

The Cube of Vanya



By AzCoper

Overview

A magical adventure through the demi-planes created by an ancient wizard, now destabilized by a malevolent dragon.

Background

The Cube

A long time ago an elven wizard known as Fae Vanya crafted herself a series of demi-planes with which she could conduct experiments away from prying eyes. Initially starting with only a private study, over time her collection of planes expanded to include a wide range of meticulously crafted locations ranging from open seas to a forge in the depths of a volcano.

Proud of her hard work but concerned it would be stolen, she hid these planes within a magical artefact: The Cube of Vanya. Made of smooth polished gold, the cube was covered in a number of intricate silver dials and buttons and adorned with many gemstones. The right combination would provide access to her study, and thus access her other planes.

In an act of paranoia, she decided to add one final security measure to the cube. Rather than simply denying access, incorrect tampering would imprison the trespasser until she could deal with him. Showing some signs of compassion, she decided their prison should at least be comfortable: an inn which caters to their every need. To keep them docile, their memory of the last week is wiped.

Unfortunately something went awry during the incantations required to create such a security measure and it backfired on her. She found herself trapped in The Sealed Inn with most of her memory wiped! Addled and confused she spent centuries being tended to by the denizens of the inn unable to remember who she is.

Home for Orcs

The cube was lost for centuries before eventually being uncovered by two orcs, Gromgorr and Bhovrou. While attempting to appraise their discovery they found themselves whisked away to a curious prison.

Navigating Vanya's various planes they eventually come across The Forest Valley and set up camp. It doesn't take long for them to realise they are in a form of paradise and the camp quickly becomes their new home.

Escaping the rage induced by the influence of gruumsh in the outside world, they raised a number of children and have lived a peaceful life.

A New Lair

Thirty years after the orcs found it, and two weeks prior to the events of the module, an insidious and wily dragon known as Yzzrel found it amongst his horde. Intrigued, he puzzled over it for days. He eventually solved it and he was provided access to Fae Vanya's study and granted control of the planes.

Enjoying his new found power, Yzzrel travelled the various planes before deciding to attempt to create one of his own which he would make his new lair. This proved more complex than he believed, but slowly he began to craft something to his liking.

His many missteps in this pursuit however are damaging the planes and the magics which hold them all together. As he progresses a number of instabilities have begun to appear...

Adventure Hook

The exact adventure hook is up to you but it is key that the players have somehow discovered The Cube of Vanya and chose to inspect it in the

Lazy Traveller inn, triggering the security measure which wipes their memory of the last week. As such, they don't know the adventure hook and discover it over the course of the adventure as they get their memory back. An example adventure hook is as follows:

The adventurers are members of a group of treasure hunters who hire themselves out to those seeking adventure and riches. Earlier today they were recruited to join an expedition to a dragon's lair which was rumoured to have recently been abandoned. Its horde was up for grabs!

The expedition was a great success and they found a massive amount of wealth with no dragon in sight. As payment they accepted a curious and expensive looking cube, expecting it to fetch a hefty sum much greater than their typical fees.

After a hard day's work they retreat to a nearby inn, The Lazy Traveller, to celebrate. After a couple, curiosity got the better of them and they attempted to figure out this interesting artefact. Curiously playing with the dials they suddenly find themselves whisked away to the prison within!

People

Fae Vanya. The wizard who created The Cube of Vanya around 450 years ago. She is now ancient, certainly in her last century and is addled and confused after her attempts at securing the cube backfired. She can only remember her first name and that she once was a wizard. She no longer remembers any spells but can still perform a few cantrips. She doesn't realise how old she is. She has the stats of a **commoner** but can cast the following cantrips at will: *mending*, *message*, *minor illusion* and *shocking grasp*.

Yzzrel. An insidious and wily **young black dragon**. He is determined to make himself a

new lair within this intriguing new place he has happened upon.

Hoph Tirjon. The human barkeep in The Sealed Inn. He is not real but rather a construct created by Fae Vanya. He can handle basic conversations, however any time a more complex subject is broached, he simply smiles and offers another drink.

Gromgorr. One of the orcs who discovered the cube and found themselves in their own personal paradise. Bhovrou's husband and father to a number of adult children. Has the stats of a **commoner**.

Bhovrou. Gromgorr's wife and mother to a number of adult children. Has the stats of a **commoner**.

Bovok Largeforge. The dwarven owner and barman of The Lazy Traveller Inn. Has the stats of a **commoner**.

Orc Children. Gromgorr and Bhovrou's children have spent their entire lives, not just inside the cube, but in the Forest Valley. Their parents have told them very little about elsewhere out of a fear they would leave. Now adults, they feel cramped and want to know more of the real world.

The children aren't detailed here. Instead one should be created for each player as a backup if their character should perish. The new character can be found anywhere within the cube, having recently defied their parents to go exploring. Otherwise they aren't encountered.

Running the Adventure

The adventure is intended for a group of four level five players and should take around six to eight hours.

While the adventure is intended to be fairly light hearted the encounters are intended to be

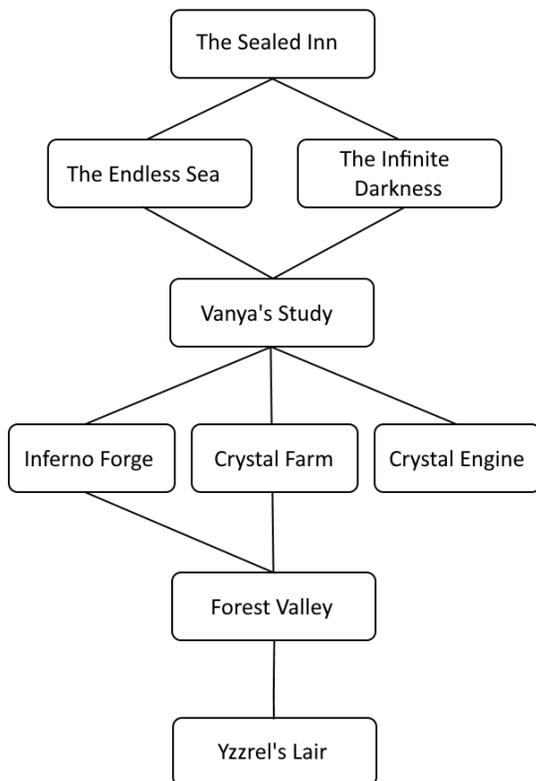
challenging. In particular the final encounter against Yzzrel is particularly tough. Various magic items are scattered through the planes to help mitigate this.

The adventure has been designed to be modular. Each plane is self contained meaning they can easily be rearranged mid session as required. If the group is taking too long, a couple of planes could be skipped to ensure they get to the end in time. If they are progressing too fast the optional planes they've skipped can be added before Yzzrel's Plane to extend it a bit.

Many of the planes have become unstable due to Yzzrel's interfering. Many of them detail an instability event which can occur, either at a specific trigger or at the GM's choice.

Paragraphs in italics are intended to be read or paraphrased to the players.

Vanya's Planes



The cube comprises a number of demi-planes, each with their own features. Each of the planes has at least one means to access another, be that mysterious doors, teleportation circles, or otherwise. The above diagram shows the general structure.

1) The Sealed Inn

You sit at the bar in a warm, good quality inn. A warm fire glows in the fireplace on the far side of the room illuminating the faces of patrons sitting around the various tables. Aside from this a handful of touches on the walls light the place, you see no windows to let in sunlight. To the side of the room, a set of stairs lead up.

The barkeep pushes a drink in front of you and says "Stoutlager's the best there is, in fact it's the only beer we stock! Enjoy!"

A prison for trespassers which provides a comfortable life for inmates. Comfortable rooms are available upstairs while unlimited food and drink are served downstairs at the bar.

Those interred here typically have the last week of their memory wiped when they enter in a bid to keep them docile. After a short time the player characters realise something is up.

You realise that you have no idea where you are or how you got here. Your memory is hazy and there is something about this place that doesn't sit quite right with you.

The first level of the inn consists of the large restaurant and bar the adventure begins in, a small kitchen and a store room. The second level consists of three comfortable rooms and a small wash room. There are no exterior doors or windows.

The bar and restaurant. The room has two doors and a staircase leading up to the second level. The first door is behind the bar and leads to a short hallway with two further doors: one to the kitchen and one to the store room. The

second door is under the stairs. This looks small, like a cupboard, and is locked. The lock can be picked with a DC 25 Thieves Tools check or unlocked with a key. The door cannot be bashed open. Once opened, the door presents an entirely black void that, once entered, teleports the players to **2) The Infinite Darkness.**

There appear to be a number of people present here including some sitting at the various tables, one at the bar, as well as the barkeep. However none of the people are real. Those at the tables are nothing more than a simple illusion to give the appearance that the inn is busy. They don't react when prompted and they are intangible.

The drinker standing at the bar is a more believable construct. She can handle basic conversation and simple tasks, however anything more complex is beyond her. If something occurs requiring a more complex response she ignores it and continues as if nothing happened. For instance, she doesn't have a name and if asked what it is, she will simply smile and go back to drinking.

The barkeep is a similar construct except that he has a name he can provide: Hoph Tirjon. He has a large brass key in one of his pockets which will unlock the door under the stairs. This can be spotted with a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check or noticed when patting him down with a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. He won't respond to any request for the key but also won't stop anyone taking it. If it is taken from his person however, the instability event occurs.

The kitchen. A small and simple room which houses a cook fervently working away and a waiter running back and forth. These are similar though simpler constructs to those at the bar, though slightly simpler, and politely ask players to leave but otherwise ignore them. Stocks are magically replenished so they never run out of food.

The store room. A large store room containing a number of kegs. All of the kegs look very similar and most contain Stoutlager except one which contains a mysterious fizzy green liquid. The different keg can be found with a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check. If this liquid is drunk it will teleport the drinker and anyone else in a 15 feet radius to **3) The Endless Sea.**

Upstairs. When they ascend read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Ascending the stairs, you reach a pleasant landing with thick rugs leading to four doors. A small fireplace illuminates the area, in front of which stands a decrepit old elven woman. She turns to you with a tired, confused look in her eyes. "Excuse me, do you know where I am?"

Fae Vanya stands at the top of the stairs, confused. She worriedly asks if the players can tell her where she is and who she is. She doesn't know much about herself other than her first name and the fact that she was once a wizard. If the players speak to her she calms down and offers to show them her cantips.

The players may try to take Vanya with them. If this happens, when she leaves she is instead teleported directly to **4) The Study.**

The four rooms accessible via the landing are a large clean washroom and three bedrooms. Two bedrooms are unlocked, tidy, and have nothing of interest. The final bedroom is Vanya's and is locked. A DC 12 Thieves Tools check or a DC 15 Strength check will grant access. Vanya doesn't protest. The room is relatively clean but looks lived in. A DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a *bag of holding*, a *wand of smiles*, and a *potion of heroism* all of which can be taken without Vanya seeming to notice.

Instability event. If a fight breaks out, someone tries to steal Hoph's key or if the players are taking a while, the instability event occurs. A

violent earthquake rumbles through the inn as the illusionary people flicker and vanish. Hoph Tirjon and the drinker at the bar morph into **shadow demons** while the cook and the waiter morph into **shadows**. As the rumbling begins to calm down, the torches and the fireplace all snuff out leaving the players in darkness.

2) The Infinite Darkness

The players arrive in a tunnel which is enveloped in complete darkness. If they arrived from **1) The Sealed Inn** then the door they entered through is no longer there. If some players have dark vision or one of the players creates some form of light, read the following:

You are in a narrow tunnel, about 10 feet wide stretching as far as you can see in either direction. Judging by rough stone walls and wooden props you suspect you are under ground, perhaps in a mine.

The tunnel runs more or less in a straight line and runs for about 5 miles after which it magically loops back on itself, giving the impression of an infinite tunnel.

There doesn't appear to be any exits however there are two hidden passages. The first is at about the one mile mark and is hidden behind an illusory wall. This can be spotted with a DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check or found with a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The investigation check reduces to DC 12 if the players are explicitly checking the walls for secret exits. The passage leads to an active permanent teleportation circle. Anyone who touches it will be instantly transported to **4) Vanya's Study**.

The second hidden passage is at about the two mile mark. The passage doesn't actually connect to the tunnel and has about one foot of stone between them. If the instability event occurs the wall crumbles.

Living in the passage are four **phase spiders**. Floor to ceiling is covered with thick spider webs which are considered difficult terrain and obscure vision more than 15 feet. Any time a player ends their turn in the spider webs they must make a DC 12 Dexterity check to avoid becoming tangled. If they fail they become restrained. As an action they can attempt to break free with a DC 12 Strength check. The spiders remain deep in the spider webs and don't attack until they are either spotted or someone becomes restrained.

The passage leads to a pool of water, at the bottom of which is an underwater tunnel. Following this a short distance will teleport the player to **3) The Endless Sea**. This is also where the players will appear if entering from that location.

At about the three mile mark in the main tunnel there is a pit trap.

Pit trap. A large trap door about 30 feet long and roughly 9 foot wide--leaving about half a foot each side--opens to the sides into a large pit. The trap door is heavily obscured by dirt but can be spotted with a DC 21 Wisdom (Perception) check or discovered with a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check if they take the time to study the floors as they walk.

If the players fall into the trap read or paraphrase the following:

You fall 15 feet to a dusty dirt floor. Looking around you are at the bottom of a wide chamber roughly 20 feet wide and 30 feet in length. The stone walls are carved with intricate patterns and pockmarked with small dark circular holes. One wall has a large slit running it's entire length around 3 feet from the ground. An old yellowing skeleton lies in one corner covered in the ragged remnants of its possessions and clothes.

When the players fall into the pit trap three mechanisms trigger at particular times in initiative order.

The first mechanism is a massive saw blade that slices across the entirety of the pit from the slit in the wall at initiative 20. Anything caught in its path must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d10 slashing damage and be knocked prone. On a successful save the creature takes half damage and isn't knocked prone. The blade has AC 15 and 30 HP.

The second mechanism is a barrage of poisoned darts which fire from the circular holes at initiative 10. The darts fire at everyone in the pit with a +5 attack bonus and deal 1d10 poison damage. If a creature is hit it must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for one hour.

The final mechanism occurs at initiative 1 at which point the trap door starts to close again. It takes three turns to fully close.

On one of the walls is a subtle switch which blends with the carved pattern of the pit making it hard to see. It can be seen with DC 23 Wisdom (Perception) or found with a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check if searching the walls. Pressing this switch will disable the mechanisms and reopen the trap door for one minute before it resets again.

A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check while searching the skeleton will reveal it is holding a *horn of blasting*.

Instability event. This occurs if the players either complete two full circuits of the tunnel, or at the GMs discretion if they are taking a long time. A strong earthquake occurs tearing wide cracks in the walls of the tunnel. The group are showered with heavy rocks falling from the ceiling. They must make a DC 14 dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 bludgeoning damage. On a failure they take half damage. The wall leading to the second hidden passage collapses, revealing it and the spider webs within.

3) The Endless Sea

A stormy sea roughly 20 miles across which magically repeats on itself giving the sense that it is endless. Heavy rain and low light from heavy dark clouds limit visibility. In the center of the sea a pirate ship is anchored thrashing back and forth in the violent storm.

Near where the anchor touches the sea bed is a fissure, 50 foot deep, roughly 100 feet under the surface. If the players enter either from **1) The Sealed Inn** or **2) The Infinite Darkness** they appear deep within the fissure.

You appear submerged deep under water. Through the murky water you can see you are surrounded by a green and yellow seaweed covered rock face. The only opening is above you and circling it is a group of sharks. Your lungs feel full as though you'd just inhaled deeply.

The sharks include two **hunter sharks** and five smaller **reef sharks**. If no-one is hurt yet, they keep their distance until the players attempt to leave the fissure. If, however, someone is hurt they are immediately drawn by the smell of blood in the water.

When the players leave the fissure they see seabed stretching in all directions and the anchor from the ship. They may follow the anchor's chain to the surface and discover the pirate ship.

The pirate ship is deserted and there is no evidence that anyone has ever been resident. It has three levels: the deck, living quarters and the hold. In the center of the deck there is an active teleportation circle which will take anyone who touches it to **4) Vanya's Study**. This is also where someone arrives if coming from that location. The living quarters consist of a number of bunk rooms for sleeping, a small mess hall and the captain's quarters. The captain's quarters are locked, requiring a DC 15 Thieves

Tools check or a DC 20 Strength check to open. Inside is an ornate room with a large chest against one wall. The chest isn't locked but is trapped. If a player opens the chest without disarming the trap, they prick their finger on a small needle in the latch. They must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 4d6 poison damage and become poisoned for 10 minutes. While poisoned in this way the creature is paralysed. On a successful save they take half damage and are not poisoned. The trap can be disarmed with a DC 15 Thieves Tools check. The chest contains 1000 gp, a small diamond worth 300 gp, 5 bloodstone and a *mace of smiting*. The hold has a number of boxes but they are all empty.

The first time the players set foot on the ship the players see a flying creature above them through the rain and clouds. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals it is a dragon though the type cannot be determined. Yzzrel is flying over surveying the various planes.

Sailing the ship. If the players choose to sail the ship they must first reel in the anchor, requiring a DC 12 Strength check. Once this is complete they each must nominate a relevant task they can do to help sail. They must then complete an ability check to determine whether or not they succeed, the type of which is determined by what they are trying and the difficulty is determined by how useful and plausible their task is.

Three successes allows them to find a small island within a day of sailing--the only island in the sea. On this island is a literal cross which, if they dig it up, yields four locked treasure chests. Once they have been dug up however, the instability event occurs and each of the chests turn into **mimics**. The mimics drop a *wand of wonder* when killed.

Instability event. This occurs at the DM's discretion, perhaps as a means of saving the players if they are drowning or if they find the island with the mimic. A massive earthquake

occurs in the seabed causing a sinkhole in the fissure. This creates a massive whirlpool drawing the ship and the players into it.

If the ship gets pulled into it, it begins to break up, eventually leaving just a piece of the deck with the summoning circle on it.

If the players are sucked up into it they are pulled into the fissure and into darkness before finding themselves resurfacing in the pool in **2) The Infinite Darkness**.

4) Vanya's Study

You appear in a small, well lit and pleasantly decorated chamber with six teleportation circles in groups of two against three of the walls. In addition to the one you arrived via, two other circles are glowing on the far side of the chamber. The fourth wall has a large archway leading to a large study.

The study is similarly well decorated with a thick red carpeted floor and mahogany panelled walls. Bright, warm yellow light illuminates the room with no obvious source. The far wall is lined with shelves filled with numerous curios; a small display case sits against the right hand wall while a large chest sits in the corner of the left. In the center of the room is a large mahogany desk covered in books and scattered notes.

This is Vanya's study, the original plane she created and a center point from which the other planes may be accessed. The teleportation circle the players initially entered via is still active, either **2) The Infinite Darkness** or **3) The Endless Sea**. The other is inactive. The two across the room from these are also active and lead to **5) Crystal Farm** and **6) Inferno Forge**. These teleportation circles have plaques next to them describing the location they will take the player: The Void, The Maelstrom, The Farm and the Forge respectively. The two remaining inactive teleportation circles have no plaques and do not explicitly lead anywhere. These can be used to extend Vanya's planes if desired.

This area is relatively safe and much more stable than the others. No instability event occurs here, nor are there any violent encounters.

The large desk in the center of the study has stacks of notes and handwritten books littered across it. Most of them are written in a secret script known only to Vanya--and now lost to time. However a few are written in common and some have notes scrawled in common in the margins. With a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check the players can piece together that they are in a series of demi planes created by a wizard known as Fae Vanya for her experiments. A DC 15 check also reveals that the last entry was 450 years ago. If the players search the desk drawers they find a square, red coin with an image of a hammer on it.

The curio shelves contain a number of interesting items such as a femur from a mammoth, various books and strange jars of liquid. If the players search the shelves they find a square, black coin which is entirely blank. Additionally, a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a *ring of acid resistance*.

The chest is unlocked and contains two potions of healing and a square, blue coin with an image of crystal on it.

Inside the display case is a blue glowing orb which seems to flicker with electricity, roughly a foot across. Sitting on top of the display case is a square, white coin with an image of a ship on it. The case is locked and cannot be picked nor broken. There is no keyhole, instead there are 4 small square slots, above which is a plaque with the following inscribed in it:

The void: black shadows endless
The maelstrom: churning and blue
The farm: white winds relentless
The forge: red fires make anew

The four coins found around the room can be placed in the four slots. The correct order is hinted at by the plaque. The colors are a red herring, instead the images on each refer to one of Vanya's planes. The correct order is:

- 1) Black coin which is blank
- 2) White coin with an image of a ship
- 3) Blue coin with an image of a crystal
- 4) Red coin with an image of a hammer

If they are placed in this order the case clicks open and the players can access the orb within. Placing them in an incorrect order will cause the case to become electrified for a few seconds. The person placing the coins must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d8 lightning damage.

If someone picks up the blue orb it begins to glow brighter and hum slightly while they hold it. After 6 seconds it teleports any creature touching it to **7) Crystal Engine**. The orb remains in the room.

Fae Vanya. If the players tried to take Fae Vanya with them in **1) The Sealed Inn** then she is here when they arrive. She looks up at them having read through the notes confused and alarmed that she apparently created this place and has been here for nearly half a millenium. Vanya doesn't want to leave and will continue to pour over the books and notes.

5) Crystal Farm

You appear next to a teleportation circle on a 30 foot wide rock platform which floats in the sky. The rock is connected by a massive 30 foot long chain to the center of a much larger rock, about 100 feet high. The larger rock is covered in many large blue crystals and has a flat surface at the top around 60 feet across. Gale force winds blow around you, nearly knocking you off the side. You can see a huge tornado approaching you and the floating rocks.

Vanya used the massive floating rock to farm the blue crystals which grow on it. Three smaller rock platforms float around the bigger rock, connected to it by massive chains. Two of these platforms have teleportation circles on them, one leading to **4) Vanya's Study** and the other to **8) Forest Valley**. The third has a large locked chest on it which requires a DC 13 Thieves Tools check or a DC 18 Strength check to open. Inside is a *mac-fuirmidh cittern*.

This area is normally calm and peaceful, a place of serene reflection, however the instability event has already occurred causing a severe hurricane. The rocks are blasted with hurricane force winds while a tornado approaches. Due to the dust and winds the other two floating rocks are difficult to see while standing on one of them, requiring a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check. However they can clearly be seen once on top of the central rock.

Normally each of the teleportation circles has a griffon waiting next to it, allowing easy transportation around the area. However the storm has spooked them and they currently are circling about 50 feet above the central rock. They aren't easy to see until the players are on top of the rock, requiring a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check before that.

Braving the storm. In initiative order, the players can attempt to navigate the area and reach the other teleportation circle before they are consumed by the incoming tornado. They have about 15 rounds before the tornado is close enough to pull them towards it.

When the players first arrive, the rock platform they are standing on splits in half, shattering the teleportation circle. The untethered piece begins to drift away at a speed of 10 feet per round. Any players caught on it will need to quickly jump to the tethered piece.

At initiative 20 each round roll a d20. If a 15 or higher is rolled one player at random is struck by lightning and must make a DC 14 Dexterity

saving throw or take 2d8 damage and be knocked prone. If they succeed they take half damage and are not knocked prone.

The players can attempt to cross the chain. It's about 5 foot wide and would normally be easy to walk across, however it sways heavily in the winds. They must make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check else they stumble. The difficulty depends on how fast they are moving. They can cross slowly and stealthily, at half speed, normal pace, or use their dash for double speed. At a slow pace the DC is 10, at a normal pace the DC is 15 and at a fast pace the DC is 20. If the player stumbles, roll a d4 to decide the direction they fall: forward, backward, left or right. If they fall forwards or backwards they fall prone but remain on the chain. If they fall left or right they begin to fall off the chain and must make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to catch the chain as they fall. The DC for this increases by 5 each time they succeed.

Once over the chain the players are faced with a 50 foot climb up to the top of the central rock. It does have many crystals jutting from it and other easy handholds however the wind makes for a perilous climb. Each turn they must succeed on a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to endure the wind. If they fail, they must make a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to find another handhold or begin to fall.

At the top of the rock the three smaller rock platforms can easily be seen, revealing the chest and the other teleportation circle if they have not already been spotted. The players also see the two griffins circling overhead. Now that they've seen the players, they will circle above them but remain at a 50 foot distance. They aren't aggressive but will attack if the players attack them. A DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check will coax them down picking up the players. A roll of 5 or lower will scare them away.

On griffin back the players can easily reach the smaller platforms with no further ability checks.

Without, however, they will need to continue the skill checks as before.

If a player falls or gets caught in the tornado, they aren't necessarily dead. Instead, they are teleported to a random location 50 feet above the group in **8) Forest Valley**. They fall and take 5d6 bludgeoning damage. If caught in the tornado, they take 1d10 bludgeoning from being tossed around.

The first time players step atop the central rock they see a creature flying over them, away from the tornado. A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals it to be a dragon. An 18 reveals it to be a **young black dragon**. Yzzrel is flying over surveying the various planes.

Variants. Although this works best handled round by round, it will be quicker and likely more fun to allow each player to act at the same time rather than strictly taking turns.

Additionally, it might be fun to allow other adjacent players to use their reaction to attempt to catch a falling player. The DC would be set based on the relative sizes of the players.

6) Inferno Forge

You appear in what seems to be a forge in the center of a volcano. A 60 foot circular platform of carved stone sits surrounded, with two short walkways leading out over the lava: one to the teleportation circle you have just entered through and another leading to another teleportation circle on the other side. In the center of the platform is an impressive forge and a large anvil. Near them is a display with a suit of armour standing between two metal statues. The heat is intense and you can already feel yourself beginning to sweat.

The heat is so intense that it exposes the players to Extreme Heat as described in the Dungeon Master's Guide.

The teleportation circle used to enter remains active however the other is inactive and will need to be activated before proceeding. The active circle leads to **4) Vanya's Study** while the inactive one leads to **8) Forest Valley**.

The statues are **helmed horrors** and the suit of armour is an **animated armor**. Vanya created them to help her with forging whatever she needs. When she enters the room they come to life and do as she asks. The players may fake this by assuming her form via illusionary means. This is enough to activate them and they will perform simple tasks for the faux Vanya.

One of the helmed horrors holds a *rod of activation*, a simple rod which will enable inactive teleportation circles in Vanya's Planes. The helmed horror can either be asked to activate the teleportation circle or it can be prised from its hands with a DC 18 Strength check.

Forging a weapon. Sitting on the anvil is a nearly finished magical weapon. The players can ask the helmed horrors to finish it for them or they can attempt to finish it themselves.

To do so, they must make three ability checks. The first check they must make is a DC 14 Intelligence check to heat the weapon in the forge gauging when it is an appropriate temperature. The second check is a DC 14 Strength check as they hammer the last parts of the weapon into shape. Finally the weapon is cooled and then sharpened on a grindstone, requiring a DC 14 Dexterity check. All of these checks have advantage if the player is proficient with smith's tools.

If the player passes all three of the ability checks then they successfully create a *dragon slayer sword*. If they pass at least one of the three ability checks then they still succeed in creating a sword, as long as none of the failed checks were a 5 or lower. In this case they create a sword, +1. The type of sword is determined by the DM.

Instability event. This occurs at the DM's discretion, for example if the players are taking too long to activate the teleportation circle. An earthquake rumbles through the chamber and the lava erupts around the platform. Some of the lava splashes down on the platform and the players must make a DC 15 Dexterity check or take 2d8 fire damage. If they succeed they take half damage. After 10 seconds or so the eruption dies down but the heat is much more intense than before. Everyone in the chamber must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or suffer one level of exhaustion immediately. The helmed horrors and the animated armor all attack the players.

7) Crystal Engine

You appear in a massive cylindrical chamber, 100 foot high and 50 foot diameter, with grey brick walls. In the center of the room, 10 feet up, floats a massive blue crystal, sparking with electricity. A small alcove near where you appeared houses a single teleportation circle.

This chamber contains the crystal which Vanya used to connect and stabilise her various planes inside of The Cube of Vanya.

Floating around the crystal about 40 feet up is a small box that can be seen with a DC 15 perception check or easily noticed if within 20 feet. The box is locked, requiring a DC 17 Thieves Tools check to open. Inside is a *ring of evasion*.

Instability event. Occurs if the crystal is destroyed.

The crystal has AC 12, 250 HP and immunity to lightning and psychic damage. Every round in which a creature has attacked it, it will summon an **air elemental** to defend itself unless there are already two present.

If the crystal is destroyed the room fills with lightning dealing 3d10 damage to everyone in

the room or half if they succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. The demi-planes begin to collapse and crumble to nothing and all sentient creatures inside the demi-planes are ejected from The Cube of Vanya to **The Lazy Traveller Inn**. This includes: Fae Vanya, Yzzrel, Gromgorr, Bhovrou and the orc children.

8) Forest Valley

You appear in a small clearing in a lush green forest, with a teleportation circle at your feet. Warm sun beams down on you from through the canopy while a pleasant breeze rustles through the leaves. You can hear the calls of unseen woodland creatures and the trickle of a nearby stream.

There are two of these small clearings with teleportation circles, one leading to **5) Crystal Farm** and the other to **6) Inferno Forge**. They lie within a valley covered in a dense forest--each at opposite ends. The valley runs about five miles and is two miles across. Similar to other planes, it magically repeats giving the sense of an endless forest.

Running through the valley is a river, which at the closest point is about 100 feet from the small clearings. The river is about 30 feet across and shallow. It can be crossed without trouble, though it is difficult terrain.

In the center of the valley is a third clearing in the forest, this one much bigger than the other two and the river runs straight through it. The orcs Gromgorr and Bhovrou have made a home for themselves here and have built a small but comfortable log cabin on the shore of the river. They spent their days fishing on the small jetty over the river, hunting the wild life in the forest and tending to a small garden for vegetables.

Navigating the forest. When the players arrive it is roughly midday and they have several hours before sundown. To navigate the forest the players must make a DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check. If they succeed then they navigate their

way to the larger clearing. If they fail they get lost in the forest and spend the remaining hours of the day wandering in circles. They can try again the next day. If they opt to follow the river they can find the large clearing without a skill check.

While progressing through the forest they may encounter one or more of the following encounters, at the DMs discretion.

1) Owlbear Den. They come across four sleeping **owlbears**. If they have been progressing quietly and notice them early enough then the group can make a DC 15 group Dexterity (Stealth) check to pass without waking them. Otherwise the owlbears attack. A DC 22 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check will cause them to back off and leave the players.

2) Hunter's Trap. A trap in which one or more of the players step and must succeed in a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or find themselves hanging upside down from a rope attached to a tree branch. They can cut themselves down with a DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check. The trap has been left by Gromgorr and it isn't actively watched so there isn't any risk in getting caught in it.

3) Help from a Unicorn. The players find an area of the forest where the trees grow far more massive than elsewhere--huge mighty oaks covered in vines and bright flowers. The area is a unicorn's lair and the appropriate regional effects apply, as described in the Monster Manual. Roaming the area is a unicorn who will aid them where it can. If they're hurt it will heal them and if they are lost it will lead them to the large forest clearing.

Large forest clearing. When the players first enter the forest clearing read or paraphrase the following:

You emerge into a large clearing through which the river runs and on the bank sits a small but pleasant looking log cabin. Surrounding the

cabin is a well tended garden and out into the river runs a small jetty. As you step out from the forest an orc turns towards you, axe in hand.

The orc is Gromgorr and he was in the middle of cutting logs, which the players can deduce if with a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. He is confused and surprised to see other people here. If the players don't make any aggressive actions after an awkward few seconds, he waves to them, puts the axe down and heads to greet them heartily.

He invites them into his home to meet his wife and explains that their adult children are off exploring the woods and hunting. The players may rest up and spend the night here. They'll be well fed and provided with strong homemade alcohol that Bhovrou has concocted.

They also provide the players with a potion which will restore their memory, allowing them to remember their adventure hook and how they got here. The orcs found a number of the potions in Vanya's Study when they passed through.

The orcs tell the players their story if they'll allow and explain that the planes have been destabilised for the last couple of weeks which appear to have coincided with the appearance of a **young black dragon**. They've seen him flying about and believe he is trying to create his own demi-plane. They've seen him frequently head towards the south (or what they have designated to be south) over the river.

They fear the dragon will ruin their idyllic home and they ask the players to save it for them. In exchange they offer to help the players leave the cube. They have a rod which, when activated, will open a portal which can be used to leave--also found in Vanya's Study. They don't tell the players they have the rod but do give them a *potion of growth* if they accept their request.

The rift. If the players head in the direction suggested by the orcs, after a couple of hours

they'll find a curious tear or rift in the air. Entering the rift will take them to **9) Yzzrel's Lair**.

9) Yzzrel's Lair

You appear in a large, dank cavern, around 100 feet across and 60 feet high. The walls are covered in slick vines while the uneven floor is dotted with various shallow pools of cloudy green water. Something about the place doesn't feel quite right, somehow artificial. To the far side of the chamber is a massive pile of gold, jewels and other assorted treasures on which a dragon with slimy black scales sits. Lazily, he gazes upon you with curiosity across his face, while running his claws softly across a massive snake curled at his feet. He snarls: "If you have come to take what is mine, then a painful end is all you will find." He rises and spreads his impressive wings, scattering coins and gems across the room.

The dragon is Yzzrel, a **young black dragon** with 205 HP and three legendary resistances per day (and a Challenge Rating of 9). At his feet is a **giant constrictor snake** he has conjured as a pet.

Although young black dragons do not typically get lair actions, Yzzrel crafted this plane himself, enabling him to do so.

Yzzrel has no intention of talking things out with the players and attacks them immediately and will fight to the death to protect his new home. His snake assists him.

If the players attempt to take the treasure it becomes immediately apparent that something isn't quite right with it. If the treasure leaves Yzzrel's Lair it vanishes. Yzzrel has a rod of plane control on him which allows the creation and manipulation of the planes within the Cube of Vanya. Unfortunately, it was damaged in the fight and no longer works.

Mission complete. If they succeed in defeating Yzzrel they can return to a relieved Gromgorr and Bhovrou who will show that they also have a rod of plane control, though they have rarely used it. Using it, they can create a portal which will allow the players to exit the cube, leading them to **The Lazy Traveller Inn**.

Instability Event. This occurs at the DMs discretion, ideally if the players are struggling or are taking too long. Yzzrel tries to use his lair action but instead the whole room starts to shake and collapse. He has caused too much damage to the stability of the planes and they begin to collapse, crumbling to nothing. All sentient creatures inside the demi-planes are ejected from The Cube of Vanya to **The Lazy Traveller Inn**. This includes: Fae Vanya, Yzzrel, Gromgorr, Bhovrou and the orc children.

The Lazy Traveller Inn

You appear behind the bar at a large and comfortable looking inn. You recognise it to be the inn you were staying at before all of this occurred. The bar is silent, all of the occupants staring at you. The barman, standing just a few feet away, turns to you and exclaims "Did you just come out of that... that thing!?" as he points towards the cube, sitting on a shelf behind the bar.

After the players vanished into the cube, Bovok Largeforge, the owner and barman, had found the cube and, when no one appeared to collect it, displayed it behind the bar.

The Lazy Traveller Inn itself is a large roadside inn with nothing much around it for miles. It sits on a major road however and sees much business from the various merchants and others travelling the road.

Destroyed cube. If the players are forcibly ejected from the cube as it collapses then more than just themselves appear. Vanya, the orcs,

and Yzzrel all find themselves in the bar, much to their own surprise and those around them.

Yzzrel immediately smashes his way through the roof and out onto the road where he challenges the players in anger. If the players get him down to about a quarter health he flees as his lair has already been destroyed.

Conclusion

Regardless of whether the players managed to defeat Yzzrel and save the planes, they managed to escape. If they haven't already regained it, then they regain their memory as they leave the cube.

Vanya. Vanya may have been forcibly ejected from the Cube or the players may have helped her leave. In either case her memory is too damaged to be recovered but outside the cube she begins to retain new memories and is thankful for their help and sorry for causing all of this.

Gromgorr and Bhovrou. If the players save the planes then they are eternally grateful that they can keep their idyllic home. If they are ejected they are still thankful to the players for trying. However, their demeanor changes as they already feel the Mark of Gruumsh affecting them.

References

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