

# PATHFINDER SOCIETY



YEAR OF THE DEMON



## THE PATHS WE CHOOSE

BY TIM HITCHCOCK





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PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO #5-99

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*Pathfinder Society Scenario #5-99: The Paths We Choose* is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 3rd- to 7th-level characters (Tier 3-7; Subtiers 3-4 and 6-7). This scenario is designed for play in the Pathfinder Society Organized Play campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world.

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# THE PATHS WE CHOOSE

BY TIM HITCHCOCK



The Grand Council that rules Absalom is broken into two major components: the High Council of 12 leading citizens and the Low Council whose membership varies by year (but stays around 50 strong). Each city district has at least one low councilor, and each of Absalom's vassal settlements is guaranteed two such positions. The late Hadrel Grayrain was an esteemed son of Diobel with ties to the town dating back 23 generations, and when he died two weeks ago, he was halfway through his seventh consecutive year-long term as a low councilor. The circumstances of his death seemed natural, and were he nearly done with his term, the Grand Council might have seen fit to let the seat lie empty until they were ready to elect a new Low Council. For a host of minor political reasons, though, they have decided both to appoint a temporary replacement to fill Grayrain's seat and to co-host a series of formal events to give the new representative an appropriate welcome. The rest of the money has come from Diobel's Kortos Consortium, which sees the publicity as an opportunity to lure business to their nearby port. They have secured the assistance and several facilities of the Pathfinder Society for the event.

The election coincides with a lull in the Society, which is concluding its expedition to the sky citadel Jormurdun in the Worldwound. As a result, a significant number of Pathfinders have returned to Absalom to debrief, relax, and meet with the leaders of their particular factions to reassess their ongoing goals. Over the past year, many of these factions' objectives have evolved, and many groups that once worked for foreign nations have distanced themselves from their respective patron states. As the Society's focus shifts south, these factions must consolidate their gains and establish their new identities—or risk disappearing altogether.

## SUMMARY

The PCs participate in a series of political events—including a memorial, a feast, and a formal oath-taking ceremony—in Absalom intended to honor the late

### WHERE ON GOLARION?

The events in *The Paths We Choose* all take place in various districts of Absalom, a metropolis on the Isle of Kortos in the Inner Sea. For more information about Absalom, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Guide to Absalom* and *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide*, available in bookstores and game stores everywhere, and online at [paizo.com](http://paizo.com).



councilor Hadrel Grayrain and formally inaugurate a replacement to finish his term. Against this backdrop, important factions within the Pathfinder Society are maneuvering to consolidate their gains from the previous year, carve out new niches for themselves, and manage emergencies that arise. During the adventure, the PCs participate in three of seven short missions, each of which highlights one of the factions in Pathfinder Society Organized Play.

The individual missions include tracking down and arresting a crooked statesman, securing the freedom of enslaved war heroes, cleansing one of the secret Society vaults of a shadowy menace, rooting out the cause of an unknown disease, stopping the assassination of Sczarni kingpin Guaril Karela, and preventing looters from robbing the tomb of a long lost Osiriani family.

**GM RESOURCES**

This adventure makes use of the following Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products: the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* (B1), *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* (B2), *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* (B3), *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* (B4), *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Players Guide* (APG), and *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* (NPC). These rules can be found online for free as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at [paizo.com/prd](http://paizo.com/prd).

**RUNNING THIS EVENT**

*The Paths We Choose* is not a typical scenario. Instead of a single adventure, there are seven short missions that are each designed to take 1–1½ hours to complete, and a group is intended to complete three such missions during the event. The GM should choose three missions that best reflect the factions of the characters in the adventure. These missions can take place anytime over the course of the adventure, allowing the GM to control the pacing and either space missions farther apart (to facilitate the PCs’ resting) or place them closer together (to build excitement). The adventure also provides information about the social events taking place and several of the NPCs in attendance. GMs are encouraged to let the PCs interact with them between missions.

The adventure aims to provide each PC a window into how her faction is evolving based on past developments and recent choices, so it is recommended that event coordinators muster tables so that each group has two or three factions represented. If there are more than four factions represented at a table, it is likely that one or more of them won’t get a chance to play their faction’s mission. Should a table complete the three missions before the end of the event, they are welcome to play through another mission with the understanding that doing so does not earn them any additional rewards.

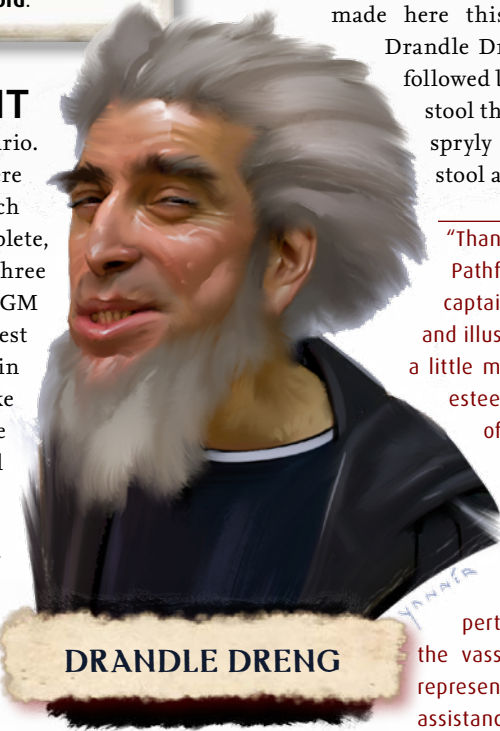
*The Paths We Choose* can be run individually or as a multi-table event. For a multi-table event, each table should report the results of each mission to an Overseer GM who tabulates the results to announce to the entire room at the end of the event. An Overseer GM might also record results in real time, showing all tables how well each faction is doing.

Each mission has two success conditions that the PCs might meet to earn gold and Prestige Point awards

during the adventure. See the Rewards section on page 38 for more details.

**GETTING STARTED**

The PCs begin the adventure in at the Grand Lodge of Absalom, where they join dozens of other Pathfinders on a lawn in the shadow of Skyreach. Many of the assembled agents hold fliers that appeared about the lodge the day before, hinting at a special announcement to be made here this morning. Venture-Captain Drandle Dreng emerges from the crowd followed by an assistant carrying a large stool that she sets on the grass. Dreng spryly clambers up to stand on the stool and addresses the small crowd.



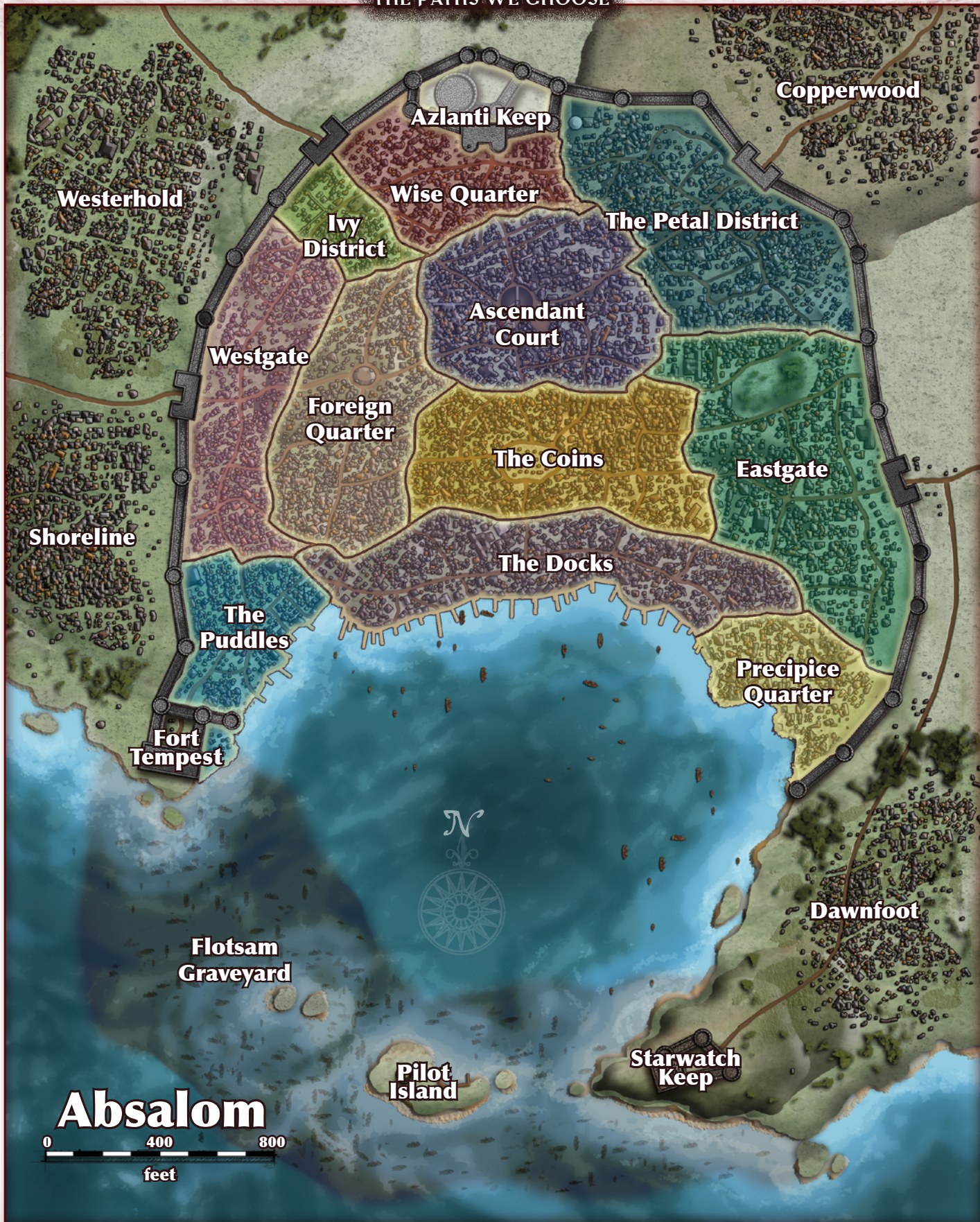
“Thank you for joining me here, Pathfinders,” the milky-eyed venture-captain shouts. “Absalom has a long and illustrious history, and today we add a little more to that ongoing record. The esteemed councilor Hadrel Grayrain of Diobel recently passed away, leaving a vacancy on Absalom’s Grand Council. We’re still many months away from the annual inauguration of councilors, and with numerous acts pertaining to Diobel on the schedule, the vassal city is eager to get a new representative. In fact, with Absalom’s assistance, Diobel’s Kortos Consortium has co-bankrolled a festival spread across much of the Foreign Quarter. Ostensibly, this is an occasion to honor the deceased and welcome his replacement. Virtually everyone also sees this as a chance to advertise and earn some new business.”

Drandle Dreng clears his throat and shrugs. “Well, the Society is no exception. We’ve already chipped in some gold to help this be a success, and in doing so we’ve received numerous invitations to the more exclusive events. With our recent work in Mendev, we’ve earned considerable goodwill. This is a good opportunity to consolidate those gains by seeing and being seen by the upper crust—as well as hobnobbing with the common people.”

He chuckles and gives the crowd a smile. “All at the Society’s expense! Have a good time, keep an ear out for interesting leads, and represent the Society well!”

The venture-captain then hops off the stool and mills about the crowd, greeting various agents by name, slapping associates on the back, and summarizing the planned events (see the section below) to anyone who inquires.







## The Schedule of Events

Each of the following missions takes place over the course of the 4-day festival, which involves several main events in addition to dozens of smaller gatherings that take place throughout the city. It is up to the PCs which of these they wish to attend, and the adventure plays out the same whether the PCs spend all of their time at high-profile parties or crawling through the most disreputable pubs. The mission hooks are fairly easy to adapt to whatever surroundings the PCs select.

**Grand Lodge Social** (Afternoon, Day 1): As part of its contribution to the festivities, the Pathfinder Society hosts an informal social gathering with drinks and appetizers to welcome visiting dignitaries and other people of note. The event also attracts a handful of representatives on the Grand Council. The Society displays several dozen relics for visitors to admire, and on one end of the reception space, Pathfinder agents take turns demonstrating their many skills to the guests' amusement.

**Commemorative Service** (Evening, Day 1): At moonrise, a nondenominational commemorative service takes place in the Docks district. The service is somber and those remembering Grayrain and his accomplishments take turns speaking. The event is comparatively small, as most who needed to say goodbye to Grayrain did so earlier in the month at his funeral. After the service, many of those in attendance retire to taverns along the waterfront or in the Foreign Quarter.

**Preinaugural Feast** (Afternoon, Day 2): This event takes place at a great hall in the Wise Quarter from late afternoon through the evening. It is semi-casual and heavily attended. Many members of Absalom's Low Council attend, though the High Council is not present. In addition to casual conversation, there is much conjecture and speculation concerning who shall become Grayrain's successor.

**Deliberation Day** (Day 3): There are no major events this day. The High Council spends much of the day in deliberation to determine which candidate should succeed Grayrain. They call upon several dozen citizens to offer input and testimony to aid in the decision. Those not under political obligations take the opportunity to host private meetings to broker alliances, draft trade deals, and manage other personal interests.

**Inauguration** (Noon, Day 4): Slightly before noon, a crowd gathers in a large open-air amphitheater in the Wise Quarter. Within an hour, the First Lady of Laws, Scion Lady Neferpatra of House Ahnkamen, takes the stage and announces the appointment of Grint Basatrel. Grint then takes the stage to give an impassioned speech about both the past and his hopes for improving future relations between Absalom and its vassal cities. After his speech, the crowd remains. Music and feasting continue long into the night.

## Very Important People

Over the days-long festivities, the PCs might meet any number of figures important to Absalom and Diobel's politics. The GM can introduce these NPCs between events, giving the PCs additional roleplaying opportunities and illustrating some of the issues ongoing in Absalom's vassal-city to the west. Keep in mind that many of the PCs have concerns and interests that might foreshadow missions in this adventure.

**Alvalda Margruel** (NG female human aristocrat/bard): Alvalda is a statuesque woman in her late forties whose family co-operates the Kortos Consortium, a powerful guild of merchants in Diobel, with two other families. She is well known among Diobelians as a capable businesswoman, a philanthropist, and a staunch advocate for using local labor.

**Scion Lord Avid of House Arnsen** (LN male human aristocrat/wizard): Lord Avid holds the title of Teriarch of Diobel, making him lord-mayor of that city by the appointment of Lord Gyr, the Primarch of Absalom. Lord Avid is hardly appreciative of this assignment, and he often struggles with the Kortos Consortium for control of the town. During the festivities, he adopts a more pleasant demeanor, but his mood sours when reminded of Lord Gyr or the Consortium.

**Bellonna Trask** (CG female halfling ranger): Bellonna is an independent business owner from Diobel who has submitted her name for consideration as Grayrain's replacement. For the past decade she has clashed with the Barge Gang, an operation that has a monopoly ferrying goods about Diobel's hazardous harbor. She sees Absalom as equally crippled by the Flotsam Graveyard.

**Grint Basatrel** (N male human expert/fighter): Grint is a pragmatic man in his early thirties who served as the aide to Councilor Grayrain for the past three years. His roots in Diobel are hardly so established as Grayrain's, and some locals scoff at his being considered a true representative of their town. Despite this disdain, Grint adeptly avoids making waves in politics and seems able to change policy gradually without upsetting the current powers that be.

**Lady Darchana of House Madinani** (N middle-aged female human wizard): Lady Darchana is the Second Spell Lord of Absalom, Archdean of the Arcanamirium, and a member of the Low Council. She views the Pathfinder Society favorably for its initiative in the Mendevian Crusade and appreciates polite conversation about the Pathfinders' recent accomplishments, as well as innovations in magical lore. If the PCs are shy about approaching other NPCs, she is willing to provide a brief introduction.

**Grand Ambassador Dremdhet Salhar** (N middle-aged male aristocrat): Dremdhet is a heavyset man with well-



oiled hair who represents Osirion's interests in the city. After his longtime advisor Amenopheus was dismissed by the Ruby Prince, Dremdhet's embassy has struggled to operate as efficiently as before. The ambassador once blamed this on the Society, though his ill feelings have softened. He is well versed in both local politics and the schedule for the festival, and he is full of praise for the event coordinators.

## MISSION ONE: DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR (SOVEREIGN COURT)

Faction leader Lady Gloriana Morilla's return to Absalom from Varisia a year ago coincided with the outbreak of the Fifth Mendevian Crusade, and in the face of tragedy to the north, she saw an opportunity. Taldor, the nation she has served loyally for years, has suffered a steady decline in power sustained by elaborate yet hollow displays of prestige by the ruling class. To Lady Morilla, certainly Taldor could rekindle its old glory by mustering a great army and leading the crusaders to a glorious victory in the Worldwound.

Few supported her, and many more outright mocked her proposal. Undeterred, she funded her own self-styled Army of Exploration formed of whomever she could recruit to march to Mendev. Even now the army battles demons to the north, while in Taldor Lady Morilla struggles to publicize her and her agents' accomplishments. The jeers have subsided, not because the nobility respect the faction leader but because many are too busy contemplating how to capitalize on this success and claim some of the glory for themselves.

Throughout the local festivities, Lady Gloriana Morilla is busy maintaining alliances and keeping up appearances, and the PCs likely spot her several times over the course of the adventure. Before the final day of festivities, she sends for the PCs to meet her at a teahouse in the Petals District, where she has secured a private dining room. After a team of servers has brought in an array of snacks and drinks, she checks to ensure that nobody is eavesdropping and then addresses the PCs.

"Nearly a year ago, I and several of my best agents began assembling a grand Army of Exploration to do battle in the

Worldwound and inspire others to do the same. Admittedly, we also aimed to restore some of Taldor's lost glory, if its leaders would show initiative by funding their own crusaders. Most of my peers continued to sit idly and mock our efforts, yet now that the army has proven victorious, these critics are racing to claim that they were key contributors.

"Several of Grand Prince Stavian's loudest sycophants—including the boorish Lord Minovitas—are in Absalom for the dedication of 'The Opparan Trace Commission,' which is a new guildhall intended to host Taldan business and is scheduled to open tomorrow afternoon. One of my agents serves as an aide to Lord Minovitas, and he reports that the lord commissioned the celebrated Varisian painter Amya Illanaf to create a series of portraits to hang in the grand hall. I have since learned that these are entitled 'The Heroes of the Worldwound.' The one my agent chanced to see portrayed that portly hound Lord Minovitas in pristine battle regalia with his foot planted on a dead fiend, as though he had slain it himself—all while Iomedae sings his praises in the background.

"We cannot afford to let Absalom see these, for they would perpetuate the stereotype that Taldor is a land of foppish aristocrats dedicated to their own grandiose delusions. If we let this happen, we would reward the ineptitude and indolence so common in Taldor's upper class. We would also surrender much of the credit we are due.

"I have made arrangements to sabotage the portraits, which Lord Minovitas is keeping covered until they are unveiled to the public. If you can get to the paintings first, you might secretly deface or alter them to embarrass Lord

Minovitas and send a so message to other Taldan nobles who would do the same. At present, the art waits in a warehouse in the Wise Quarter. Find a way in, do what you must, and try to avoid hurting innocents or being caught in the act; we're trying to help Taldor, not start a civil war."



LADY GLORIANA  
MORILLA

Lady Morilla knows that she is asking a difficult favor, and she is willing to contribute material resources to the PCs to help them accomplish the job. She has three *scrolls of erase* that she cautions can destroy a painting rather than alter it, which is less desirable. She also has one *scroll of fabricate* and ample paints to repaint a portrait. Third, she had enough warning to commission two unframed paintings of her own that the PCs might use to replace Lord Minovitas's gaudy art. One is a fairly realistic depiction of Lady Morilla mustering soldiers, and the other shows one of the Sovereign Court faction PCs

battling a demon. Finally, she gives the PCs a tiny silver figure of a raven (a *silver raven figurine of wondrous power*), requesting that once they have completed the sabotage, they contact her via the figurine for further instructions.

### Diplomacy (gather information) or Knowledge (nobility)

The PCs may already know about Lord Minovitas and his recent exploits. Lady Morilla may know and share some of this information if the PCs express moral objections to sabotaging the unveiling, as the lord is a callous and—by some standards—evil man.

**15+** Lord Minovitas is a Taldan nobleman who has spent much of the past year in Absalom laying the groundwork for future business endeavors, though most of that time he has spent intoxicated while wining and dining influential citizens.

**20+** His lordship is fighting a losing battle to maintain his upstanding image in Absalom as several Taldans have begun telling stories of Lord Minovitas’s habitual exploitation of his ancestral lands and its people. At least two of these rumormongers have disappeared very suddenly in the past month.

**25+** Lord Minovitas’s superiors have formally censured him on at least two occasions for “ignoble conduct,” which would qualify as felonies if performed by a commoner.

### Diplomacy (gather information) or Knowledge (local)

The PCs can scout out the warehouse and learn more about its business practices.

**15+** The warehouse in question helps to stock shops in the Wise Quarter and Foreign Quarter, so it contains a wide variety of goods. Prospective clients visit often to rent out space or order shipments of goods, which often includes a tour of the facility.

**20+** Lord Minovitas sent for a handful of Taldan guards to transport six flat crates from the warehouse, but they are yet to arrive at the guildhall. His lordship sent word that he intends to dispatch replacements soon to retrieve his possessions.

**25+** Business has been slow for the warehouse, and the owner is late in paying his employees’ wages—much to the workers’ chagrin.

### The Heist (CR 5 or CR 8)

The course of events plays out as follows. The replacement guards hired by Lord Minovitas arrive on the morning of the event to pick up the six crates, which they load into a close-topped wagon and escort from the northern end of the Foreign Quarter to the Opparan Trace Commission

building. Along the way they have to take multiple detours to get around street festivals and parades, causing them to arrive late to the unveiling. The guards carry the paintings into the building, where others hastily place the covered art on large easels on a stage at one end of the great hall. Lord Minovitas delivers a speech to commemorate the occasion and unveils the paintings to the polite applause of those in attendance.

Of course, that assumes the PCs don’t interfere in the process. The party should have at least 12 hours between their meeting with Lady Morilla and the unveiling in which to prepare spells, hastily paint their own works of art, acquire special equipment, and plan their heist. Modifying a painting requires a successful DC 15 relevant Craft, Disable Device, Profession, or Sleight of Hand check, though the GM may allow creative uses of other skills as a substitute with up to a –5 penalty. The PCs should make one check per painting, which factor into their success later in the mission. Replacing a painting with one of Lady Morilla’s canvases earns 1 Shame Point without any check required. If the PCs exceed the DC by 5 or more for at least three paintings, they earn 1 additional Shame Point. Grant the PCs half a success (rounded down; see below) for each portrait they crudely deface or destroy, as with *erase* or a failed skill check.

There are many ways in which the PCs can access the paintings, and this mission is flexible to accommodate most plans the PCs might devise. No matter the strategy, the group should need to attempt at least three relevant skill checks or participate in one combat. Unless the skill check is an opposed roll, set the base DC for success at 15 (19 in Subtier 6–7). The GM can increase or decrease this DC by up to 5 to reflect particularly challenging or simple circumstances. Ideally, at least one skill check should involve the entire party rather than just an elected spokesperson; so long as at least half of the PCs succeed, the group succeeds. Finally, a failed skill check does not necessarily mean the PCs fail. Instead, a failure should lead to additional complications, opportunities to cover up the failure, or, in more serious circumstances, the need to withdraw and try a different plan. Every two failed checks the group makes increases the DC of all subsequent checks by 1 as the NPCs grow wiser to the PCs’ plans.

The GM is at liberty to make minor adjustments to the course of events described above to introduce a few complications, as few heists ever go quite as planned; however, these complications should force the PCs to think on their feet in a fun way rather than completely ruin an otherwise good plan. For example, a worker might begin wandering in the PCs’ direction, an official might ask to see paperwork proving the PCs’ employment by Lord Minovitas, or an aide might insist on inspecting the delivered goods unless the PCs can assure him that that’s



## A. Wise Quarter Warehouse



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Flip-Mat: Warehouse

unnecessary. The following are a few likely plans, how they might play out, and what skills are likely involved.

**Impersonation:** The PCs might pretend to be the replacement guards (Bluff or Disguise) and convince the warehouse employees to let them take the paintings (Bluff)—possibly with forged papers (Linguistics). They may have to pass muster when they arrive at the council building (Bluff) or at least convince the employees that everything is in order (Diplomacy).

**Infiltration:** The PCs might gain access to the warehouse by impersonating merchants who are interested in renting out space in the warehouse (Appraise, Bluff, Disguise, Profession [merchant]), which could allow one or more of them to slip away during the tour (Climb or Stealth), find the paintings (Perception) and alter them. Although it may be tempting to send an exceptionally stealthy PC to break into the warehouse alone, the GM might introduce a few factors that

encourage the other PCs to participate (such as needing a distraction).

**Robbery:** The PCs might decide to accost the hired guards and their wagon while they're making the delivery. Finding a good ambush site (Knowledge [local] or Stealth) might grant the PCs a surprise round in combat or unsettle the guards if the PCs prefer to impersonate city officials looking for contraband (Bluff or Disguise). The guards have no deep loyalty to Taldor or Lord Minovitas, so as long as they're sufficiently scared (Intimidate), they might surrender their cargo without a fight (a more difficult Diplomacy or Intimidate check). Alternatively, the PCs might subdue the guards and steal the wagon.

**Sweet Talking:** The PCs might befriend the warehouse workers (Diplomacy) and convince them to look the other way with a significant bribe (Sleight of Hand to avoid their supervisor's notice). Several workers can then provide a small distraction as others lead the PCs to the paintings (Stealth).



**Creatures:** The guards are capable combatants and are fairly perceptive.

## Subtier 3–4 (CR 5)

### HIRED GUARDS (4)

CR 1

Guards (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex 267*)

hp 22 each

## Subtier 6–7 (CR 8)

### HIRED GUARDS (3)

CR 5

Expert bodyguards (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex 269*)

hp 59 each

**Development:** Once the PCs contact Lady Morilla with the *silver raven figurine of wondrous power*, she sends it back to them with a return message; give the PCs **Player Handout #1**. This prompts the PCs to attend the unveiling at the Opparan Trade Commission.

## The Unveiling

The PCs have a little time in which to enjoy the grand opening of the Opparan Trade Commission, a reception that involves lavish finger food, expensive drinks, and exposure to many of Foreign Quarter's and Absalom's leading citizens, including some of the NPCs described in the Very Important People section on page 6. There are several other leaders present including the personalities detailed below and any others that the GM may wish to include.

Each PC has an opportunity to interact with one or more of these NPCs depending on how quickly they completed the heist. After such interactions, so long as a PC made some effort to portray Lord Minovitas as unsympathetic or otherwise undermine his reputation, she can attempt a DC 15 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Perform (comedy or oratory) check to sway that NPC's opinion against the host. No matter how long the PCs spend chatting, each PC receives only one opportunity to attempt such a check. For each successful check, the PCs earn 1 Shame Point. For a group of only four PCs, each success instead grants one-and-a-half Shame Points (rounded down).

**Senator Augustyn Naran of Andoran:** Senator Augustyn is a prominent member of a banking family and travels to Absalom to see and be seen when not needed in Almas. He is an obese man in his late sixties, and constantly sweats in Absalom's midday heat. This makes him quite irritable and open to taking out his frustration on easy targets.

**Lady Vaelia of House Wintermark:** Lady Vaelia is venerable and frail, walking with the aid of an ebony cane while wearing a worn falcata (her late husband's blade) at her side. She is vehemently against everything Qadiran,

and although she believes Taldor can do no wrong, she is open to criticizing her peers whenever they fail in Taldor's name.

**Development:** Once each PC has had an opportunity to make a check, Lord Minovitas takes to the stage as three trumpeters play a fanfare to call attention to him. He then delivers a prepared speech that precedes his unveiling of the paintings.

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"Welcome esteemed colleagues and honored guests. On this historic day, the glorious Opparan Trade Commission is open for business! But it is not just commerce that we commemorate today; we also recognize the valor of several of the greatest heroes of our time who have fought in Mendev's recent crusade and pushed back the demon threat so that others might live in peace. Yet this was not accomplished alone, and in an alliance of nations we found our strength. With the establishment of this facility here in Absalom, the Commission hopes to continue this alliance and further promote fair and equitable trade to the benefit of all.

"With great honor, I dedicate this embassy to its founding members, whose esteemed accomplishments shall be forever commemorated by the work of the world-renowned painter Amya Illanaf!"

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With that, Lord Minovitas gestures dramatically as if expecting someone to unveil the paintings for him. When that fails, he strides over to the first painting and theatrically whips off its cover while smiling to the audience. He repeats the action with several other paintings before realizing that the art has been altered. Furious, he unveils the other paintings. Depending on how many Shame Points the PCs accumulated and the crowd's reaction, he either regains some composure before concluding the presentation, or he panics and ineffectively tries to calm the crowd before retreating from the stage. Tally the number of Shame Points to determine how the crowd reacts.

**3 or Fewer:** The crowd responds excitedly to the speech and sympathetically applauds when the paintings are unveiled.

**4–7:** The crowd is unimpressed by the speech and chuckles at Minovitas's expense.

**8–10:** The crowd heckles Minovitas during his speech (causing him to stutter and lose his place) and jeers maliciously when the paintings are revealed.

**11–13:** The crowd mercilessly heckles Minovitas and roars in disapproving amusement at the paintings.

## Concluding the Act

In the aftermath, Lady Morilla gathers the PCs together, retrieves her *silver raven figurine of wondrous power*, and shares her vision of her faction's future.



"I'm appalled and disappointed that the same nobles who once opposed us now seek to steal our glory by claiming that creating the army was their idea. While I thank you for today's efforts to rebuke them, I fear they'll simply continue to perpetrate this fraud back in Taldor. Worse, should they succeed, it will only reinforce the 'do nothing' nobility and be another nail in Taldor's coffin. And if it's a coffin they're building, I refuse to be buried with them.

"This is not unique to Taldor, yet in other lands I have met nobles who have their people's needs in mind and greater vision of how to accomplish their goals. Rarely are these members of royal families, but many have their respective monarchs' ears. Rather than recreate the Taldan empire of old, we shall promote an enlightened aristocracy that promotes the virtues of strong, wise governance. I do not expect a response now, but I invite you to join me in this endeavor."

**Developments:** During the PCs' meeting with Lady Morilla, there is a quiet knock on the door followed by a woman saying, "My lady sends her thanks." A sealed missive then slides under the door. The PCs might identify the seal as that of Princess Eutropia of Taldor with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (nobility) before Lady Morilla retrieves the note, stores it for later, and politely redirects any questions about it to other topics.

## MISSION TWO: A MATTER OF VENDETTA (THE EXCHANGE)

Unlike other missions, it's important this mission begin in the evening or at night.

Two years ago, Guaril Karela embarked on an aggressive campaign to unite the Varisian Sczarni families under his leadership. Through honeyed words, classic arm-twisting, and merciless maneuvers, he effectively succeeded. However, his tactics made him many enemies, including the survivors of several of the families that he crushed. Months ago, Sczarni faction PCs learned that some of these enemies had banded together to assassinate Guaril Karela and end what they perceive as a tyrannical takeover. Guaril directed his resources to neutralizing this threat, though every time his agents seem to corner his enemies, the Gaels (a family of his most persistent foes) have proven elusive. After spending the better part of a year in hiding, the faction leader is

tired of playing cat and mouse and longs to resolve the matter once and for all.

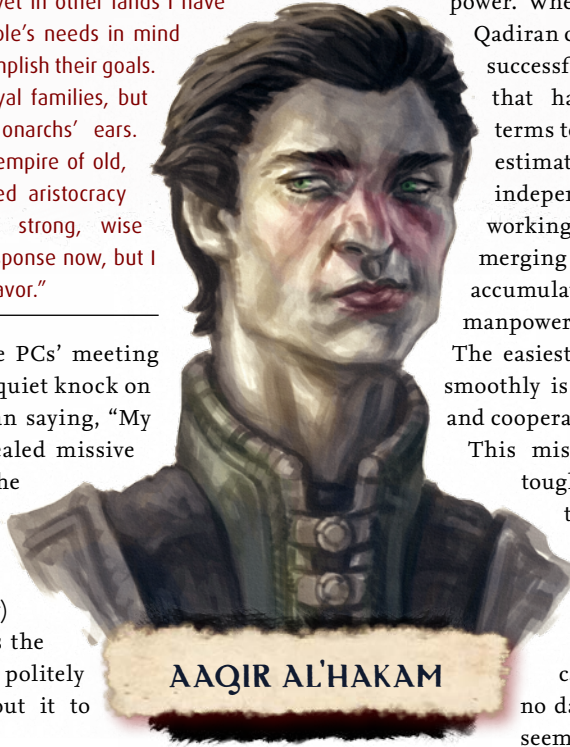
From the perspective of Aaqir al'Hakam, Guaril Karela would make an excellent business partner. Several years ago, the Qadira faction repeatedly encountered difficulties in negotiating trade deals in Varisia, in part because the locals were unimpressed by—sometimes even distrustful of—such a self-important mercantile power. When Aaqir began downplaying his Qadiran connections, his agents were more successful in dealing with organizations that had previously denied favorable terms to the satrapy. In Aaqir al'Hakam's estimation, conducting business as an independent has proven better than working as an extension of Qadira. By merging his assets with Guaril's, Aaqir can accumulate enough capital, support, and manpower to make his business a success. The easiest way to ensure the merger goes smoothly is to ensure Guaril remains alive and cooperative.

This mission begins when two Sczarni toughs (more dressed for a shakedown than a formal event) seek out the PCs. Slightly out of breath and visibly on edge, they request the PCs follow them to a secure location where they can speak safely. The PCs are in no danger from these two, but if they seem threatened or skeptical, the toughs surrender their weapons as a sign of good faith. They lead the PCs through Absalom, doubling back on their path and taking several snaking turns to a brightly colored ledge wagon parked in the Docks district only a few blocks from the Pickled Imp. The PCs' escorts signal to several other Sczarni guarding the wagon as well as to a few street vendors positioned on opposite ends of the block (lookouts, as the Sczarni explain).

Once cleared to approach, the PCs can enter the wagon. The interior is dimly lit by small brass lamps that spread the faint odor of lamp oil, only partly masked by incense. The only other occupant is faction leader Aaqir al'Hakam, who makes an effort of standing to greet the PCs in the low-ceilinged wagon.

"I suppose you're surprised to see me? Sit. I wish I could say I have called you here for a more celebratory reason, but such isn't the case. We have a desperate situation on our hands: Guaril Karela is missing.

"Lately the Sczarni leader and I have discussed a deal that



AAQIR AL'HAKAM

might be in both our organizations' interest, and I had hoped to finalize more of the terms tonight. However, several individuals wearing Qadiran clothing and wielding long blades broke into the Pickled Imp, Guaril's business, tried to set it ablaze, and kidnapped the proprietor—a Szarni operative who has spent the last month disguised as Guaril to mislead his enemies. Despite their appearance, I have no connection to these vandals. In fact, they may even have been attempting to implicate me and eliminate yet another one of Guaril's friends.

"Apparently Guaril did not take the news lightly, and I've been informed that he grabbed his weapons, ordered all but two of his subordinates to stay behind, and set off after the criminals. It seems this was just one of many contingencies he had prepared, for he had written instructions ready. It seems that part of the plan," he notes aloud as he extends a sealed missive, "Involved recruiting your help in particular.

"I suspect that the Gael family is behind this, and Guaril sees this as an opportunity to finally do in the rivals who have worked to undermine and kill him for the past year. This has the potential to be very dangerous, but apparently he wanted you to be present for whatever he has planned."

Give the players **Player Handout #2**, which is a missive sealed with Guaril's personal mark. This is a cryptic set of instructions for how to reach Guaril's prepared battleground, where he intends to lure his Gael enemies. See the "Finding Guaril" section below for details about what the lines mean and how to reach that location. The PCs may have questions for Aaqir al'Hakam, and he can also provide some information to help them interpret the first few lines of the instructions if the players are struggling. The following are likely questions and his answers, some of which are based off lines in the handout.

**Why should we trust you?** "Guaril has entrusted me with his safety twice before, and he is too close of a friend and business associate for me to endanger his life."

**Will you accompany us?** "I have attempted to track Guaril with magic to no avail, but I will continue to do so from here. Should I locate him, I will contact you."

**Why did Guaril behave so recklessly?** "I understand Guaril devised numerous contingencies that would help him survive an attack by the Gael family, then hit them where it hurts. I imagine he has lured them to a prepared battlefield somewhere in Absalom."

**What is Beldren's Bluff?** "That's in the Precipice Quarter, which collapsed into the water years ago. I believe its one of the low hills there is known as Beldren's Bluff."

**Can we borrow a boat?** "Guaril's friends keep several small boats, and I can request they lend you one."

## Finding Guaril

While trying to find Guaril, the PCs must attempt several skill or ability checks to follow the faction leader's directions and efficiently navigate the Flotsam Graveyard—the graveyard of half-sunken ships skirting Absalom's harbor. The PCs should be able to find Guaril even if they fail these checks, but each failure means the PCs are delayed more, and Guaril's condition is worse by the time they arrive.

Interpreting the poem requires a very literal translation of each verse. Guaril designed it to work much like orienteering from a map, in that each successive reference point relies on the previous reference point.

The first two lines refer to the Precipice Quarter, where if the PCs look due west, they can see the Puddles District and Fort Tempest, the latter which the poem calls the "storm of stone." It is possible to use a map to make these conclusions without actually traveling to the Precipice Quarter.

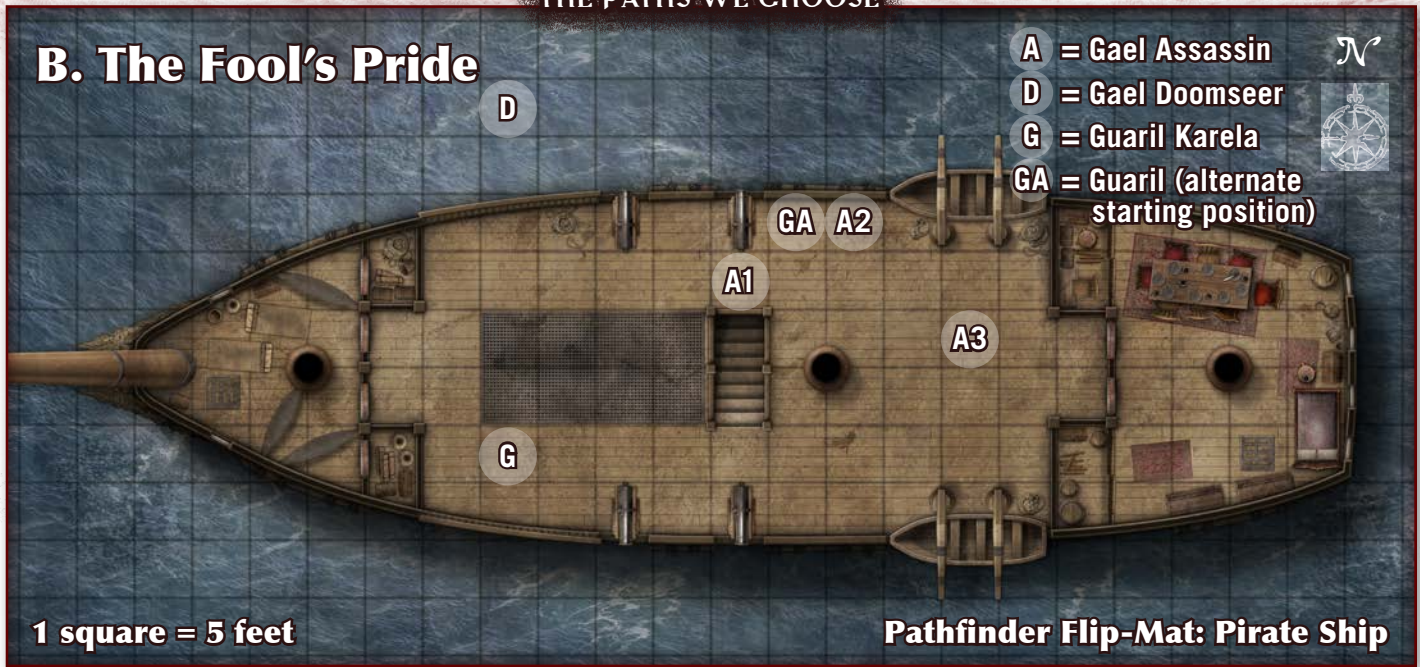
Just south of Fort Tempest are the partially submerged remains of the *Silver Wren*, a ship whose painted figurehead remains above water and in fairly good shape. From there the PCs can spot a line of six dark ships collectively known as The Black Whale (an off-shore prison maintained by the city) with a successful DC 20 Perception check. If the PCs climb up to the crow's nest, they find a badly weathered spyglass that makes it easier to scan the Flotsam Graveyard and grants them a +5 circumstance bonus on the check. Alternatively, a PC can pinpoint the location with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (local) check. These are the six black whales referenced in the poem, and the light refers to the lighthouse on Pilot Island (no check needed to see it). Failing the skill check means that the PCs take an especially long time finding the right landmarks, giving the Gaels more time to harry Guaril.

Approximately halfway between the lighthouse and The Black Whale is a capsized vessel whose figurehead is a woman with a flowing gown, her mouth open as if she were drowning. This is the "drowning maiden without a name," and by following her gaze, the PCs can identify *The Fool's Pride*, a great flat lumber barge, as Guaril's hideout.

While the PCs are traveling about the Flotsam Graveyard, each PC must succeed at a DC 16 Stealth check to avoid the notice of the Gael Doomseer's raven familiar. If at least half of the PCs succeed, the raven fails to spot them as it glides over the wreckage; otherwise it notes their approach and reports back to its master. This counts as a failed skill check for this encounter and urges the Gaels to fight harder to kill Guaril before his reinforcements arrive. In addition, either one PC can attempt a DC 15 Profession (sailor) check or all of the PCs can attempt DC 15 Strength checks to pilot their boat efficiently through the wreckage. If the Profession check



## B. The Fool's Pride



fails, or fewer than half of the PCs succeed at the Strength checks, this counts as a failed skill check.

If the players are struggling to interpret the poem and are unlikely to resolve this part of the mission within 15 minutes, Aaqir al'Hakam contacts them by means of *whispering wind* and informs them that he has located Guaril Karela on *The Fool's Pride*. Allow the PCs to reach the barge without further skill checks, counting any remaining checks as failures.

### B. The Fool's Pride (CR 6 or CR 9)

*The Fool's Pride* once belonged to the rebellious son of a blacksmith, naming the ship after his father's favorite criticism of the son's desire to ply the dangerous waters. The vessel sank within a year after veering too close to the Flotsam Graveyard during rough weather, and there it has remained for the past several years. Two months ago, Guaril began outfitting the ship with traps, bait, and other contingencies to lure his enemies here, so he might kill them where Absalom authorities are unlikely to ask questions. By the time the PCs arrive, Guaril has already killed a dozen Gael assailants who arrived in two waves. During these attacks, they triggered his traps and fell to his ambushes, leaving several bodies lying across the deck and many more slowly sinking where Guaril pushed them overboard.

By the time the PCs arrive, it is night, and the Flotsam Graveyard is dark. The map assumes that the PCs are approaching from the south, but if they approach from the north, flip the starting positions so that the assassins begin on the far side of the ship.

**Creatures:** The number of assassins on the ship and where Guaril is depend on how many of the three skill checks (finding the Black Whale, piloting the boat,

and avoiding notice) the PCs failed in reaching *The Fool's Pride*. If the PCs failed no checks, Guaril is in the marked starting position with 30 hit points, and the Gael assailants clamber on board on the opposite side of the ship 1 round after the PCs arrive. If the PCs failed one check, PCs and the Gaels arrive simultaneously. If the PCs failed two or more checks, Guaril and the Gaels are already fighting and begin in the positions marked on the map (use the alternate starting position for Guaril). Finally, if the PCs fail all three checks, Guaril has only 15 hit points remaining.

Just after dealing with the first band of Sczarni, Guaril tipped several gallons of fish guts overboard to attract sharks. Instead of sharks, this chum has lured several devilfish that arrive soon after the fighting begins, turning the combat into a three-sided melee. Ideally, the devilfish act as a balancing factor, allowing the GM to target either side to make the fight a little more even and Guaril's survival a little more uncertain.

The encounter's overall CR takes into account the staggered arrival of enemies, their tactics, and Guaril Karela's assistance.

### All Subtiers

#### GUARIL KARELA

**CR 10**

Human rogue 11

CN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +9; **Senses** Perception +13

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +5 Dex)

**hp** 75 (11d8+22)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +13, **Will** +5



## PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO

### SCALING THE FOOL'S PRIDE

Make the following changes to accommodate a group of only four PCs.

**Subtier 3–4:** Remove one Gael assassin from the encounter, and give one devilfish the young simple template.

**Subtier 6–7:** Remove one Gael assassin from the encounter, and remove the advanced simple template from one devilfish.

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** +1 *dagger* +14/+9 (1d4+1/19–20)

**Ranged** dagger +13/+8 (1d4/19–20)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +6d6

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 10, **Dex** 20, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +13 (+15 dirty trick); **CMD** 23 (25 vs. dirty trick)

**Feats** Agile Maneuvers, Combat Expertise, Deceitful, Deft

Hands, Improved Dirty Trick<sup>APG</sup>, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +19 (+24 when jumping), Bluff +20, Climb +8, Diplomacy +16, Disable Device +28, Disguise +12, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (local) +12, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +23, Stealth +19, Swim +8

**Languages** Common, Shoanti, Tien, Varisian

**SQ** rogue talents (bleeding attack +6, charmer<sup>APG</sup>, finesse rogue, honeyed words<sup>APG</sup>, skill mastery [Acrobatics, Perception, Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, Stealth]), trapfinding +5

**Gear** +2 *studded leather*, +1 *dagger*, daggers (2), *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, *boots of striding and springing*, sunrod (2), disguise kit, mwk thieves' tools

### Subtier 3–4 (CR 7)

#### DEVILFISH (2)

CR 4

**hp** 42 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 88)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The devilfish arrive and join the combat at the beginning of the second round of combat.

**During Combat** The devilfish attack any creature in reach, grabbing a target, biting it, and tossing incapacitated victims aside to be consumed later.

**Morale** The devilfish wish to inflict pain and secure a meal, but one flees if reduced to 8 or fewer hp.

#### Gael Assassin (3)

CR 2

Human ranger 2/rogue 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +3; **Senses** Perception +6

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex)

**hp** 23 (3 HD; 2d10+1d8+4)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *kukri* +4 (1d4+3/18–20), +1 *kukri* +4 (1d4+2/18–20) or +1 *kukri* +6 (1d4+3/18–20)

**Ranged** shortbow +5 (1d6/x3)

**Special Attacks** combat style (two-weapon), favored enemy (humans +2), sneak attack +1d6

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The assassins apply their *oil of light* and *oils of magic weapon* to their kukris before attacking. These enhancements are noted in their stat block.

**During Combat** The assassins' aim is to eliminate Guaril Karela, and they take moderate risks to target him rather than the PCs.

**Morale** The Gaels initiated this fight knowing that Guaril's death is their only means of victory. They fight to the death.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Iron Will, Skill Focus (Stealth), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (kukri)

**Skills** Acrobatics +8, Appraise +5, Bluff +4, Climb +6, Diplomacy +3, Disable Device +7, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +6, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +11, Survival +5, Swim +7, Use Magic Device +3

**Languages** Common, Skald, Varisian

**SQ** track +1, wild empathy +1, trapfinding +1

**Combat Gear** *oil of light*, *oil of magic weapon* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *smokestick*; **Other Gear** *studded leather*, mwk kukris (2), *elixir of swimming*, and 137 gp

#### Gael Doomseer

CR 4

Female diviner 5

LE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +4; **Senses** Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 35 (5d6+15)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** quarterstaff +1 (1d6–1)

**Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +9) 7/day—diviner's fortune (+2)

**Diviner Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; concentration +9)

3rd—*fly*, *invisibility sphere*, extended see *invisibility*  
2nd—*glitterdust* (DC 16), *locate object*, *scare* (DC 16),



## THE PATHS WE CHOOSE

*scorching ray*

1st—*grease* (DC 15), *hydraulic push*<sup>APG</sup>, *touch of gracelessness*<sup>APG</sup> (DC 15), *true strike*, *vanish*<sup>APG</sup>

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *message*, *read magic*

**Opposition Schools** abjuration, enchantment

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The doomseer casts extended *see invisibility*, *fly*, and *invisibility sphere* to hide as many of her allies as possible.

**During Combat** The doomseer uses her spells to hamper Guaril's allies and attack the faction leader.

**Morale** The Gaels initiated this fight knowing that Guaril's death is their only means of victory. The doomseer fights to the death.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

**Feats** Arcane Armor Training, Combat Casting, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

**Skills** Appraise +10, Craft (alchemy) +12, Fly +10, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Spellcraft +12

**Languages** Common

**SQ** arcane bond (raven), forewarned

**Gear** leather armor, quarterstaff, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, 40 gp

## Subtier 6–7 (CR 10)

### GAEL ASSASSIN (3)

CR 4

Male or female ranger 2/rogue 3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +8; **Senses** Perception +7

### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +4 Dex)

**hp** 38 (5 HD; 2d10+3d8+10)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +3

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, trap sense +1

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *kukri* +8 (1d4+3/18–20), +1 *kukri* +8 (1d4+2/18–20) or

+1 *kukri* +10 (1d4+3/18–20)

**Ranged** shortbow +8 (1d6/×3)

**Special Attacks** combat style (two-weapon), favored enemy (humans +2), sneak attack +2d6

### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Stealth), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (kukri)

**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Appraise +5, Bluff +5, Climb +9, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +10, Intimidate +6,

Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +7, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +15, Survival +7, Swim +9, Use Magic Device +4

**Languages** Common, Skald, Varisian

**SQ** rogue talents (finesse rogue), track +1, trapfinding +1, wild empathy +1

**Combat Gear** *elixir of swimming*, *oil of light*, *oil of magic weapon* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *smokestick* (3); **Other Gear** *boots of the cat*<sup>ME</sup>, +1 *studded leather*, mwk *kukris* (2), 49 gp

### GAEL DOOMSEER

CR 8

Human diviner 9

LE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +10; **Senses** Perception +1

### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 84 (9d6+1d10+45)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8

**DR** 10/adamantine (90 points)

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** quarterstaff +3 (1d6–1)

**Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th; concentration +14) 8/day—diviner's fortune (+4)

**Diviner Spells Prepared** (CL 9th; concentration +14)

5th—*cone of cold* (DC 20), *prying eyes*, *suffocation*<sup>APG</sup> (DC 20)

4th—*dimensional anchor*, *enervation*, *locate creature*, *stoneskin*

3rd—*dispel magic*, *fly*, *haste*, *invisibility sphere*, extended





see invisibility\*

2nd—*false life*, *glitterdust* (DC 17), *locate object*, *mirror image*, *scare* (DC 17), *scorching ray*

1st—*grease* (DC 16), *hydraulic push*<sup>APG</sup> (2), *magic missile* (2), *touch of gracelessness*<sup>APG</sup> (DC 16), *true strike*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *message*, *read magic*

**Opposition Schools** abjuration, enchantment

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** The doomseer casts extended *see invisibility*, *false life*, *fly*, *stoneskin*, and *invisibility sphere* to hide as many of her allies as possible.

**During Combat** The doomseer uses her spells to hamper Guaril’s allies and attack the faction leader.

**Morale** The Gaels initiated this fight knowing that Guaril’s death is their only means of victory. The doomseer fights to the death.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 20, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Arcane Armor Training, Combat Casting, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Light Armor Proficiency, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

**Skills** Appraise +17, Craft (alchemy) +17, Fly +14, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (dungeoneering, history, local, nature, nobility, and planes) +11, Spellcraft +17

**Languages** Common, Giant, Goblin, Infernal, Skald, Tien, Varisian

**SQ** arcane bond (raven), forewarned, scrying adept

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** +1 mithral chain shirt, quarterstaff, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, *headband of vast intelligence* +2, diamond dust (250 gp)

**ADVANCED DEVILFISH (2)**

**CR 5**

**hp** 52 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 88, 292)

**Concluding the Mission**

If Guaril survives the encounter, he takes a few seconds to catch his breath, smooth his mustache, and confirms that there are no other combatants before thanking the PCs.

“Every investment is a gamble, and it seems this paid off—barely. I assume that sly fox Aaqir told you about the plan, yes? Let your enemies see you in a moment of weakness, allow them to strike and taste blood, then lure them toward a trap while they think they’re winning. I, ah,” he motions noncommittally

toward some of the blood staining the deck, “think I may have let them taste too much blood tonight. You can imagine how thrilled Uncle Guaril is that a few of his heavily armed friends happened to be in the neighborhood in his time of need,” he remarks while flashing a knowing smile.

“Speaking of deals and mutual backscratching, you should know that Aaqir and I have nearly finished one to help us perform the other. I got a little too ambitious in Varisia and made a few enemies we didn’t intend to unleash, and that’s made staying in business as we are... less than wise. Fortunately, Aaqir’s looking for talent like ours, and I’m not really in a position to say no.

“That’s not to say I’m breaking up the family business—hardly the case. This is just a mutually beneficial marriage of two honest enterprises in which everyone gets a juicy cut—so long as we play nice with our proverbial in-laws. Be prepared to be even more upstanding than usual, but be ready to do things the old fashioned way. This is the start of something big.”



GUARIL KARELA

**MISSION THREE: SPAWN OF THE SPIRE (GRAND LODGE)**

Over a year ago, the Pathfinder Society learned that an enemy wizard named Tancred Desimire had entered Bonekeep, one of siege towers outside Absalom. Suspecting that Desimire had found some weapon within to use against the Society, several teams of highly skilled agents entered the site to identify what the conjurer had discovered. Several Pathfinders died during the brief exploration, but they recovered fabulous treasures as well as clues as to what the tower’s creator may have attempted before being defeated centuries earlier.

Of special note were biological samples taken from slain creatures, in which Society alchemists identified several unique pathogens that they isolated for further study. The researchers insisted on putting the returning agents in quarantine to ensure that the disease would not spread, and there they remained for several days before they began to show symptoms such as ugly boils. This morning, the disease took an unexpected turn for the worse. Without warning, the victims went mad, attacked the researchers, and destroyed alchemical equipment, resulting in an explosion that incapacitated the infected and spattered the room—and Dalva Aiger, the surviving alchemist—with disease-bearing bits of



flesh. When Dalva recovered, she tried to flee the lab and seek a healer, but by then the fast-acting disease had already begun to warp her judgment and senses. She viciously attacked the first person she saw, and the shocked bystanders succeeded in driving her back into the lab and barricaded the door. Immediately they sought capable agents to help.

The mission begins when Ambrus Valsin asks the PCs to join him in speaking with several dozen dignitaries who have joined in the celebrations and are interested in knowing more about the Society and its role in Absalom. Valsin requests the PCs behave themselves and try to put on a pleasant face when dealing with these visitors, as every good word makes it easier for the Society to operate in distant lands. This is a brief opportunity for the PCs to roleplay as influential merchants, lesser nobles, and well-dressed ambassadors ask them questions about their recent exploits. Several minutes into the conversations, a terrified Pathfinder enters the room in a panic. Valsin spots the man and signals to the PCs to handle the matter, including a Pathfinder hand sign that expresses “and keep it quiet.” Hoping to draw the visitors’ attention away from the PCs and the recent arrival, Valsin announces that he has brought several relics recovered over the past year to show off, and the crowd excitedly gravitates in his direction. If one or more PCs insist on staying with him, Valsin fixes her with a steely glare, gives a forced, overly friendly smile, and inquires why she doesn’t have business to handle elsewhere—hinting that the PC should really be addressing the emergency.

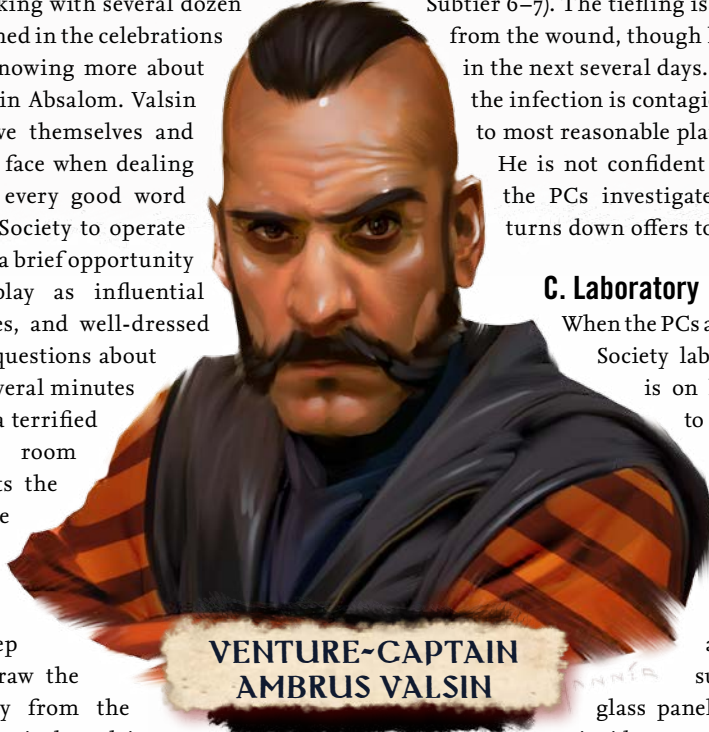
The frightened agent is **Kalkuin** (NG tiefling human bard 1/fighter 1), and he ushers the PCs into a side room before explaining the situation.

“There aren’t many agents around the Grand Lodge, so when I heard an explosion and ran to investigate, I was the first one there. It seems something bad happened in one of the laboratories—really bad. One of the researchers stumbled out all covered in boils and blood, and when I tried to lend him an arm, he bit me and tried to tear out my throat! It was all I could do to fend him off, and two others helped me drive him back into the lab and barricade the door.”

He pulls back a tattered sleeve to reveal a bite wound that is festering as though days old, insisting, “This isn’t part of my

heritage, no matter what you think. I think it’s some kind of infection, and I intend to find a cleric as soon as possible. In the meantime, we have agents in trouble at the lodge. Somebody’s gotta help them!”

A PC examining Kalkuin’s wound can partially diagnose the infection as a necromantic, flesh-eating disease with a successful DC 17 Heal check (DC 19 in Subtier 6–7). The tiefling is not in immediate danger from the wound, though he could die if not treated in the next several days. It is also unclear whether the infection is contagious, and Kalkuin submits to most reasonable plans to quarantine himself. He is not confident about his ability to help the PCs investigate the laboratory, and he turns down offers to accompany the PCs.



### C. Laboratory

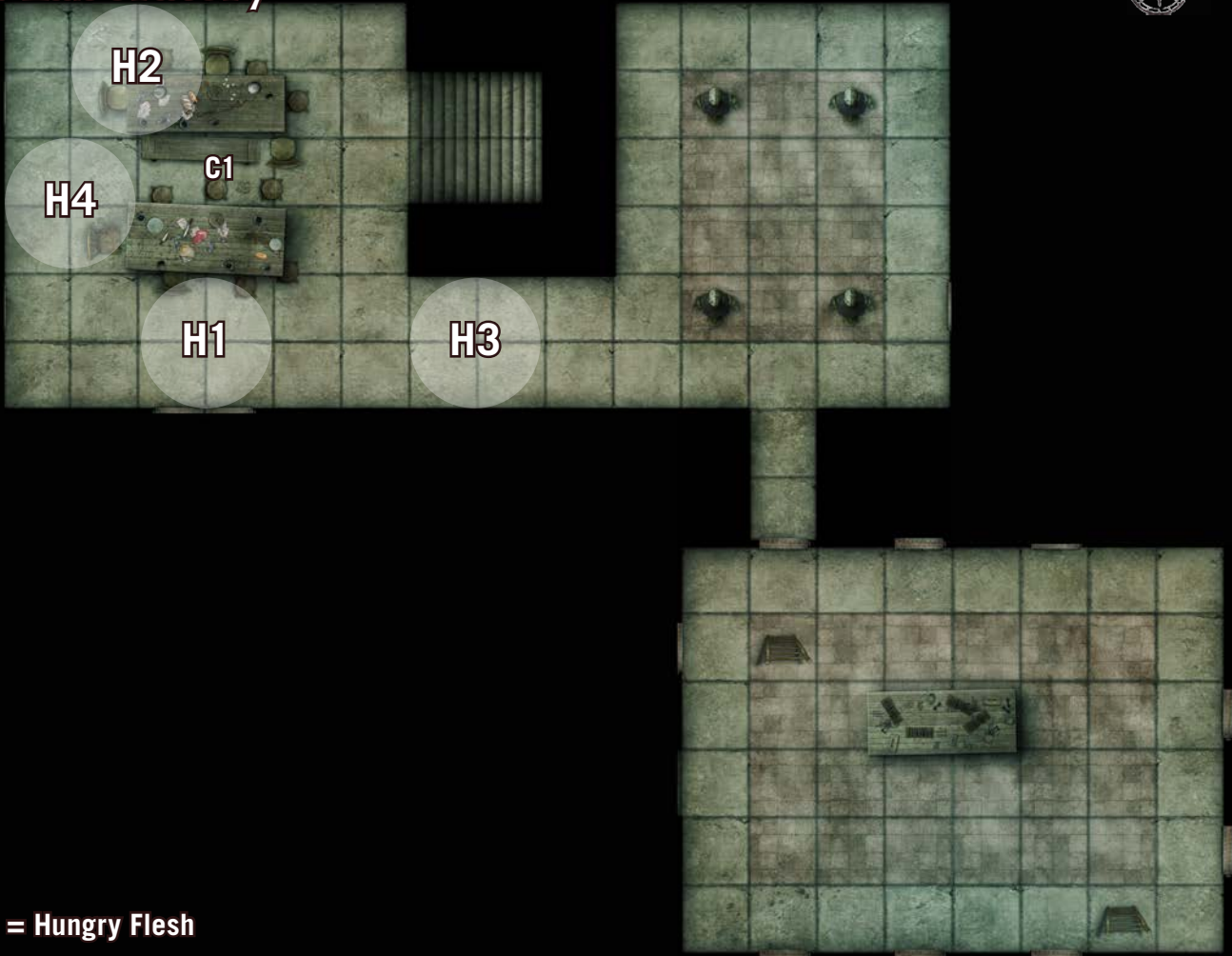
When the PCs arrive at the entrance to the Society laboratory, a groundskeeper is on hand to give them a key to open the thick wooden door reinforced with thick metal plates. The door opens to a hallway with several preparation rooms used to concoct various items used in alchemical research. Each such room’s door has a glass panel that allows one to look inside. Most of the rooms show signs of hasty vandalism from when Dalva burst in, overturned a few tables, and then left to cause mayhem elsewhere. With a successful DC 15 Craft (alchemy) check or DC 20 Perception check, the PCs can find either a flask of acid or a flask of alchemist’s fire (determined randomly). For every 5 points by which the PCs exceed this check, they find one additional flask.

A set of stairs at the end of the hall leads to a lower level. These are sticky with an unfamiliar substance that, with a successful DC 13 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check, a PC can recognize as a slime trail like that left by a large slug or ooze. This is the slime trail of the hungry flesh in area C1, but it has dried enough that it is no longer slippery.

### C1. Hungry Flesh (CR 5 or CR 8)

This entire area is slick with fresh slime left as the hungry flesh slithers about. Treat the entire area past the stairs as though it were under the effects of a *grease* spell that can transmit tumor infestation on contact for the next 5 rounds after the PCs arrive (DC 17 in Subtier 3–4,

## C. Laboratory



**H** = Hungry Flesh  
**1 square = 5 feet**

**Pathfinder Map Pack: Thieves' Guild**

DC 19 in Subtier 6–7); see the hungry flesh slime trail ability for more details.

There are doors that lead to other branches of the laboratory, but this mission only explores a few rooms. The reinforced wooden doors leading to unmapped areas are locked with good locks.

**Creature:** Typically tumor infestation would not decompose flesh so quickly, but the virulence of the disease found in Bonekeep and the accidental introduction of particular alchemical agents have accelerated its progress and spawned hungry flesh in just an hour. They attack a few seconds after registering that there is living prey in the area.

### Subtier 3–4 (CR 5)

**HUNGRY FLESH (2)** **CR 3**  
 hp 47 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 152)

### Subtier 3–4 (CR 8)

**ADVANCED HUNGRY FLESH (4)** **CR 4**  
 hp 57 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 152, 288)

### C2. Combat Range

This room contains four armored mannequins that each show signs of energy damage, such as scorch marks, fracturing from cold, and corrosion from acid. When developing prototypes for new alchemical weapons, researchers often test early formulae against these dummies to study the weapons' effects.

### C3. Inner Laboratory (CR 6 or CR 9)

Racks of surgical tools line the walls of this room, which contains only a single operating table. Steel shutters peer



## THE PATHS WE CHOOSE

down from more than ten feet above the floor. The floor is a mess of broken glassware and dark stains.

This is a dissection room with numerous observation windows from which other researchers might watch an experiment in progress—and seal the apertures in case of an emergency. The only door is on the west wall and leads to area C2.

**Creature:** Dalva Aiger staggers about here, alone and confused. The tumor infestation has responded to her differently due to her extensive exposure to alchemical substances, and rather than breaking down her flesh, it has attacked her nervous system. The result is that her brain interprets the signals from her sensory organs in unpredictable ways, causing her to hallucinate and see the PCs as fantastically aberrant enemies. In addition, several of her glands have begun producing a substance similar to her mutagen. Although this is to her short-term advantage, her body is slowly breaking down to sustain the process. Finally, her bite is able to transmit her infection. Collectively, these modifications increase her Challenge Rating by 1.



DALVA AIGER

### Subtier 3–4 (APL 6)

DALVA AIGER	CR 6
Female human alchemist 6 ( <i>Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide</i> 26)	
LN Medium humanoid (human)	
<b>Init</b> +6; <b>Senses</b> Perception +10	
<b>DEFENSE</b>	
<b>AC</b> 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +2 Dex)	
<b>hp</b> 42 (6d8+12)	
<b>Fort</b> +5, <b>Ref</b> +7, <b>Will</b> +3; +4 vs. poison	
<b>OFFENSE</b>	
<b>Speed</b> 30 ft.	
<b>Melee</b> mwk sickle +7 (1d6+2), bite +1 (1d2+1 plus disease)	
<b>Special Attacks</b> bomb 9/day (3d6+3 fire, DC 16), disease	
<b>Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 6th)</b>	
2nd— <i>barkskin</i> , <i>fire breath</i> <sup>APG</sup> (DC 15), <i>spider climb</i> , <i>vomit swarm</i> <sup>APG</sup>	
1st— <i>expeditious retreat</i> , <i>jump</i> , <i>keen senses</i> <sup>APG</sup> , <i>reduce person</i> , <i>stone fist</i> <sup>APG</sup>	
<b>TACTICS</b>	
<b>During Combat</b> Dalva hides under the operating table to	

### SCALING HUNGRY FLESH

Make the following changes to accommodate a group of only four PCs.

**Subtier 3–4:** The hungry flesh are particularly weak after their accelerated growth. Reduce their maximum hit points by 10, and reduce the save DC of their slime trail ability by 3.

**Subtier 6–7:** Remove one advanced hungry flesh from the encounter.

escape the ghastly specters she thinks are flitting about the room. If she hears combat in area C1, she consumes her extracts of *barkskin*, *spider climb*, and *jump* in that order.

**During Combat** Dalva activates her mutagen at the beginning of combat and viciously attacks anyone in sight. She uses her exceptional mobility to leap from combat to rain bombs upon the PCs. Despite her altered mental state, she maintains knowledge of her equipment and class abilities along with considerable cunning.

**Morale** Dalva fights until killed or subdued.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 17, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18

**Feats** Brew Potion, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Point-Blank Shot, Throw Anything, Toughness

**Skills** Appraise +9, Craft (alchemy) +12, Disable Device +9, Heal +10, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Perception +10, Sleight of Hand +9, Spellcraft +10, Survival +10, Use Magic Device +8

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Osiriani, Undercommon  
**SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +6, identify potions), mutagen (+4/–2, +2 natural, 60 minutes), discoveries (feral mutagen, shock bomb, smoke bomb), mutated infestation, poison use, swift alchemy, swift poisoning

**Gear** +2 *studded leather*, mwk sickle, 169 gp

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Disease (Ex)** Tumor Infestation: Injury; save Fort DC 17; onset 1 minute; frequency 1/day; effect 1d2 Con and 1d2 Cha; cure 2 consecutive saves. Anyone who dies from tumor infestation turns into a hungry flesh 1d4 hours later.

**Mutated Infestation (Ex)** Dalva's tumor infestation has caused her body to begin producing its own mutagen, allowing her to "consume" her mutagen as a swift action without actually drinking it or provoking an attack of opportunity. It takes 4 hours for her body to create a new reserve of mutagen, and Dalva's present reserve is a Strength mutagen.

## PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO

### SCALING THE INNER LABORATORY

To accommodate a group of only four PCs, Dalva has already expended any extracts of *barkskin*, *haste*, and *vomit swarm* in addition to all but 3 of her bombs for the day.

### Subtier 6–7 (APL 9)

#### DALVA AIGER

**CR 9**

Female human alchemist 9

CN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +6; **Senses** Perception +13

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**DEFENSE****AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +2 Dex)**hp** 62 (9d8+18)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6; +6 vs. poison

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**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** +1 *sickle* +9/+4 (1d6+1), bite +3 (1d6)**Special Attacks** bomb 13/day (5d6+4 fire, DC 18)**Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 9th)**3rd—*bloodhound*<sup>APG</sup>, *gaseous form*, *haste*2nd—*barkskin*, *fire breath*<sup>APG</sup> (DC 16), *invisibility*, *spider climb*, *vomit swarm*<sup>APG</sup>1st—*expeditious retreat*, *jump*, *keen senses*<sup>APG</sup>, *reduce person* (DC 15), *shield*, *stone fist*<sup>APG</sup>

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**TACTICS**

**During Combat** Dalva hides under the operating table to escape the ghastly haunts she thinks are flitting about the room. If she hears combat in area **C1**, she consumes her extracts of *barkskin*, *haste*, *spider climb*, *invisibility*, *jump*, and *shield* in that order.

**During Combat** Dalva activates her mutagen at the beginning of combat and viciously attacks anyone in sight. She uses her exceptional mobility to leap from combat to rain bombs upon the PCs. Despite her altered mental state, she maintains knowledge of her equipment and class abilities along with considerable cunning.

**Morale** Dalva fights until killed or subdued.

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**STATISTICS****Str** 14, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +6; CMB +8 (+10 grapple); CMD 20 (22 vs. grapple)**Feats** Brew Potion, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Throw Anything, Toughness**Skills** Appraise +13, Craft (alchemy) +16, Disable Device +14, Heal +13, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Perception +13, Sleight of Hand +11, Spellcraft +16, Survival +13, Use Magic Device +11**Languages** Common, Draconic, Kelish, Osiriani, Undercommon**SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +9, identify potions), mutagen (+4/-2, +2 natural, 90 minutes), discoveries (feral mutagen, shock bomb, smoke bomb), psychosis, poison use, swift

alchemy, swift poisoning,

**Gear** +3 *studded leather*, +1 *sickle*

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**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Disease (Ex)** *Tumor Infestation*: Injury; save Fort DC 19; onset 1 minute; frequency 1/day; effect 1d2 Con and 1d2 Cha; cure 2 consecutive saves. Anyone who dies from tumor infestation turns into a hungry flesh 1d4 hours later.

**Mutated Infestation (Ex)** Dalva's tumor infestation has caused her body to begin producing its own mutagen, allowing her to "consume" her mutagen as a swift action without actually drinking it or provoking an attack of opportunity. It takes 4 hours for her body to create a new reserve of mutagen, and Dalva's present reserve is a Strength mutagen.

### Concluding the Mission

Shortly after the end of the encounter, Ambrus Valsin arrives with several additional agents, explaining that he was able to conclude his part of the festivities and hurry over. If Dalva is alive but restrained, Ambrus examines the infection from a safe distance and authorizes one of the agents to cast *remove disease* followed by *remove curse* when the first spell seems insufficient to clear up the disease. The spell combination appears to cure Dalva for now, and she relays her recent studies, the sudden outbreak of madness in the patients, and her own concerns about how quickly her own infection progressed.

She turns herself over to Ambrus to be quarantined for further observation and study, citing that the magical healing she just received may not have been sufficient. She also recommends that the PCs, Valsin, and the other agents submit to an examination by other Society alchemists to ensure that they do not carry and spread the disease further. Were this a weapon Bonekeep's master had intended to use against Absalom, Dalva speculates, the city is fortunate that he never succeeded in unleashing it.

After spending an hour, Society researchers confirm that any PCs who did not contract tumor infestation are cleared to leave quarantine. They detain any infected PC with Valsin's blessing, though a PC can participate in the rest of the adventure if he is cured by a spell like *remove disease*. In thanks for the PCs' service, Ambrus Valsin offers to pay for the first such spell cast on a PC. He then addresses all of the agents.

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"In the past three years, the Pathfinder Society has embarked on as many significant expeditions. We're about to claim the dwarven sky citadel Jormurdun as our own—a major accomplishment. As you can see, though, these discoveries come at a cost in mortal life, and I need agents who are sharp enough to get the job done, get out alive, and pull out any Pathfinders who aren't as lucky or capable. Keep up the good work, and you'll go far."



“Explore, report, and cooperate,” Valsin quotes as he gives an uncharacteristic, honest smile.

auction, buy the freedom of these crusaders, and bring them to the Grand Lodge to give them a true fresh start.”

## MISSION FOUR: THE FREEDOM AUCTION (SILVER CRUSADE)

Over the past year, the Silver Crusade faction has enjoyed the spotlight as it led the charge against the demons of the Worldwound, earning it (and by extension the Pathfinder Society) considerable prestige. In doing so, the Silver Crusade has won numerous future favors from the Society. With this glory comes an unexpected hurdle: as it scales back its combat role in the Mendevian Crusade, the faction must maintain its momentum and remain an equally powerful and relevant force of good.

Throughout inauguration festivities, Silver Crusade faction leader Ollystra Zadrian maintains a high profile. She tracks down the PCs at one of the events to request their aid.

“While I am happy to see you here, I have come because I need someone I can trust to help me right a grievous injustice.

“When Queen Galfrey called for troops during the Fifth Mendevian Crusade, many who answered her call were criminals in their homelands who joined our cause in efforts to seek redemption. For their valor and sacrifice, Queen Galfrey granted them a warrior’s pardon. Despite this official declaration, a number of bounty hunters followed these criminals north. Either ignorant of the declaration or in defiance of it, they have begun capturing several of these felons-turned-war-heroes and turning them in for profit. More troubling, when they cannot claim their bounties, these hunters simply sell our heroes off as slaves.

“I have learned that three of these champions are to be auctioned in the slave pits of Absalom today. What’s more, I am familiar with the particular villain who is hoping to buy all three—an unfitting end for these redeemed souls. Such auctions are generally closed to the public, and those bidding are required to purchase special coins in advance. Fortunately, the Society owes us many favors for our valor over the past year, and they were willing to provide me both seats at the auction and auction coins.

“However, I’m too well known in Absalom, and my appearance at the auction would jeopardize the mission. Please, attend the

The PCs may have questions for Ollysta. Likely questions and their answers are below.

**Who is the villain who wants to buy the slaves?** “Midley Blackburn, a name familiar to many of the slave traders. He’s also a genius with disguises, and he seems to delight in looking a little different for every auction. I trust you’ll be able to identify him once bidding begins.”

**Why don’t we just raid the slave pits and deny the slavers any gold?** “I do not approve

of slavery, but this is not the time to overthrow the entire institution and risk the slaves’ lives. Perhaps in the future the circumstances will be different.

For now, we play their game and do a little good where we can.”

**Is it really worth saving these criminals?** “These three have troubled pasts, yes, but they have taken important steps in seeking and earning redemption for their crimes. I have no reason

to doubt Queen Galfrey’s proclamation that they are heroes, and as heroes they should be spared the indignity of slavery.”



OLLYSTA ZADRIAN

After the PCs agree to attend the auction and bid for the enslaved heroes’ freedom, Ollystra gives them a rolled leather coin purse containing

30 bronze coins embossed with an image of stocks and the words “Stig’s Twenty Five.” She then tells them to head to Misery Row, where the auction is to be held in about an hour. The inscrutable individual running the auction is a large Varisian man known as Bounder Stig. She also tells them that Bounder runs a closed, buy-in auction, meaning the only people allowed to bid are those who have previously paid to signed up for the action and purchased special bidding coins. The coins are worth 25 gp each. They are non-refundable (but always usable at the market). Using the coins allows bidders to avoid carrying a lot of money during auctions and ensures that the slavers are making a profit.

### The Auction

The slave pits of Absalom get their name from the deep pits in which slaves wait in plain view of potential buyers. The site hosts auctions regularly, many of them operating



## D. Sore Losers



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Map Pack: Pub Crawl

through licensed auctioneers such as **Bounder Stig** (NE male human rogue 5, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +8, Sense Motive +5). Unless one of the PCs is a regular in Absalom's seedy underbelly, he doesn't recognize them and rudely tells them to get lost. Showing him the auction coins changes his tune causing him to grumble and tells them to find a spot. Several more groups arrive after the PCs, and all told, there are about 50 people representing perhaps a dozen bidding parties. Bounder crosses names off a list as they arrive, and then he launches into his opening banter.

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"Alright, enough of the chitchat! Anyone up fer bidding find a spot around the pits. Anyone else... shove off!

"Today, I'm holding a quick sale auction! That means I'm doing this quick. Any of ya with complaints can stick around to thank the pesky Andorens that keep showing up and getting' in me business.

"Each auction is one bid per slave, got it? No haggling today, and no complaints! Look at yer bid coins an you'll know I already got yer money.

"I ain't havin' no arguments today neither, so don't nobody spill blood on my block unless you paid for it.

"So here's how it works. I put a slave up for auction and anyone interested writes down a bid. I check the offers and the slave goes off to the highest unique bid. If yer bid's the same

as anyone else's, ya both lose. I ain't got time to sort out no arguments. Remember, I keep all bids, so even if ya don't win, I'm still taking yer coins, so if you can't afford to lose 'em, don't place a bloody bid!

"Lastly, the bids for all auctions start at 8 coins. I ain't repeating that and if there's anyone dumb enough to offer me less than 200 gold, don't expect me to take any more offers from ya, period. All clear?"

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From about the block, the buyers grumble in agreement, after which the auction begins.

Running the auction is straightforward. First, have the PCs write down their bid. Remind them that they must bid at least 8 coins. If need be, clarify that the PCs don't necessarily need the highest bid, only the highest unique bid. Because the PCs only have 30 coins to purchase all three slaves, they need to figure out how to make the coins last for all four auctions. For each of the three slaves, assume that there are two rival bidders, each of which bids  $1d4+8$  coins. Reveal all of the bids for a slave, and discard any results that match. The highest remaining bid wins that auction.

While a number of disreputable purchasers have arrived to bid on the war heroes, not all of them bid every auction. The only serious bidder among them is a ruthless agent of a Qadiran shipping company who goes



by the name of Midley Blackburn. Assume any of the GM's winning bids go to Midley.

The slaves are **Talmar** (CG human male ranger 3, *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 129), a former bandit from Isger who has now sworn to protect his homeland; **Holianda Wist** (half-elf female paladin 3, *NPC Codex* 113), a swindler from the River Kingdoms who has since converted to Iomedae's faith; and **Elwyhir Eshikonas** (NG male elf sorcerer 3, *NPC Codex* 161), a mystic exiled from the Land of the Linnorm Kings for slander against its dragon-slaying monarchs. None of them have equipment. In addition, Holianda has already used her smite evil ability and all but one use of lay on hands for the day. Elwyhir has only one 1st-level spell slot remaining. They are willing to help the PCs in any plan against Blackburn so long as they are provided some basic equipment.

### D. The Sore Losers (CR 6 or CR 9)

What occurs next depends on how events at the auction played out. If the PCs won two or more of the auctions, Midley Blackburn and his goons track them through Misery Row and just as they are about to leave, they accost them and try to claim their slaves by force.

If instead the PCs lost most of the auctions, they might need to resort to similar tactics in order to save the enslaved heroes. Should this occur, the PCs need to track down Midley and his goons, though they refuse to surrender their slaves without a fight.

### Subtier 3–4 (APL 6)

#### BLACKBURN THUGS (3) CR 1

LE skulking brutes (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 144)

hp 19 each

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The thugs approach the PCs from several directions.

**During Combat** The thugs aim to sow confusion, harass spellcasters, and provide Midley Blackburn easy targets to finish off.

**Morale** A thug prefers to drink a *potion of cure light wounds* when reduced to 5 or fewer hit points. Otherwise, they continue fighting so long as Midley does, and continue to fight for 1 round after he dies or flees.

#### MIDLEY BLACKBURN CR 4

Male doppelganger rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 89)

NE Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +9

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

**hp** 37 (5 HD; 4d10+1d8+11)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6 **Immune** charm, sleep

### SCALING SORE LOSERS

Make the following changes to accommodate a group of only four PCs.

*Subtier 3–4:* Remove two of the Blackburn thugs from the encounter.

*Subtier 6–7:* Replace two of the Blackburn thugs with the thugs from Subtier 3–4.

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk bastard sword +10 (1d10+7/19–20) or

2 claws +9 (1d8+5)

**Ranged** mwk blowgun +8 (1d2 plus poison)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +1d6

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 18th; concentration +21)

At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 15)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Midley coats his bastard sword and one of his blowgun darts with blue whinnis poison.

**During Combat** Midley's identity as a doppelganger is a secret, and he prefers to keep it that way by not assuming his natural form.

**Morale** Midley values his life over acquiring a few slaves, and he tries to flee if reduced to 7 or fewer hp.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 20, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 17

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 24

**Feats** Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative

**Skills** Acrobatics +10, Bluff +14 (+18 while using change shape ability), Diplomacy +10, Disguise +11 (+31 while using shape change ability), Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +9;

**Racial Modifiers** +4 Bluff, +4 Disguise

**Languages** Common

**SQ** change shape (*alter self*), mimicry, perfect copy, trapfinding +1,

**Combat Gear** blue whinnis poison (2); **Other Gear** masterwork bastard sword, masterwork blowgun with 10 darts

### Subtier 6–7 (APL 9)

#### BLACKBURN THUGS (3) CR 4

Grizzled mercenaries (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 268)

hp 51 each

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The thugs approach the PCs from several directions. If they have sufficient warning, they consume their *potions of barkskin*.

**During Combat** The thugs aim to sow confusion, harass spellcasters, and provide Midley Blackburn easy targets to finish off.

**Morale** A thug prefers to drink a *potion of cure moderate wounds* when reduced to 15 or fewer hit points. Otherwise,

## PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO

they continue fighting so long as Midley does, and continue to fight for 1 round after he dies or flees.

### MIDLEY BLACKBURN

CR 7

Male doppelganger rogue 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 89)

NE Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +13

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 21, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+2 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

**hp** 60 (8 HD; 4d10+4d8+20)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, trap sense +1 uncanny dodge; **immune** charm, sleep

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *bastard sword* +13/+8 (1d10+8/19–20) or 2 claws +12 (1d8+5)

**Ranged** mwk blowgun +12/+7 (1d2 plus poison)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +2d6

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 18th; concentration +21)

At will—*detect thoughts*

**Rogue Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th, concentration +5)

3/day—*message*

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Midley coats his *bastard sword* and one of his blowgun darts with blue whinnis poison.

**During Combat** Midley's identity as a doppelganger is a secret, and he prefers to keep it that way by not assuming his natural form.

**Morale** Midley values his life over acquiring a few slaves, and he tries to flee if reduced to 12 or fewer hp.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 20, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 17

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 28

**Feats** Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack

**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Appraise +6, Bluff +16 (+20 while using shape change ability), Diplomacy +14, Disable Device +10, Disguise +11 (+31 while using change shape ability), Intimidate +8, Perception +13, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +12, Use Magic Device +10;

**Racial Modifiers** +4 Bluff (+8 while using shape change ability), +4 Disguise (+24 while using shape change ability)

**Languages** Common

**SQ** rogue talents (combat trick, minor magic), trapfinding +2, change shape (alter self)

**Combat Gear** *potion of invisibility*, blue whinnis poison (2); **Other Gear** leather armor, +1 *bastard sword*, *ring of protection* +1

**Development:** After the fight, the PCs have a generous amount of time in which to resolve any loose ends

before the Coins District's guards—infamous for their lazy leniency—eventually investigate. Although Midley Blackburn has no intentions of changing his ways, he's willing to promise almost anything if captured. He uses *detect thoughts* to read the minds of his captors and tailor any oaths to what they want to hear. Should the PCs let him go, he uses his change shape ability to blend into the crowd and lay low before hiring new guards and getting back into the slave trade.

### Concluding the Mission

Ollysta is relieved to hear of the PCs' success, and she personally welcomes each of the freed heroes into the Grand Lodge to recover. Her joy gradually turns to sadness as she contemplates recent events, and she addresses the PCs.

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"I wish I could say today's events were isolated, but I cannot. With recent victories to the north, I understand the Fifth Mendevian Crusade is drawing to a close. I now see that we have as much work to do at home helping people as we do on the frontier fighting demons. Fortunately, our efforts at the Worldwound have made the Pathfinder Society look as much like a guild of heroes as an association of archaeologists, and the positive response has not been lost on the Society's leadership. I expect they will continue to support our efforts as we turn them homeward and attempt not to be crusaders, but soldiers of peace.

"Be prepared for missions of mercy and justice. Our work is not done."

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## MISSION FIVE: THE VAULT OF BASTORIETH (DARK ARCHIVE)

Over a year ago, one of Paracountess Zarta Dralneen's enemies pulled strings to have her disappeared by Cheliex for crimes she didn't commit. The Pathfinder Society saved her, but Zarta's faith in the government she had loyally served was crushed. Over the past year, she has strengthened her ties to the Pathfinder Society, seeing in the Grand Lodge a vital ally that might help her and her faction distance themselves from Cheliex while also acquiring the power necessary to retaliate against her enemies. In doing so, she has carved out a special niche for her organization that might allow her to do both things with the Decemvirate's approval—assuming she can convince the masked leaders that they can trust her.

Faction leader Zarta Dralneen is very active over the course of the festivities, and the PCs likely catch sight of her rubbing elbows with a wide variety of public officials, council members, visiting nobles, and



## THE PATHS WE CHOOSE

guild leaders. She may even join the PCs' conversation with another NPC, smiling knowingly as she helps to encourage conversation and asks one or more PCs to share a particularly bold or embarrassing story about his adventuring career. It is during such an interaction that she requests one of the PCs gather his comrades and join her for a brief meeting out of easy earshot. When the PCs arrive, Zarta is sitting at a table adorned with delicate hors d'oeuvres. She invites them to sit and partake of the food before voicing her request.

---

"Welcome, my dear Pathfinders. I hope it's not too untoward if I spare you the sweet nothings that the political elite are relentlessly exhaling. As you may know, the Society and I have maintained a somewhat distant relationship based on... mutual respect. On occasion, we offer each other support, but it's always an exchange of favors. Recently, I have offered to assist the Society in a more permanent capacity. Needless to say, the leaders were both intrigued and skeptical. Their responses speak to their wisdom.

"I trust you are familiar with the Vaults, yes? There must be dozens of them scattered throughout the Grand Lodge. Being constant collectors, the Society occasionally recovers an artifact that possesses powers that they believe too dangerous or destructive for mortals. For such items, they have designed a special section within the Vaults that they inspect only infrequently. But as I have informed them, some evils only become more dangerous if left to decay in the dark. As this collection of forgotten treasures grows, it poses an ever-increasing risk that requires increased... supervision.

"It appears the Decemvirate has come to understand these truths as I do, and I have a standing offer to catalogue and maintain these dangerous relics so long as I and several of my agents can complete several tests to the Ten's satisfaction. I am about to check in on one of my assignments, and I would appreciate your handling this other task.

"It seems that something has gotten loose in one of the vaults, specifically the vault containing artifacts recovered from the castle of the lovely Erya Bastorieth. The Society sealed off the vault to prevent whatever it is from escaping, but that's hardly a permanent solution. I have permission to send a small team to rectify the situation and determine what went wrong. I trust you're up for the challenge."

---

The PCs may have questions or objections they wish to voice. Likely topics and Zarta's responses are below.

**Why would the Decemvirate trust you?** "They recognize that several centuries of unpredictable and potentially unstable relics are hidden in the foundation, and they need a professional and her trusted agents to make sure nothing dangerous develops. I may be from an empire of devils, but I'm an independent, and a devil they know."

**Why should we cooperate with you?** "I realize it is difficult to trust someone with my background. Even so, I'm acting for the good of the Society and within its oversight. If you still don't trust me, wouldn't it be to your advantage to cooperate this time so that you can see for yourself whether I've been disloyal?"

**What can you tell us about Erya Bastorieth?** "She was a so-called weeping vampire accused of stealing her victims' youth by bathing in their blood. The Society recovered quite a few disturbing treasures from her holdings."

**What do you know about the thing that is loose?** "The Society periodically sends groups of Pathfinders into their Vaults to ensure that nothing is amiss. Apparently one of the agents ran into trouble, as evidenced by breaking glass and screams. Her companions tried to save her but only succeeded in sealing off that section of the Vault."



ZARTA DRALNEEN

Once the PCs have agreed to handle the task, Zarta thanks them, calls in an aging dwarf whose bleary eyes attest either to his sleep deprivation, inability to forget terrible memories, or both. He introduces himself as Hasjald, an employee of the Grand Lodge who works as a groundskeeper and part-time custodian of the Vaults. He volunteers to guide the PCs to the sealed vault. As he leads them into the wooded area near the Wall of Names, he explains that there are multiple Vaults that riddle the Grand Lodge, but until the PCs have permanent clearance to enter them, it's important that they be blindfolded until they get to the rooms in question. So long as the PCs agree—the mission stalls if they don't—Hasjald faithfully leads them below ground through a hidden entrance, past several locked doorways, and down several winding tunnels. The PCs find themselves in a dank, dimly lit stone hallway without any visible windows. The



## E. The Mirror of Nightmares



**1 square = 5 feet**

door to the east bears a plaque reading “The Vault of Erya Bastorieth.”

Hasjald announces that they’ve arrived and informs the PCs that he will open the door for them, seal it behind them, and await a signal knock before opening the door again.

### E. The Mirror of Nightmares (CR 6 or CR 9)

A young Pathfinder named **Rasina** (N female human rogue 3) developed an unhealthy fixation with the exhibits in this vault when she was patrolling it earlier this week, and she made the mistake of peeking behind a velvet curtain that hid a large pane of inky glass, in which was trapped a shadowy outsider called an owb. The creature read enough of Rasina’s thoughts to begin haunting her dreams with nightmarish threats and terrible promises for the next several nights. Exhausted and in a trance, she returned to the Vaults with her companions to finish the task she’d been nocturnally assigned. She shattered the glass and, in so doing, released the outsider trapped within.

The door opens to a small, unlit foyer surrounding a plain stone stairwell. The stairs descend into a room lined in dark

lacquered wood panels. A number of macabre items stand carefully positioned about the room, including a guillotine, a gold-lined iron tub with claws shaped to resemble lion’s paws, and gruesome abstract paintings depicting tortured figures donning strange, birdlike masks and engaging in acts of ritual scarification. Another wall displays a number of exquisite white lace dresses drenched with sanguine stains set upon mannequins fashioned from human skeletons. Lastly, two crystalline display cases sit upon wooden pedestals, one holding a wickedly sharp athame with a flame-shaped blade, the other containing a simple circlet of braided silver and bronze.

A dozen mirror-like fragments of glass are scattered across the floor, and a young woman’s body lies in a congealed pool of blood at the center of the room. A pair of shadow-shrouded alcoves flanks the stairs.

Although the owb escaped the mirror into the Material Plane, it is not entirely free of the mirror’s influence. Residual magic has dulled the creature’s connection to the Plane of Shadow keeping it from escaping the room. In addition, the mirror fragments still hold power over the outsider, for no matter the lighting conditions (even in supernatural darkness), the owb’s reflection always



appears in the mirror's pieces. In this way, a PC can use a mirror fragment to locate the owb, even if the PC cannot see in the dark. Holding a fragment in such a way requires a free hand. In addition, a mirror shard can be wielded as an improvised dagger that overcomes the damage reduction and regeneration of a nightmare owb as if made of silver. Each shard retains a faint magic aura, and a PC can learn the mirror shard's properties as if it were a magic item (CL 5th).

A PC can also draw conclusions about the mirror's use as a magical prison with a successful DC 17 Knowledge (arcana or planes) check (DC 21 in Subtier 6–7); identifying a mirror shard's properties as above also hints at its original purpose. Examining the dead Pathfinder with a successful DC 15 Heal check (DC 18 in Subtier 6–7) reveals that her wounds are particularly clean, almost as though her body were frozen before being sliced apart by large claws.

The darkened alcoves are kept dark by the owb's *deeper darkness* spell-like ability, and the effect extends to the archways and no further.

**Creatures:** The evil and alien creature(s) is native to the Plane of Shadow and lurks hidden beyond the magically darkened portals. Using *detect thoughts* it immediately knows when any living creature enters the room. As the PCs begin to explore the chamber, it begins subtly sending sinister telepathic messages to random PCs. Once a PC perceives the owb, wanders into an alcove alone, or otherwise bores the outsider, the creature attacks. In Subtier 6–7, there are two owbs, each warped over its long imprisonment into a nightmarish monstrosity.

### Subtier 3–4 (CR 6)

**OWB** **CR 6**

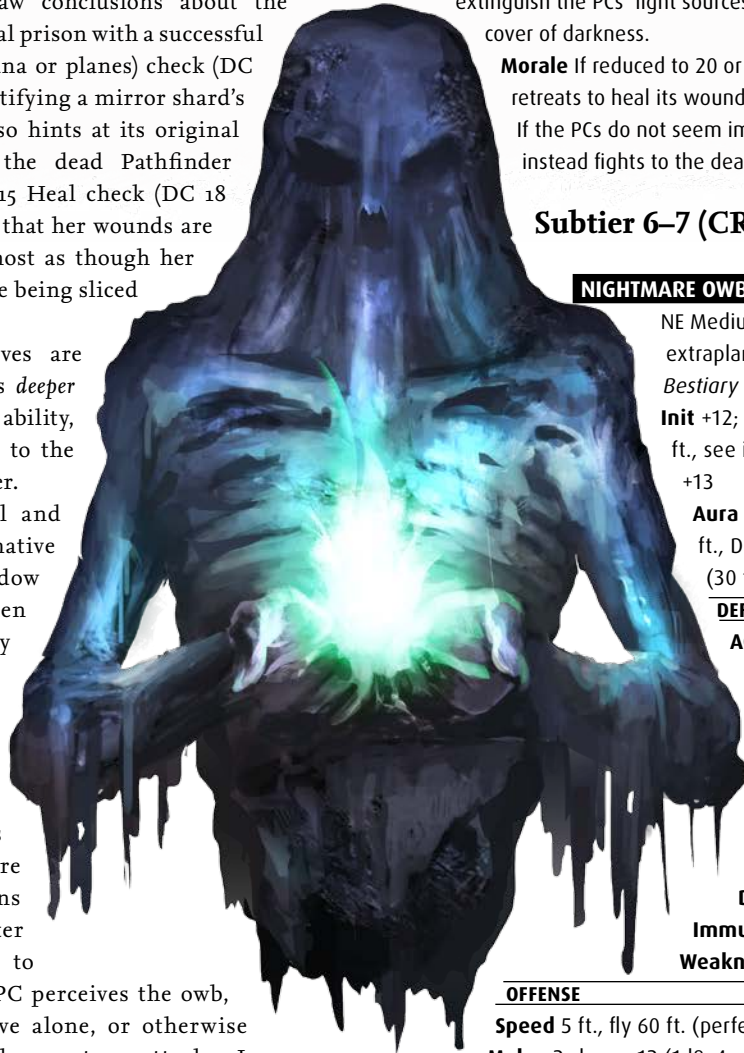
**hp** 76 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4, 210)

**TACTICS**

**During Combat** The owb uses its spell-like abilities to

### SCALING THE MIRROR OF NIGHTMARES

To accommodate a party of only four PCs, reduce the owbs' maximum hit points by 15. The owb is still weakened from its long imprisonment, and its *deeper darkness* spell-like ability is unable to create supernatural darkness; it can only create natural darkness that darkvision can pierce.



extinguish the PCs' light sources and attack from the cover of darkness.

**Morale** If reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, the owb retreats to heal its wounds before attacking again. If the PCs do not seem impeded by darkness, it instead fights to the death.

### Subtier 6–7 (CR 9)

**NIGHTMARE OWB (2)** **CR 7**

NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar); (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 204, 210, 204)

**Init** +12; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., see in darkness; Perception +13

**Aura** fear aura (60-foot radius ft., DC 19), frightful presence (30 ft., DC 19)

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 19, touch 19, flat-footed 10 (+8 Dex, +1 dodge)

**hp** 76 (8d10+32); regeneration 5 (good spells and weapons, silver)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8; +4 vs. illusion.

**DR** 5/good or silver;

**Immune** cold

**Weaknesses** light sensitivity

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)

**Melee** 2 claws +12 (1d8+4 plus 1d6 cold)

**Ranged** burning cold +16 (3d6 cold)

**Special Attacks** burning cold, curse of darkness, night terrors

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +13)

Constant—*blur*, *protection from good*

At will—*deeper darkness*, *detect thoughts* (DC 17), *dust of twilight*<sup>APG</sup> (DC 17)

5/day—*shadow step*<sup>APG</sup>

3/day—*dream*, *nightmare* (DC 20), *suggestion* (DC 18)

1/day—*plane shift* (self only, to or from the Shadow Plane only), *shadow walk*

## PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO

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### TACTICS

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**During Combat** The owb uses its spell-like abilities to extinguish the PCs' light sources and attack from the cover of darkness.

**Morale** If reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, the owb retreats to heal its wounds before attacking again. If the PCs do not seem impeded by darkness, it instead fights to the death.

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### STATISTICS

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**Str** 18, **Dex** 26, **Con** 19, **Int** 13, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 20

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 32

**Feats** Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot

**Skills** Bluff +14, Diplomacy +13, Fly +20, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (planes) +12, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +12, Stealth +23; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Intimidate, +4 Stealth

**Languages** Dark Folk (can't speak); telepathy 100 ft.

**SQ** feign death (DC 19)

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### SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Burning Cold (Su)** As a standard action, an owb can conjure a ball of flickering flames and hurl it at an opponent. The flames can be thrown as a ranged touch attack at a range of 120 feet with no range increment, and deal 3d6 points of cold damage.

**Curse of Darkness (Su)** With a touch, an owb can make bright light unbearable to the victim. Any creature touched must succeed at a DC 19 Fortitude save or gain the light blindness weakness. This ability also robs the victim of its coloration, leaving the creature and its equipment in washed-out shades of gray. This effect can be removed with break enchantment or remove curse, unless the target has the dark folk subtype, in which case the effect can only be removed by wish or similar magic. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Feign Death (Ex)** Whenever a nightmare creature is unconscious, it appears dead. A conscious nightmare creature can also make itself appear dead as an immediate action. Any creature that physically interacts with a nightmare creature feigning death must succeed at a DC 19 Heal check or Will saving throw to recognize it is actually alive.

**Illusion Resistance (Ex)** A nightmare creature automatically disbelieves illusions (no saving throw required) and has a +4 bonus on saving throws to resist illusion effects.

**Frightful Presence (Su)** This ability activates when the nightmare creature charges, attacks during a surprise round, or succeeds at a DC 15 Intimidate or Perform check. Its frightful presence has a range of 30 feet.

**Fear Aura (Su)** All creatures within a 60-foot radius that see or hear a nightmare creature must succeed at a Will save or be shaken for as long as they are within the aura. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same nightmare creature's fear aura for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear affect.

**Night Terrors (Su)** Once a nightmare owb enters a target's

mind with its dream or nightmare spell-like ability, it can attempt to control the target's dream. If the target fails a Will saving throw, it remains asleep and trapped in the dream world with the nightmare creature. Thereafter, the nightmare creature controls all aspects of the dream. Each hour that passes, the target can attempt another saving throw to try to awaken (it automatically awakens after 8 hours or if the nightmare creature releases it). The target takes 1d4 points of Charisma damage each hour it is trapped in the dream; if it takes any Charisma damage, it is fatigued and unable to regain arcane spells for the next 24 hours. The target dies if this Charisma damage equals or exceeds its actual Charisma score.

**Faction Notes:** In addition to defeating the owb, Dark Archive faction PCs should determine what befell the dead Pathfinder and what the Society had stored in this area. Piecing together a convincing picture requires the PCs do two of the following four things: identify the owb with a successful Knowledge (planes) check, identify the mirror's properties (see area description), determine the cause of death of the Pathfinder (see area description), or use magic such as *divination* or *speak with dead* to learn the Pathfinder's motivations.

### Concluding the Act

After confirming that the owbs are dead, the PCs are free to knock on the door, leave with Hasjald, and return to Zarta Dralneen to report their success. By that time she is already at the Grand Lodge with a leather folio in hand, and she expresses her approval of the PCs' work.

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"I'm pleased to hear you were successful. Together we are preparing to open a new chapter in the Society's illustrious history. I have with me a formal proposal for the creation of a dark archive dedicated to the study and proper handling of any artifacts the Decemvirate deems dangerous enough to hide away. Knowing that they can trust me—and agents under my direction—to do this should seal the bargain. If you are strong enough to handle what lies in darkness, I welcome you to join me. For now, though, there are more festivities."

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As she parts way with the Pathfinders, she winks knowingly at members of the Cheliox or Dark Archive factions, as if hinting that greater rewards best left unspoken that await.

## MISSION SIX: THE QUISLING (LIBERTY'S EDGE)

Early in the Fifth Mendevian Crusade, Major Colson Maldris learned of a class of corrupt career politicians—many who had roots in the nobility dismantled during



Andoran's People's Revolt. His agents tracked down and arrested one such politician, which spooked many of that man's allies into hiding. Although Maldris has the ear of several legislators due to his faction's recent progress, many others are frustrated by his lack of continued success and have concluded that the major is leaping at conspiracies.

Frustrated by this negligence, Maldris and his agents have sought allies among other freedom fighting organizations to rediscover the roots of Andoran's sense of liberty. To him, there is a certain purity maintained by these freedom fighters that has been tarnished in Andoran over the decades. The irony of fighting tyranny and corruption as an agent of a government that harbors the tyrannical and corrupt is difficult to stomach. He and his faction are growing more distant from their homeland by necessity, lest they be lulled into complacency. Further, this distancing may make it possible to engage in more daring activities both to bring aid to other lands and cleanse his homeland of its malaise.

Colson Maldris makes few appearances during the festivities leading up to this mission, but when he does appear, he offers to buy the PCs dinner to honor the late representative. During the meal, a courier arrives for him and delivers a sealed letter from the People's Council. Maldris's expression changes to one of intense seriousness. He taps the letter on the table a couple of times, as if deciding whether or not to open it, then he breaks the seal and reads silently to himself before addressing the PCs.

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"I hold in my hands a warrant for the arrest of none other than Halmont Warrith, the Andoran Envoy of Foreign Cultural Affairs. I along with several high-ranking members of the People's Council have reason to believe the envoy guilty of embezzling funds and accepting bribes to establish safehouses for foreign spies in Andoran—all secretly funded by our own exiled nobility so that they might recapture their political power and influence. Furthermore, he's been turning around and selecting his own candidates—many connected to exiled Andoran nobility—who he believes will operate under the "old rules," and treat Andoran's ex-nobility as they were prior to the revolution. In this endeavor, Halmont is quickly becoming a very wealthy and influential man.

"Halmont's ties run much deeper than perhaps even he realizes, and I suspect that other far more important members within the Council are using Halmont as a scapegoat. At the very least, I am certain Halmont has allies within the Council who would have warned him the second someone issued the warrant. His cronies will be keeping an eye out for me, making it next to impossible for me to approach without him fleeing." He glares at his clenched fist in silent frustration before looking up.

"Perhaps you can help by making this arrest for me. I can lure away some of his allies by traveling away from his residence, and you could then approach without scaring him off. Take the warrant, go to Halmont's flat, and arrest him, but don't forget to gather any evidence you can. He's a true coward, so hopefully he'll come peacefully.

Remember, I need proof that Halmont's allies have connections to older Andoran noble families ousted during the revolution in order to make our accusations stick."

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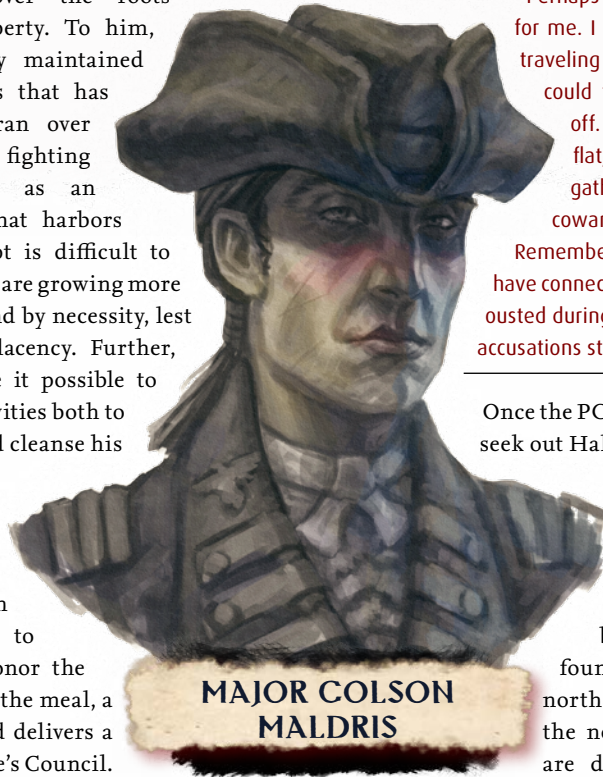
Once the PCs accept the mission, they should seek out Halmont at his current residence in the Foreign Quarter.

### F. Halmont's Apartment

Halmont's lives in a semi-attached, two story brick building that shares a foundation with its neighbor to the northeast. There are entrances to the north and east. All the curtains are drawn, though a PC can spot candlelight flickering through the

north-facing window of area F7 with a successful DC 20 Perception check. Most of the upstairs windows are cracked open by an inch, and all of the downstairs windows are closed and latched.

As Maldris suspected, Halmont already knows about the warrant. Sensing the end of his political career, he races to pack his most important belongings and flee the city. As the PCs approach, he has already collected his most incriminating documents into a small, wooden case sealed with wax and pine pitch, though that is waiting for him in the cold cellar. In a second satchel he has several sets of clothing. His third bag is empty, though he hopes to fill it with funds he has stored in a safe deposit box at the church of Abadar. He wears the key around his neck and has a copy sitting near his box of documents in area F8. If Halmont feels capture is inevitable, he tries to hide or swallow the key discretely. The key bears Abadaran iconography, and a



**MAJOR COLSON  
MALDRIS**

## F. Halmont's Apartments



PC can intuit its significance with a successful DC 12 Intelligence, Knowledge (local), or Knowledge (religion check).

Nearly done with his preparations to leave and wired on coffee and zerk (a stimulant detailed on page 237 of the *Pathfinder RPG Gamemastery Guide*), he obsessively glances out the windows for fear of seeing Major Maldris approaching with a squad of Eagle Knights. As the PCs approach the apartment, they must succeed at a DC 17 Stealth check (DC 19 in Subtier 6–7) to prevent Halmont from noticing them. The PCs gain a +5 circumstance on this check if they approach from the east or another direction not readily visible from area F7.

If Halmont spots the PCs, hears a knock at the door, or notices anything else suspicious, he tries to confirm the intruders' identities by peering out a window in a different room and pretending as though no one is home. He gathers up his belongings, cracks open the door to area F6 to alert the dog there of trouble, takes his *potion of invisibility* in hand, and begins sneaking down to the cellar (area F8). There he escapes through a tunnel that connects to an apartment about 100 feet to the northeast. From the time he first becomes

aware of the PC, it takes Halmont about 3 minutes to reach the escape tunnel and another 1d3 minutes to flee through his neighbor's home into the streets of Absalom. Except under exceptional circumstances, Halmont is able to lose the PCs at this point. If the PCs begin exploring his home quickly, Halmont improvises and may take less time to leave, though in this case he must attempt frequent Stealth checks, open any doors in his way, and negotiate a path around the PCs. If he confirms that the PCs already have his documents, he cuts his losses and attempts to escape through any means.

He does not hesitate to break his *air elemental gem* as a distraction or to cover his escape. This is a more powerful version of an *elemental gem* that summons a larger elemental than normal.

### F1. Front and Side Doors

The exterior doors to Halmont's residence are made of strong wood (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 25) and have good locks (Disable Device DC 30).

**Trap:** Halmont's allies installed a poisonous gas trap at each of the entrances to his home. The envoy armed these



## THE PATHS WE CHOOSE

as soon as he learned of the warrant and started packing his bags. A trap triggers when the door is opened.

### Subtier 3–4 (CR 6)

#### BASIC INSANITY MIST TRAP CR 6

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 15

##### EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset automatic reset

Effect poison gas (insanity mist); never miss; multiple targets (all targets in the marked area)

### Subtier 6–7 (CR 9)

#### CONCENTRATED INSANITY MIST TRAP CR 9

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 20

##### EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset automatic reset

Effect poison gas (concentrated insanity mist: Save Fortitude DC 17; Cure 2 consecutive saves); never miss; multiple targets (all targets in the marked area)

**F2. Living Room:** This large room has ample space for entertaining guests. It has two storage rooms accessible by doors to the east, and a set of polished oak stairs ascends to the second floor.

**F3. Dining Room:** This is a broad room that houses a 15-foot-long dining table with eight elegant chairs.

**F4. Privy:** This small room has little other than a small table with a washbasin and a polished wooden bench that sits over a metal privy pan. A row of hooks on the back of the door holds hand towels.

**F5. Kitchen:** There are several cabinets stuffed with food, sundries, and mundane utensils. A stone hearth is set up for cooking, and two tables in the middle of the room are clean and ready for food preparation. The table in the northwest corner stands over a concealed trapdoor that leads to the cold cellar, which the PCs can spot with a successful DC 18 Perception check (DC 22 in Subtier 6–7).

### F6. Office (CR 1)

This is a well-appointed office with rugs, a desk, and shelves of books. Halmont swept most of his desk's contents into one drawer and locked it (DC 20 Disable Device). He took care to extract the particularly incriminating documents, but it takes 1 minute of skimming and a DC 15 Linguistics, Profession (barrister), or Wisdom check to determine that the writings are virtually worthless for Maldris's purposes. While searching the desk, a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check finds a copy of the key to Halmont's safe deposit box.

**Creatures:** Halmont recently acquired a strong dog to guard his home, and he has left it in his office to act as a decoy as he flees the premises. Once the dog hears anyone other than Halmont moving about the house, it begins barking loudly. However, Halmont ordered it to stay in this room, so it initially resists its urge to rush at any intruders until they are just outside the door.

### All Subtiers (CR 1)

#### CHOMPER CR 1

Riding dog (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 87)

hp 13

**F7. Bedroom:** An unmade bed is draped with three thick blankets resting atop silk sheets. An old wooden dresser with all the drawers pulled out is near the bed, and a nightstand bears a nearly expired blob of yellowish tallow.

**F8. The Cold Cellar:** This is a storage cellar that contains a wide variety of foods and bottled drinks. Halmont has already moved some of his luggage here to prepare for his flight from Absalom. With a successful DC 15 Perception check, the PCs spot Halmont's sealed box of documents atop the cabinet in the northeast corner. If they exceed this check by 5 or more, they also notice scuff marks along the floor, as though the cabinet has been slid forward and back many times. The cabinet conceals the escape route, and moving the cabinet makes a dull scraping sound; Halmont mitigates this noise by consuming his *potion of ant haul* to help him lift one end of the cabinet at a time.

**Creatures:** Halmont is not a capable combatant, but he is clever, subtle, and sneaky. Where the PCs encounter him depends on where and if they spot him before he flees the building. There are no modifications in this encounter for a group of four PCs.

### Subtier 3–4 (CR 5)

#### HALMONT WARRITH CR 5

Male aristocrat 2/expert 5

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; Senses Perception +7

##### DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex)

hp 31 (7d8)

Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +7

##### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +7 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged mwk dagger +7 (1d4-1/19-20)

##### TACTICS

## PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO

**During Combat** Halmont is a coward and doesn't like to fight; he only fights as much as is needed to get away. If the PCs manage to capture him, he pleads for mercy and offers to pay them to let him go. Otherwise he tries to escape unnoticed, as detailed in the description for area F.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 12, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Bluff), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Appraise +10, Bluff +15, Diplomacy +12, Disable Device +7, Disguise +7, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nobility) +8, Linguistics +5, Perception +7, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +9

**Languages** Common, Infernal

**Combat Gear** *elemental gem* (large air elemental), *potion of ant haul*<sup>APG</sup>, *potion of invisibility*; **Other Gear** leather armor, *ring of protection* +1, ledgers

### Subtier 6-7 (CR 8)

#### HALMONT WARRITH CR 8

Male aristocrat 4/expert 6  
N Medium humanoid (human)  
**Init** +6; **Senses** Perception +9

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 45 (10d8)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk dagger +10/+5 (1d4-1/19-20)

**Ranged** mwk dagger +10/+5 (1d4-1/19-20)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** Halmont is a coward and doesn't like to fight; he only fights as much as is needed to get away. If the PCs manage to capture him, he pleads for mercy and offers to pay them to let him go. Otherwise he tries to escape unnoticed, as detailed in the description for area F.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20

**Feats** Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Knowledge [local]), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Appraise +12, Bluff +21, Diplomacy +15, Disable Device +9, Disguise +9, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Linguistics +5, Perception +9, Sense Motive +14, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +8

**Languages** Common, Infernal

**Combat Gear** *greater elemental gem* (huge air elemental), *potion of ant haul*<sup>APG</sup>, *potion of invisibility*; **Other Gear** leather armor, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *ring of protection* +1, ledgers

**Treasure:** Having every intention of continuing his efforts elsewhere, Halmont carries his real ledgers on his person. These contain all the evidence Maldris needs to convict him.

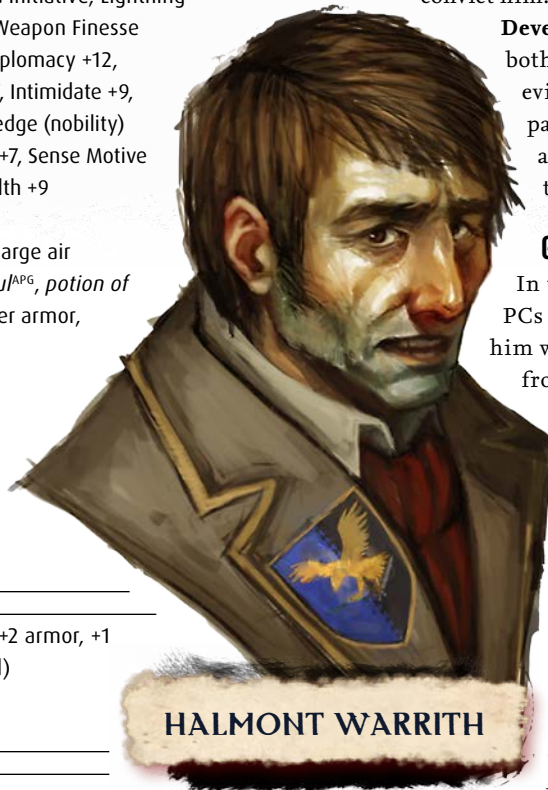
**Development:** To succeed, the PCs must both capture Halmont alive and recover evidence of his guilt—specifically the papers he has temporarily stored in area F8. Should Halmont escape, see the Hunting Halmont section below.

### G. HUNTING HALMONT

In the event that Halmont escapes, the PCs still have an opportunity to capture him when he tries to withdraw his money from his safe deposit box at the church of Abadar. The PCs likely found a copy of the key from the Andoren's office in area F6, and they can use it to stake out the church and try to catch Halmont while he makes his withdrawal. In the interim, he has changed his clothing and minor features of his appearance, making it difficult for the PCs to pick him out of the crowd of businesspeople that frequent the building; a PC must succeed at a DC 17 Perception check (DC 19 in

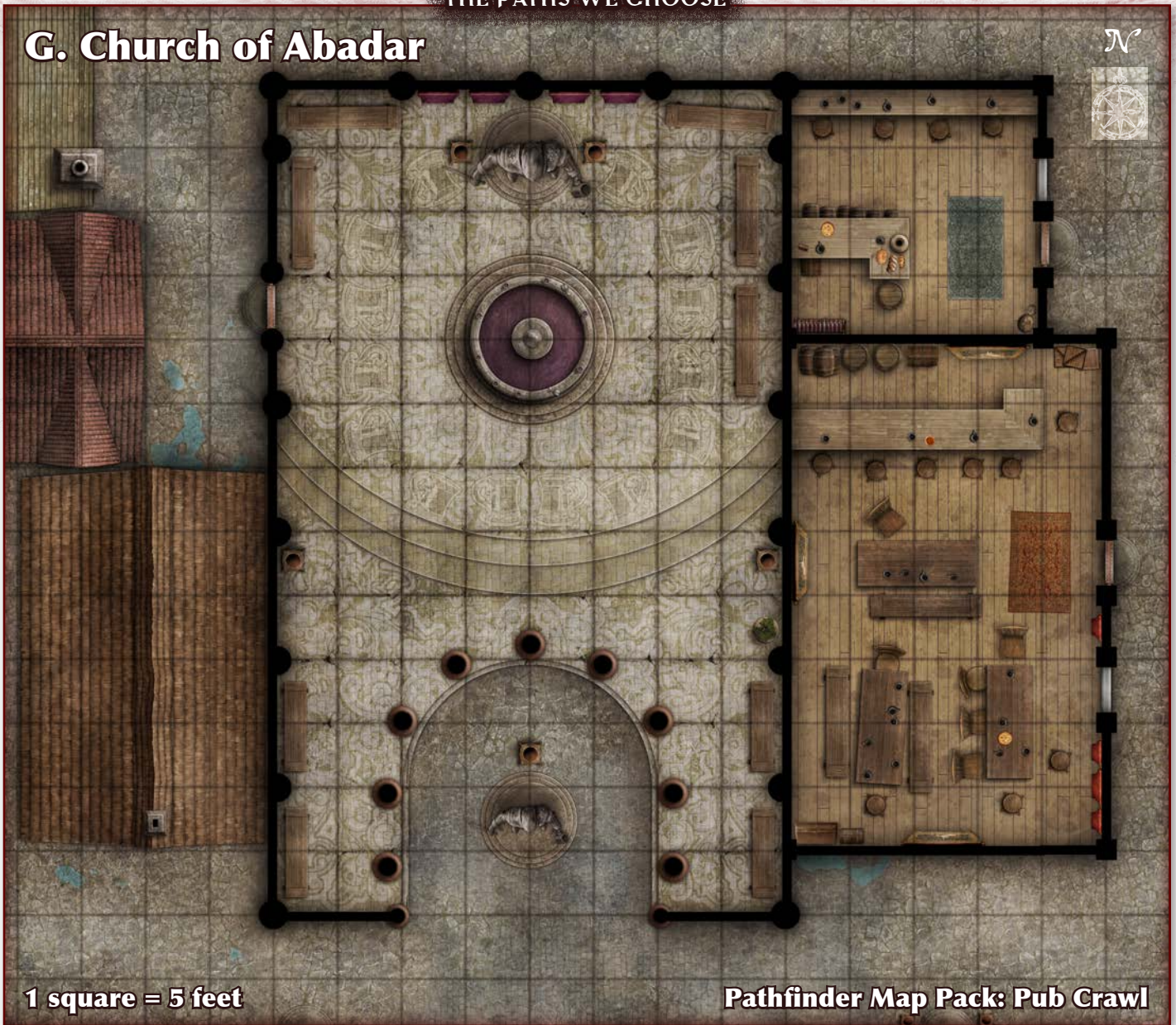
Subtier 6-7) to identify Halmont. He arrives an hour after the PCs do, scopes out his surroundings (it is DC 15 for him to pick out any of the PCs from the crowd, unless they have disguised or hidden themselves), and furtively approaches a cleric to request assistance in securing his gold. Extracting this sum takes 10 minutes, most of which is spent in a secure vault that is out of sight. The PCs can accost him either before or after he emerges from the vault. If Halmont spots and identifies the PCs, he gets only about 10 feet into the church before quietly turning around and trying to leave.

So long as the PCs exercise some subtlety as they wait for Halmont, the clerics of Abadar do not question the presence of adventurers on the premises. The PCs can impersonate Halmont to withdraw his money before he arrives, though access to a safe deposit box requires a character to succeed at a DC 25 Disguise check followed by a DC 15 Bluff check. Failing either causes the clergy to





## G. Church of Abadar



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Map Pack: Pub Crawl

expel that PC and any other companions from the church for the next 24 hours. If the PCs extract the money, the clerics call Halmont out as a fraud when he tries to use his key, automatically alerting the PCs to his arrival.

The PCs can also show one of the clerics the warrant for Halmont's arrest to establish their credentials. The foreign document is legitimate but does not immediately win the Abadarans' cooperation, for bounty hunting at a bank is distasteful. A PC must also succeed at a DC 15 Diplomacy check to convince the priests to allow the PCs to perform a nonlethal arrest without interference.

Any violence pulls three clerics of Abadar (use the statistics for a lawful neutral mercenary healer on page 44 of *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*) into the fray to pacify the assailants, which are most likely the PCs. At this

point, a PC can convince the clerics to stand down by presenting the arrest warrant and succeeding at a DC 25 Diplomacy check as a standard action. Reducing a cleric to 0 or fewer hit points with lethal damage draws the attention of higher-ranking clerics, including the acting head banker (use the statistics for the divine loremaster in *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 224) and a pair of vault guards (use the statistics for a lawful neutral grizzled mercenary in *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 268). Two additional vault guards arrive every two rounds until the PCs are subdued or flee. Halmont avoids combat, either fleeing or sheltering behind the Abadarans as appropriate.



### Concluding the Mission

Once the PCs arrest Halmont, they must bring him, along with all recovered evidence, to Major Maldris, who makes arrangements for his transport back to Andoran to face trial. After dealing with Halmont, Maldris invites the PCs to speak with him privately. In his meeting he confides his future plans, which include a drastic change for the faction he leads.

"There are many who have flocked to Andoran's freedom, yet in the passing years I have come to learn that a great number of these individuals see not love in our movement, but selfish opportunity. I fear that the direction our politicians have led, while on its surface seemingly inspired and courageous, has ventured little from the rule of our exiled nobility. Class warfare remains and much of our nation's political power is controlled either directly or indirectly by the wealthiest members of our society. Many are formal nobles who publicly renounced their titles, but privately held onto power. For these individuals, renouncing their titles permitted them even greater opportunity and upward mobility, especially those who worked their way into trade and politics.

"I find the irony of fighting tyranny and corruption as an agent of a government that harbors the tyrannical and corrupt difficult to stomach. We may have captured a few of the snakes, but there are at least ten more villains for each one we have brought to justice. As it struggles with itself, Andoran cannot combat tyrannies as it should, so I am stepping away from Andoran politics to deliver its unadulterated philosophies to other lands. I, and anyone who is bold enough to join me, shall remain enemies of slavery and tyranny, yet without direct national ties, we shall be able to engage in even more daring actions abroad and cleanse even my homeland of its malaise without the oversight of those we seek to purge!"

Realizing he has crescendoed into a booming speech, Maldris more quietly reinforces the sincerity of his beliefs, thanks the PCs for their assistance, and wishes them a pleasant remainder of the festivities.

## MISSION SEVEN: THE

### REPLEVIN (SCARAB SAGES)

Two years ago, a member of the Osirion faction recovered a Thassilonian artifact and brought it to the royal court. When the Ruby Prince examined it, he was afflicted with a terrible, wasting curse. The faction struggled to find a cure, and ultimately the Ruby Prince used his own magic and resources to remove the affliction. Disappointed in Amenopheus's failure, the monarch dismissed the Sapphire Sage and his agents from his service. Although crushed by this development, Amenopheus used his free time to search for traces of the defunct Jeweled Sages, an order of scholars dating back to Osirion's first age. Over the past year, Amenopheus and his allies tracked down a previously unknown member of the organization. They met recently and decided to revive the Jeweled Sages, however they disagreed about exactly how to do so and what the revised faction's goals should be. Invoking an ancient tradition of the sages, they called for a binding vote to establish the future course. Pathfinder agents favored the Diamond Sage Tahonikepsu, and Amenopheus graciously honored the decision and works closely with his peer to expand the ranks of the Jeweled Sages.

Tahonikepsu is still busy studying an ancient stronghold that once belonged to the order, so she requested that Amenopheus travel to Absalom and act as the face of the evolving faction. The Sapphire Sage enjoys a pleasant festival, and the PCs likely spot him several times over the course of the events. Even before this mission begins, he might share a few words with PC members of the Scarab Sages, thanking them for their hard work and encouraging them to keep an eye out for treasures from Osirion.

The festivities attract their fair share of peddlers, and one such enterprising individual sizes up the PCs as adventurers who might appreciate an exotic trinket. She approaches and offers to sell them a silver amulet that depicts a scarab with feathered wings spread in flight. Her price is a mere 25 gp, which a PC can determine is fair with a successful DC 15 Appraise check. With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (history or nobility) check, a PC can identify the symbol as that of an Osirian family that fled Osirion to Absalom to escape Qadiran occupying forces, but that disappeared nearly two millennia ago.





By exceeding the check DC by 10 or more, the PC recalls that the family perished from a terrible disease around 4000 AR, and the city provided them a burial following Osirian traditions: a secret tomb bearing grave goods hidden underground. In any case, no check is required to identify the amulet as being old and Osirian in origin.

Whether they buy it or not, Amenopheus meets with the PCs shortly afterward and invites them to share a drink with him and speak about things they have seen over the past several days. This is an opportunity for the PCs to show Amenopheus the amulet or describe it if they decided not to purchase it. If the PCs do not broach the subject, Amenopheus might ask questions that inspire them to do so. Failing that, Amenopheus pulls a similar amulet out of his pocket and relates how he purchased it from a peddler earlier that day. He knows of the family and that only a few members of Absalom's elite are believed to know where they were interred, so the reappearance of such jewelry is a good sign that someone has happened upon the tomb and begun looting it.

---

*"It's infuriating that others continually violate the sanctity of our dead and the treasures of our people, as if our ancestors were simply corpses with no rights." Calming slightly he continues, "Someone has either found the hidden tomb or decided to make a clever forgery, but I suspect the former. The city has its hands full with current events, and this is a job better suited to trained explorers. I shall reimburse you for the amulet. I ask that you find the tomb, place the amulet back where it came from, and reseal the vault so that no one else disturbs it. So long as you do not take any of its contents, one might take this as an opportunity to study a rare form of Osirian burial."*

---

If the PCs accept but are at a loss as to where to begin, Amenopheus recommends tracking down the same peddler who was selling the amulet. Perhaps she might have information about where it came from.

### The Street Peddler

The peddler **Iara Talson** (female human expert 7; use the statistics for a successful merchant from *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 263) works a route that covers a few blocks surrounding the location where the PCs first encountered her. If she spots the PCs (whether or not they previously purchased the amulet), she approaches them with a cheerful smile and attempts to sell them more jewelry.

The PCs' challenge is to get Iara to reveal her business associates. Being a trustworthy businesswoman, she refuses to divulge any information about her suppliers, so a simple line of questioning fails to produce any useful information. Still, there are several ways for the PCs to find out what they need. They can bribe her for 100 gp

(250 gp in Subtier 6–7), though they can reduce this value with a Bluff or Diplomacy check; reduce the bribe amount by 25 gp for every 10 points by which they exceed DC 0. They might instead browbeat her with a successful DC 19 Intimidate check (DC 22 in Subtier 6–7), though a failed check increases the DC of any Bluff or Diplomacy checks against her by 5. Finally, they can simply attack her and reduce her to 10 or fewer hit points.

Whichever means the PCs choose, Iara shares that her supplier is a man named Vonraig, whom she hired a few urchins to shadow after his most recent sale. According to their reports, Vonraig purchased bright green chalk and slipped into the sewers below the Petals District before emerging with a small bag that jingled like coins. Iara can provide directions and note that those sewers have undergone repairs and expansion over the past month.

**Development:** If the PCs used violence to force Iara to talk about her supplier, she or a witness eventually contacts the guards and presses charges against the PCs. This translates to a 100 gp fine (250 gp in Subtier 6–7) per PC applied at the end of the adventure, though a GM might waive this fine if the PCs took extraordinary measures to avoid witnesses and later identification.

### G. TEMIT KHEMI'S TOMB (CR 5 OR CR 8)

Vonraig first discovered this tomb three days ago when he used the tunnels to lie low after a failed heist. His half-elf companion first noticed the irregular brickwork that had been damaged by recent efforts to expand the sewers, and together they dismantled part of the wall and entered the tomb hidden beyond. A trap struck the half-elf dead, which suited Vonraig just fine, for it allowed him a greater share of the contents. He has since returned several times, though he is only able to smuggle out small amounts of treasure each trip without attracting unwanted attention. He does his best to re-brick the entrance each time he leaves.

Following Iara's directions the PCs are able to find and use the sewer entrance most likely used by the looter Vonraig. Within, they can trace his path, which he marked with green chalk. Carefully dismantling the brick wall takes about five minutes now that the mortar is dislodged, though the PCs can just bash it in with a few quick strikes. The tomb's walls were carefully sealed and kept out most of the water from the sewers that eventually grew up around it, so its wall's depictions of funerary rites and stylized illustrations of life in Absalom are still fairly well preserved. Over a dozen small, terra cotta statues of humans equipped to perform common chores line the north and south walls, and at least as many urns and coffers are scattered throughout the room. The eastern sarcophagus is partly open, and disintegrating shreds of linen nearby attest to someone having ransacked the

# H. Temit Khemi's Tomb



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Map Pack: Waterfront

contents. This is where the PCs' amulet came from and where they must return it.

**Trap:** The architects who designed this tomb for Temit Khemi and her family placed a single trap at its entrance to guard against tomb robbers. The trap strikes the first intruder with a curse, though by design it only functions against living creatures. In their non-native understanding of Osirian mummification, they wanted to ensure that any trap would not harm the deceased if they were to rise as undead. As a dhampir, Vonraig inadvertently bypassed the trap, which perceives him as an undead creature.

In Subtier 5–6, the curse causes the target to weep tears of blood, and when he speaks, his words sound as though they were screeched by ravenous daemons. This imposes a –5 penalty on Charisma-based skill checks, except for Intimidate. In addition, the target takes a –2 penalty on saving throws against curses, diseases, and poisons. The curse's exact manifestation tends to vary over time, allowing the GM to present other symptoms that are equally disturbing bystanders and impose the same penalty. In Subtier 6–7, the curse briefly causes the target to perceive everything around him as a manifestation of his worst nightmares, which might kill the afflicted outright.

## Subtier 3–4 (APL 5)

**SANGUINE TEARS TRAP** **CR 5**

**Type** magic; **Perception** DC 29; **Disable Device** DC 29

### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** 1 hour

**Effect** spell effect (*bestow curse*, see above; DC 16 Will)

## Subtier 6–7 (APL 8)

**HEIGHTENED PHANTASMAL KILLER TRAP** **CR 8**

**Type** magic; **Perception** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31

### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** 1 hour

**Effect** spell effect (*heightened phantasmal killer*; DC 19 Will disbelief; DC 19 Fortitude for 3d6 damage or die from fear)

**Developments:** Once the PCs bypass the traps they can safely enter the tomb and return the stolen amulet. After the PCs have had a moment to explore the tomb, proceed to the next encounter.

## The Looters (CR 5 or CR 8)

**Creatures:** Vonraig is worried that someone else might learn of the tomb and steal what remains, so he has hired several goons to help him carry out the remaining treasure. They arrive just as the PCs are finishing their work inside.

## Subtier 3–4 (APL 5)

**DWARVEN RAGERS (2)** **CR 1**

hp 28 each (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex 10*)



## THE PATHS WE CHOOSE

### VONRAIG

CR 3

Male dhampir oracle 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42, *Bestiary* 2 89)

NE Medium humanoid

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

**Perception** +4

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 shield)

**hp** 34 (4d8+1d10+8)

**Fort** +0, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6; +2 racial bonus on saving throws against disease and mind-affecting effects

**Defensive Abilities** negative energy affinity, resist level drain

**Weaknesses** light sensitivity

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk shortspear +3 (1d6-1) or  
+1 dagger +3 (1d4/19-20)

**Ranged** mwk shortspear +7 (1d6-1)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th; concentration +6)  
3/day—*detect undead*

**Oracle Spells Known** (CL 4th; concentration +6)

2nd (4/day)—*false life, inflict moderate wounds, sound burst* (DC 15)

1st (7/day)—*command* (DC 14), *doom* (DC 14), *cause fear* (DC 14), *inflict light wounds, shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic, ghost sound, guidance, mage hand, read magic, resistance, spark*<sup>APG</sup>

**Mystery** bones

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Vonraig uses his armor of bones revelation and casts *false life*. These are already calculated into his stats.

**During Combat** Aware that he has a glass jaw, Vonraig prefers to have his hirelings lead the charge while he supports them with spells.

**Morale** Vonraig attempts to flee or surrender if reduced to 5 or fewer hit points.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 8, **Int** 12, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Combat Casting, Toughness

**Skills** Bluff +10, Craft (alchemy) +6, Diplomacy +10, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perception +4, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +6; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Bluff, +2 Perception

**Languages** Common, Osiriani

**SQ** oracle's curse (haunted), revelations (armor of bones, death's touch)

**Gear** light steel shield, mwk shortspear, +1 dagger

### Subtier 6-7 (APL 8)

### AXE WARRIORS (4)

CR 2

**hp** 40 each (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 11)

### SCALING THE LOOTERS

Make the following changes to accommodate a group of only four PCs.

*Subtier 3-4:* Removed one dwarven rager from the encounter.

*Subtier 6-7:* Remove two axe warriors from the encounter.

### VONRAIG

CR 6

Dhampir oracle 7

NE Medium humanoid

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +4

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +3 Dex, +1 shield)

**hp** 53 (7d8+1d10+14)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7; +2 racial bonus on saving throws against disease and mind-affecting effects

**Defensive Abilities** negative energy affinity, resist level drain

**Weaknesses** light sensitivity

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk shortspear +5 (1d6-1) or  
+1 dagger +5 (1d4/19-20)

**Ranged** mwk shortspear +9 (1d6-1)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 7th; concentration +11)  
3/day—*detect undead*

**Oracle Spells Known** (CL 7th; concentration +11)

3rd (5/day)—*animate dead, dispel magic, inflict serious wounds, invisibility purge*

2nd (7/day)—*darkness, false life, inflict moderate wounds, levitate, minor image, sound burst* (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*

1st (7/day)—*bane* (DC 15), *command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds, doom* (DC 15), *cause fear* (DC 15), *inflict light wounds, shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic, ghost sound, guidance, light, mage hand, read magic, resistance, spark*<sup>APG</sup>

**Mystery** bones

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Vonraig uses his armor of bones revelation and casts *false life*. These are already calculated into his stats.

**During Combat** Aware that he has a glass jaw, Vonraig prefers to have his hirelings lead the charge while he supports them with spells.

**Morale** Vonraig attempts to flee or surrender if reduced to 10 or fewer hit points.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 8, **Int** 12, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 18

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

**Feats** Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Toughness

**Skills** Bluff +13, Craft (alchemy) +6, Diplomacy +13,

## PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO

Intimidate +13, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perception +4, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +11;

**Racial Modifiers** +2 Bluff, +2 Perception

**Languages** Common, Osiriani

**SQ** oracle's curse (haunted), revelations (armor of bones, death's touch, soul siphon)

**Gear** light steel shield, mwk shortspear, +1 *dagger*, *headband of alluring charisma* +2

**Development:** Once the PCs replace the amulet and defeat Vonraig, they should seal up the tomb's entrance. They can acquire mortar for a negligible cost and re-brick the wall that Vonraig has dismantled, though doing so in a way that won't stand out requires a successful DC 15 Profession (mason) or similar check. A PC can instead cast *make whole*, *stone shape*, or use similar magic to repair the wall without a check, though *mending* is insufficient. Accommodate creative solutions. Failing to restore the wall in a convincing way leads to other looters breaking in within a week.

### Concluding the Mission

Once the PCs have finished their work, they can find Amenopheus, who is chatting with Osirian ambassador Dremdhet Salhar. The Sapphire Sage invites the PCs to report about what occurred, and the two men listen intently, inquire about details, and compliment the PCs on a job well done.

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"Amenopheus," the copper-skinned ambassador begins, "the significance of this most recent gesture is not lost on me. As I noted earlier, your continued respect for Osirion and its history despite past circumstances has impressed even the Ruby Prince who sent you away a year ago. If there is anyway I can aid you and your agents in reconciling with His Majesty, I happily offer my services."

Amenopheus responds graciously, "During my year of searching for the Jeweled Sages, I have determined my true calling is that ancient organization. While I'm honored by your gesture, Osirion shall always be a close friend, but not my master."

Salhar seem somewhat taken back by Amenopheus' reply, then with solemnly dignity makes a sacred sign and says, "So be it then. In the Ruby Prince's name, I offer you Osirion's blessing. We officially recognize the Jeweled Sages' legitimacy and accept them as allies and honored guests within our borders. I shall make this declaration public ensuring a peaceful break between your new order and the old."

"Peace, yes," Amenopheus agrees, "but the head of our organization would prefer we not be exposed to public scrutiny until we are better established."

---

Salhar agrees to honor the Jeweled Sages' confidentiality, offers his respects, and departs.

Amenopheus then shifts his gaze back to the PCs and says, "Well now, that was a curious turn of events. I suppose we'll just have to see how that plays out in the future, won't we?"

## CONCLUSION

The adventure concludes on the final day of festivities, when the First Lady of Laws announces Grint Basatrel as the new member of the Grand Council. After the new councilor takes the stage to thank Diobel and the High Council for their trust, the crowd gradually disperses to fit in a bit more city-funded celebration. Venture-Captain Drandle Dreng, ever looking the part of a blind beggar, sidles up alongside the PCs to chat.

---

"And so ends an election and begins a political career. I'm pleased that the High Council chose Grint, as he's amenable to working with the Society. It also sounds as though he's not the only one with friends in high places; I hear several of our close allies owe you their thanks, and they've already begun paying off that debt with a fewer presents delivered to the Grand Lodge with your names on them. Well done. The Society's strength is not measured by the enemies it defeats but by the friends it keeps."

---

With a concealed wave goodbye, Dreng stumbles off into the crowd once more, his alms bowl held high as he listens for more rumors of note.

### Rewards

Each PC earns an equal amount of gold for completing a mission, and the reward structure for *The Paths We Choose* assumes that each table completes three such missions. Award each PC the following gold for each mission for which they fulfilled the primary success condition (maximum three).

**Subtier 3–4:** Award each PC 320 gp (maximum 960 gp).

**Out of Subtier:** Award each PC 560 gp (maximum 1,680 gp).

**Subtier 6–7:** Award each PC 800 gp (maximum 2,400 gp).

In addition, each PC earns an additional reward for completing his or her faction's primary success condition. If the PC was unable to participate in his faction's mission because there were four or more factions represented at the table, he earns this additional reward so long as the group fulfilled the primary success condition for at least three missions.

**Subtier 3–4:** Award the PC 320 gp.

**Out of Subtier:** Award the PC 560 gp.

**Subtier 6–7:** Award the PC 800 gp.



### Reporting Notes

If the PCs undertook the Exchange faction's mission, and Guaril survived until the end of the adventure, check box A on the reporting sheet. If the PCs undertook that mission and failed to save Guaril (or failed to reach the *Fool's Pride*), check box B. If the PCs undertook the Grand Lodge faction's mission and subdued Dalva Aiger without killing her, check box C. If the PCs undertook the Sovereign Court's faction mission and earned 8 or more Shame Points, check box D.

### Primary Success Conditions

The PCs complete their primary success condition and earn 1 Prestige Point so long as they complete at least three of the following:

**Dark Archive:** The PCs kill all owbs in the area E.

**The Exchange:** The PCs defeat the Gael assassins.

**Grand Lodge:** The PCs subdue or kill Dalva Aiger.

**Liberty's Edge:** The PCs arrest Halmont Warrith and deliver him to Major Colson Maldris.

**Scarab Sages:** The PCs replace the amulet in the tomb of Temit Khemi.

**Silver Crusade:** The PCs return at least two of the enslaved Mendevian crusaders to the Grand Lodge.

**Sovereign Court:** The PCs accumulate at least 4 Shame Points before Lord Minovitas unveils the paintings.

### Secondary Success Conditions

The secondary success condition for each PC is tied to his faction and its mission, and all members of a particular faction succeed or fail together. Fulfilling this condition earns the faction PC 1 additional Prestige Point. If the PC was unable to participate in his faction's mission because there were four or more factions represented at the table, he earns the additional Prestige Point if at least half of the other factions represented at the table earned the extra point.

**Dark Archive:** The PCs learn about the Vault of Bastorieth in at least two of the ways detailed in the Faction Notes section on page 28.

**The Exchange:** The PCs ensure that Guaril Karela survives.

**Grand Lodge:** The PCs subdue Dalva Aiger without killing her.

**Liberty's Edge:** The PCs recover both Halmont's sealed case of documents in area F8 as well as his funds in area G.

**Scarab Sages:** The PCs seal up and obscure the entrance to the tomb.

**Silver Crusade:** The PCs win at least two of the slaves at the auction, forcing Blackburn to attack and allowing the Silver Crusade to defend its actions as self-defense.

**Sovereign Court:** The PCs accumulate at least 7 Shame Points before Lord Minovitas unveils the paintings.

### PLAYER HANDOUT #1: SILVER RAVEN MISSIVE

*I have learned that Lord Minovitas is preparing to give a speech just before unveiling the paintings to a crowd of the influential elite. I encourage you to be in that crowd with me—but not too close, lest others draw their own connections. No doubt Minovitas's poor taste in art will draw some jeers, but to ensure maximum effect, we must prime the crowd so that they are not sympathetic toward the lord's embarrassment. As you chat with the other guests, be sure to share a few facts about his lordship's distasteful habits. I leave it to you whether these are true or fanciful fabrications.*

*We shall meet at the same teahouse afterward.*

## PLAYER HANDOUT #2: LETTER FROM GUARIL KARELA

*I stood high 'pon Beldren's Bluff,  
And gazed out to the west.  
Just south of the storm of stone,  
Silver Wren sleeps in her nest.  
Stole I to her side,  
Stole I to her side,  
But her fledglings cast in flight.  
Past three black whales,  
And three black whales,  
And half way to the light.  
And there, beneath the waters green,  
Drowns the maiden without a name.  
Still it is her gaze.  
That finds refuge in the graves.*



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## Pathfinder Society Scenario #5--99: The Paths we Choose

Event		Date	
GM #		GM Character #	
GM Name		GM Prestige Earned	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark Archive	<input type="checkbox"/> The Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Lodge	<input type="checkbox"/> Liberty's Edge
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarab Sages	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Crusade	<input type="checkbox"/> Sovereign Court	
<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
Character #		Prestige Points	
Character Name			
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark Archive	<input type="checkbox"/> The Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Lodge	<input type="checkbox"/> Liberty's Edge
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarab Sages	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Crusade	<input type="checkbox"/> Sovereign Court	
Character #		Prestige Points	
Character Name			
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark Archive	<input type="checkbox"/> The Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Lodge	<input type="checkbox"/> Liberty's Edge
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarab Sages	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Crusade	<input type="checkbox"/> Sovereign Court	
Character #		Prestige Points	
Character Name			
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark Archive	<input type="checkbox"/> The Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Lodge	<input type="checkbox"/> Liberty's Edge
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarab Sages	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Crusade	<input type="checkbox"/> Sovereign Court	
Character #		Prestige Points	
Character Name			
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark Archive	<input type="checkbox"/> The Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Lodge	<input type="checkbox"/> Liberty's Edge
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarab Sages	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Crusade	<input type="checkbox"/> Sovereign Court	
Character #		Prestige Points	
Character Name			
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark Archive	<input type="checkbox"/> The Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Lodge	<input type="checkbox"/> Liberty's Edge
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarab Sages	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Crusade	<input type="checkbox"/> Sovereign Court	



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  - Gear to kit out your character and plenty of new magic items to fill up the GM's treasure chest
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# Pathfinder Society Scenario #5-99: The Paths We Choose

Character Chronicle #

	A.K.A.	-	
Player Name	Character Name	Pathfinder Society #	Faction

**This Chronicle sheet grants access to the following:**

Choose one of the following boons. Cross the other two off your Chronicle sheet.

**Changing Circumstances:** As your faction's focus shifts, you are quick to learn the skills needed to accomplish the evolving goals. You may use this boon at the end of an adventure to replace one of your two starting traits for a faction trait from your faction, though you cannot have more than one faction trait. When you use this boon, cross it off your Chronicle sheet.

**New Recruits:** Your faction's success enables it to recruit and train new members. You may designate one newly created PC under your Pathfinder Society number who shares your faction as a new recruit. This additional training grants that PC one of the faction's traits as a bonus trait, though the PC cannot have more than one faction trait. You must include a copy of this Chronicle sheet with the new PC's records, though that PC gains no additional boons, equipment, or wealth from this Chronicle sheet.

Character receiving this boon: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Faction: \_\_\_\_\_ GM Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

**Old Loyalties:** Your faction recognizes your tireless efforts on its behalf. You can use this boon to reduce the Prestige Point cost of a vanity or prestige award by an amount equal to your Fame divided by 10. This cannot reduce the cost of a vanity or award below 0. When you use this boon, cross it off your Chronicle sheet.

<b>MAX GOLD</b>	SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
	3-4	640	1,280
	SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	Out of subtier	1,120	2,240
	SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
	6-7	1,600	3,200
<b>FAME</b>	SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
	-	-	-
	Initial Prestige	Initial Fame	
<b>GOLD</b>	+	XP Gained (GM ONLY)	
	=	Final XP Total	
	Prestige Gained (GM ONLY)	Prestige Spent	
-	Current Prestige	Final Fame	
+	Starting GP		
+	GP Gained (GM ONLY)		
-	Day Job (GM ONLY)		
-	Gold Spent		
=	Total		

Notes

**For GM Only**

EVENT	EVENT CODE	DATE	Game Master's Signature	GM Pathfinder Society #
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