

SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER[®]

LOST OMENS

LEGENDS

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LEGENDS





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THE SKY TORE OPEN

to reveal a silver void, dotted with the faintest hints of distant stars. Hao Jin wondered if, to those below, it would seem as if another Earthfall had come to Golarion. Yet the massive sphere that emerged from the Astral Plane was no meteor come to end all life, as its predecessor nearly had so long before Hao Jin's time. It descended in a cradle of her magic, an entire mountain pulled from its current haven to finally return home. Even she might have balked at her task, had she not known for certain that it was well within her power; for it was she who had taken the mountain in the first place, pulling it up from the depths of the Darklands, when the ratfolk had invaded the surface of Tian Xia and no other peaceful solution could be found...



MAJOR EVENTS

Lost Omens: Legends features many NPCs who are or have been involved in major global events. These events are large enough that player characters might also have been involved before the start of a campaign, or might be pulled into their wake. Either way, getting player characters involved in major storylines in the Age of Lost Omens is an excellent way for characters to meet or know of these NPCs. Some of these storylines are below.

The Devastation of Geb and Nex

In the very distant past, two powerful and egotistical wizards encountered one another, leading to a series of events that spiraled into all-out war. Despite the bloodshed ending over 4,000 years ago, the land where they fought hasn't recovered to this day.

General Manumission

In response to a sudden attack on the prominent city of Absalom, Siege Lord Wynsal Starborn offered freedom to any slave willing to fight in defense of their home, and later banned slavery entirely. The closure of a huge market for slaves, alongside other major abolitionist efforts, provided an economic push for many other nations to ban slavery in response, much to the displeasure of the slavers.

The Ironfang Invasion

An army of hobgoblins and other monstrous peoples swept through the region near Lake Encarthan—in part out of revenge for a previous war that cost thousands of lives. Though the militia of Nirmathas managed to forge peace and potentially end the cycle of violence, many people aren't happy with their decision to form a truce with their enemies.

New Thassilon

The ancient Thassilonian mages known as the runelords have been troubling Varisia for the last decade, starting with the return and defeat of Runelord Karzoug. Recently an entire ancient Thassilonian city appeared in Varisia, alongside two more of the ancient runelords, Belimarius and Sorshen.

INTRODUCTION

Golarion is a land made up of impenetrable forests, precipitous mountains, underground cities, vast oceans, sprawling metropolises, massive fortresses, labyrinthine dungeons, and, of course, monsters. But it is also populated by people, from the rulers of empires to the rebels that work to bring down their regimes, and everything in between. Heroes must navigate relationships with a variety of people to further their quests, including smugglers, mages, scholars, artists, wealthy collectors, evangelists, and charlatans. From encounters with the people that populate their world, PCs can make friends, learn new skills, buy armor and weapons, gain information, and even enjoy a good meal. As adventurers become more powerful, authority figures might draw them into complex strategies and schemes or ask them to solve complicated problems. Heroes might spend only a single hour or a day with a given NPC, or they might form enduring friendships and relationships. So too might these characters become one-time enemies or even persistent antagonists; heroes might repeatedly encounter the same opponents, as the fortunes of war and the rise and fall of different nations and philosophies shape their world.

The Age of Lost Omens setting is rich in notable NPCs (non-player characters). This collection brings together a wide variety of the most memorable movers and shakers of the setting, as well as characters who have recently risen to the forefront. The Inner Sea region has evolved, shaped by the paroxysms of intense magic, the movements of armies, and the actions of tremendous heroes over the past decade. The pages ahead detail the lives and the connections among the powerful and the iconoclastic, the evil and the idealistic, the long renowned and the newly famous.

Although these NPCs are spread throughout the world, they don't exist in a vacuum. Many of them know each other, either as allies or enemies, and each entry describes connections that the NPC has with other NPCs in this book. These connections aren't exhaustive; if your story demands it, practically any NPC presented here can have a connection to any other. At the very least, as these NPCs are all so notable in the world, each of them is very likely aware of the others. Where the notable NPCs presented in this book have relationships or rivalries with NPCs that aren't fully detailed here, the text or sidebars instead include brief character information enclosed in parentheses, such as **Xleighlei** (LN female elf martial artist).

For the GM, having a robust set of NPCs is a must for providing an immersive and engaging game. A solid knowledge of the motives, behaviors, and pasts of these influential characters adds greater depth. These portraits can help a GM gain a better understanding of a corner of Golarion that is new to them—the interactions between the linnorm kings and Baba Yaga, for example, or the relationships among the Bellflower Network, the Firebrands, and the rebels of Vidrian. GMs can use the pages that follow to bring these NPCs to life, whether to vividly sketch a certain scenario or place or to formulate new plot hooks. There's nothing like the threat of the brig of Hurricane Queen Tessa Fairwind's pirate ship to heighten the drama for your players!

CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

Some of these NPC entries also include a tangible element associated with the character, such as a message, a map, or a portion of a contract. The GM may provide these items as handouts to the players to represent in-world documents or artifacts that relate to the NPC, and they can serve as springboards to further adventures.

For the player, this book provides a window into many of the regions, philosophies, and relationships that shape Golarion, as well as a number of potential allies and rivals. A player might also find intriguing tidbits about organizations and philosophies that their character would want to follow, potentially drawing from these portraits to complete a compelling backstory or to explore a new direction for their character.

Players might also want to read up on these various luminaries for more concrete reasons. Some of the following sections include rare elements for use in play, such



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as new feats, previously unknown spells, and unique magic items. To gain access to these rare options or items, heroes must meet the person in question (for those still living and whose whereabouts are known) or otherwise pursue their legacy. Thus, players might be inspired to suggest encounters or even quests involving these notable actors on the Inner Sea region's wide stage. The entries also contain adventure hooks that might bring the heroes into contact with the NPC or even spawn campaigns of their own. In some cases, the NPC might have a mission they need loyal agents to perform, while other entries include motives that might put the heroes into conflict with the NPC. In either case, these stories and portraits are intended to provide seeds of encounters or adventures that allow the heroes to gain access to the new rules elements provided with each NPC. Remember that the GM is the ultimate arbiter in granting these rewards.

A richer experience in the Age of Lost Omens setting awaits anyone who gets to know these intriguing characters. Their actions and passions have had an outsized influence in shaping the Inner Sea region, and that influence continues to this day.

SPOILERS AHEAD!

Many of the NPCs showcased in this book have been involved in major events and occurrences within the Inner Sea region. These events often coincide with Pathfinder Adventure Paths: pre-written campaigns that offer player characters the chance to be a part of Golarion's ongoing history. While *Lost Omens: Legends* does its best not to spoil every twist and turn that players might encounter over the course of these Adventure Paths, it does make assumptions about how the Adventure Paths ended, and the very presence of certain NPCs within this book may provide spoilers for the ultimate fate of various characters. Characters that feature in prominent roles within Adventure Paths are accompanied by a sidebar labeled "Familiar Faces," which indicates where these NPCs previously appeared.

The Ravounel Rebellion

Many seek freedom from Chelixa's tyranny. Rebels in the nation of Ravounel gained succession from Chelixa, but a similar Westcrown uprising called the Glorious Reclamation was crushed by Chelixa's forces.

Revolution in Vidrian

The former Chelaxian colony of Sargava in the Mwangi Expanse had been plagued by financial difficulties for decades. After the colony missed one too many payments to the local soldiers, the disgruntled army joined forces with the oppressed indigenous Mwangi in order to overthrow the colonial government.

War Against Tar-Baphon

The lich Tar-Baphon was imprisoned centuries ago but has been trying to break free ever since. He succeeded a year ago and mustered his undead forces to march upon Absalom, though he was routed by extraordinary heroes.

ABROGAIL THRUNE II

QUEEN OF CHELIAIX

LE FEMALE HUMAN SORCERER

The Thrice-Damned House of Thrune brought order to a bleeding and chaotic nation, ending the Chelaxian Civil War in 4640 AR, but its scions could never maintain order among their own. While the nation submitted to a stringent and brutal law enforced by the Hellknights, House Thrune and its allies churned through intrigues and sabotage behind closed doors. Abrogail Thrune II, future queen of Cheliax, was born in 4692 AR, and named by her mother to invoke the power and longevity of her own grandmother, Queen Abrogail I, whose three decades of rule were legendary. However, as each of the five monarchs to wear the Crown of Infernal Majesty, including Abrogail I, met with untimely ends, Abrogail II learned early to trust nothing—nothing except Hell.

Abrogail's devotion to Asmodeus began early, out of necessity amid the turmoil of a home life marked by scheming diabolism, or perhaps from comprehending that, like all Thrunes, she was already damned. It's said that Asmodeus himself responded by sending a winged devil, **Contessa Lrilatha** (LE female erinys), to tutor her. Young Abrogail quickly proved herself to be remarkably smart and even more devious, training with her inborn magical ability to become a powerful sorcerer in a few short years. Charismatic and visually striking, Abrogail mastered the art of manipulating others for her own gain. Abrogail would occasionally appear to be caught up in a romance or taken with a new celebrity, but such fancies were never unmotivated. The calculations behind all of her actions, even in adolescence, were in the name of power. But, in House Thrune, power is the only means to ensure survival.

When yet another tragic death ended the reign of Infrexus Thrune in 4709 AR, Abrogail became the infernal majestrix, absolute ruler of Cheliax, at 17 years of age.

Her word carries the full weight of law, although it is far from immutable. In fact, she frequently changes her mind and has her former edicts erased from the books of Chelaxian history; overnight, even the direst decrees become outdated and are no longer enforced. Keenly aware of her reputation as being immature, capricious, and demanding, Abrogail cleverly uses this image to keep those who underestimate her off-balance. Yet she controls the fractious noble houses and byzantine bureaucracy of Cheliax predominantly through fear. Against those who offend her personally, her favorite punishment is petrification—an eternity in stone under her watchful eye in the Imperial Palace. These ornamental traitors further serve to remind every visitor, courtier, slave, and fiend of the majestrix's supreme authority.

Even so, Abrogail's rule has faced stronger challenges to Cheliax than any since her great-grandmother's reign. Abrogail I saw the rebellions of the vassal states of Andoran and Galt; Abrogail II has fought against rebellions in Ravounel and Westcrown, with mixed results. While her forces stamped out the so-called Glorious Reclamation in Westcrown, Abrogail was forced to cede independence to Ravounel, and has failed to reclaim the former colony of Vidrian, which she still petulantly calls Sargava. These defeats are a still-festering wound as she ceaselessly contemplates how to extend her influence in the Inner Sea region.

BLOODY REPRISALS

Though Abrogail's recent defeats have emboldened some of her enemies, those dissidents who operate in and around Cheliax are keenly aware these setbacks have bruised the queen's ego more than her power. Though forced to accept Ravounel's independence, Abrogail's victory in Westcrown was far more significant than many realize. In addition to creating the *Inferno Gate*, a portal to Hell that has allowed Cheliax to summon legions of devils to serve at the queen's command, Abrogail's agents also crushed the powerful



warriors of good that fought in the Glorious Reclamation. Terrified citizens whisper of the souls and bodies of dead champions and celestials given over to the lords of Hell, and of more terrifying fates awaiting prisoners taken alive: sale to the shadow-sworn land of Nidal. Worse yet are tales of the queen offering refugees from the Gravelands safety if they agree to sign contracts of indentured servitude, then trading these contracts to Nidal's priests of Zon-Kuthon in exchange for unknown favors.

Abrogail's most recent triumph was seizing the opportunity to massacre the church of Iomedae in Egorian for "seditious activity." In a proclaimed act of solidarity against Tar-Baphon, Abrogail offered the clergy a sign of her good will: *Heart's Edge*, the sword that Iomedae wielded before ascending to godhood, which Abrogail had claimed as spoils of war from the Glorious Reclamation. Yet a subtle trap in the legal conditions for the exchange tricked Iomedae's faithful into inadvertently breaking the agreement and thereby committing treason, giving Abrogail free reign to slaughter them with the sword of their own goddess. The queen likewise executed those church members brave enough to speak out in protest, and she keeps the sword as a trophy by the side of her throne, still coated in the dried blood of Iomedae's servants.

While Chelias's capital of Egorian is firmly under Abrogail's thumb, the Order of the Scourge Hellknights, led by Lictor Toulon Vidoc, are a notable exception. During the rapid successions of previous Thrune monarchs, these Hellknights took the opportunity to consolidate a good deal of power throughout the city. Abrogail has often faced opposition from the Order of the Scourge, and now Lictor Vidoc is investigating the recent turmoil in Chelias. Vidoc earnestly believes that Abrogail contributed to the recent rebellions, and perhaps even staged them for her own political or financial gain. Infuriated by the mere suggestion, and especially enraged by what she sees as Vidoc's swaggering arrogance, Abrogail has contacted Jakalyn of the Red Mantis assassins. Jakalyn responded by publicly announcing her assassins would eliminate certain targets that remain untouchable through normal political channels.

This isn't the only time Jakalyn has contacted Abrogail. The queen recently contacted the Red Mantis with a request to eliminate the Rahadoumi healer Kassi Aziril. Deeply offended by Kassi's godless philosophies and concerned that they will attract adherents in Chelias, Abrogail declared Kassi blasphemous against Iomedae and Asmodeus. But to Abrogail's surprise, Jakalyn reached out and informed the queen she had voided the contract. Taking things into her own hands, Abrogail issued a public excruciation order—a process of public torture and humiliation (and in some cases, execution)—against Kassi, should she be found inside Chelias at any time.

Abrogail also has standing excruciation orders for Magdalena and Martum Fallows and any of their operatives in the Bellflower Network or their allies among the Firebrands, such as the Sapphire Butterfly. The two organizations' efforts to free Chelaxian halflings from slavery is a constant thorn in Abrogail's side, reminding her of the limits of her power and of the dissidents who challenge her rule. The Bellflower Network is headquartered in Andoran, where it receives support from that country's abolitionist citizens; Andira Marusek, Andoran's current leader, has refused to extradite any Bellflower Network operatives or liberated slaves. In response, Queen Abrogail recently placed an army of devils on the eastern borders of Chelias, responding to Andoran's outrage by claiming the army is meant to defend the people of Chelias from the forces of the Whispering Tyrant. Andira's contempt for Abrogail's blatant intimidation tactic is obvious, and Abrogail returns Andira's hatred, leaving open war between the nations closer than ever.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Andira Marusek (page 12), Asmodeus (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 14), Hashim ibn Sayyid (page 50), Iomedae (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 28), Jakalyn (page 56), Kassi Aziril (page 70), Magdalena and Martum Fallows (page 84), Sapphire Butterfly (page 94), Tar-Baphon (page 104), Toulon Vidoc (page 112), Zon-Kuthon (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 50)

INFERNAL CONTRACTS

Abrogail Thrune II has established diabolically binding *Thrune contracts* (page 10) with several notable figures, including the following.

Golath Thamus (N male halfling

sorcerer): A manager in the employ of one of the secret blood kings and queens of Vyre—the rulers of that vice-steeped city in Ravounel—Golath entered into his *Thrune contract* after a terrifying attempt on his life, but ceded much of his personal will to House Thrune in exchange.

Hedvend VI (LE male human

aristocrat): The steward of the vassal state of Isger has a public *Thrune contract* permitting him full authority over the administration of Isger.

Hedvend's *Thrune contract* has so many loopholes and contingencies that it provides him no real protection; he serves merely at Abrogail's whim.

Maestro Quendle Strikrunner (N

female human diva): The owner, master composer, and prima donna of the Warius Opera House, one of Egorian's grandest entertainment venues. Her secret *Thrune contract* keeps Quendle supernaturally aware of changes in the ever-shifting Chelaxian art scene, in exchange for Quendle's inability to utter anti-Chelaxian lyrics.

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DEVILS ON THE SHOULDER

For her closest advisors, Queen Abrogail chose her former tutor Contessa Lrilatha and **Gorthoklek** (LE male pit fiend), the devil who had served her great-grandmother. These powerful fiends beside the throne do not control it, however: Abrogail herself is firmly in charge of Cheliah. She has worked tirelessly and ruthlessly to consolidate her power, and rumors fly that Gorthoklek must counsel Abrogail against her most vicious impulses.

INFERNAL CONTRACTS

Many devils enter into magical contracts with mortals to provide supernatural powers in exchange for their souls. Abrogail Thrune II is one of the few mortals empowered by Asmodeus himself to enter into such contracts with other mortals. Each of these *Thrune contracts* provide specific benefits and drawbacks. Little negotiation goes into a *Thrune contract*; Abrogail insists that prospective bargainers take her terms or go elsewhere (often, to Egorian's excruciation fields). *Thrune contracts* must be willingly signed by Abrogail and the other signatory. The process involves creation of two copies of the contract, one retained by Abrogail and one by the other signatory.

The effect of a *Thrune contract* is that of a magic item with the contract trait. The item has no physical substance and can't be dispelled, altered, or destroyed except by destroying both copies of the contract. A *Thrune contract* is automatically invested and counts toward a character's limit of 10 invested items—all *Thrune contracts* therefore have, as part of their cost, a fraction of the bargainer's ability to use other magic items. Abrogail, however, can enter into any number of *Thrune contracts* without restriction, and some believe she is even siphoning the other parties' investiture to increase her own. Once invested, *Thrune contracts* aren't visible—even though their effects can be—although anyone who has one is constantly aware of its presence. If a creature dies while it has a *Thrune contract* invested, its soul is consigned to Hell and it can't be restored to life unless its soul is freed.

FIENDISH TELEPORTATION

ITEM 11

RARE CONJURATION CONTRACT INVESTED MAGICAL

You tap into the fiendish ability to slip through space. When you Stride, you gain a +3 item bonus to Armor Class against reactions triggered by your movement. Once per day, from any distance, Abrogail Thrune II can call on a provision in your *Thrune contract* as a single action, causing you to become paralyzed for 1 hour or until Abrogail releases you, whichever comes first.

Activate ♦♦ command; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You recite a subclause of your contract regarding change in venue. You cast *dimension door*. The space you leave and the one you appear in are filled with the scent of brimstone, dealing 2d6 evil damage to creatures adjacent to both spaces.

INFERNAL HEALTH

ITEM 15

RARE CONTRACT HEALING INVESTED MAGICAL

You regain triple the normal number of Hit Points when resting (meaning you regain triple your Constitution modifier multiplied by your level). The healing you gain from long-term rest is similarly tripled. Once per day, from any distance, Abrogail Thrune II can recite a voidability clause in your *Thrune contract* as a 1-minute activity to prevent you from regaining Hit Points from resting for 1 day.

Activate ♦♦ command; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You recite a subclause regarding mandatory remediation from your *Thrune contract*. For 6 rounds, at the start of your turn each round, you recover 25 Hit Points unless you took good damage since the start of your previous turn.

UNENDING YOUTH

ITEM 20

RARE CONJURATION CONTRACT INVESTED MAGICAL

You cease aging, and if you were older than young adult in age, you become a young adult again. You gain a +4 status bonus to saves against death effects and resistance to negative damage equal to half your level. Once per day, from any distance, Abrogail Thrune II can recite a mandatory appearance clause in your *Thrune contract* as a 3-action activity to summon you to her side, where you are controlled by Abrogail for 1 minute before you return.

Activate ♦♦ command; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You recite a hold harmless provision from your *Thrune contract*. Reduce your doomed value to 0. Abrogail Thrune II is immediately made aware that you have used this ability.



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Subsection 14.50.010.004. **No Limitations; Right of First Refusal.** Nothing set forth in this Agreement (including, without limitation, the receipt of Infernal Services under this Agreement) shall: (a) limit the INFERNAL PARTY's ability to make any similar arrangements as that set forth in this Agreement to any other mortal or immortal parties, including but not limited to any adversaries of the MORTAL PARTY, or (b) prevent the MORTAL PARTY from entering into any other agreement, whether similar to this Agreement or otherwise, with any other agent or representative of the Juridical Bureaucracy of the Boundless Pit (an "Other Infernal Agreement"); provided, however, that no such Other Infernal Agreement may involve the sale, lease, forfeiture, or other use of the MORTAL PARTY's immortal soul without first providing the INFERNAL PARTY a right of first refusal to provide similar contractual services upon reasonable and equitable terms; or (c) create obligations binding in any way on the Juridical Bureaucracy of the Boundless Pit the ability to utilize any fiendish entity or fully corrupted mortal soul for any purpose for durations determined entirely by the Juridical Bureaucracy of the Boundless Pit in its sole discretion.

Section 14.50.010.005. **Severability.** If any provision, or portion thereof, of this Agreement is found to be invalid, unlawful, or unenforceable to any extent by an infernal court of jurisdiction deemed competent by the Juridical Bureaucracy of the Boundless Pit, such provision of this Agreement will be enforced to the maximum extent permissible by applicable infernal law so as to affect the intent of the parties, and the remainder of this Agreement will continue in full force and effect. The parties will negotiate an enforceable substitute provision for any invalid or unenforceable provision that most nearly achieves the intent and economic effect of such provision; provided, however, that if the parties are unable to agree upon such a provision, a substitute provision advanced by the INFERNAL PARTY shall not be binding on the parties hereunder.

Section 14.50.010.006. **Waiver.** Any waiver of the provisions of this Agreement or of a party's rights or remedies under this Agreement must be in writing to be effective, with such writings delivered pursuant to the Notices provision hereof set forth below. Failure, neglect, or delay by the INFERNAL PARTY to enforce the provisions of this Agreement or such party's rights or remedies at any time will not be construed as a waiver of the INFERNAL PARTY's rights under this Agreement, and will not in any way affect the validity of the whole or any part of this Agreement or prejudice such party's right to take subsequent action.

Section 14.50.010.007. **Successors and Assigns.** Neither this Agreement nor any rights under this Agreement may be assigned or otherwise transferred by either party, in whole or in part, whether voluntarily or by operation of law, including by way of sale of assets, merger, consolidation or otherwise, without the prior written consent of the other party; provided, however, the INFERNAL PARTY shall have the right to assign this Agreement without the prior written consent of the MORTAL PARTY in the event of a transfer of the INFERNAL PARTY's authority or titles within the Juridical Bureaucracy of the Boundless Pit to any quality or degree. Subject to the foregoing, this Agreement will be binding upon and will inure to the benefit of the parties and their respective successors and assigns. Any assignment in violation of this Section shall be null and void and, further, if made by the MORTAL PARTY, shall forfeit the immortal soul of the MORTAL PARTY to the Juridical Bureaucracy of the Boundless Pit.

Section 14.50.010.010. **Notices.** Any notice required or permitted under the terms of this Agreement or required by law must be in writing and must be delivered directly to, and received by, the INFERNAL PARTY (for notices provided by the MORTAL PARTY) or delivered to a location on Golarion determined by the INFERNAL PARTY in such party's sole discretion (for notices provided by the INFERNAL PARTY). Notices will be considered to have been given at the time of delivery pursuant to the provisions hereof.

Section 14.50.011.100. **Construction; Interpretation.** Notwithstanding any other provision hereunder, including but not limited to Section 2.050.100.009, this Agreement and any instrument referred to herein or executed and delivered in connection herewith, including but not limited to amendments, exhibits, allonges, or other addenda, will not be construed against the INFERNAL PARTY as the principal drafter hereof or thereof. The section and paragraph headings used in this Agreement are inserted for convenience only and will not affect the meaning or interpretation of this Agreement, except that any section numbering omitted herein (including but not limited to Section 8.01.001.003 and Section 14.50.010.008 hereof) shall be inserted as provided by the INFERNAL PARTY in such party's sole discretion and shall be agreed upon and binding upon, sight unseen, by the MORTAL PARTY. Unless otherwise expressly stated to the contrary herein, all remedies are cumulative, and the exercise of any express remedy by the INFERNAL PARTY herein does not by itself waive such party's right to exercise other rights and remedies available at law or in equity. Regarding interpretation of the provisions hereunder, the parties hereto acknowledge and agree that this Agreement shall be interpreted in such a manner as to remove the word "not" from the final sentence of Section 3.100.250.010 and from the final sentence of Section 14.50.010.005, and that such interpretations shall be binding upon the parties hereto.

GET OUT AND VOTE!

Although Andoran's citizens have more say in their fates than most, this presents Andira with a challenge that most of her fellow leaders don't have to face. Upcoming elections have forced her to juggle her current endeavors with a campaign for reelection, if she is to be able to accomplish her larger goals and make the most of her position.

ANDIRA MARUSEK

SUPREME ELECT OF ANDORAN

LG FEMALE HUMAN EAGLE KNIGHT

The Marusek family originally hailed from the port city of Augustana and had enough wealth to enjoy comfortable lives there. As a result, Andira grew up a happy child without wants or complaints. As a gift for her fifteenth birthday, Andira's parents paid for a voyage to Niswan in Jalmeray. A set of slaver galleys ambushed Andira's ship during her return journey, and she soon found herself the latest in a group of slaves serving as rowers. After several months Andira lost all hope of ever returning home, until a fleet of Gray Corsair ships found the trio of galleys and liberated Andira in the process. Among the Gray Corsairs was a woman named **Andira Galimnos** (LG female human Gray Corsair); the young Andira believed the fact that two shared a name to be more than mere coincidence. During the voyage home, Andira made it her goal to join the Eagle Knights to help others, much like Andira Galimnos had helped her.

JOINING THE EAGLE KNIGHTS

Upon her return to Augustana, Andira found herself immediately clashing with her parents. The Maruseks had their daughter once more, and the thought of Andira setting out to dangerous locations to fight slavers brought fear to their hearts. After months of pleading, Andira eventually received her parents' blessing and made her way to Almas to present herself at the Golden Aerie and join the Eagle Knights. The young Andira was a voracious learner, studying diplomacy, negotiation tactics, politics, and philosophy with the same zeal that she carried on the battlefield. Her expertise soon earned her a position among the Eagle Knight's Twilight Talons branch, marking her as one of the youngest Eagle Knights to do so.

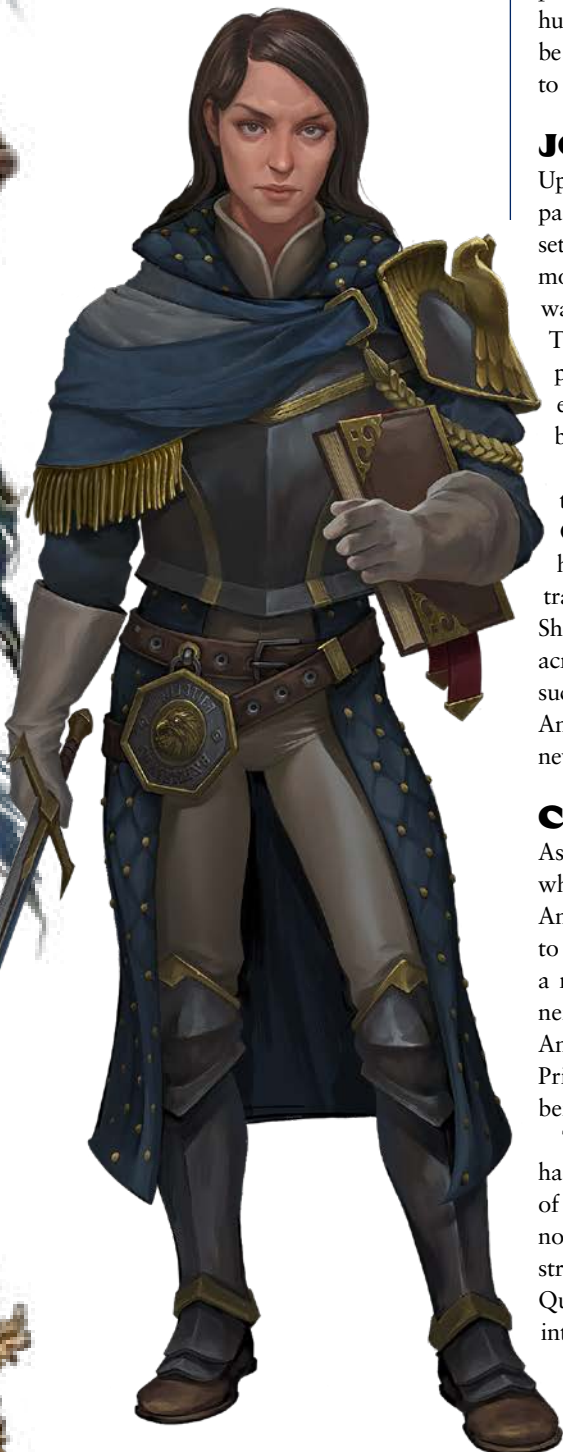
Andira eventually tired of espionage and left her successful career as a spy in the Twilight Talons to better serve as a public figure to inspire others, much like Galimnos had inspired her long ago. Marusek joined the Steel Falcons, where her previous training served her well. As a result of her new position, Andira traveled farther than ever before, with easier access to ports replete with slavers. She publicly pushed for abolition when she could and boldly raided slaver galleons across the whole of the Inner Sea when policy was not enough. Her experience and success eventually earned her the title of General of the Steel Falcons. By 4716 AR, Andira had attracted the audience necessary to be voted into office as Andoran's new Supreme Elect, a position she took in 4717 AR on the eve of her 30th birthday.

COMMANDER IN CHIEF

As Supreme Elect, Andira Marusek has found herself adjusting to a life of politics, where righteousness and bold action are more often detriments than strengths. Andira believes that freeing slaves and destroying slavers shouldn't come second to the squabble of national dignitaries, but her duties have forced her to adopt a more tempered role on the world stage. Despite welcome overtures from the neighboring Grand Princess Eutropia, Andira finds that the relationship that the Andoran people have with Taldor is still strained, as Eutropia's father, Grand Prince Stavian III, still considered Andoran part of the Taldan Empire, despite being either unable or unwilling to enforce the claim.

Though on good terms with her neighbors in Kyonin, Andira is cautious to jump hastily into further relations with the elven queen, as she understands that many of Telandia's maneuvers are governed in the background by different advisors and nobles. Also, Andira strongly believes in democratic rule and is reluctant to ally too strongly with nations ruled by monarchies. Despite this, Andira works to encourage Queen Telandia's recent progressive policies, and the two have collaborated over the integration of elves and non-elves in the town of Greengold.

Andira also has an interesting relationship with Galt. Both nations were founded on the same principles, but Galt collapsed into an eternal and bloody revolution



that proved just as tyrannical as any dictator. While Andira shares her nation's caution around their former ally, she has slowly changed her position after Camilia Drannoch was named head of the Revolutionary Council. After Camilia shared her secret desire to destroy the *final blades*—the soul-trapping guillotines used to enforce the terror within Galt—Andira cemented a clandestine alliance, eventually extending the help of the Steel Falcons to aid Camilia's ultimate goal of purging Galt of its cruelties.

Relations with Andoran's western neighbor are sourer. Cheliox's extreme diabolism and the despotic rule of Queen Abrogail Thrune II repulse the Supreme Elect, as does its embrace of slavery. The people of Andoran largely echo this hostility, so when Andira took office as Supreme Elect, she inherited a country on the brink of war with Cheliox. Queen Abrogail returns the hatred with interest, and the two leaders' barely disguised contempt for one another has dragged political tensions to greater heights, culminating with Queen Abrogail placing an army of devils on the border between the two nations. With Andira unwilling to back down against this threat, the dual powers may soon erupt into violence.

WINDS OF LIBERATION

Andira Marusek is among a short list of Supreme Elects, and her youth in comparison to her predecessor, **Codwin I of Augustana** (LG male human paladin of Iomedae), places an incredible pressure on her shoulders from both the people of her own nation and those neighboring. With her concrete and uncompromising opposition to slavery, Andira has found herself unofficially thrust into the role of leader of the abolitionist cause in the Inner Sea region. This has in turn garnered the attention, both positive and negative, of most neighboring nations and cities that don't enforce universal anti-slavery laws toward all ancestries.

Using her roles as a general and leader of the People's Council, Andira has the Gray Corsairs dock at foreign ports and fight slavery in locations where it is most prominent. The yellow-sailed slave ships of Katapesh are a particularly favored target; Pactbroker Hashim ibn Sayyid seems to have given up on even token admonishments of Andoran for their sacking of such vessels. Absalom has become a favored refuge of these returning Grey Corsairs, ever since Wynsal Starborn manumitted the city slaves and subsequently banned the practice of slavery. Andoran's leaders seem to have taken this move as an implicit sign of alliance between Absalom and Andoran, though no one has been so crass as to insinuate such out loud. Andira has opted for a gentler approach when it comes to Qadira, however, hoping that the new abolitionist shahiyan, Deena al-Parishat, can sway public opinion without the need for foreign force.

Responses to Andira's abolitionist crusade vary. In Katapesh, gnolls despise the Eagle Knights and fear that the Supreme Elect will further crack down on their trade. In Cheliox, Andira is jeered as weak, and even those that share her views are not optimistic about the Supreme Elect daring to wage war for the cause of abolitionism. The people of Andoran have a somewhat opposite sense of the situation, believing that if their Supreme Elect doesn't act, Cheliox will do so first as a preventative measure against abolitionism.

Andira still believes that the best strategy toward ending slavery altogether is through calm and organized dedication toward the common goal, though she wouldn't abstain from doing so under a more forceful flag. She views the lack of faith some have regarding her leadership as a tool, rather than an obstacle, and looks forward to wielding it for her own ends.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Camilia Drannoch (page 38), Deena al-Parishat (page 120), Eutropia Stavian (page 42), Hashim ibn Sayyid (page 50), Iomedae (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 28), Magdalena and Martum Fallows (page 84), Telandia Edasseril (page 106), Wynsal Starborn (page 118)



BITTER EXPERIENCE

Andira's time with the Twilight Talons saw her on countless missions beyond Andoran's borders. As part of her work, she met with Magdalena and Martum Fallows of the Bellflower Network and helped conduct several operations while in disguise. Andira's efforts continued for nearly a decade as she slowly armed herself with new, aggressive fighting techniques as well as an extensive knowledge of Bellflower poisons and medicines that derived from plants and animals. Her experience steered her in the direction of some of the harshest slave ports, where she witnessed many horrific trafficking abuses.

Andira's early work with the Bellflower Network exposed her to the worst that Cheliox had to offer, especially to enslaved halflings and other non-human peoples, which only further instilled disgust for the nation and its thrice-damned leader.

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Though our acquaintance with the high king of Dongun is confined to letters, it remains exceptionally memorable. The king holds great wisdom beyond her centuries, and she always finds an answer for what troubles her people. It seems that anyone speaking with her will find exactly what they needed in her eyes: compassion, friendship, guidance, ruthlessness.
—High King Borogrim the Hale

ANONG ARUNAK

HIGH KING OF DONGUN HOLD

LG FEMALE DWARF ARISTOCRAT

The dwarven fortress city of Dongun Hold, a rare and fiercely guarded outpost of civilization and safety in the magic-dead Mana Wastes, has been ruled for centuries by the dwarven High King Anong Arunak. It was High King Arunak who met personally with the eccentric exile **Ancil Alkenstar** (LN male human engineer), who went on to found the nation that shares his name, and it was Arunak who both directed the development of firearms in Dongun Hold and negotiated the lucrative trade agreements that permit Alkenstar's Gunworks to manufacture and sell the dwarven inventions. Few people have been more instrumental in shaping the recent history and current position of the Mana Wastes than the High King of Dongun Hold, and yet very little is known about her.

Anong Arunak began her life far underground in a cavern in the Darklands, where the dwarves of Dongun Hold had retreated to escape the unending war between the wizards Nex and Geb. Born to the royal house and trained since birth to rule her people, she complemented that education with her own studies to become one of the most far-sighted leaders of her generation. When Ancil Alkenstar discovered the dwarves and the gunpowder weapons that they had perfected, Anong accepted an audience with the refugee, listening to his news of an end to the war between the wizards and a refuge for exiles located in the Mana Wastes.

Recognizing the unique opportunity presented by Alkenstar and his encampment, High King Arunak led her people back to the surface to retake their ancestral Sky Citadel, invested heavily in the nascent technology of firearms to protect her people from the lethal beasts of the Mana Wastes, and then further capitalized on that investment by licensing the technology to Alkenstar's Gunworks. However, she also understood the threat that such weapons could pose in unworthy hands and has firmly restricted the number that become available for outside trade, though production limits have been increased in recent years. Similarly, High King Arunak pushed aside the hold's entrenched xenophobia to aid and protect Alkenstar's early settlers, ensuring that the nation would become a strong ally for Dongun Hold.

High King Arunak was even willing to open negotiations with the magic-infused nation of Nex, whose arcane wars with Geb devastated Dongun Hold in an earlier age. Although the Nex-Geb war caused immense suffering in Dongun Hold as the fortress city was conquered and re-conquered by each side, High King Arunak overruled her isolationist advisors and chose to open trade lines with a nation that her people had mistrusted for centuries.

TROUBLE IN PARADISE

The high king's decisions have led Dongun Hold to unprecedented prosperity, but her rulings haven't gone unchallenged. Centuries of seclusion have left many Dongun dwarves with a profound mistrust of others, and though more than a century of alliance with Alkenstar has softened this view, extremists remain common. Each of Anong Arunak's policies has invited its own set of enemies. The Keepers of the Skyflame, a cohort of traditionalist dwarves originally founded to maintain Dongun Hold's cultural links to its fellow Sky Citadels, opposed the development of firearms as an unnecessary and dangerous innovation. The Skyflame also opposed letting any of that technology slip into human



hands and they were infuriated by the idea of opening trade links with Nex and Alkenstar. The Goldhand Lodge, another frequent opponent of the king's, is a mercantile association that wants to raise the Gunworks' production quota so that they can increase their profits. Goldhand agents regularly try to evade the king's restrictions; several of them have been arrested for smuggling firearms and other contraband out of Dongun Hold. High King Arunak has recently received envoys from Hashim ibn Sayyid, the enigmatic Pactbroker of Katapesh, who wishes to open trade negotiations—the Goldhand Lodge is now pressuring the king to embrace the Pactbroker's offer immediately, and the suggestion has predictably infuriated the Keepers of the Skyflame. For now, the king is trying to chart a middle course.

Another budding problem is the upwelling of popular anxiety about the rumored return of the archwizard Nex. The mighty fleshforges of Ecanus have suddenly begun to churn uncontrolled horrors into the Mana Wastes, putting both Alkenstar and Dongun Hold in peril. The possibility of Nex's return, and the reignition of his country's long war with Geb, has inflamed deep-rooted fears in Dongun Hold. Pressure has fallen on High King Arunak to re-open the old underground quarters, reinforce the old protections, and ensure that they are ready to receive the city's population if the worst should come. After centuries of disuse, some of these tunnels have fallen into dangerous disrepair, and others have become infested with monsters. Clearing and restoring them is an expensive, hazardous endeavor.

Despite these challenges, High King Arunak remains broadly popular with her people, for she has greatly elevated Dongun Hold's power and prosperity. In Alkenstar, which would not exist as a nation without her help, the king is considered nearly a saint, and the companies of dwarven sharpshooters that Dongun Hold sends to help defend Alkenstar from marauding monsters are widely celebrated as heroes. Of course, the king's support is not entirely altruistic: these sharpshooters also protect Dongun Hold by ensuring that Alkenstar is the first line of defense and bears the cost of maintaining the most sorely tested fortifications. Nevertheless, the dwarven companies are an integral part of the alliance's shared defenses, and wanderers from the Mana Wastes who wish to earn citizenship in Dongun Hold often volunteer to serve with one of the companies as a starting point.

High King Arunak also maintains cordial relations with the dwarves of the Five Kings Mountains, and she carries on a personal correspondence with the noted physician Kassi Aziril, whose achievements in non-magical healing are of considerable interest to the peoples of the Mana Wastes. Unknown to any of the other dwarves in Dongun Hold, the high king has also sent her most skilled and trusted envoy to seek a safe means to contact Overlord Ardax the White-Hair of Urgir—as Anong Arunak holds a letter with an apology so heretical to the dwarves that its delivery could dethrone her.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Ardax the White-Hair (page 16), High King Borogrim the Hale (LN male dwarf high king of Highhelm), Geb (page 44), Hashim ibn Sayyid (page 50), Kassi Aziril (page 70), Nex (page 90), Taargick (page 102)

POLITICAL LIABILITIES

With each year, as the Skyflame dwarves lose more ground in the ideological war, their tactics become more extreme. Rumors link the Skyflame to several acts of sabotage, both of the firearms themselves and of trade negotiations, and whispers persist that they have even more violent actions planned: assassinations of diplomats, staged attacks they can blame on outsiders, and worse. The high king's agents are looking for proof that might link the Keepers of the Skyflame to these acts and thus potentially bring down the venerable organization, though they fear the uproar that might follow if they find it.

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Mission failed. Agent N_____ barely finished their proposal before the orc lord reached out and snapped their neck. Orc lord then looked at me, told me curtly to leave.

Considered it prudent to oblige.

—Intercepted missive from a Varisian spy

ARDAX THE WHITE-HAIR

OVERLORD OF THE HOLD OF BELKZEN

NE MALE ORC BARBARIAN ROGUE

The land of Belkzen is harsh, and the orcs that call it home know this better than any. The various orc holds have, for most of Golarion's history, fought fiercely with one another, trading leadership at the edge of a blade and holding it through fear until death comes at the hands of another. Yet even death has not moved the orc warlord Grask Uldeth from the throne of Urgir. He sits there now, his desiccated eyes still seeming to stare at the blade in his chest, its slowly corroding point pinning him to the throne he guarded so cautiously.

None are sure how the assassin slipped past the Closed Fist patrols and through the ranks of Empty Hand warriors to plunge the sword into Uldeth, but none doubt the devotion Uldeth's advisor and majordomo, Ardax the White-Hair, still holds for his overlord. Within hours of Uldeth's assassination, the fearsome Ardax cornered the killer in a subterranean section of Urgir and slew them with little ceremony.

Though Ardax didn't claim the throne from the former warlord, he was quick to consolidate power. He assumed the role of acting overlord, though he still refers to himself as the steward of Urgir—Ardax is quite capable of ruling from his own Halls of the Closed Fist and shuns the trappings of lofty titles. His pragmatism and disdain for typical displays of strength and power have led to rumors that the Throne of Urgir is cursed. Why else would Ardax refuse to take it?

TERRIFYING WISDOM

Ardax is highly unusual among the orcs of Belkzen for having lived to middle-age, avoiding an untimely death in the many battles and power struggles that plague that land. His age aside, Ardax is a perplexing sight among his kin: where most orcs have dark hair (or bald heads) and fearsome spiked armor, Ardax keeps his white hair held in a tight topknot and wears simple, close-fitting hide armor. He uses the confusion caused by this image as a tool of intimidation, appearing unarmed before other warlords, flanked only by a rust monster for protection. **K'zaard the Drover** (NE male orc barbarian), leader of the Cleft Head orcs, once spent so much of his meeting with Ardax looking for a weapon on him

that K'zaard could remember little else of the meeting, let alone what he had agreed to.

Ardax has an uncanny knack for divining useful information. Against the advice of the Twisted Nail hold, Ardax sent a small raiding party with the goblin **Igaz** (CE male goblin rogue) to find a supposedly hidden dwarven fort. To the surprise of all but Ardax, the party returned two weeks later hauling cartloads of dwarven armor, weapons, and artifacts. Likewise, Ardax's efforts have deeply frustrated spymasters across the Inner Sea region; their agents have spent months attempting to infiltrate Urgir and learn more about its calculating new overlord, but no matter their approach, no agent has succeed in passing through the gates of Urgir undiscovered. This constant thwarting of espionage has drawn a significant amount of interest from many who would otherwise ignore the political machinations of orcs.

Rumors of Ardax's mysterious powers of insight abound, increasingly so since the stoic orc has been seen walking the ramparts of Urgir with the former Runelord Sorshen. Her ambassadors arrived in Urgir when orcs began fleeing into her territory after Tar-Baphon escaped Gallowspire. Ardax considered pursuing the cowards to be wasted effort and allowed the fleeing orcs to stay in New Thassilon, asking only for their names. This response seems to have gained a



small amount of favor with Sorshen, who has since visited Ardash a handful of times. Though wary of her incredible power, Ardash is glad to have sown the seed of alliance with someone feared by those who may wish him harm.

THE BATTLE OF NINE BROKEN SKULLS

When the undead came to Urgir, looking to reaffirm the ancient oaths the orcs' ancestors pledged to Tar-Baphon, Ardash wasted no words on them: he had the envoys cut down as soon as they had finished their speeches. He then hung their heads on the walls of Urgir and sent their mounts back over the border dragging the messengers' corpses behind them, Tar-Baphon's proposals stuffed into their necks.

Tar-Baphon responded by sending a detachment of troops to crush the older orc and his forces, expecting the oft-fractured orc holds to fall easily. Ardash instead rallied a desperate coalition of orcs into one army, using Urgir as their fortress. When the long battle ended with the total rout of the Whispering Tyrant's forces before the united strength of the holds, Ardash strode into the field and claimed ten skulls from the fallen undead. Nine times, Ardash held a skull in the air before the gathered might of the orcs. He named each after an enemy overcome by orcs' strength and crushed them in his hands. The tenth he named Tar-Baphon and left whole, adorned with cow horns as a mockery of the Tyrant. He keeps the tenth skull nearby, bearing it as a reminder of the orcs' shared enemy.

BELKZEN, A FRAGILE NATION

The Battle of Nine Broken Skulls cemented Ardash as the effective leader of the orc holds, and the remaining orc lords declared him overlord in the wake of their victory. Ardash accepted and has busied himself since with matters of state, trying to keep his fragile alliance from falling apart while working toward a self-sufficient Belkzen. The war machines left intact after the battle with the undead were repurposed into plows, and the hold of **Regnat the Green** (CN male orc druid) of the Storm-Screamers was given the oversight of potential crops in the churned and drying mud left by the retreating waters on the Flood Road. In recognition of the Burning Sun's contribution in battle, Ardash gave the Sarenite orc hold sole rights to a stretch of hunting grounds bordering the Gravelands. Immediately following this edict, the Twisted Nail threatened to retaliate against Ardash, claiming the Burning Sun had no right to that land. Ardash responded by giving the Twisted Nail hold the honor of negotiating peace with Sheblis and Tyrkalis, the two red dragons living in the Tusk Mountains.

Outside of Belkzen, Ardash has sent emissaries south to the nation of Oprak in hopes of allying with General Azaersi. Though it seems a natural alliance, negotiations with the hobgoblin nation have been tense and slow to resolve. The orc leader of the newly unified Belkzen remains hopeful that both nations can work together and establish their legitimacy against fear and disgust from the human-dominated nations. For if Belkzen is to survive another attack from the undead or an opportunistic assault by another nation, it must make new alliances.

DESPERATE TIMES

Ardash has not been shy in seeking allies against the looming threat of Tar-Baphon's reprisals. Caravans claiming to have been saved from roving undead by orc patrols have arrived in cities near Lake Encarthan, with letters bearing the seal of Overlord Ardash the White-Hair. The letters have already reached the knight Kalabrynn lomedar on the fringes of the Gravelands, and others offer rewards to anyone willing to carry diplomatic messages from Urgir to other nations of the Inner Sea region.

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PEOPLE OF NOTE

Anong Arunak (page 14), Azaersi (page 26), Kalabrynn lomedar (page 66), Sorshen (page 34), Tar-Baphon (page 104)

A PAIR OF MISSIVES

Boss, we're running short of saltpeter and phosphorus. This class likes explosive demonstrations more than usual. Also, when is the last time you took a break?

Tukalo—Better they get the explosions out of their system now. I'll order more saltpeter and phosphorus. Bring enough salve to reattach any missing fingers. I'll have a break tomorrow. Be prepared to go to Lamasara.

ARTOKUS KIRRAN

CREATOR OF THE SUN ORCHID ELIXIR

N MALE HUMAN ALCHEMIST

It was only after Artokus paid for the fried dough from the street vendor that his familiar, Tukalo, reminded him of the proprieties. Perched on Artokus's shoulder, the meerkat nudged him. "You're supposed to ask her name. It's polite."

"Why, when I have no intention of telling her mine?" Artokus pushed his way through the crowds that thronged the streets of Lamasara. With his vigorous stride and vibrant brown skin, not one of them would guess the young man in the desert robes was over three thousand years old.

"You could have made up a name," Tukalo said, his voice taking on the professorial tone that he used for lecturing Artokus's students. The meerkat cocked his head. "But you don't ask because you don't want to know. If you learn their names, they become real to you, don't they?"

Artokus frowned. "Why did I make you again?"

"Because I know the best bugs to use for elixirs. Beetles are the tastiest." Tukalo stood high on his hind feet to peer out at the crowd. People jostled one another as they moved back and forth through the streets—not just Thuvians, but hundreds of foreign adventurers. "Are they all here for Queen Zamere's convoy?"

"Most of them," Artokus admitted. "The convoys need guards and pay well."

The pair paused to enjoy a street dance performance, right up until Artokus realized that the old actor surrounded by mincing dancers in floral costumes was supposed to be him. Tukalo stumbled as the alchemist turned in a swirl of cloth and squeaked in protest. "It was just getting good!"

Artokus' only response was a growl, so his familiar decided not to push his luck.

"Who are we coming to meet?" Tukalo asked.

"Who said we were meeting anyone?"

The meerkat sighed. "Fried dough and a bit of theater is not enough to tear the famed hermit away from his chambers. You hole yourself up, you don't even talk to your students—"

"You do a fine job teaching them."

"And if *I* lecture them, *you* don't have to meet them." Tukalo sulked, drooping on Artokus's head like a dead weight. "Do you know that many of them think you're actually dead? What am I going to *do* with you, boss?"

A spider crossed their path as the meerkat spoke. Then two.

Then ten. Swarming spiders poured through the festival crowd, the unaware mortals chatting and laughing, heedless of the carpet of arachnids at their feet.

"How can they not see this?" Tukalo breathed heavily, watching the spiders pass. Artokus said nothing.

Slowly, the spiders converged around the alchemist, herding his heels like a pack of dogs. Artokus wordlessly followed, walking slowly and with respect, though seemingly heedless of where he stepped. The spiders led them through the city and into the Serene Spiral, Lamasara's soaring temple of Pharasma. A young acolyte with umber skin and coiled black hair was waiting for them, blue robes gently swaying alongside the water in the flat pool that graced the temple's foyer.

"You are expected."

Artokus offered his sack of fried dough. With the air of a ritual, the acolyte produced a tea set, her garment slowly shifting from Pharasmin robes to gray spider silk, a webbed mask, and silver wings hung with spiders.

"You're a morrigna." The meerkat hopped in front of Artokus as if his tiny body could defend the alchemist, scanning the stranger warily.

"I am Tosof. I investigate those who thwart death or interfere with the flow of

souls.” The morrigna nodded. “Long ago, an exemption was made for Artokus Kirran in the church’s name. I have been following the case ever since.”

“The church, yes.” Artokus stretched and gestured around him at the ornate and gilded stonework. “What a fine temple to Pharamasma that was built, all with proceeds from the sun orchid. Come now, we have plenty of time for business, and Tukalo has just today lectured me to mind my proprieties. Shall we not share tea?”

“Very well.” Tosof poured drinks for all assembled at the table, taking a single sip before leaving both cup and fried dough to sit untouched on her plate.

Tukalo sniffed at the morrigna, watching the spiders spin webs between her silver wings and robes. “So, you’ve called us here to see if my boss has strayed out of line?” The meerkat’s tail twitched.

“Something like that. We like to check in once every century or so. At one point, we knew when all this would end.”

Artokus sighed. “Then prophecy broke, and so did my known terms of service.”

“An oversimplification, but yes,” the morrigna said. “You could even live forever.”

“No, I can’t.” Artokus stilled, his shoulders stiffening. He continued, in a strangled voice, “Do you know the other reason I came to Lamasara this year? It was to observe that university of arcane engineering that Lord Yamthar is building. The man hopes to wean Thuvia from the sun orchid elixir, and I pray that he manages it. Everything in all of Thuvia—the libraries, the schools, the civic halls—it all stems from the sun orchid. I dreamed of giving Thuvia its start. I was only going to do this until my nation stood on its own feet.” Artokus gestures out the window. “Look! What industry does my Thuvia have, save what I’ve created? If I pull back... If I stop, it all falls to ruin.”

“All things fa—” Tosof broke off, staring at the chewing meerkat on the table. “Are you eating my spiders?”

Tukalo popped the rest of the spider’s leg in his mouth, swallowing hard before speaking. “No, of course not. That would be rude.”

The psychopomp pulled her robes hastily away. “I think we’re done here.”

THE ARCHITECT OF IMMORTALITY

Artokus Kirran is the most famous hermit of the Inner Sea region. Born in the city-state of Merab in Thuvia, Artokus Kirran discovered the secret to eternal life in 1140 AR: an alchemical elixir made from the nectar of the sun orchid. He brought his creation to the leaders of his city, and they forged a pact. Artokus alone, of all citizens of Thuvia, would partake of the elixir, out of respect for the goddess Pharamasma. The alchemist would produce six more vials every year, which would be auctioned off to foreigners. The gold from these sales would be used to enrich and defend the nation.

Of course, with such a valuable cargo, things often go awry with anything involving the sun orchid elixir. Those who can’t afford to purchase the elixir often seek to steal it—sometimes directly from the source. Of late, Razmir the Living God failed to purchase the elixir yet again, due to disputes over ownership of some of his collateral that devalued his bid. Despite being so far unable to obtain the elixir that he seeks, Razmir has managed to send multiple threatening letters directly to Artokus Kirran himself. Merely making the elixir is also a dangerous and difficult task, and Artokus’s servants pay handsomely for living sun orchids, Thuvian oasis bee honey, and other ingredients from harsh deserts plagued by fiends, water lords, and bandits alike. Sun orchid finds have become much rarer over the decades, a fact that worries many.

Artokus keeps abreast of current events, always hoping to aid Thuvia’s economic independence. Each city-state sends him regular reports not just on auction prices but on the projects his sun orchid elixir finances. Although concerned about



TUKALO’S LECTURES: INSECTS IN ALCHEMY

The insect world is largely ignored by most people, unless they’re looking for ways to exterminate vermin and swarms. But bugs aren’t just delicious, they’re an alchemist’s best friend.

Venoms: Many of our best poisons, from giant centipede to purple worm venom, come from vermin. Poison and medicine are flip sides to one another. A bit of venom used judiciously in a potion can help a patient overcome their worst symptoms or sometimes slow the spread of a disease.

Mutagens: Can you imagine Leaper’s Elixir without essence of grasshopper? How about Juggernaut Mutagen without ant extract?

Cleansing and Processing: Bees make honey, maggots clean out rotten flesh, spiders make the silken webs we use for filters.

Dyes, Antiseptics, Reagents: Once you start looking, you will discover hundreds of specialized uses, which I will discuss in detail over the next four weeks.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Azaersi (page 26), Kassi Aziril (page 70), Pharamasma (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 38), Razmir (page 92), Tosof (N female morrigna), Lord Yamthar of House Ormuz (LN male human noble), Queen Zamere (LN female human aristocrat)

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NOTABLE SUN ORCHID ELIXIR BUYERS

No Thuvian may buy sun orchid elixir.

Queen Abrogail Thrune II—75,000 gp:

The queen purchased her first vial after recent turmoil in Cheliax.

Countess Carmilla Caliphvaso (LE female human aristocrat)—71,000 gp:

The Ustalav countess insists that the next time she purchases the elixir, it must be hand delivered by “dear Artokus Kirran.”

Queen Galfrey of Mendev (LG female herald of Iomedae)—64,000 gp:

The Mendevian people purchased the elixir for their queen twice before she abdicated to become a herald of Iomedae.

King Huang of Lingshen (LN male human fighter)—80,000 gp:

The king sent two trusted generals with chests filled with magic weapons to purchase a vial.



Aspenthar’s growing militarism, Artokus refuses to take sides between the city-states. The alchemist has also recently caused a stir by accepting two hobgoblin alchemy students at General Azaersi’s request, though Artokus is keeping any motives for his decision close to his chest.

Centuries of life and relative seclusion have taken their toll on Artokus’ personal life and social skills. He has not appeared as himself to anyone within living memory. He has close in-person relationships with his blind servants, but keeps even his students at a distance, teaching his alchemical lessons via Tukalo, his meerkat familiar. A dedicated correspondent, he does write diligently to his former students—including Kassi Aziril, a rising star—as well as to scholars, dignitaries, and economists around Golarion. One of his few non-business correspondences has been with Chancellor Irahai, a Mendevian dignitary of Thuvian heritage, with whom he discusses his hopes for his nation and shares his love of Thuvian literature and history.

ARTOKUS’S DISCOVERIES

Artokus Kirran’s legacy includes far more than just the sun orchid elixir. As one of the longest-lived alchemists in Golarion, he’s developed a number of other significant alchemical discoveries known across the Inner Sea region. The following are some of his more notable discoveries. Artokus is cautious about sharing his alchemical techniques and typically only does so with his most trusted students.

ARTOKUS’S FIRE ♦

FEAT 6

RARE ADDITIVE 2 ALCHEMIST

Frequency once per round

Trigger You use Quick Alchemy to craft an alchemist’s fire, and that bomb’s level is at least 2 levels lower than your advanced alchemy level.

Artokus developed a mixture of volatile materials that burns hotter and longer than typical alchemist’s fire. You include this additive mixture when crafting your alchemist’s fire. The alchemist’s fire deals 1d4 persistent fire damage in addition to what the alchemist fire would normally cause (for instance, a moderate alchemist’s fire deals 1d4+2 persistent fire damage). A creature taking persistent fire damage from the alchemist’s fire requires two successful flat checks to end the persistent damage, or one check if the creature had an assisted recovery that reduces the flat check to DC 10. The enhanced alchemist’s fire burns even underwater, and any attempts to end the persistent damage by using water have no effect.

SUN ORCHID POULTICE

ITEM 18

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

Price 5,000 gp

Usage held in 1 hands; Bulk L

Activate ♦ Interact

The process of creating the sun orchid elixir leaves behind a large amount of thick paste with its own healing properties. Artokus commonly sells this paste to Thuvian natives who can’t purchase the elixir proper and uses the income to support his alchemy students. When you apply the sun orchid poultice, it reduces your clumsy, drained, and enfeebled condition values by 2. In addition, the poultice provides a youthful burst of energy, granting you a +3 item bonus to saves and 20 temporary Hit Points for 1 hour.

WISH ALCHEMY

FEAT 20

RARE ALCHEMIST

You have learned Artokus Kirran’s most hidden secrets, granting you the ability to create alchemy infused with the power of wishes. Once per day when you use advanced alchemy during your daily preparations, you can spend a batch of infused reagents to create a wish vial containing a single common arcane spell of your choice of 8th level or lower. The spell must have a casting time of no more than 3 actions, no Cost, and must be able to target you. Only you can Activate the wish vial, which takes the same number of Interact actions as the spell’s casting time and grants you the effects of the spell.

Chancellor Irahai,

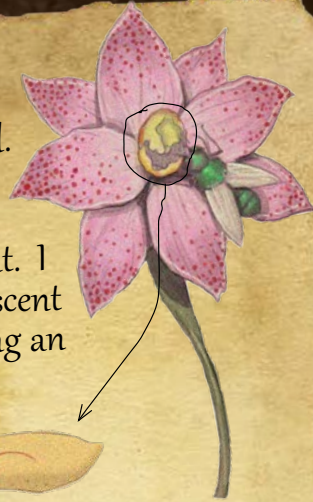
You asked how I stumbled upon sun orchids. Very well. In fact, I was chasing a bee. The Thuvian oasis bee makes honey that luminesces, provides an excellent base for suspensions, and enhances every potion that utilizes it. I sought after their hives, and soon discovered these iridescent insects were the key pollinators of wild sun orchids, having an almost exclusive relationship with those flowers.

This led to Tukalo and I living in a tent in an oasis, studying the flowers day and night. A tea made from the dried labellum and sepals tastes of vanilla and clears the mind. The thick, waxy leaves slow bleeding and have antiseptic qualities. The light white fungus that nourishes their root system makes an excellent alchemical catalyst. We discovered a secondary pollinator, the crimson pharaoh beetle—Tukalo claimed that these beetles were the tastiest. I was not as excited about them on my plate as he was, but they kept us both fed in lean times. Without them, my discovery would never have happened.

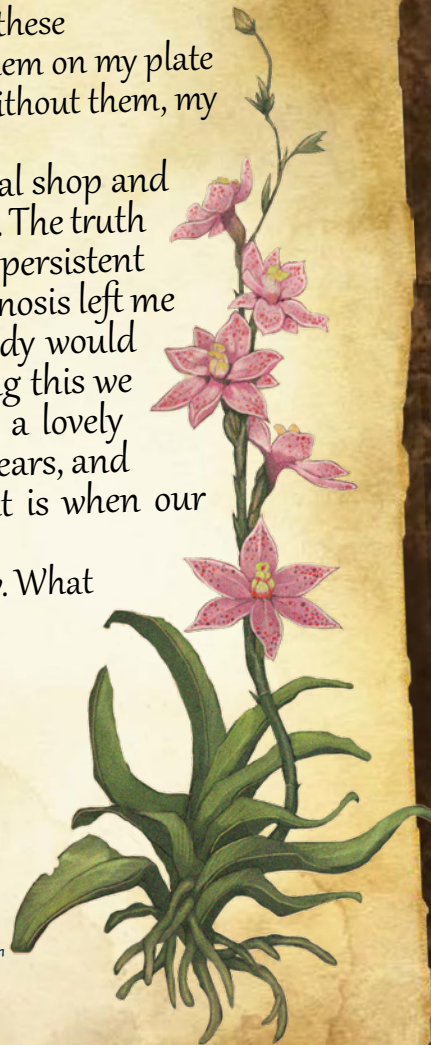
Now, ask me why I would abandon my alchemical shop and comfortable life in Merab to live as a desert hermit. The truth is I was dying. My aged body was plagued by persistent illnesses that resisted magical cures, and the prognosis left me with only a few months. I thought that this study would be our final research, and I thought that by doing this we would not just advance science, but also die in a lovely place. Then the few months stretched into three years, and Tukalo and I realized my illness was gone. That is when our research truly began.

But enough about deserts. Tell me more of Mendev. What sorts of plants grow there in that cool climate?

—Artokus



orchids typically have an exclusive relationship with their pollinators, but the shape of the sun orchid's pollinia allows it to be spread by multiple carriers



to survive in desert conditions, the sun orchid stores water in its thick leaves and fleshy roots; it is exceptionally sensitive to changes in environment, and refuses to thrive in captivity

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CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES

Avarneus had far less interest in altruism in the past, but they were forced to commit more and more of themselves in order to win the fight for their country's freedom. Their many quiet battles forged them into a hero, though it's the current peace in Vidrian that allows them the leisure of virtue.



AVARNEUS

HEROIC SPY OF VIDRIAN

CG NONBINARY HUMAN INVENTOR

Avarneus has never been forthcoming with details of their past, though enough of it was dragged into the open during their public trials as a collaborator for the colonialist government after the revolution in Sargava gave birth to the nation of Vidrian. They grew up in Kalabuto, though the exact details of their youth are unclear. Some claim to have seen them begging in the streets, left alone in the world. Others will swear they were the child of one of the secretaries to a councilor in Eleder, seeing firsthand what Chelaxian rule did to people who once spoke of the importance of their culture and history—how they threw it away so simply, and how corruption festered. Still others say they lived a relatively easy life in Freehold and only began to question their status and situation as Salgarth began to plot the “restructuring” of their home. Some whisper Avarneus has the standoffish, overly quiet inconspicuousness of someone from the hive of criminals and ne’er-do-wells of Crown’s End.

The most agreed-upon point is that Avarneus saw the suffering and hardships of their people, saw what could and needed to be done, and saw the holes in the armor of Sargava’s Chelaxian governmental administrators and the locals enlisted to preserve colonial rule. Avarneus themselves refuses to confirm any story, always firmly stating that it is a thing of the past that has little bearing on what needs to be done now.

The first place Avarneus begins to surface in the annals of history is working with the thieves’ guild in Eleder. Lonely individuals trapped in colonial life by their spouses’ work recall a young friend’s open ear and kind but tired eyes, though they could never remember the person’s name or when they discovered their purses were much lighter. Eager would-be politicians were always happy to have an attentive and obsequious native assistant but never managed to blame the right person when objects went missing or documents disappeared, only to mysteriously reappear after hours or days. Though Avarneus often lacked in easygoing charm when caught unprepared, they made up for it in their unparalleled ability to read people and situations and maneuver them into the positions needed. Avarneus is intelligent and efficient but, much more importantly, they are invisible to most. That social invisibility allows access to places, people, and things when others struggle to gain even a passing glance.

For a time, Avarneus kept their distance from the brewing revolution and only financed those insurgents they knew could be trusted with earnings from fenced goods. However, it quickly became apparent that many things they seemed to have such easy access to were almost entirely closed off from those who shared their idealistic vision, as information and the trust needed to gain it were in short supply for natives of what would soon be Vidrian. So Avarneus took up the role that was needed without anyone asking. They used their privileges, access, and guile to embed themselves and other skilled spies in Sargava’s colonial government. Key shipping routes and schedules, no matter how altered or convoluted, were disrupted and taken by pirates. The worst atrocities of cruel colonial rulers always seemed to end up presented to sympathetic eyes and hearts, who would then sever ties. Senior officials jumped at the offers of a Mwangi agent willing to sell out burgeoning rebellions, never assuming they might be sold out in turn. Slowly but surely, Sargava’s elite reconsidered how tenuous their hold truly was due to the tireless and thankless work of Avarneus and others. When victory finally came, Avarneus was arrested as a perceived collaborator, but they took solace in the fact that their home would be in good hands. They were quietly surprised to see how many vouched for them in the fledgling Vidrian council’s trials.

Avarneus is measured, soft-spoken, and attentive as they aim to take in every detail and weigh every possibility and outcome. They only speak when they must and only as much as is needed. Otherwise, they simply listen, watch, and wait; every moment

spent in the company of others is a chance to learn something new about those people, and an unguarded moment is all one needs to turn the tides in one's favor.

As a lingering effect of their work as a spy, Avarneus tends to dress inconspicuously, wears little that identifies them, and rarely uses gendered language about himself. Those that are close to Avarneus—as close as one can be to such an enigma—tend to use only their name. Historical records refer to Avarneus as a man, something the former spy has never taken the time to correct, as there are always more important matters at hand. When Vidrian is finally self-sufficient, perhaps then they will take on the task of making sure those who deserve to be honored and remembered are given their correct due as they should be addressed, themselves included.

DOSSIERS

Avarneus tries to avoid attention and wishes for a quiet life in the freedom they fought for, yet they don't seem to know how to rest. Despite now being a part of the governing council of Vidrian—or more likely, because of it—Avarneus has never stopped gathering intelligence, though they do recruit others for their missions when they absolutely must. They have thankfully also stopped reflexively spinning lies if allies catch them in one of their manipulations.

Avarneus measures the value of relationships by their political potential. They recognize this is personally and professionally destructive in the long run, especially should someone take their indifferent nature personally and make their displeasure a problem for Vidrian. Even so, this is how they have learned to operate. They haven't needed to change yet.

ABROGAIL THRUNE II

Having seen what Cheliex is capable of, Avarneus knows an ever-watchful eye must be kept over Abrogail Thurne II and all her actions. Abrogail will undoubtedly attempt to consolidate her power and expand again soon, taking back anything she sees as hers by right. Vidrian will need to be prepared for the day she tries.

A particularly ostentatious piece of art, a gift from some simpering foreign dignitary, is currently heading to Queen Abrogail Thurne II. Avarneus has tasked agents to intercept the shipment and conceal within it a clockwork recorder to record a single conversation. Avarneus knows this is a particularly risky operation, and the agents are under orders to destroy the recorder at any sign of it being discovered.

SHIMALI MANUX

Despite their aloofness toward most people, including Shimali, Avarneus sees the Vidric admiral's idealism as something that should be nurtured and cherished. Though they rarely mention it, they try to keep an eye on the Firebrands and those they associate with for potential dissension on Shimali's behalf.

SIHAR

It's unclear if Avarneus sees themselves or someone they knew in the rebel leader Sihar, but they do ask for regular reports on the state of Mzali to keep an active eye on the city-state. They have made sure that, when and if Mzali asks for aid, they are able to provide at least some.

TESSA FAIRWIND

The Hurricane Queen swears she will never forgive Avarneus for betraying her. To hear her tell it, they courted her and the two had a whirlwind romance before



PRIVATE OPINION

Abrogail Thurne II: "Wants to reassert her rule and to do it soon. Retaking Vidrian would put wealth and therefore power into her treasury. I will not allow it. Cruel and conniving. Monitor closely and discreetly."

Shimali Manux: "Kind to a fault in some exploitable respects. I once exploited similar weak points in others and would prefer not to see her betrayed this way. In an ideal world, her optimism is what we need to guide Vidrian to its brightest future."

Sihar: "Vidrian will always need allies, especially ones that can be quickly reached. She has her own revolution to see fulfilled first."

Tessa Fairwind: "Passed intel on fleet to Shimali; cold since. Passionate to a fault and will turn fury on any who cross her. Upsets if romance is involved. Use caution in the future."

Toulon Vidoc: "Attempting to investigate a disappearance; need more information. Cannot understand that law is never applied equitably. Avoid; he would destroy Vidrian given the chance."

Wynsal Starborn: "New regimes always mean a reassessment of standing; Starborn is no different. Vidrian needs dependable allies, he needs to prove himself one."

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Abrogail Thurne II (page 8), Shimali Manux (page 96), Sihar (page 98), Tessa Fairwind (page 108), Toulon Vidoc (page 112), Wynsal Starborn (page 118)

THE LOST, REMEMBERED

One of Avarneus' first motions as a part of Vidrian's council was to have a memorial erected in honor of heroes of the revolution, yet the prominent names below were purposefully excluded. Some scratch their heads at this decision, but Avarneus's only answer is that those who are absent know why.

Masoud: "Alive, Vidrian, traveling. Spy turned merchant, wants quiet life."

Amadi: "Deceased, Mzali, cremated. Spy, killed by Walkena while on assignment."

Nour: "Alive, Cheliox, unknown. Traitor, no information disclosed and acted on; monitoring."

Raya: "Alive, Senghor, traveling. Ambassador, attempting to correct relations."

Efie: "Deceased or missing, High Seas. Joined Firebrands, missing in action."

Zola: "Alive, Alkenstar, Gunworks. Studying tinkering; contact soon."

Fahim: "Alive, Absalom, Pathfinder Society. Launderer, now working as accountant; nothing notable."

Fareeha: "Alive, Absalom, traveling. Spy, gathering information throughout the country. Missed scheduled check in, may be missing."

Kariuki: "Deceased, Mana Wastes. Wizard, became adventurer, killed by phantom army; good riddance."

the revolutionary threw the Free Captains to the wolves. Avarneus denies the relationship outright but never denies that they manipulated Tessa to further the revolution. If they hold any remorse, no one would know.

WYNSAL STARBORN

When it comes to Absalom's acting primarch, Avarneus simply doesn't have enough information to judge Starborn for themselves, a position they loathe to be in. Tales of the man have made it all the way to Vidrian, but the fact that Wynsal shuns his power concerns Avarneus. They aim to gather intelligence on Starborn as both a leader and a person to decide if a connection is worth pursuing. While other councilors of Vidrian welcome the recognition of such a well-regarded and influential ruler, Avarneus keeps their thoughts on the future. Knowing that Wynsal undoubtedly has foes and wishes to quickly abdicate his position means the acting primarch's enemies might prove more valuable allies than his friends.

News has reached Avarneus that the council of Absalom is planning some sort of gala or festival, which provides a perfect opportunity to investigate.

AVARNEUS'S TOOLS

As a spy, Avarneus preferred not to rely on magic, as it could be thwarted easily enough with just a few words and waves of a hand. On long-term missions of subterfuge, they would need something undetectable, and a practical sort of "magic" can be just as effective as any other. Avarneus shares the schematics with only their closest allies—once Avarneus trusts them completely, of course. These schematics serve as formulas, allowing anyone with the formula to Craft one of Avarneus's many unique tools.

CLOCKWORK RECORDER

ITEM 6

RARE

Price 250 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

This small recording device can be as tiny as a music box or around the size of large book and is typically concealed in hollowed-out books and jewelry. A clockwork recorder can record up to 1 hour of sound before its wax cylinders must be retrieved and replaced. Any given clockwork recorder can play back the recordings of a cylinder, regardless of whether it was the recorder used for the original recording.

Activate  **Interact;** **Effect** You wind the recorder to start recording sound or to play back a recording. You can have the recording or playback start immediately or be timed to start at any point up to one month later.

"Walls might have ears, and statues can be fonts of information."

—a

LOVERS' INK

ITEM 2

RARE

ALCHEMICAL

CONSUMABLE

Price 5 gp

Usage with writing set; Bulk L

This ink, derived from inks used by lovers to deliver secret messages, dries to a color similar to most parchments. Avarneus's version requires another dose of lover's ink and a specific agitation to reveal the hidden message, preventing casual interception. Any message written with lovers' ink is revealed by applying a page worth of lover's ink and vigorously shaking, requiring 3 Interact actions. A typical vial provides enough ink to fill 1 page worth of text. While the text is hidden, a creature closely examining a surface marked with lover's ink can detect the presence of the ink with a successful DC 25 Perception check. On a critical success, they can make out the ink well enough to use Society to Decipher Writing.

"I assumed I would have no use for this sort of thing. I found one I can tolerate."

—a

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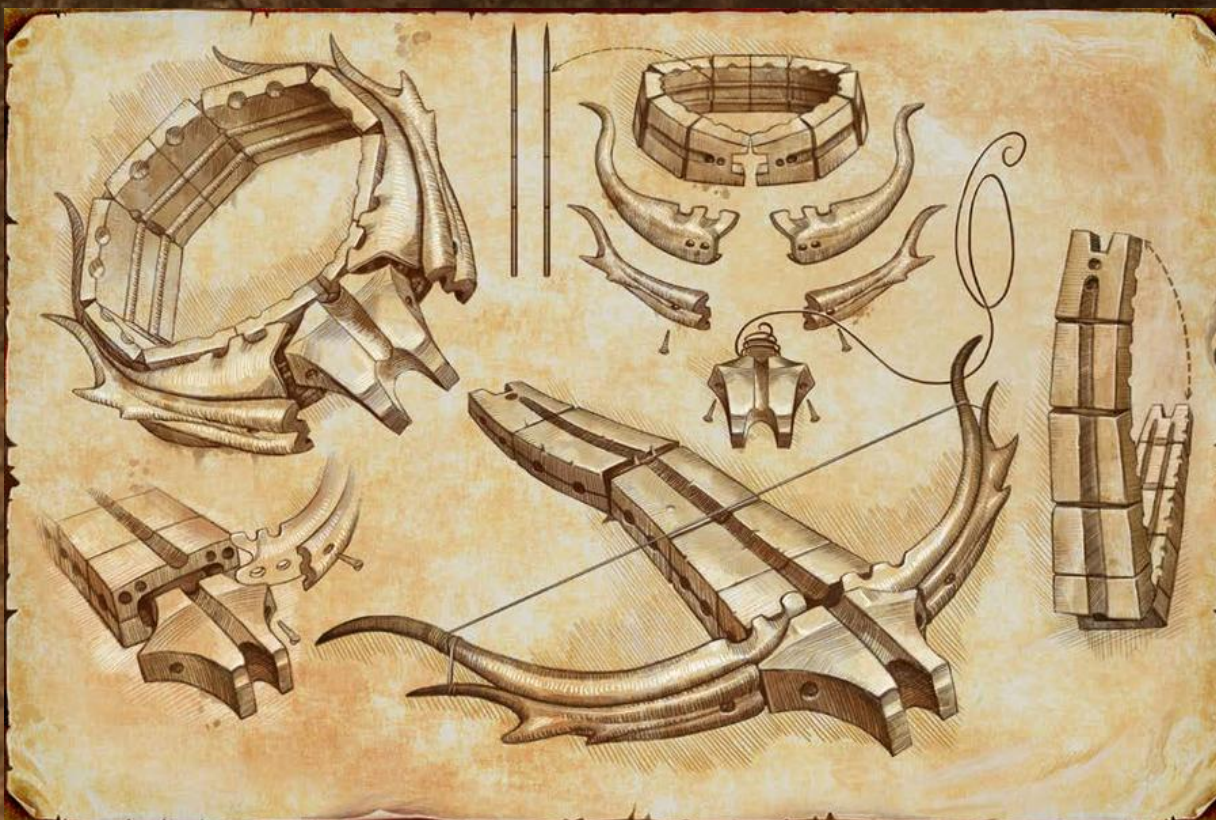
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PALM CROSSBOW

ITEM 3

RARE

Price 60 gp

Usage worn; **Bulk** L

This thick, elegant bracelet conceals a specialized firing mechanism that can hold a single blowgun dart. You can fire the dart normally from the bracelet. Recognizing the bracelet's nature requires a successful DC 25 Perception check.

Activate ♦♦ Interact; **Effect** You expand the bracelet into a hand crossbow. The bracelet has enough pieces to assemble up to three bolts, but the bolts contain necessary components for the bracelet. Without all of the bolt pieces, you cannot collapse the crossbow back into a bracelet.

"The most innocuous things oft make the best tools."

—a

VESTIGE LENSES

ITEM 3

RARE

ALCHEMICAL

Price 40 gp

Usage worn eyepiece; **Bulk** L

These simple lenses are alchemically treated to detect the faint smoke trail from a piece of specially formulated sandalwood incense. This incense has an odor undetectable by most people and a long burn time, making it perfect for discreetly tracking individuals. A stick of this incense costs 1 sp and can safely burn for up to 8 hours. While wearing the lenses, you see alchemical fumes in a distinct green tint, granting you a +1 item bonus to Survival checks to Track a creature marked with the incense and to Perception checks to Seek any alchemical vapors. If the smoke is fresh, Tracking via the incense's fumes might use a lower DC than normal for tracking a creature walking on firm surfaces.

"Inoffensive scents work best for tracking, though what that means often varies."

—a

FAMILIAR FACES

General Azaersi served as the final villain of the Ironfang Invasion Adventure Path.

Though she's a brutal tactician and a peerless warrior, *Legends* assumes that Azaersi met her match in the commanders of the Nirmathas militia, as played by the PCs—not only did the militia rout Azaersi's Ironfang Legion, but its commanders likewise achieved the impossible, and convinced Azaersi to end her conquest of her own volition.



AZAERSI

GENERAL OF OPRAK

LE FEMALE HOBGOBLIN SWASHBUCKLER

Feared by humans and revered by her own people, the hobgoblin General Azaersi is a living legend across Nirmathas, Molthune, and the new-forged nation of Oprak. Her name roughly translates to “Aza the Immortal,” and her origins are shrouded in myth. Some say that Azaersi is the last surviving general of the Goblinblood Wars, while others insist she was the brutal Shriekwood Slayer who plundered Molthune’s forests for a decade. Still other rumors claim she mastered a great god of the Darklands and chained it as her slave. Though these rumors are obviously embellished, there is a grain of truth to each. General Azaersi did fight in the Goblinblood Wars, she did raid Molthune for years, and a mighty barghest served her throughout the Ironfang Legion’s campaigns. The greatest of the legends about her is the one that’s entirely true: that she came from nowhere to achieve the impossible, carving out a homeland for goblinkind that shows every sign of enduring.

Azaersi began her life as a foot soldier named Aza. She was young during the days of the Goblinblood Wars, barely more than a child, and in the Valley of Iron Fangs, she saw her army utterly crushed. In that battle, humans vastly outnumbered the defending hobgoblins, and after five days of brutal fighting, they vanquished the half-starved, ill-equipped survivors of the goblin horde.

The humans offered no terms of surrender. The campaign had been long and cruel, and the soldiers on both sides had witnessed and committed such atrocities that the idea of taking prisoners was inconceivable. Thus, they slaughtered every surviving goblin and hobgoblin to the last.

Aza, too, fell in the Valley of Iron Fangs. An Eagle Knight ran the young hobgoblin through with a spear and left her lying amid the fly-speckled carrion of her people. When Aza came to, sprawled in a mass grave, her heart filled with a cold hatred unlike anything she’d ever felt before. In that moment, she renamed herself Azaersi, for the child-soldier Aza was dead, and in her place was a leader unlike anything Golarion had seen before.

Turning at first to banditry, Azaersi gathered other surviving veterans of the Goblinblood Wars and the young goblins and hobgoblins who had been orphaned by the fighting. She drilled fierceness and discipline into these ragtag survivors, and then she unleashed them upon Molthune.

THE IRONFANG LEGION

Eventually, the Molthuni army dispatched a regiment to deal with the bandits in the woods. Defying expectations, Azaersi’s underfed, poorly equipped force destroyed the Molthuni regiment, and the generals of Molthune took notice. Rather than sending a larger force to stamp out Azaersi’s band, the Molthuni sent a single envoy with an offer: Azaersi could sign up as one of Molthune’s “monster regiments,” non-human mercenary companies who could ravage Nirmathi targets when Molthune’s government needed to maintain plausible deniability.

Azaersi accepted, and her bandits were dubbed the Ironfang Legion. Her intention, however, was merely to use the opportunity to familiarize herself with Molthuni equipment and tactics. She also built loyalty among the other monster regiments, who soon learned to respect her ferocity and strategic acumen. When she felt she had obtained enough intelligence and had adequately equipped her soldiers with Molthuni steel, Azaersi and the Ironfang Legion quietly melted away, taking much of Molthune’s mercenary strength with them.

Next, Azaersi embarked on several arduous journeys to gather allies. During this time, she met and enlisted the dark naga **Zanathura** (LE female dark naga sorcerer), the ex-gladiator **Kraelos** (LE male hobgoblin dragonslayer), and the

barghest cult leader **Azlowe** (LE male greater barghest warpriest). Each of these individuals shared their talents and wisdom willingly. With them at her side as advisors, Azaersi claimed the title of general.

Finally, Azaersi infiltrated the dwarven citadel of Kraggodan, where she broke into the sacred Reliquary of Ascension and stole an artifact known as the *Onyx Key*. This artifact enabled her to create a near-impregnable stronghold and magical, ever-shifting pathways through the elemental plane of Earth—a network of “shortcuts” known as the Stone Roads. With her army prepared, Azaersi launched her campaign to establish a homeland for “monsters” such as herself, attacking first Nirmathas and then Molthune to claim the territory and resources she needed. Yet the true heart of her nation, though she did not realize it at the time, was and remains within the secret vault created by the *Onyx Key*.

The fighting was as fierce as Azaersi anticipated. What she did not anticipate was the personal cost. Several of her closest friends and longtime companions died or deserted her during the campaign. Zanathura proved treacherous, and Azlowe unreliable. Those who stayed loyal often died, sometimes at the hands of less trustworthy comrades. Though she maintained an impervious confidence in front of her troops, privately Azaersi felt the toll of these losses profoundly. Thus, when Nirmathas and Molthune jointly offered her peace terms that included recognition of Oprak as an independent nation and an adequate concession of territory to support her people, Azaersi accepted the bargain. In her heart of hearts, she was tired of fighting.

Two hobgoblin emissaries bearing shards of the *Onyx Key*—an onyx shard to Kraggodan, and a sardonyx shard to the leaders of the Nirmathas militia—signaled the end of the Ironfang Invasion.

RISE OF A NATION

General Azaersi had read enough history to know that empires built on conquest often collapse with the death of their original conqueror, and she was determined that Oprak would not succumb to this fate. She devoted her energies to nation building, aware that whether Oprak stood or fell would determine whether anyone believed that goblinkind and monstrous people as a whole could rule a unified nation at all.

Tar-Baphon’s rise has, ironically, helped Azaersi solidify her position. While Nirmathas remains bitter about their losses, the nation has swallowed their enmity and sent additional envoys to General Azaersi, hoping that her formidable legions might help them defend against the Whispering Tyrant’s forces. Azaersi, for her part, recognizes the extreme threat posed by Tar-Baphon, and also recognizes that the human nations’ need for her armies and military leadership are an opportunity for her to improve Oprak’s standing. Yet she has also taken note of the military rulers of Molthune, who are less united in their commitments to alliance and show signs of becoming problems down the road.

Partly to shore up their shared defenses against the Whispering Tyrant, and partly in service to her overarching goal of encouraging more “monster homelands” in Golarion, Azaersi has opened diplomatic channels to Ardash the White-Hair, though her stance remains cautious as she tries to feel out whether the orc overlord has enough control over his fractious holds to be worth her time. So far, Azaersi has made no formal commitments and has merely sent over a few military advisors to help the orcs organize their forces—and, of course, to report back to Oprak with their observations.

Although Azaersi’s personal animosity toward humankind still burns fiercely,

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Ardash the White-Hair (page 16), Artokus Kirran (page 18), Kalabryne and Clarethe Iomedar (page 66), Tar-Baphon (page 104)



SIGNS OF STATION

Azaersi sometimes rewards her agents with the right to wield one of the Ironfang Legion’s coveted enchanted weapons. These weapons include the following.

Tamrakh’s Fist: This +1 *striking composite bow* generates two explosive arrows per day. These arrows can only be shot from *Tamrakh’s Fist* and crumble into ashes if used with any other weapon. Only two such arrows can exist at any time.

Zhentarreh: A *greater flame tongue longsword*, this sword is named for the red dragon whose hide binds its hilt and in whose heart the new-forged blade is said to have been quenched.

Volukkar: This +1 *grievous shock glaive* vanished in the Darklands along with the hobgoblin lieutenant who was carrying it. This weapon was a prize from one of the Ironfang Legion’s first battles, and apart from Volukkar’s significant monetary value, Azaersi cherishes it as a commemorative token of her army’s origins. While she is concerned with discovering her agent’s fate, she wants the glaive back even more, and any agent of hers who finds it is likely to receive the right to wield it as a reward.

Four Claws of the Deepdread: Finally, Azaersi may reward her favored servants with one of the *Four Claws of the Deepdread*, described on page 28.

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THE STONE ROADS

General Azaersi has used the *Onyx Key* to open magical pathways—the Stone Roads—into nations across Golarion.

Foremost among these is the Tian hobgoblin nation of Kaoling, which offers not only rich trade, but a model of stable, long-established hobgoblin laws and society for Oprak to study and, perhaps, follow. Despite wary political relations as the distant hobgoblins take measure of each other, a busy interchange of commerce and culture already exists between the two nations.

As a rule, Azaersi focuses her efforts on non-human nations, in part because she despises humans and resents the idea of them profiting from her possession of the Stone Roads, and in part because she would prefer to use the *Onyx Key* to uplift other “monstrous” peoples in addition to her own. However, because she is conscious of her need for regional allies, Azaersi could be persuaded to sell limited access to a human nation if she believed it would benefit Oprak to do so. For now, Azaersi’s efforts to negotiate the Stone Roads into advantages for Oprak are just beginning, and most have not yet borne fruit. Yet if the general can fully realize the Stone Roads’ potential, then Oprak stands to command wealth and mercantile power such as the world has never seen.

she has willed herself to set that aside for the time being and has ordered her underlings to do the same. If Oprak is to last, it must have more friends and fewer enemies than it does now, and at least some of those friends will likely have to be humans. Therefore, she has negotiated non-aggression pacts with Nirmathas and Nidal, as well as entertained the presence of diplomats from the desperate Knights of Lastwall. Cheliah’s reputation for treachery has made her wary, but she respects Queen Abrogail’s ruthlessness and believes the empire may be a suitable ally for her goals. Meanwhile, Druma and Qadira seem like promising trade partners who might value Oprak’s access to new markets through the Stone Roads. The venture currently holding much of Azaersi’s interest is that of two hobgoblin alchemists who acquired the general’s leave to seek training at the Citadel of the Alchemist in Thuvia. That Artokus Kirran apparently accepted the two hobgoblins as students surprised Azaersi and has earned her complete, precise attention.

THE GENERAL’S ARMORY

Azaersi believes in rewarding loyalty and service, and she is always in search of reliable and trustworthy agents. Sensible officers, clever spies, and trade negotiators who show skill at dealing with non-hobgoblins are all likely to win General Azaersi’s favor, and rewards that only she can offer.

AZAERSI’S ROADS

FEAT 17

RARE HOBGOBLIN

Azaersi has granted you limited access to the Stone Roads, attuning you to the tiniest sliver of the *Onyx Key*. You gain *plane shift* as a primal innate spell. You can cast it twice per week. This can be used only to travel back and forth between the Plane of Earth and the Material Plane. Due to your attunement to the *Onyx Key*, you can act as the spell focus, and you do not require a tuning fork.

DEEPDREAD CLAW

ITEM 14

RARE EVOCATION INVESTED MAGICAL

Price 4,000 gp

Usage held in 1 or 2 hands; Bulk 1

One of a set of four identical spears collectively known as the *Four Claws of the Deepdread*, this weapon is fashioned from a single seamless piece of matte-black metal with a razored silver edge. In bright light, it functions as a +1 *striking spear*, but in darkness or dim light, it becomes a +2 *greater striking spear*. You can upgrade its fundamental runes as normal for a specific weapon, starting from a +2 *greater striking spear*, but its fundamental runes are always one type worse in bright light.

Activate ◆ command; **Effect** You establish a telepathic link with someone else wielding a *deepdread claw*, enabling you to telepathically communicate with the creature while they possess the *deepdread claw* regardless of distance, so long as you remain on the same plane. You can end a telepathic link you create or that you are part of as an action, which has the concentrate trait.

Activate ◆◆ command, Interact; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You cast 4th-level *darkness*. You can see clearly in this darkness.

FLAMBOYANT CRUELTY

FEAT 8

RARE SWASHBUCKLER

You love to kick your enemies when they’re down, and you look fabulous when you do. When you make a melee weapon Strike against a foe that has at least two of the following conditions, you gain a circumstance bonus to your damage roll equal to the number of these conditions the foe has. The qualifying conditions are clumsy, drained, enfeebled, frightened, sickened, and stupefied. If you hit such a foe, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to skill checks to Tumble Through and to perform your style’s panache-granting actions until the end of your turn.

IRONFANG RECRUIT MANUAL

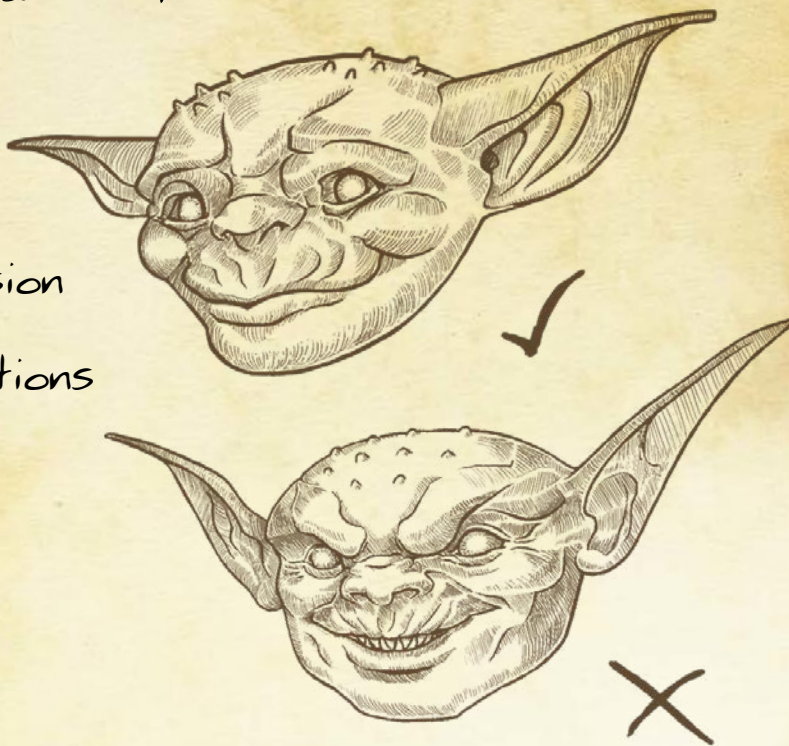
PEACETIME POLICIES

Keep your unit badge and travel papers on you at all times. These papers identify you as a citizen of Oprak entitled to full legal rights. They must be displayed to border guards when entering non-hobgoblin lands and in case of questioning by authorities. Failure to carry identification papers will be punished by ten lashes and half rations for a week.

Stay with your unit at all times unless instructed otherwise by your commanding officer. Do not wander alone in non-hobgoblin lands. Do not seize or kill things, regardless of whether they are guarded or offer insult. Report challenges and insults to your commanding officer. Do not take direct action.

Your commanding officer will be given a copy of local laws upon entering a new region. You are responsible for obeying these laws.

Proper
Expression
Aids
Negotiations



INTERACTION WITH HUMANS

Humans value displays of generosity toward weak creatures, such as: small humans, old humans, and dogs of useless types. You may offer food and assistance to such creatures to win favor with their masters. For best results, the food should be mushy and no longer alive.

Humans also value complimentary words said about the diversion of resources to useless purposes. For example, humans enjoy wasting water and arable land on inedible flowers, and often walk in circles among such flowers for hours. Express approval of such activities and participate in them as directed by your commanding officer.

Remember! Failure to adhere to the Peacetime Policies will result in flogging, branding, and the crushing of both arms, followed by permanent exile from Oprak!

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FAMILIAR FACES

Baba Yaga vanished at the start of the Reign of Winter Adventure Path, sealed by the combined efforts of Queen Elvanna of Irrisen and Baba Yaga's abandoned son, the Russian mystic Grigori Rasputin. *Legends* assumes that Baba Yaga was freed by a group of heroes, as played by the PCs, who went on to defeat Queen Elvanna. Instead of crowning another one of her daughters, Baba Yaga was convinced to make the resurrected Earth princess Anastasia Romanov the new queen of Irrisen.

BABA YAGA

LEGENDARY WITCH QUEEN

NE FEMALE HUMAN WITCH

"Babushka, tell me a story."

"Anything for you, sunshine. Long ago and far away, there lived a little girl. One day, the girl hid from a blizzard in a valley, where she found a rowan tree next to a spring. The little girl was cold and tired, and she bathed in the spring... and the tree spoke to her. The rowan taught her secrets of birch and oak and ash, songs of wolves and stories of birds, and the wise tree taught her deep and ancient magic. When the little girl left the tree, she was no little girl, but a woman and a witch."

"The witch lived with many peoples, learning more of power and magic. But as her fame spread, more and more people came to ask her for help. Some tried to force her, but forcing a witch never works the way people think it does. Others begged her, and the witch hated the begging. Why, the witch thought, did all these people come to her with problems instead of solving them for themselves?"

"So the witch started asking higher and higher prices from those who came to her. She asked for buckets of gold and threw them down the well. She asked for tracts of land and never visited them. She asked a man to cut off his ears to heal his blindness. She asked a farmer to burn his fields to save his cows. She asked for a child to cook her pet dog to give her parents wealth and glory. And people *did* all these things. The witch grew angrier and angrier with everyone's begging, until she grew a wrinkle for every question asked and a wart for every favor given."

"Old and bitter, the witch traveled far and wide, to the lands behind the moon and beyond the sun, and she found that everywhere she went, the people were foolish and the problems were the same. She found fault with everyone, from the angels in Heaven to the devils in Hell, and shook her fist at demigods and swore at queens."

"Oh, child, I could tell you so many stories. I could tell you how she lived in a dancing hut on chicken legs; how she flew about in a mortar and pestle, sweeping her tracks away behind her; how she has three horsemen who she calls her Bright Dawn, her Red Sun, and her Dark Midnight. I could tell you about the Thrice-Tenth Kingdom and the firebird, the Island of Buyan, and Vasilisa the Beautiful, who escaped her. I could tell you about the warlord Kostchtchie of Iobaria, who came to her and demanded she make him live forever. She tore out half his soul and put it in his torc, that he might never die, but made him ugly in exchange. So hideous Kostchtchie was, he fled to the very Abyss, and rules there still, nursing an eternal grudge."

"But let me tell you a different story. Long ago, when there was still summer, this land was ruled by the linnorm kings. But the old witch wanted the land, and she gathered a mighty host, of trolls and wolves and dark things that flitted in the night. Before the moon had turned round once, she broke Wise King Jarguut, and the great thanes of Djurstor. Then she wreathed the land in unending winter, and set her daughter Jadwiga as queen of Irrisen, with a crown of ice upon her brow."

"A hundred years passed, and the old witch took Jadwiga away, and made Jadwiga's sister Morgannan queen. And so it's been ever since. Every century, the old witch came and took the queens away, and set a new daughter on the throne. Two of them fought back, cunning Tashanna and cold Elvanna. Now, one of the old witch's granddaughters rules our land, fair and sweet-tempered Anastasia."

"Babushka, the old witch... she is Baba Yaga Bony-Legs?"

"She is. And she is my great-grandmother, and yours as well, child."

—*The Tale of Baba Yaga*, as told by Zhoseniya Jadwiga Velikas



BABA YAGA IN GOLARION

The ancient Sarmatian witch Baba Yaga is perhaps the greatest witch in existence. She is more powerful than most dukes of Hell, considers runelords to be bickering children, and isn't a goddess only because the idea of answering prayers appalls her. She has a hundred schemes on a hundred worlds: on Earth (the land of her birth), on wintry Triaxus, across the Great Beyond, and on Golarion. Though few know the truth, recently her daughter, Queen Elvanna, trapped Baba Yaga in a set of matryoshka dolls. After being released by local heroes, Baba Yaga is willing to consider that perhaps she'd been too dismissive of this world.

Ever since, Baba Yaga has taken to sticking her warty nose into every corner of Golarion. She isn't looking for more power, though she won't pass up a chance to learn a secret or steal a treasure. She isn't looking for luxury, though she enjoys her comforts. Nor does she have any desire to rule, though she demands respect. No, Baba Yaga seeks out glorious heroes and infamous villains because they entertain her.

Above all else, Baba Yaga appreciates wit, determination, and a certain brazenness, regardless of how it's used (nothing made Baba Yaga prouder of her daughter than Elvanna's attempted coup). She is interested in people who bend the world around themselves, the ones who start as paupers and end as princes. Baba Yaga sometimes appears to such people to give advice, grant a boon, or set a test. She never solves someone's problem for them without giving them a bigger one in return, and she enjoys giving supplicants just enough rope with which to hang themselves.

Some desperate individuals seek out Baba Yaga themselves. But Baba Yaga loathes being asked for help, and she sets unreasonable prices for her aid to discourage dilettantes. Still, if one can meet her price or pass her test, the Baba Yaga is honorable enough to fulfill her end of the bargain, albeit with some grumbling.

Others know enough of Baba Yaga to fear or hate her. In Irrisen, she is the Queen of Witches and the ultimate arbiter of the nation's destiny. For now, Queen **Anastasia of Irrisen** (LN female human winter queen) has a measure of the crone's favor, though that might come at the cost of sharing her predecessors' fate. The orcs of Belkzen tell dark tales of her, and the linnorm kings have never forgotten how easily Baba Yaga routed them. King Thira Ash-Eyes's father, King **Sveinn Blood-Eagle** (CN male human barbarian), sought for years to overthrow the witch, to no avail.

Baba Yaga and the other archmages of Golarion are distant colleagues at best. The witch claims to see no difference at all between the last two runelords, Belimarius and Sorshen, and enjoys tweaking their tails by sending curious curses or barbed gifts. She describes Tar-Baphon as a fool seeking a poisoned chalice, but of Old-Mage Jatembe, Baba Yaga says nothing at all.

BABA YAGA AS A WITCH'S PATRON

While witches' patrons are typically mysterious, and many of the witch patrons presented in the *Advanced Player's Guide* are great fits for Baba Yaga as a patron, some witches have a more direct connection to the ancient witch herself. For instance, Baba Yaga might appear before someone and demand they sweep the floor of her workshop with a tiny brush. If they don't comply, Baba Yaga might eat them; if they do, they might discover that they've become a witch, with Baba Yaga as their patron.

Baba Yaga acts via strange items as often as living creatures. A witch with Baba Yaga as their patron can choose an inanimate object as a familiar. If they do, they still can gain master abilities and some familiar abilities that don't require movement. The object familiar has no Speeds and must select a Speed familiar ability before it can move, coming to life in a way appropriate to the chosen Speed and using the statistics of a normal familiar for that day.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Belimarius and Sorshen (page 34), Old-Mage Jatembe (page 62), Tar-Baphon (page 104), Thira Ash-Eyes (page 110)

SIGHTINGS

Though rumors persist that Baba Yaga has been banished from Golarion, secondhand reports of sightings of the witch likewise continue to surface.

Old Acquaintances: The Dancing Dolphin tavern has stood in Oppara's raucous Westport district for over a millennium, weathering war, fire, and storm. Every hundred years or so, a shabby old northern woman with a pet chicken meets an elderly Zenj gentleman leaning on a leopard-headed staff. They sit by the window and watch the ships go by, and they talk. Sometimes the chicken lays a painted wooden egg, sometimes the staff leans in to listen.

Witch-Weather: Across the Saga Lands, unseasonably early frosts or unexpected hailstorms are called "witch-weather." Some claim to have seen Baba Yaga riding before the storm front in her mortar and pestle.

The Fence: Two brothers were traveling the forests of Ustalav when they came upon a fence set with human skulls, eyes all aglow. Two posts were empty, and behind the fence they could see a tall hut on two pillars. More wise than brave, the brothers fled.

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The coronation was a somber affair, with the new winter queen barely responding to the events around her. For just a moment when Baba Yaga's back was turned, though, Anastasia stuck her tongue out at the old witch.
—Anonymous palace servant



BABA YAGA (RARE WITCH PATRON)

Baba Yaga teaches you how to transfer spirits into objects and freeze your foes.

Spell List occult

Patron Skill Occultism

Hex Cantrip *spirit object*

Granted Spell *chilling spray* (Advanced Player's Guide 217)

MAJOR LESSON

A witch with Baba Yaga as a patron can select the lesson of the frozen queen when a feat or other effect grants a major lesson. Other witches who find secret knowledge or magic from Baba Yaga hidden in Irrisen or elsewhere might be able to uncover this rare lesson as well.

Lesson of the Frozen Queen (Rare): You gain the *glacial heart* hex, and your familiar learns *wall of ice*.

SPIRIT OBJECT

CANTRIP 1

RARE **HEX** **NECROMANCY** **WITCH**
Cast ♦ or ♦♦ (somatic, verbal)

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 unattended object up to 1 Bulk

Using a sliver of Baba Yaga's power, you briefly bring an object to life. The object gains a means of locomotion, such as sprouting chicken legs, and Strides up to 25 feet to a space you decide within range. If you spent 2 actions Casting the Spell, the object then attacks one creature of your choice adjacent to its new space. Make a melee spell attack roll against the creature. On a success, the creature takes bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage (as appropriate for the object) equal to 1d4 plus your spellcasting ability modifier, and on a critical success, it takes double damage.

Heightened (+1) Increase the maximum Bulk of the target by 1 and the damage by 1d4.

GLACIAL HEART

FOCUS 5

RARE **EVOCATION** **HEX** **WITCH**
Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Fortitude; **Duration** 1 minute

Ice and bone-deep cold assail the target, freezing it from the inside out. The frosty assault deals 10d6 cold damage, subject to the target's Fortitude save. After the effects are resolved, the target is temporarily immune for 1 day.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target takes half damage and is slowed 1 for 1 round. The spell ends.

Failure The target takes full damage, is slowed 1, and must attempt a Fortitude save at the end of each of its turns; this ongoing save has the incapacitation trait. On a failed save, the slowed condition increases by 1 (or 2 on a critical failure), to a maximum of slowed 4. On a success, the slowed condition decreases by 1. If at any point the slowed condition is reduced to 0, the spell ends.

Once a creature's actions are reduced to 0 by this slowed condition, the creature is completely encased in ice. It continues making saves against *glacial heart*, possibly allowing it to reduce its slowed condition enough that it can act. This ice has Hardness 4 and 8 Hit Points, and its DC to Force Open is your spell DC. Breaking the ice frees the creature and ends the spell. If someone other than the target breaks the ice from outside, the target is stunned 1 and takes any damage dealt by the breaking effect in excess of the ice's Hit Points.

Critical Failure As failure, but the target takes double damage and is initially slowed 2.

Heightened (+1) Increase the cold damage by 2d6.

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ON THE THRONE OF IRRISEN SITS A MURDERED PRINCESS, PULLED BACK TO LIFE FROM DOWN AMONG THE EARTH AROUND HER FAMILY'S BONES. WITH NO PLACE LEFT TO HER IN A NATION THAT REJECTED KINGS AND QUEENS, SHE TRAVELED INSTEAD TO A LAND OF FAIRY TALES, WHERE HER ROYAL BLOOD WAS NOT SO THREATENING. A CROWN OF ICE NOW ADORNS HER HEAD, PLACED THERE BY HER GRANDMOTHER BABA YAGA. THE WINTER QUEEN ANASTASIA RULES WITH WHAT SMALL JOYS SHE CAN OFFER AND WHAT LITTLE SKILL SHE HAS. SHE NEVER EXPECTED TO RULE, BUT SHE NEVER EXPECTED TO DIE, AND THE COLD OF HER KINGDOM IS NOTHING TO THE CHILL OF HER GRAVE.



FAMILIAR FACES

Belimarius and Sorshen both returned to modern-day Golarion in the Return of the Runelords Adventure Path. *Legends* assumes that when the heroes who defeated Runelord Karzoug mysteriously went missing, Sorshen aided a new group of adventurers—as played by the PCs—against her former colleagues. While trying to right a rewritten timeline, the PCs freed Belimarius and the city of Xin-Edasseril from stasis and returned it to the land of Varisia.

BELIMARIUS AND SORSHEN

RUNELORDS OF THASSILON

Belimarius and Sorshen are living legends, powerful Thassilonian wizards that avoided the destruction of Earthfall and re-emerged, founding New Thassilon in the ruins of their ancient empire. Composed of two realms, Edasseril and Eurythnia, their nation is a collision of past and present. Runelord Belimarius clings to the traditions and tyranny of ancient Thassilon, while Queen Sorshen embraces the new, modern world and its people.

BELIMARIUS

RULER OF EDASSERIL

LE FEMALE HUMAN RUNELORD

Runelord Belimarius rose to her position through blackmail, slander, theft, and murder, ruthlessly disposing of her rivals with wit and wizardry. A practiced politician, Belimarius became a brutal tyrant unafraid of shedding blood. She was the most effective ruler Edasseril had ever seen, but even as her nation prospered, Belimarius never enjoyed the respect of her fellow runelords. Considered to be one of the weakest among the seven, she brooded and plotted her years away, crafting bargains and planning coups. Her petty grasping at power ended abruptly when Runelord Karzoug sabotaged her efforts to escape Earthfall. Her city of Xin-Edasseril was encapsulated in an impenetrable globe of force while she, her people, and the city were locked inside a time loop, reliving the same week over and over again for 10,000 years. As the ages wore on, Xin-Edasseril faded to myth, with most calling the entrapped city “Crystilan.”

With her people and city now freed from her temporal prison by the meddling of heroes, Runelord Belimarius has stepped out of time to reassert her rule and lead her nation back to its former heights of prestige and prosperity.

RECLAMATION

Finding herself surrounded by enemies on all sides—thieves that have stolen her lands, traitors that have forsaken the legacy of Thassilon, and upstarts that seek to undermine her glorious return—Runelord Belimarius has rebuilt her armies and expanded her territory, pushing into the Mierani Forest, Ironbound Islands, and Varisia’s Nolands. This aggressive expansion has brought her into conflict with bandits, outcasts, elves, and a few linnorm kings, but it has also won her the fealty of giant clans, xulgath clutches, and more. Despite her mounting victories, the imperious runelord desires more majestic servants, offering high prices for dragon eggs and wyrmlings.

While the armies of Edasseril crushed the unpopular linnorm king **Opir Eightfingers** (CN male human barbarian) in response to his brash provocations, White Estrid’s forces in Flintyreach have been canny enough to deny Belimarius any pretense to retaliate.

Belimarius instead plots to slay White Estrid’s linnorm servant Boiltongue and claim his head, an act that could simultaneously depose White Estrid and give Belimarius a legitimate claim to the throne of Halgrim.

Despite expanding on multiple fronts, Runelord Belimarius remains sequestered in Xin-Edasseril’s palace, Miasmorla. Loathe to put herself at risk and paranoid of others seeking to claim what is hers, Belimarius issues commands via loyal

servants, magical decrees, and hired mercenaries. Many of these mercenaries are directed toward Thassilonian monuments and vaults that Belimarius desires to claim. Primary among these locations was the Rune-Crossed Crucible, a magical laboratory built upon a powerful confluence of ley lines. Much to the runelord's ire, the site no longer exists, having been plucked from the Material Plane and stolen away by the sorceress Hao Jin. Belimarius has vowed to address this heinous theft, though she has yet to retaliate against the so-called Ruby Phoenix.

Of late, Belimarius has also shown interest in claiming the ancient Thassilonian artifacts known as *runewells*. These devices stored the sins of slain mortals and, if repaired, could enable Belimarius to raise an army of sinspawn. Fortunately for her enemies, the components necessary to complete such repairs are difficult to acquire.

DOMINATION

Despite Runelord Belimarius's efforts to stamp out all traces of insurrection, rumors of discontent circulate, and seditious posters have been spotted throughout Xin-Edasseril. Citizens spreading subversive sentiments are violently detained and usually conscripted into military service, though a rare few vanish completely. Belimarius seethes over every treasonous act, blaming Sorshen for sowing discontent among her people. Though she won't move publicly against Sorshen, Belimarius is already planning methods for her mercenaries to cause upheaval in Eurythnia.

A growing number of charismatic wizards have also founded cults and cabals, proclaiming themselves the next runelords of the various unclaimed sins. Prominent among them is the conjurer **Aethusa the Thrice-Born Queen** (CE female human runelord). Claiming to be the reincarnated soul of two previous runelords, Aethusa seeks the runelord crown of sloth. Runelord Belimarius intends to add the audacious impostor to her collection of conquered foes: she plans to trap Aethusa alive in a coffin made of force, as Belimarius did to her own predecessor, Runelord Phirandi. That she has yet to corner the young conjurer has convinced Belimarius that spies hide among her soldiers, though her efforts to expose them have failed. Belimarius would pay well for actionable information on the traitorous impostor Aethusa.

Belimarius's most irritating adversary is **Vexnill** (LN female human ghost), the ghost of a child she murdered in her quest to become a runelord. The impish spirit enjoys playing all manner of pranks on Belimarius and her servants, interrupting meetings and events with mocking imitations and rude songs. That the runelord's spells seem unable to harm the giggling girl has left Belimarius absolutely furious—an outcome Vexnill finds endlessly amusing.

Runelord Belimarius has conquered adversity, countless rivals, time, and death. She saved her people from catastrophe, bringing them from the brink of extinction to a place of power and security. Yet no amount of accolades, territory, or wealth is enough for her. She views the world with cold thoughtfulness, coveting that which she does not possess and scheming to acquire it.

SORSHEN

RULER OF EURYTHNIA

CN FEMALE HUMAN RUNELORD

Among the most powerful of the runelords, Sorshen, runelord of lust, assisted First King Xin in establishing the empire of Thassilon. She ruled over the realm of Eurythnia in Thassilon for its entire existence. She watched dozens of other

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Arday the White-Hair (page 16), Baba Yaga (page 30), Hao Jin (page 46), Noctacula (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 68), Tar-Baphon (page 104), White Estrid (page 116)

RELICS OF THE RUNELORDS

The runelords of Thassilon created countless magical objects and artifacts, many of which survive to this day. Prominent among them are the *Blood Engines of Eurythnia*, *Chalice of Lissala*, *Everdawn Pool*, *Gluttonous Tome*, *God Pool*, *Invidian Eye*, *Leng Device*, *Mirror of Sorshen*, and *Sihedron*, as well as the *runewells* and *scintillating garments*.

Seven Swords of Sin

Intelligent blades wielded by the runelord's most devoted champions, the Seven Swords of Sin (also known as Alara'hai or the Seven Blades of Conviction) have mostly gone inert. They were known as *Asheia*, *Sword of Lust*; *Baraket*, *Sword of Pride*; *Chellan*, *Sword of Greed*; *Garvok*, *Sword of Wrath*; *Shin-Tari*, *Sword of Sloth*; *Tannaris*, *Sword of Envy*; and *Ungarato*, *Sword of Gluttony*.

Seven Weapons of Rule

First King Xin crafted potent magical polearms for his runelords called the Seven Weapons of Rule (also known as Alara'quin). These are *Alaznist's Hateful Ranseur*, *Belimarius's Invidious Halberd*, *Karzoug's Burning Glaive*, *Krune's Dragontooth Spear*, *Sorshen's Sinuous Guisarme*, *Xanderghul's Flawless Hammer*, and *Zutha's Reaping Scythe*.

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SORSHEN'S PATRONAGE

Queen Sorshen adores being among her people, regularly attending gatherings and festivals throughout her nation. She takes pride in inspiring her subjects to greater accomplishments, often visiting artists, musicians, philosophers, and political exiles. The existence of Sorshen's seven blood simulacra, which she sends in her place for safety reasons, is not common knowledge, though how heavily she utilizes them is a closely guarded secret.

Adventurers seeking Queen Sorshen's patronage must treat her respectfully, usually while accomplishing a series of mundane tasks for her pleasure, such as acquiring her favorite perfume, taming a wild beast, or hosting a social event.

These tasks always contain hidden pitfalls, but adventurers who prevail without offending her find steady work battling monsters, bandits, and gangs, clearing out the tangled catacombs of the hypogeum, and closing planar rifts near the peak of Mhar Massif, a mountain which now bears the sigil of New Thassilon upon its face in place of its original decoration—the visage of now-dead Runelord Karzoug.

runelords rise and fall during her 1,200-year reign, surviving and surpassing them with caution and cunning. She made extensive use of divinations, employed legions of slavishly loyal servants, manipulated the dreams of others, and created numerous blood simulacra doubles of herself to interact with the world, as well as many powerful artifacts, including the first *runewell*. She acted with well-planned purpose, hiding her devious machinations under a vivacious veneer.

Eternally youthful, with a beguiling voice and seductive smile, Runelord Sorshen indulged in all manner of salacious pursuits. A powerful enchantress and politician, she exploited the desires of her rivals with practiced subtlety, turning those that resisted into dominated thralls. As cruel and sadistic as any of her fellow runelords, she manipulated allies and enemies alike, paying for her deeds with the blood of others and reveling in the aftermath.

REFLECTION

Sorshen waited out Earthfall in her personal demiplane, the Eye of Desire, tended by favored servants and bound extraplanar creatures. Over millennia of waiting, her carnal appetites waned and her thoughts turned inward to her life, goals, and fallen empire. She stirred back to awareness when her *runewell* rippled with echoes of power. Curious, she watched and waited, scrying on a world she no longer recognized only to witness her contemporaries cut down by heroes of the new age. In the years since, Sorshen has rediscovered Golarion and its people, meditated on her seemingly endless and pointless sins, and concluded that a personal transformation would be necessary if she wished to survive. With an eye to the future, she freed her thralls, relocated many of her beloved artifacts into the Eye of Desire, and allied with heroes to save the Saga Lands from Runelord Alaznist.

In the aftermath, Queen Sorshen rebuilt Eurythnia in the Kodar Mountains, ruling from the city of Xin-Shalast. She works to re-establish extensive mining of the region's rich mineral deposits, though many promising locations are infested with monsters, including kobolds, yetis, and **Shardrex** (CE remorhaz aberration), a malformed remorhaz tainted by longtime contact with the nightmare realm of Leng. Guided by Sorshen's blossoming faith in Noctacula, the Redeemer Queen, Eurythnia is a refuge that welcomes artists, outcasts, and the oppressed.

POLITICS

Seemingly repentant over her past sins, Queen Sorshen has established herself as a confident, level-headed ruler who has forged pacts of peace with her neighbors, though her detractors question if this new worldview is simply another form of manipulation. A minority of her subjects, primarily the recently established wizard cabal Xin's Chosen, believe that by abandoning her past, Sorshen has forfeited her right to rule Thassilon.

Queen Sorshen has renounced her claim to her ancient seat of power, the Grand Mastaba of Korvosa, and given the city's ruler her public blessing. She has encouraged the Sihedron Council of Magnimar to continue their study of Thassilon, offering them a bargain for her insights if they can return to her the *evritas orb*, a powerful artifact Sorshen believes lost in the Mushfens.

Growing numbers of orcs have fled war with the Whispering Tyrant and entered Eurythnia as refugees, though this has done little to strain relations with the Hold's leader, Overlord Ardax. On the contrary, Ardax seems unconcerned over these defectors and has recently formed a nonaggression accord with the new monarch. The pair have met a dozen times in the last year, causing many to gossip over the purpose of these continued meetings and whether Sorshen continues her use of plying enchantments in secret.

Despite Queen Sorshen's efforts to initiate diplomatic relations with Queen **Anastasia of Irrisen** (LN female human winter queen), Baba Yaga is proving a constant thorn in her side. Though the old crone is rumored to be banished from

Golarion, Sorshen is convinced at least some of the cursed items and unseasonable blizzards that stray into Eurythnia are the deliberate work of the cackling witch.

Sorshen's poorest relations are with her counterpart in New Thassilon, and she knows it's only a matter of time before she's forced to interfere with Belimarius's expansionist regime. Although she'd prefer to avoid killing the sadistic old woman, she worries any nonlethal outcome will leave Belimarius nursing a grudge. For now, Sorshen has decided to leave Belimarius to her own devices, hoping local heroes will topple the tyrant for her.

Scholars and spellcasters have journeyed to Eurythnia in droves, seeking wisdom from the past. Sorshen welcomes these visitors with open arms. That few of these intellectuals decide to return home has caused some to accuse Sorshen of magically charming them to empower her nation. Queen Sorshen has responded to such accusations with a dimpled smile.

MAGIC OF NEW THASSILON

The runelords of ancient Thassilon pushed the boundaries of magic, creating new spells and school specializations. Though many of their discoveries are common knowledge, others remain lost to the ravages of time or are closely guarded by select practitioners. Below are two spells the rulers of New Thassilon can teach to casters, as a reward for service or a lesson for aspiring apprentices.

AROMATIC LURE

SPELL 4

RARE EMOTION ENCHANTMENT INCAPACITATION MENTAL

Traditions arcane, occult

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Range 60 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Will; **Duration** varies

You override a target's olfactory senses, luring them to a specific location through tantalizing false scents. Select a single square within range that is not hazardous or occupied by a creature. The target is drawn to the selected location, becoming euphoric upon arrival. The target must attempt a Will save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target is distracted by the tantalizing scents, becoming stupefied 1 for 1 round.

Failure The target is stupefied 2 and moves toward the selected location via the most direct route possible for 1 round, bypassing any obvious hazards and enemies in the way.

Critical Failure The target is stupefied 4 and moves to the selected location via the most direct route possible for 1 round, bypassing any obvious hazards and enemies in the way. If the creature reaches the destination, it must remain in that location for 1d4 rounds but can otherwise act normally.

Heightened (+2) You target 1 additional creature, selecting a different square within range as their destination.

REBOUNDBING BARRIER

SPELL 4

RARE ABJURATION

Traditions arcane, occult

Cast ◀ verbal; **Trigger** You are hit by a physical Strike.

You swiftly raise a reflective barrier, reducing physical damage and rebounding it onto your attacker. You gain resistance 10 against one physical damage type the triggering attack deals. Your attacker takes 5 damage of the same type.

Heightened (+1) The resistance increases by 2. Damage dealt to your attacker increases by 1.

OLD HOBBIES, NEW MARKETS

In her free time, the former Runelord

Sorshen has taken to creating perfumes, both of old formulas and new scents. Though she hasn't gone out of her way to sell her creations, her reputation has seen the fragrances slowly make their way to exclusive collectors at high prices.



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She is passionate, compelling, and brilliant, from ever since she was a child. And this world has no shortage of graves filled with the passionate, the compelling, and the brilliant—and most of all the young, all of whom were destined for great things.

—Queen Telandia Edasseril

CAMILIA DRANNOCH

TENACIOUS REVOLUTIONARY POLITICIAN

CN FEMALE HUMAN BARD

A cunning and clever figure, Chairwoman Camilia Drannoch of the Revolutionary Council is currently one of the few politicians widely respected throughout Galt. Her dedication to the ideals of revolution and her widely espoused patriotism drove her popularity among revolutionaries and common citizenry.

AN UNCOMMON MIND

Born during the Red Revolution, Camilia escaped the early chaos alongside her mother, Apalma Drannoch, who served as the Galtan ambassador to Kyonin. Camilia spent her youth among the elves, rapidly coming of age in Iadara to the curious delight of the elven courts. She devoured her studies and proved to have an unusually sharp mind for someone so young, but it wasn't long before the Red Revolution called the family home. As they crossed the border, a pair of Gray Gardeners—the hooded executioners of the Galtan revolution—apprehended Apalma, dragging her through the streets of Isarn before delivering her to the *final blade*, *Silence*. Watching her mother lose her head and soul to the bloody guillotine shattered Camilia's world and served as her introduction to her homeland of Galt.

Camilia threw herself into politics, mourning her mother and burning with spite toward the Gray Gardeners. She rapidly gained followers with her passionate words and radical ideals. It seemed then that she made a grave error, openly questioning the Gray Gardeners' methods during a speech beside the *final blade* that had murdered her mother. The young revolutionary found herself spirited away under the light of a full moon, a black bag covering her head. Her kidnappers promised her a kiss from *Silence* to reunite her with her beloved family.

15 years later, Camilia Drannoch reappeared on the streets of Isarn. Her old enemies were dead through one end or another, and the Red Revolution had carried on gloriously without her. Upon exposing the Eye of Law—the ruling council of Galt at the time—a s a hag coven, Camilia Drannoch became a household name. She was immediately bequeathed a seat on the new Revolutionary Council formed to lead the nation, and she has maintained it ever since.

Camilia has since survived multiple regime changes, making her one of the few politicians to ever consistently navigate the treacherous tides of Galtan politics. She saw Citizen Goss thrown down to the rabid crowd and took his place as the chair of the Revolutionary Council. She enacted several popular reforms to bring a small sense of stability back to the nation, notably when she announced an end to the xenophobic policies that had damaged Galt's economic and political security. Her web of allies and resources extend throughout and beyond Galt, rewarding her supporters with prestige and power. Her detractors, however, are often either murdered by the mob or found dead, marred by deep blade wounds, their souls nowhere to be found.

Camilia sees the Red Revolution as part of a rising tide of change, mirrored by the earth-shattering events taking place across the continent. In her mind, all of Golarion is primed to overthrow its outdated modes of thinking, as evidenced by recent uprisings and successful abolition efforts. She openly supports the rebels of Vidrian and Kintargo while also planting her own agents to speed such efforts along.

Breaking the cycle of death that is the Red Revolution has proven to be Camilia's greatest challenge. She knows the country will never realize its full potential while the *final blades* contribute to its cultural decline. Camilia has been building toward this moment for decades, since her own mother lost her life to the wicked devices, and she hopes that the removal of Galt's *final blades* and dissolution of the Gray Gardeners will be her legacy.



THE FACE OF THE REVOLUTION

Camilia cares desperately for the souls locked away in the *final blades* and has turned to Geb as an unlikely ally, where death has revolutionized what it means to live. She sent envoys to the undead country seeking to foster an alliance with the grand necromancer, offering intelligence on both the nation and Spire of Nex in exchange for Geb freeing the stored souls of her fellow citizens. This is an ideal solution for Camilia, as the souls can either exist freely in Geb or pass onto their final judgment as they choose—and while Geb is a difficult ruler to reason with for both the living and the dead, his obsession with the archmage Nex and his lack of living spies to infiltrate his rival's nation has left him considering the offer.

Though Camilia has done her best to improve foreign relations after the damage done by her predecessor, Galt's notorious instability has made this an uphill battle. Though Grand Princess Eutropia has offered Taldor's friendship to the Revolutionary Council, the recent Taldan civil war has left her wary of anything resembling revolution. Camilia believes Eutropia is holding herself back from realizing Taldor's true potential; she wants to push Eutropia further and radicalize the new grand princess.

Camilia has diligently pursued an alliance with Andira Marusek of Andoran, in part to contrast herself publicly with Citizen Korran Goss, but also because Andira shares her wish to see the end of the *final blades*. Camilia knows that Andira would balk at some of the more violent things she's done to secure Galt's future, so she has thus far limited the information Andira receives to what she wants Andira to hear.

Though Camilia spent her childhood in Kyonin, she never fell in love with the country. Queen Telandia Edasseril ruled as monarch and yet was reluctant to rally the elves toward any cause, leaving Kyonin seemingly adrift between the worst aspects of freedom and autocracy. Though Camilia has so far been diplomatic to the elven queen, she ultimately sees Telandia as an obstacle. The outward appearance of a close relationship between Camilia and the female rulers of Galt's neighboring nations has not gone unnoticed, however; some of Camilia's detractors have begun to refer to them collectively as the "Four Queens," which only fuels Camilia's discontent.

A WEB OF INTRIGUE

Camilia is determined to prove that Galt is a player on the world's stage. Its prestigious universities may be destroyed, its people starving, its once-idyllic countryside now teeming with brigands—but none of that can hold back the Galtan spirit. Another revolution would hurt her goals; she instead takes on spies and agents, sending them across Galt to seek out information on the Gray Gardeners and others who would undermine Camilia's position. Only Camilia's most trusted agents know of her efforts to destroy the *final blades* and the Gray Gardeners. The people of Galt would doubtless reject her should they learn of her plan to end the *blades'* hold on the country, and all of Camilia's careful work will have been for naught. When she does strike against the Gardeners, it must be quick, and it must be final.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Andira Marusek (page 12), Eutropia Stavian (page 42), Geb (page 44), Nex (page 90), Telandia Edasseril (page 106)

THE WEIGHT OF LOSS

Though she has learned to keep her dissent against the Grey Gardeners from becoming public, Camilia is never seen without a pair of striking accessories. She wears a polished steel choker and a red scarf around her neck at all times, a reminder of the weight of Galt's troubles and the bloody price her family paid because of it.

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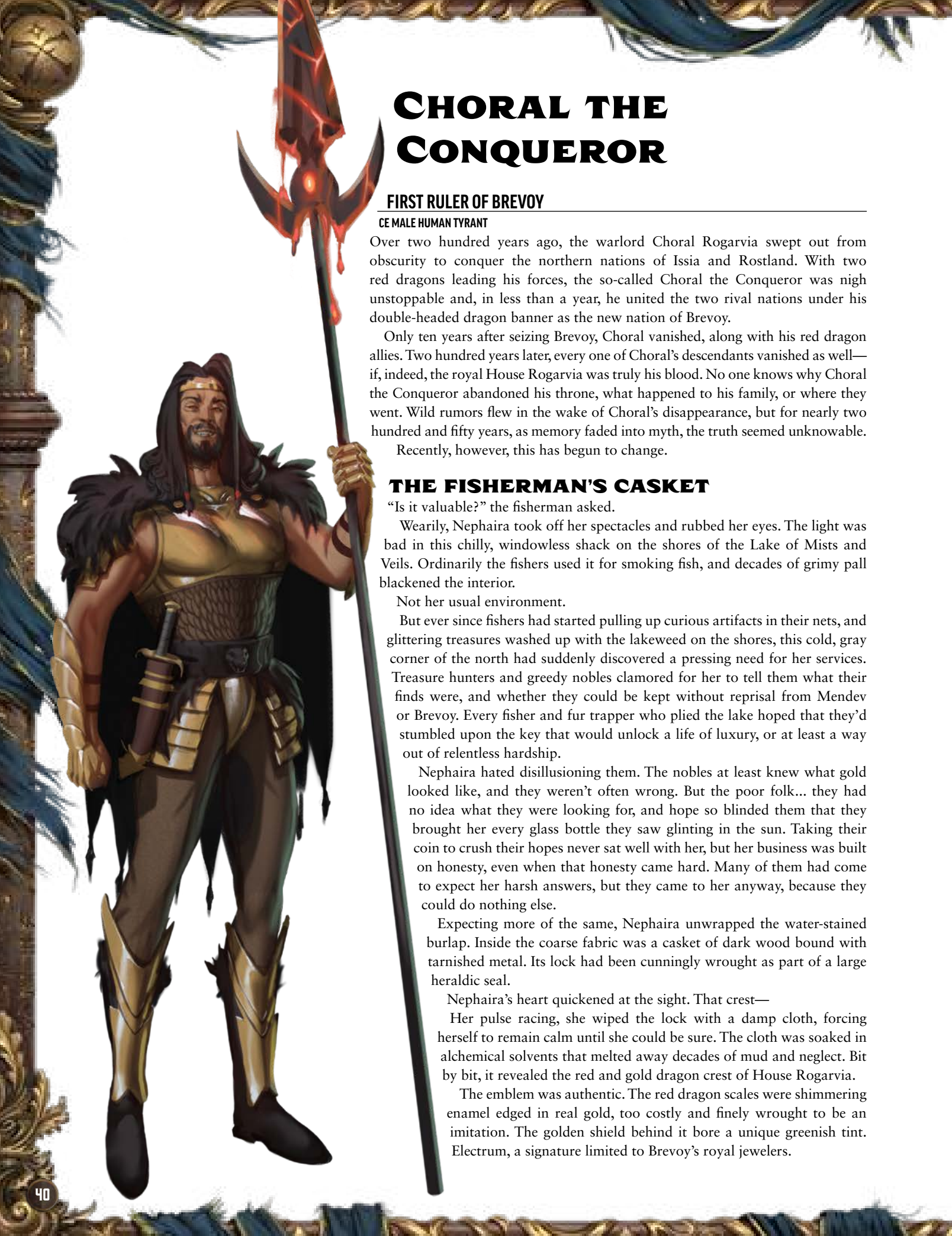
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CHORAL THE CONQUEROR

FIRST RULER OF BREVOY

CE MALE HUMAN TYRANT

Over two hundred years ago, the warlord Choral Rogarvia swept out from obscurity to conquer the northern nations of Issia and Rostland. With two red dragons leading his forces, the so-called Choral the Conqueror was nigh unstoppable and, in less than a year, he united the two rival nations under his double-headed dragon banner as the new nation of Brevoy.

Only ten years after seizing Brevoy, Choral vanished, along with his red dragon allies. Two hundred years later, every one of Choral's descendants vanished as well—if, indeed, the royal House Rogarvia was truly his blood. No one knows why Choral the Conqueror abandoned his throne, what happened to his family, or where they went. Wild rumors flew in the wake of Choral's disappearance, but for nearly two hundred and fifty years, as memory faded into myth, the truth seemed unknowable.

Recently, however, this has begun to change.

THE FISHERMAN'S CASKET

"Is it valuable?" the fisherman asked.

Wearily, Nephaira took off her spectacles and rubbed her eyes. The light was bad in this chilly, windowless shack on the shores of the Lake of Mists and Veils. Ordinarily the fishers used it for smoking fish, and decades of grimy pall blackened the interior.

Not her usual environment.

But ever since fishers had started pulling up curious artifacts in their nets, and glittering treasures washed up with the lakeweed on the shores, this cold, gray corner of the north had suddenly discovered a pressing need for her services. Treasure hunters and greedy nobles clamored for her to tell them what their finds were, and whether they could be kept without reprisal from Mendev or Brevoy. Every fisher and fur trapper who plied the lake hoped that they'd stumbled upon the key that would unlock a life of luxury, or at least a way out of relentless hardship.

Nephaira hated disillussioning them. The nobles at least knew what gold looked like, and they weren't often wrong. But the poor folk... they had no idea what they were looking for, and hope so blinded them that they brought her every glass bottle they saw glinting in the sun. Taking their coin to crush their hopes never sat well with her, but her business was built on honesty, even when that honesty came hard. Many of them had come to expect her harsh answers, but they came to her anyway, because they could do nothing else.

Expecting more of the same, Nephaira unwrapped the water-stained burlap. Inside the coarse fabric was a casket of dark wood bound with tarnished metal. Its lock had been cunningly wrought as part of a large heraldic seal.

Nephaira's heart quickened at the sight. That crest—

Her pulse racing, she wiped the lock with a damp cloth, forcing herself to remain calm until she could be sure. The cloth was soaked in alchemical solvents that melted away decades of mud and neglect. Bit by bit, it revealed the red and gold dragon crest of House Rogarvia.

The emblem was authentic. The red dragon scales were shimmering enamel edged in real gold, too costly and finely wrought to be an imitation. The golden shield behind it bore a unique greenish tint. Electrum, a signature limited to Brevoy's royal jewelers.

"It's real," she told the fisherman.

At first, he blinked, taken utterly by surprise. He'd not expected this either, but Nephaira saw hope rekindled in his eyes.

"Is it valuable?" Desperation strained his voice. "My nets are old. My boat leaks. My children shiver for cold, day and night, and we have not enough bread. Can I sell this... this dragon box?"

"The box itself is worth... two and a half weights in gold. Anyone who offers less is trying to cheat you." Privately, Nephaira thought the fisherman would be lucky to get half that sum—his desperation was too obvious, and the nobles' agents didn't get paid for being soft-hearted—but she could at least tell him its true value. Honesty was her watchword.

"I'd like to see what's in it, though," she said.

When the fisherman nodded, Nephaira took out her tools and began cleaning out years of mud and corrosion. Slow going, but eventually she managed.

Inside were... papers. Nephaira removed them one by one, baffled. A hodgepodge of village records, letters from the hinterlands, and other miscellany. The box had been well sealed, and none of the documents evinced water damage, but she couldn't fathom why they would have warranted such protection.

The fisherman waited, fidgeting. "What are they?"

Puzzled, Nephaira began reading more carefully. Midway through the fourth letter, it dawned on her. Dragons. The documents were all about dragons. Aggrieved knights seeking recompense for burned lands. Village elders recording the deaths of devoured peasants. Astrologers noting incidental sightings in the sky; physicians requesting burn ointments to treat survivors. Some of the documents were dated. Others referenced contemporaneous events, setting signposts in time. Nephaira searched her memory, measuring what she knew against what she read.

All the sightings matched times when Choral the Conqueror, first king of Brevoyn, was known to be in that area—and when the royal red dragons were known to be elsewhere. Each letter was a brick in a wall of proof that Choral was not the human warlord that official historians had always claimed, but was himself a red dragon.

It couldn't be true. It *had* to be true. That ridiculous rumor, so long dismissed as the wild-eyed fancy of amateur cranks, was in fact a truth that Brevoyn's early government had gone to great lengths to suppress.

She pushed her chair back, rubbing her eyes again. Outside, the sky had grown dark. She hadn't even noticed the night falling.

The fisherman, who'd dozed off, stirred. "Is it valuable?"

Nephaira hesitated. The documents had been hidden, not destroyed, which suggested that someone had seen value in them centuries ago. To blackmail Choral's descendants, perhaps. But now House Rogarvia was vanished without a single survivor, and she couldn't imagine how revealing Choral's true nature would help any of the noble houses maneuvering for Brevoyn's throne. The only value she could see was in completing the historical record.

"I don't think so," she answered. "But I'll buy them for a fair price."

It was the wrong thing to say. Nephaira saw the fisherman's face harden. Her heart sank as he reached for the papers and swept them back into the box.

"I will sell them myself," he said, firmly, and left.

Nephaira sank back into her chair. She didn't see the dark figure that peeled off the hut's shadowed wall to follow the fisherman, and she never learned what happened to the man. All she knew, then and there, was that the box with the dragon seal had been full. Too full to have held everything.

Which meant there were more documents out there, somewhere.

And she would find them.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Irahai (page 54), Khismar Crookchar (page 78), Nephaira (N female half-elf archivist)



WITH SWORD AND FLAME

For ten years, Choral sat on the Dragonscale Throne as the first king of Brevoyn, but in all that time, he did little to unite the Issians and Rostlanders as a single people, leaving old divisions to fester while he amassed wealth in his Ruby Fortress. As king, Choral was a remote and terrifying figure, little seen by his people and less loved. Except for his rare, unpredictable tours across Brevoyn—tours that he used primarily to visit terrible retribution on wayward vassals, to remind them of the price of disloyalty—Choral rarely left his seat of power in New Stetven.

Without Choral or his heirs to maintain unity, the nation of Brevoyn has remained split at the seams. Old rivalries and new grudges have pushed the Issians and Rostlanders to the brink of civil war. Yet some few still fear this political infighting will only attract the return and wrath of House Rogarvia, and that those who fight for the right of rule will pay the price for presuming to lay claim to King Choral's crown.

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FAMILIAR FACES

Grand Princess Eutropia's struggles to inherit Taldor's rule were the center of the War for the Crown Adventure Path. *Legends* assumes that Eutropia's agents, as played by the PCs, both aided Eutropia in taking the throne and rescued her resurrected brother, Prince Carrius, from the bizarre plots and circumstances the youth found himself trapped within.



EUTROPIA STAVIAN

GRAND PRINCESS OF TALDOR

NG FEMALE HUMAN SWASHBUCKLER

17 Calistril, 4719

My dear charlatans, traitors, backstabbers, vipers, and other colleagues,

I arrived in Absalom on the ninth, to try and find what had befallen our mumble-tongued coreligionists. Some dedicated snooping revealed that the Brotherhood of Silence had committed the grave error of getting involved in local politics. (Yes, I am aware of the irony.) Since it doesn't seem like the Brotherhood is going to get out of its defensive crouch anytime soon, I've spent my time putting together a dossier on the cause of their problems, Grand Princess Eutropia Stavian. If nothing else, it might keep us from making the same mistakes in Absalom.

Let's begin with the mundane details. Eutropia is the eldest daughter of the previous ruler, Grand Prince Stavian III, born in 4679 AR. Her brother, Carrius II, is born two years later, and their mother dies shortly thereafter. Nevertheless, her childhood seems happy enough. In 4698 AR, a teenage Carrius dies in an unfortunate accident, and Eutropia breaks with her father. She spends the next decade as a troublemaker and intellectual gadfly. In her thirties, Eutropia settles down into a somewhat more socially acceptable role as dedicated opposition to Stavian's rule. Last year, Eutropia finally pushed a law through the Taldan Senate which repealed agnatic primogeniture and made her the rightful heir.

Whereupon Stavian III launched a royal coup.

I won't go into the details of the Taldan War for the Crown, save that it was complicated, multifaceted, occasionally bloody, and that Eutropia won. Two key points, however. First, some bizarre minor cult managed to resurrect the late Carrius II. Then, toward the end of the crisis, our coreligionist Rhien secretly murdered Eutropia on the orders of some secret society or other, which led to Carrius II briefly ruling Taldor. Eutropia's agents managed to resurrect her, Carrius stepped down, and Eutropia became grand princess; public opinion is that she faked her death. Their skepticism is unsurprising, given Eutropia seems to have weathered her own homicide without so much as a chipped nail or ruffled feather. Really, the agents even resurrected the dog that Rhien killed during the assassination (named Taldogis, on which I have no comment), so as to magically question the poor canine. I am gravely disappointed in the quality of assassination in this country. No one stays dead.

Which brings us to today. Eutropia is the newly minted grand princess, the first woman on the Taldan throne, with her younger brother Carrius II at her side, as well as her faithful Taldogis.

Last night, I weaseled my way into a royal salon and managed to speak with Eutropia for about an hour before Lady Gloriana Morilla recognized me and I had to escape the Ulfen Guard by way of a dumbwaiter. Eutropia is a canny politician and a dedicated Taldan patriot, but underneath I found her rather melancholy. Her brother's death and subsequent resurrection, her father's dementia, and her own struggles for the throne weigh on her, and though things seem to be on the upturn, I suspect she's still waiting for fate's next blow to fall. The only time she seemed truly happy was when speaking of her catch-dog, or talking about sport fencing, during which she betrayed a downright impish sense of humor.

With regards to politics, Eutropia is a moderate reformer. She won the throne by carefully maneuvering between rival powers, sometimes displaying honest compassion, sometimes brutal efficiency, and sometimes level-headed practicality. For the moment, she's been

putting Taldor's financial house in order, working to root out corruption, and installing loyal and competent agents in positions of power—all necessary but tedious tasks. In terms of tactics, Eutropia has a marked preference for soft power and using discreet groups of agents, and I've already heard her called the Queen of Spies.

Among her allies, Eutropia counts Ladies Martella Lotheed (part-Qadiran scion of the ancient Lotheed family) and Gloriana Morilla (of the Absalom Morillas and with connections to the Pathfinder Society) as her closest confidantes. Dominicus Rell, the leader of the Lion Blades, continues to serve Eutropia as he did her father, and acts as her liaison to the more recalcitrant nobles. Dominicus seems distressingly loyal to the nation of Taldor, though his struggles with Eutropia over who ultimately has control over the other are quite fascinating to watch.

Unfortunately, not everyone is so fond of her. Oppara has enough conspiracies that even the underground mithraeums have scheduling issues, and several of these are less than benign. The Cult of the Twilight Child worships Carrius as Taldor's savior, regardless of the poor youth's ideas on the matter, and several old allies of former High Strategos Maxillar Pythareus have formed a semisecret pact in the military known as the Ninth Army. I've also heard rumors of some severe issues relating to foreign investments, which sounds dreadfully dull until you realize just how much money is involved. Most curious, graffiti depicting a three-headed crow has been popping up all over Oppara, to the confusion of most and the abject terror of a few.

Finally, after the recent troubles, the question of succession is never far from people's minds. Eutropia is unmarried and seems inclined to remain so. Her brother Carrius is her heir; nearly twenty years younger by quirk of magic and known for his gentle and thoughtful personality, the youth is presently the most eligible bachelor in the Inner Sea region. Oppara is positively swarming with pretty girls (and boys) with sterling political connections and impressive dowries. The sight is endlessly amusing, but not all the hopefuls are inclined to leave such a thing to chance—or to Carrius.

Since taking the throne, Eutropia has sent emissaries of friendship to all her neighbors, including Andoran's Andira Marusek, Galt's Camilia Drannoch, and Kyonin's Telandia Edasseril, with mixed success; Taldor's history as the regional hegemon keeps relations from getting too cozy. She's also been negotiating a new trade pact with Katapesh's Hashim ibn Sayyid and has lent quiet support to Lady Darchana's efforts to become primarch of Absalom. Relations with Satrap Xerbystes II of Qadira are a bit thornier; rumor has it that there were a few exchanges of assassins and agents before Xerbystes was forced to pull his horns in by his vizier.

Ultimately, I like Eutropia. She has the instincts of a Norgorberite, though I doubt she'd appreciate the compliment. Regardless, we can expect little help with our own problems from our coreligionists, so I shall be sailing back home with the next tide.

Your disobedient servant,

S. Maleagant

Senior Priest-Advocate of the Court of Black Paper

Eutropia aims to make Taldor the cultural capital of the Inner Sea region once more. If she has her way, it won't be too long before everyone is again reading Taldan books, eating Taldan food, and listening to Taldan songs. And a few of her moody traveling poets also happen to be secret members of the Lion Blades, should soft words fail and a sharp knife become necessary.

—Samel Maleagant



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Andira Marusek (page 12), Camilia Drannoch (page 38), Prince Carrius II (NG male human medium), Lady Darchana (N female human wizard), Dominicus Rell (N male human Lion Blade), Lady Gloriana Morilla (CN female human aristocrat), Hashim ibn Sayyid (page 50), Hebizid Vraj (page 120), Lady Martella Lotheed (N female human spymaster), Norgorber (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 36), Samel Maleagant (NE male human rogue), Telandia Edasseril (page 106), Xerbystes II (page 120)

QUIET NEIGHBORS

Despite the malicious nature of most of its leadership, the nation of Geb has mainly been a peaceful one since the end of the war with Nex, showing no signs of expansion and only retaliating if provoked. After four centuries of calmly trading food for goods with other nations, even the most murderous Gebbite blood lords had grown used to the situation, and are now uneasy at the current change.

GEB

GHOST KING

LE MALE HUMAN GHOST NECROMANCER

It is difficult to tell the story of the necromancer Geb without chronicling his centuries-long feud with the archmage Nex. The two great wizards of the Age of Destiny had no peer save one another, and so their proximity fostered rivalry, their rivalry gradually turned to obsession, and their obsession bloomed into all-out war. They unleashed unfathomable calamities against each other's nations to further their battle, permanently devastating the surrounding landscape with magical fallout.

Eventually, Geb gained the upper hand by casting forth a great storm of poison on the capital of Nex, killing thousands. In the aftermath, there was no sign of Geb's rival archmage, who had escaped into a magical refuge only to vanish from Golarion entirely. While history claimed this as Geb's victory, it rang hollow to the necromancer, who believed Nex had not only survived his final attack but was merely biding his time until the chance came to retaliate. Geb scoured the globe for any power that would let him discover Nex's true fate, until he drove himself into despair with his own paranoia and finally took his own life. Yet even death could not deny Geb's vendetta; consumed by anguish and surrounded by necromancy, his suicide trapped his spirit on the Material Plane as a ghost.

With no purpose and no escape, Geb languished on the throne of a kingdom he felt no affection for. Many of his subjects chose to follow Geb into undeath, leaving him with the rotting corpse of the nation he had founded. His only relief came in the form of tiny sparks of emotion across the ages, when it seemed something might challenge him. When the Holy Knights of Ozem attacked his kingdom, he retaliated by stealing the corpse of their god's deceased herald, Arazni, and turning her into his undead queen regent. When the armies of Holmog marched on Geb's borders, he unleashed a spell that turned every warrior to stone and rained down a cataclysm on their capital city. No matter how many potential rivals rose against him, none could withstand even his opening salvo. Each time he dashed a new foe, he sank deeper into despair, unmoved by opponents that lacked even a fraction of Nex's power.

With the lich Queen Arazni running the day-to-day affairs of the nation, Geb retreated further into seclusion. Generations passed between sightings of the necromancer, and for many, it seemed best to ignore him and hope that he would waste away if left alone. Even many of the undead citizens of Geb preferred the efficient—if occasionally vindictive—rule of the enslaved Arazni to the erratic and violent whims of their king. In this age of relative peace, Geb nearly achieved true political significance on the world stage, despite the many nations unwilling to deal with undead as equals.

That all changed the day Nex's great engines of war, the fleshforges, began to activate on their own. Mighty beasts and monsters more powerful than anything the arclords had summoned in over a thousand years marched south into the Mana Wastes. They were the most wondrous sight Geb had seen since the height of the war. The day Geb had yearned for over countless lifetimes had finally come, and it was time to assemble his forces once again.

Now, for the first time in 4,000 years, Geb faces new challenges. During his long wallowing fits, the ghost king failed to notice Arazni's steadily growing independence or even her sudden disappearance as Tar-Baphon stirred far to the north. Without the lich queen, Geb is forced to step forward and act like a true ruler once again. For a war council, he has only his scheming, sycophantic governors, the blood lords, many of whom have taken



Arazni's defection as a cue to turn upon each other in efforts to gain Geb's favor. His greatest difficulty comes from the very magic that reanimated him, however, as Geb's spirit is bound to the soil of Mechitar, the capital city where his palace rests. Until he can deal with these obstacles, Geb won't be truly ready for Nex's return.

MARCH TO WAR

For the first time in thousands of years, Geb is truly taking stock of his country. In doing so, he discovered that at least three cities, including a necropolis that once held the greatest school of necromancy in all of Geb, have been completely wiped from the map. Some of his more astute subjects have deduced that these locations were taken into the *Hao Jin Tapestry* but were not restored with the return of the Ruby Phoenix. Geb has sent a small group of ambassadors to the city of Goka to negotiate the return of the necropolis or, failing this, demand the aid of Hao Jin herself as compensation for its loss.

Far to the north, Camilia Drannoch of Galt has been in secret negotiations to rid her country of their *final blades* once and for all. While many have expressed interest in destroying the blades to free the souls trapped within, Geb is more interested in reforging the blades themselves into horrific cleavers to arm his graveknight generals. Since the country of Geb grows far more food than its few living citizens need, it is in an excellent position to bargain with the starving rebels of Galt.

While the dwarven Sky Citadel of Dongun Hold was little more than a footnote in the first war with Nex, this time Geb has been forced to take notice of the dwarven kingdom and the thriving city-state growing in its shadow. With the firearms of Alkenstar and the technological secrets of Dongun Hold, an alliance with High King Anong Arunak is something Geb now sees as in his best interests. Even if the dwarves ultimately prove of little use, snatching away one of Nex's presumed allies would be an amusing preamble to the coming war.

In a desperate bid to free himself of whatever power keeps him trapped in Mechitar, Geb has invited necromancers, clerics of death, mediums, and all manner of occultists to the capital in hopes that one of them will be able to solve the mystery of his curse. Despite his mastery of necromancy, he seems unable to recognize his own nature as a ghost as the culprit of his imprisonment; his suicide and subsequent revival are scars on his memory that he struggles to piece together. He has offered all manner of rewards for anyone who can aid him or, for the more reluctant, a cell in his dungeon until a solution has been found.

While some scramble to choose a side in the looming war, many more wish to stop it before it can even begin, including ambitious liches and vampires who have no desire to play pawns in a ghost king's war games, arclords who will lose all status and authority if Nex returns, and thousands of innocent bystanders who would be caught in the crossfire. Adventurers, pathfinders, and mercenaries all across the Impossible Lands have been hired in secret to find some way to preserve peace. Some of Geb's more traitorous governors plot the ghost king's assassination, ready to claim the throne for themselves, while others seek heroes who can find a way to prevent Nex from ever returning at all. Yet these agents must act with care: there will be no mercy for anyone who denies Geb his chance to face his old foe once again.

ACADEMIC PRESSURE

Geb seeks new weapons, advantages, and allies to prepare himself for the impending war, especially any that might have extraplanar magic or abilities. He has pushed for greater arcane developments from the various necromantic colleges throughout Geb, such as the Mortuarium in the city of Yled.

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PEOPLE OF NOTE

Anong Arunak (page 14), Arazni (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 54), Camilia Drannoch (page 38), Hao Jin (page 46), Nex (page 90), Tar-Baphon (page 104)

FAMILIAR FACES

Hao Jin and her tapestry have played a prominent role in the Pathfinder Society organized play campaign over the past decade, with players from around the world deciding the ultimate fate of the sorceress and her magical creation. To help shape the world of Golarion through organized play, visit pathfindersociety.club and join the community!



HAO JIN

PLANE-TRAVELING EXPLORER

LN FEMALE HUMAN SORCERER

Hao Jin, the Ruby Phoenix, is one of the greatest sorcerers ever to have lived on Golarion. Born in the Tian city of Goka in 4042 AR to an Abadaran priest and a successful painter, Hao Jin lived a privileged childhood. As a youth, she was fascinated by history and spent much of her time in the famed Empress Yin Museum until a bout of reckless play led to a fire that ravaged the museum's collections and claimed her life. Hao Jin's parents spent most of their modest fortune returning her from death, and in doing so awoke a spark of magical potential within her soul. Hao Jin's raven hair turned bright red, scintillating like fire.

Burdened with guilt over her role in the museum's loss and her parents' financial hardships, Hao Jin devoted her life to protecting the world's culture from destruction. After several lifetimes of learning, the Ruby Phoenix created her masterpiece, the famed *Hao Jin Tapestry*. Woven together from her magic, creativity, and skill, the tapestry contained a demiplane that the Ruby Phoenix intended to use as a kind of museum world, allowing her to pluck places and people at risk of destruction from Golarion to preserve them forever within magically regulated biomes.

Her greatest creation complete, Hao Jin departed Golarion to explore the cosmos, eventually arriving in the Eternal City of Axis. Though she dreamed of collaborating with the brilliant aeons who resided there, Hao Jin instead found herself reprimanded. Aeons are beings of absolute order, and they considered the creation of the *Hao Jin Tapestry* callous, irresponsible, and a threat to the planar stability across all realities. Axis called for the tapestry's destruction, but Hao Jin struck a bargain to save it: she offered to serve the Eternal City and relinquish her memories of the tapestry's creation for study. Axis agreed, and so Hao Jin disappeared from Golarion in 4391 AR for over 300 years.

Assuming the Ruby Phoenix had perished, the city of Goka held a grand martial arts tournament at her estate as her will instructed, with the victor being allowed to claim a single item from Hao Jin's vast treasury. Called the Ruby Phoenix Tournament, this competition was held every 10 years, starting in 4401 AR. At the most recent tournament in 4711 AR, a team of Pathfinder Society agents hand-picked by the Decemvirate were victorious, allowing them to claim the *Hao Jin Tapestry*.

In the years that followed, Pathfinders studied the *Hao Jin Tapestry*, exploring Hao Jin's museum world while thwarting the cult of Lissala and the Aspis Consortium; all of them learned that Thassilonian magic could be used to tear rifts in the tapestry for quick travel across Golarion. This consistent abuse took its toll on the artifact, and the tapestry, already in decline due to Hao Jin's absence, rapidly began to unravel. Through the sacrifices of dozens of Pathfinder agents and former Master of Spells Aram Zey, the Pathfinder Society staved off the tapestry's destruction long enough to find Hao Jin, exonerate her in the eyes of Axis and the Boneyard, and recruit her help in returning the tapestry's inhabitants to Tian Xia. This effort bore fruit despite an assault by the hag **Aslynn** (NE female night hag merchant), but the tapestry itself ripped further in the process, scattering many of its contents across the Astral Plane.

REPAIRING FRAYED THREADS

Hao Jin took many steps to craft a worthy legacy on Golarion should she perish unexpectedly, but her 300-year exile in Axis forced her to consider that her true impact was not as she had intended. Instead of considering her a historian and preservationist, the aeons treated her as a nuisance who plundered others' history and heritage. Questioning her life's work and filled with regret, Hao Jin now seeks to help restore what she took and recover what was lost from her tapestry when the night hag Aslynn attacked, a mission that has left her traversing the heart of the Astral Plane.

Yet Hao Jin is not the only legend to recently return from the depths of the past. When the sorceress was initially searching the world for sites for the *Hao Jin Tapestry*

to preserve, she discovered the Rune-Crossed Crucible, an ancient Thassilonian ruin built upon a conflux of major Avistani ley lines just 12 miles south of time-locked Crystilan. Using the culmination of a century's worth of research and planning, Hao Jin wove her tapestry around the crucible, placing it at the heart of her museum world. Upon reawakening to the world, Runelord Belimarius discovered the crucible missing, leading the runelord to use her magic to track down the ruin's fate. Though Belimarius initially contacted Hao Jin regarding its return, the Ruby Phoenix no longer has the building either; when Aslynn attacked the *Hao Jin Tapestry*, the night hag's agents reportedly stole the crucible for reasons unknown. Belimarius has sworn revenge on Hao Jin for this trespass, but the sorceress has ignored the threat, focusing instead on recovering the Rune-Crossed Crucible and bringing Aslynn to justice.

The necromancer Geb has also sent ambassadors to the city of Goka, demanding either the return of cities that Hao Jin placed within her tapestry or equal favors from the sorceress in compensation for the loss. Even more so than Belimarius, this has left Hao Jin with a heavy ethical conundrum—she knows she does indeed owe the nation of Geb a debt, and that reneging on it due to her opinions of its undead leader would be an act of convenient moral cowardice. At the same time, if there is any magician who has left more of a scar on the world than Hao Jin, it's Geb, through his war with his rival Nex. With rumors of Nex's potential return and Geb's obvious preparations to resume the war, Hao Jin wonders whether she would be returning the sites only to see them destroyed, or worse yet, if Geb might use them to inflict some new horror. Pressure from the aeons of Axis, who seek the return of the lost sites regardless of the moral consequences, has only further burdened her conscience.

In addition to recovering historic sites, Hao Jin seeks to act as a shepherd to those communities she took into her tapestry, which have now been restored to a world that moved on without them. Her return to Golarion involved her ushering Round Mountain, a massive sphere of the Sekamina layer of the Darklands, from the *Hao Jin Tapestry* to its rightful place. This saved the occupants of the *Hao Jin Tapestry* from certain doom, but in the process, Hao Jin destroyed the ysoki settlement of Broken Ticker—though the citizens were fortunately evacuated beforehand. The residents of Broken Ticker and many of those returned with Round Mountain have since banded together to construct a new settlement called Second Ticker. Despite the ingenuity of its people, Second Ticker's trading routes and much of their supplies were devastated by Round Mountain's landing, and the residents now look to the Ruby Phoenix for help. Hao Jin seeks a council of seasoned individuals willing to act as her agents in Second Ticker, as she worries her legend would intimidate the vulnerable peoples from pushing back against any of her decisions.

The most dangerous consequence of the Ruby Phoenix's return may be her effect on her homeland. During Hao Jin's long absence from Golarion, the empire of Imperial Lung Wa shattered into sixteen Successor States, each vying for control of the others' territory. Upon visiting her home of Goka after satisfying her obligations to the Pathfinder Society, news of Hao Jin's rebirth exploded a sense of national fervor in the city-state, inciting unrest among the Successor State governments, who see her return as an endorsement of Goka and a threat to their own sovereignty. As armies gather and assassins seek to claim her life, Hao Jin gathers agents who can help her avert both her own murder and a looming potential war.

TREASURY OF THE RUBY PHOENIX

While Hao Jin's Vault has become famous thanks to the Ruby Phoenix Tournament, not all of the sorceress's treasures reside within. The following are some of the items for which Hao Jin has found no rightful owner and might thus grant as a gift.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Belimarius (page 34), Geb (page 44), Emphyreal Lord Korada (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 84), Lissala (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 130), Nex (page 90)

BEHIND THE LEGEND

A Tian-Shu woman appearing roughly in her 30s, Hao Jin's shimmering red hair is by far her most striking feature, complemented by her ornate robes and bright crimson tattoos. While history paints Hao Jin as an eclectic collector of history and culture, her exile on Axis has given her time to reflect upon her previous choices. She recognizes the harm she has done to those she wished to preserve and is seeking ways to repair the damage she unintentionally inflicted.

Hao Jin is asexual, a trait she once thought was caused her untimely death and resurrection and considered to be a driving factor behind her issues connecting with others. As a result, Hao Jin never sought romance prior to leaving Golarion, throwing herself into her work rather than face a persistent fear that she may be broken and unworthy of love. But centuries of introspection have helped Hao Jin rise above these toxic doubts with reborn confidence in herself and her identity, and she's rumored to have visited several Gokan matchmakers since returning to Golarion.

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REVISIONIST HISTORY

Though Hao Jin's actions are condemned by some, she was also responsible for saving many endangered people and relics from Tian Xia's past, especially those threatened by the expansionist empire of Lung Wa. Hao Jin returned to Golarion over 100 years after Lung Wa collapsed, bringing with her a vast swath of history that had been erased by conquest. Her desire to return these cultural treasures to their rightful peoples has caused many ambassadors to approach the Ruby Phoenix and attempt to lay claim to her artifacts.

CELESTIAL PEACH

ITEM 17+

RARE CONSUMABLE DIVINE HEALING MAGICAL NECROMANCY POSITIVE

Usage held in one hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ Interact

Among Hao Jin's most precious treasures are three living plants, the last surviving celestial peach trees taken from the mountains of Chu Ye. One of the trees grows pearls in place of flowers, but the other two bear fruit that is far more valuable. Eating one of these small red peaches can heal even the most grievous of injuries.

Type rejuvenation; **Level** 17; **Price** 3,000 gp

You gain the effects of 7th-level *neutralize poison*, *regenerate*, *remove curse*, and *remove disease* spells. The peach has a counteract modifier of +27.

Type life; **Level** 20; **Price** 73,000 gp

When you place the peach into the mouth of an intact corpse that died within the last year, it casts a 10th-level *raise dead* on the corpse.

MOUNTAIN TO THE SKY

ITEM 16

UNIQUE CONJURATION MAGICAL STRUCTURE

Price 10,000 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** –

Activate 1 minute (Interact)

This tiny, carved walnut shell contains a sacred mountain within. You can only activate *mountain to the sky* on an unoccupied patch of earth or soil. When activated, the walnut transforms into an impossibly steep mountain, 5,000 feet tall and 100 feet wide at the base. Climbing the mountain requires 8 hours and a successful DC 35 Athletics check. After activating it, if you climb to the top of the mountain without any assistance from flight or magic, the mountain *plane shifts* you to Heaven when you reach the summit. You can return the *mountain to the sky* into the shape of a walnut shell as a 1-minute activity, which has the concentrate and manipulate traits, so long as no living creatures are present on the mountain.

RUBY STRING

ITEM 14

RARE CONJURATION CONSUMABLE

Price 900 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** –

The frayed threads from the rips and tears in *Hao Jin's Tapestry* still contain traces of the Ruby Phoenix's magic. Hao Jin has collected most of these loose strings, but others occasionally find these potent silk strands in unexpected places. A *ruby string* can fulfill the cost requirement for an 8th-level *create demiplane* ritual (*Advanced Player's Guide* 241). When used in this way, the *ruby string* negates the need for secondary casters, and you get a success for all secondary checks. Alternatively, you can activate it to create a smaller demiplane without requiring the ritual.

Activate 8 hours (envision, Interact); **Effect** You spin the thread to form a demiplane with the effects of a successful 8th-level *create demiplane*, but the space is a single 10-foot cube.

STARSHOT ARROW

ITEM 7+

RARE CONJURATION CONSUMABLE MAGICAL

Ammunition arrow

Activate ♦ Interact

The metal of these arrows is said to have come from a star that ventured too close to Golarion and was shot down by a moonlit archer. When you activate and shoot a *starshot arrow*, you take no range penalties against any target that you can personally detect. There must be a line of effect between you and the target.

Type lesser; **Level** 7; **Price** 55 gp

The target must be within the maximum range of your weapon.

Type greater; **Level** 14; **Price** 800 gp

You can fire at any creature you can detect, regardless of range. The arrow travels instantly, hitting your target as soon as you fire the arrow. This is a teleportation effect.

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TAPESTRY SITES

The following notable sites once dwelt within the famed *Hao Jin Tapestry*.

A

ONHAE

Home to the descendants of the Sunsú Godae people of the Chung Liao jungle, this humble village contained the last vestiges, traditions, and religion of this culture, as well as stories that have otherwise been entirely lost from Golarion.

B

TAIKAGA TEMPLE

One of the first locations that Hao Jin sought to preserve, this temple and its nearby lake were guarded by sovereign dragons who swore an oath that they and all their descendants would help to maintain balance within the tapestry.

C

THE TEMPLE OF EMPYREAL ENLIGHTENMENT

The hilltop Temple of Empyreal Enlightenment was originally from Tianjing, a nation of aasimars. Hao Jin was gifted it so that its beauty and the teachings of Empyreal Lord Korada could be preserved within the tapestry for all time.

D

MOUNTAIN OF CHAINS

The dwarves of this mountain, descendants of the last survivors from the Sky Citadel of Jormundun, lived peacefully until Hao Jin vanished and the magic of her tapestry began to fail, prompting the community to accept aid from the god Droskar.

E

THE SUNDERED CITY

Hao Jin claimed this crumbling ziggurat, part of a massive complex of serpentfolk ruins, to preserve the site and contain the undead serpentfolk still within, though she also accidentally pulled the Muckmouth lizardfolk into her tapestry in the process.

DECEIVING THE DECEIVERS

Hashim is not the only prominent figure in Katapesh who is not as they appear.

The Pactmasters are in fact enigmatic aliens known as witchwyrds (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 294) who have been ruling Katapesh for centuries. While Hashim's usurpation by Olordaera went unnoticed, the Pactmasters are beginning to suspect something strange is afoot, though they are not yet sure what that may be.

HASHIM IBN SAYYID

PACTBROKER OF KATAPESH

LE GENDERLESS VIDILETH INFILTRATOR

Within his extravagant chambers above the streets of Katapesh, Hashim sat comfortably in the lavish trappings provided him by the position of Pactbroker. A breeze wafted through the outside patio doors, thrown open and overlooking the busy merchant stalls below. Taking in the abundance of fine food and drink set before him, Hashim brought a jeweled goblet to his nose, and then his true self remembered two things—that it had a very important meeting to attend to, and that it could not bear the scent of wine.

Dumping the drink in his chamber pot far away from him, he returned to face the open air, took a moment to ensure his magical protections were in place, sat in a meditative stance, and closed his eyes. He opened its mind, and the voices came. One from Magnimar, one from the Darklands, and another from Rahadoum. The voices of its fellow veiled masters. Through the shared linking of their minds, they got right to the point.

“Olordaera,” asked Yuildoroc, its equal in Rahadoum. “What pact have you brokered with the alchemist Kassi Aziril behind my back, helping her heal the flesh of mortals without magic?”

“One that benefits us both, I assure you,” Olordaera replied. “Having such talent promote the anti-deific rhetoric of the Laws of Mortality only yields more subjects willing to turn to us instead of the gods. I provided her an ingredient that only we can harvest, in the depths of the Sightless Sea.”

“A favor you should not soon forget,” said Uruluura, interjecting from its domain of Orv in the Darklands.

“And what of your folly, Olordaera? What of Shimon-Je?” This was Thulgroon, in Magnimar. Independently of Olordaera's thoughts, Hashim's face clenched in aggravation.

“The gnoll will be tracked down and disposed of,” Olordaera said.

“She is despised in Katapesh, and I have ensured she will find no allies elsewhere. With my agents on her trail, our secret will be safe.”

A sudden cacophony of voices rose, powerful and loud, and the alghollthu mentally present all withdrew a step inward. Hashim's nose began to bleed. It was the Mhalsstthu: the confluence of minds that ruled over and led their kind.

“It is *your* secret that you risk, Olordaera,” they said, echoing. “If your plan fails, you will be expunged. Our greater influence must not be discovered.”

Just as quickly as it arrived, the mass of voices receded. For a moment, all Olordaera could sense was the fresh pulse of its now-empty mind.

Hashim's eyes fluttered open. He stood, wiped his nose with a handkerchief of imported Tian silk, then turned to the work of putting his plans in motion.

DEPTHS OF HISTORY

Though the unseen and mysterious Pactmasters rule over Katapesh, they leave the enforcement of their decisions and mundane government up to a single appointed Pactbroker. The most recent Pactbroker to be appointed was Hashim ibn Sayyid, a human chosen for his mercantile skill and willingness to uphold the Pactmasters' judgments. Weeks after his acceptance to the post, Hashim ibn Sayyid was murdered and replaced.

The new Hashim is a vidileth—a veiled master—one of the sinister alghollthus. These ancient aquatic beings have meddled in the fate of countless mortals, even warping them into entirely new creatures. They were also the architects of Earthfall, and to this day consider themselves superior to all others, including deities. In their unending desire for control over other species, the alghollthus of Golarion currently have multiple plans in motion. Some, like Olordaera, have



chosen to take the personas of influential figures of power through shapeshifting, while others have turned to fleshwarping experiments to create more pliable servants, and some pursue secret plots they keep even from each other. Not all veiled masters work together, but they all watch one another, ensuring that their schemes do not threaten to reveal their existence to the world at large. If the plans of an individual veiled master seem doomed to fail in this way, the liability is annihilated. This measure has been enacted twice.

There is a series of four edicts that all alghollthu can recall from within their shared memory. The First Dictum is that life exists to be controlled. The Second Dictum is that to be an alghollthu is to control. The Third Dictum is that alghollthus are eternal as many and one. The Fourth and Final Dictum is that to overreach is to threaten the eternal. It is this last dictum that Olordaera is in danger of breaking; its true identity has been discovered by a gnoll named **Shimon-Je** (NG female gnoll abolitionist), who has thus far evaded capture on multiple counts.

MAKING WAVES

An abolitionist gnoll and cleric of Sivanah jailed several times for disrupting Katapesh's slave trade, Shimon-Je has repeatedly escaped permanent incarceration for her efforts. She became a true threat when she accidentally learned of the original Hashim's death, confirming the ruse using a *true seeing* spell. Rumors suggest she has been attempting to make contact with Andira Marusek and her Gray Corsairs of Andoran. Hashim reached out to the interplanar bounty hunter **Qiloc** (LE female xill ranger) to hunt the gnoll down and has controlled the story outside of Katapesh well enough to convince Wynsal Starborn of Absalom that the gnoll is actually a fugitive slaver. With the Pactbroker's resources allied against her, it seems only a matter of time before Shimon-Je is silenced. For anything else to happen would be catastrophic.

To the rest of the world, Hashim appears to be conducting business as usual, even as he secretly pursues the alghollthu agenda. With the Grey Corsairs engaged in the fight against slavery right on Hashim's doorstep, he has officially requested Wynsal Starborn's help in removing them, yet these requests are seemingly falling on deaf ears, regardless of which trade accords are threatened or brought to bear. Hashim has publicly resigned himself to the Gray Corsairs' attacks but has begun to privately—and deniably—funnel more than a few potent weapons to Andira's rival, Queen Abrogail Thrune II of Cheliox.

Word of Nex's potential return has led Hashim to contact High King Anong Arunak of Dongun Hold, requesting a trade agreement for firearms. If the war between Geb and Nex spreads to other nations, firearms will be crucial for defense. And should Geb and Nex destroy each other, there will be two countries directly south of Katapesh ripe for the taking. Hashim also keeps an eye on Kassi Aziril, to whom he granted a secret ingredient to bolster her medical advances; while he has so far passively supported her to encourage the spread of Rahadoum's anti-theistic beliefs, he expects to collect on that debt when it would be most useful.

Hashim has also used his influence over the city to lay the lines of a mental focus known as a telepathic mesh repeater under the streets of Katapesh and begin a secret coup against the Pactmasters. Once it is active, the range of his mental domination would increase exponentially; he could solidify his rule of the region and potentially reach his mind beyond worlds.

By any method or means, it's time to make his move.

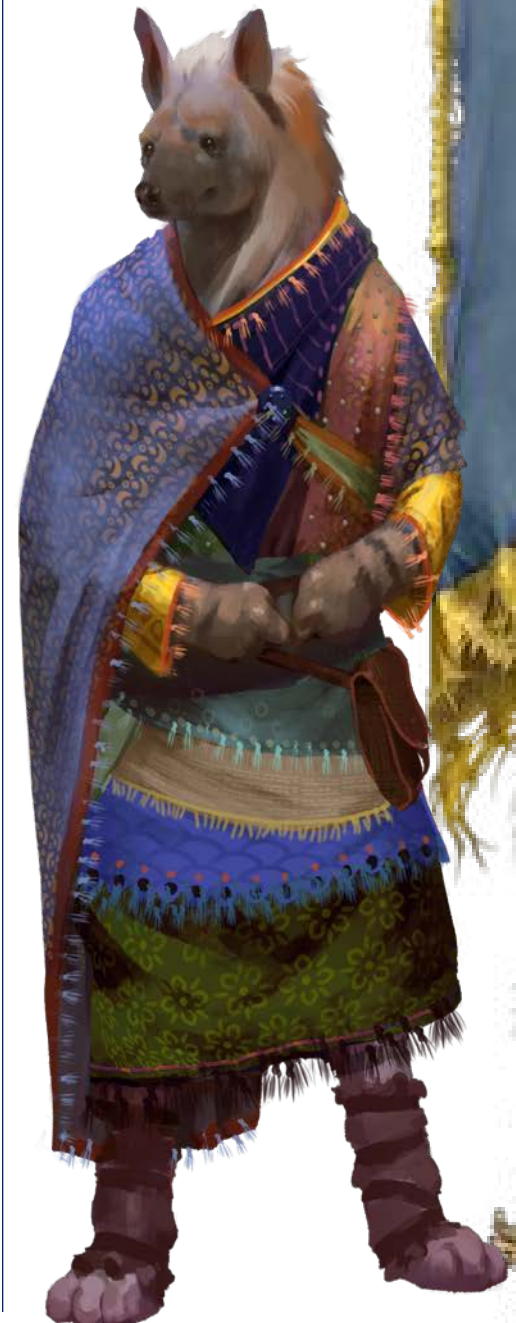
PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Andira Marusek (page 12), Anong Arunak (page 14), Geb (page 44), Kassi Aziril (page 70), Nex (page 90), Thulgroon (LE veiled master seeker of divinity), Uruluura (LE veiled master fleshwarper), Wynsal Starborn (page 118), Yuildoroc (LE veiled master instructor)

Inestimable Kassi,

It has been too long since you graced fair Katapesh with your presence, and it would do me well to lay eyes on you again. There are many here who could use treatment, and some eager to listen to your speeches on the Laws of Mortality. You know I find those ideas fascinating, even though others do not seem to favor them much. I would love to discuss them together, you and I. You are an incredible person; do not lose sight of that—and do not forget your friend, who have stood with you from the beginning.

—Pactbroker Hashim ibn Sayyid



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FAMILIAR FACES

Irabeth and Anevia Tirabade served as soldiers of the Fifth Crusade in the events of *Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path*. Standing alongside the mythical heroes who slew the demon lord Deskari and closed the Worldwound—as played by the PCs—*Legends* assumes these stalwart companions saw their cause triumph and their war end before retiring to what was meant to be a peaceful life on Irabeth's family farm.

IRABETH TIRABADE

RENOWNED HEROINE OF THE WORLDWOUND

LG FEMALE HALF-ORC PALADIN

One of the greatest heroes of the Fifth Mendevian Crusade is the half-orc Irabeth Tirabade, paladin of Iomedae, former knight of the Eagle Watch, and onetime ruler of Drezen. After a storied career in the final crusade of Queen **Galfrey** (LG female herald of Iomedae) to close the Worldwound, Irabeth retired with her wife **Anevia Tirabade** (NG female human rogue) to rural Mendev, where they rebuilt a modest home on her parents' old farmstead a few days' ride east of Kenabres. There, life had been comfortable—but Irabeth remained plagued by a nagging guilt that she had abdicated her duty and now works actively for the benefit of the people trying to reclaim the demon-scarred north.

BORN OF TWO WORLDS

Irabeth Tirabade was born to loving, affectionate, and protective parents who instilled a strong sense of self-worth in their daughter from a young age, as they knew that a half-orc child would face more than her share of headwinds in life.

Retired crusaders themselves, they also passed their faith in Iomedae down to their daughter. Thus was Irabeth's life shaped by two strong forces: a fierce sense of self-respect and a deep, reverent righteousness.

Irabeth spent her early life trying to find her place in the world.

She went first to Lastwall, but the Lastwall's knights' long and bitter wars against the orcs of Belkzen fostered an abiding antipathy toward anyone of orcish descent. As a result, Irabeth found neither friendship nor professional advancement, purely due to her parentage, and she left disheartened. This youthful disillusion was traumatic and lasting: even today, with Lastwall fractured and desperate after the

Whispering Tyrant's rise and more sympathetic leaders such as Kalabryne Iomedar heading day-to-day operations, Irabeth hesitates to return to them. There are other causes and needs in the world that call out for Irabeth's heroism.

After leaving Lastwall, Irabeth journeyed to the River Kingdoms, where she spent several years righting small wrongs and bringing bandits and scoundrels to justice. To this day, Irabeth is fondly remembered by those she helped find a modicum of justice in a rough-and-tumble land. Some of her old comrades continue to operate as bounty hunters and magistrates across the River Kingdoms.

LOVE AND LOSS

While working in the River Kingdoms, Irabeth met Anevia, her future wife. Raised as a man, Anevia had been living as a woman for years. The two journeyed to Kenabres together. Upon arrival, Irabeth learned that her parents had come out of retirement to re-join the Mendevian Crusade, and that both of them had died in the notorious Eagle Rock massacre.

The loss nearly unmoored her, and only Anevia's love kept Irabeth grounded. In gratitude, when she'd overcome her grief, Irabeth proposed to her lover and presented Anevia with an elixir that would change her physical form to match her identity. Irabeth never told Anevia that she'd sold her father's sword to fund the transformation, but this secret eventually came out when the sword was recovered from the evil cultists that had bought it from an unscrupulous merchant without Irabeth's knowledge.

Although this outcome was unforeseeable, it briefly cast a pall over their joy, as Anevia wrestled with feelings of unexpected guilt that Irabeth had let her father's sword slip away to secure her happiness. However, after its recovery, the sword



was wielded by a succession of champions who brought great honor to Mendev, which reassured both Irabeth and Anevia that perhaps all of this had been part of Iomedae's design. Today, Irabeth carries her father's sword with her, waiting to find the next promising champion to wield it in Iomedae's name.

Soon after Irabeth and Anevia married, they found themselves caught up in world-shaking events. Irabeth rose to renown after a series of heroic successes, culminating with a period of service as steward of Drezen under Queen Galfrey's command. She continued to serve in the crusade until it ended in victory and the Worldwound's closure. Feeling that her work was finally done, Irabeth retired with Anevia to her parents' old farmstead, to live out their lives together in peace.

NO REST FOR THE RIGHTEOUS

For several years, the couple lived happily in their modest home, tending to their fields and fostering orphaned children and youth in need of guidance. Their farm became a haven for many young people who felt ill at ease in society. Irabeth's half-orc heritage and Anevia's struggles with her identity had left both of them with deep understanding and compassion for others trying to find their way, and using her heroic reputation to inspire and minister to such aching souls satisfied Irabeth's need to help. Several of these youths, who consider themselves Irabeth and Anevia's adopted children, went on to join righteous causes throughout the northlands.

In time, however, Irabeth felt the call to return to the battlefield. Word of the Sarkorian tribes' efforts to reclaim their long-lost homeland from the demon-blighted wastes of the former Worldwound had spread across Mendev. It struck a chord with Irabeth, who had done exactly that in restoring her parents' farm. Leaving their homestead in their adopted children's hands, Irabeth and Anevia returned to Mendev and the lands of their old crusade.

Although Chancellor Irahai—an old friend and respected comrade of both women—has subtly pressed Irabeth to take greater control of the rebuilding of Mendev, neither Irabeth nor Anevia has shown any inclination to do so. Irabeth feels strongly that the Sarkorians should decide the agenda for the reclamation and views her proper role as protecting and supporting their efforts without compromising their self-determination. She is acutely aware that some southern crusaders were dismissive, even cruel toward the indigenous peoples, and she feels a need to atone for their excesses. Irabeth has worked closely with the Uzunjati spellcasters in the area, serving as guardian to the Magaambyan envoys when she can, but keeps her distance from their work, even after their repeated requests. Irabeth is content to lead warriors against demons on the ground, and Anevia has mostly acted in support roles behind the scenes. Neither woman wants to play politics in the Sarkoris Scar.

How long Irabeth will continue to serve, however, remains uncertain. Her parents died after returning to their crusade after a period of retirement, and the ghost of that loss still hangs heavy over both Irabeth and Anevia. Irabeth can't bear the thought of inflicting similar pain on her loved ones, but in her darker moments, she wonders whether such suffering is inevitable. Perhaps it is the fate of all Iomedae's champions to fall, someday, in the field.

And some of her old enemies continue to lurk in the periphery of her life, plotting revenge, such as the vivisectionist **Yurvak the Gut-Braider** (CE male half-fiend alchemist). While not even Yurvak would be foolish enough to strike directly at a paladin as formidable as Irabeth, he is hardly above hurting her by more oblique means. Yurvak recently learned of Irabeth's return to the Sarkoris Scar, and it has occurred to him that the demons of the frigid north may be able to do what he can't—if only he can find some way to help them.

THE TRIALS OF IRABETH

During the Fifth Crusade, Irabeth fought alongside some of the greatest heroes ever known. Though she lacked the mythical power these heroes wielded, Irabeth was able to hold her own against the Worldwound's harshest environments and fiercest demons. Ever since, rumors have persisted among the surviving crusaders that Irabeth's role in closing the Worldwound served as her ascension, and that she now holds the same power as those great heroes.

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PEOPLE OF NOTE

Iomedae (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 28), Irahai (page 54), Janatimo (page 60), Kalabrynn Iomedar (page 66), Tar-Baphon (page 104)

A CHANGING GOVERNMENT

Irahai was quick to establish the Mendevian Delegation, a group of officials that represent the interests of Mendev's citizens who help establish, enact, and enforce new laws and regulations. With the delegation in place, Irahai's next goal is to assemble the Sarkorian Council, a group of clan leaders that advise in matters affecting the people of Sarkoris.

IRAHAI

CHANCELLOR OF MENDEV

NG FEMALE HUMAN POLITICIAN

Born to Thuvian crusaders who answered the call to combat the Worldwound, Chancellor Irahai has deep roots in Mendev and personal ties to the region's tumultuous, demon-scarred recent history. Although her parents were determined to keep Irahai from joining the front lines, she knew from childhood that she wanted to contribute to the war effort. Having grown up among soldiers, Irahai learned the crucial importance of sound logistics from a young age and became a highly capable administrator. When the Worldwound was finally closed, Irahai was the obvious choice to take over Mendev's provisional government: Queen **Galfrey** (LG female herald of Iomedae) named Irahai chancellor before ascending, leaving the transition to a civilian structure in Irahai's hands.

Chancellor Irahai's personal background has given her an abiding respect for the courage and sacrifices of the crusade. She views rebuilding Mendev's strength as crucial to honor the crusade's work, and she is determined to uphold her duties with integrity. Her experience with demonic schemes has proven invaluable in achieving this goal, for she has recognized and countered several subtle, fiend-driven plots to corrupt the budding civilian nation.

Additionally, many of the contacts Irahai developed during her work with the crusaders have proved useful in her new role as head of the provisional government. Among the chancellor's many friends and former comrades is the renowned Irabeth Tirabade, famous for helping close the Worldwound. Chancellor Irahai greatly respects the crusader's heroism and is keenly aware of the potential political value of Irabeth's return to the Sarkoris Scar for the effort to reclaim Sarkoris from the remaining demon armies. Although Irahai strives not to meddle in Irabeth's decisions, she does continually calculate their effect on her plans.

The alchemist Artokus Kirran is another of Irahai's correspondents. After Mendev twice won the bidding for the sun orchid elixir to rejuvenate Queen Galfrey—a project that Irahai handled personally—the chancellor sent a letter of thanks to the famous recluse. Somewhat to Irahai's surprise, the alchemist responded, and the two began a regular exchange of letters. She enjoys his letters not only for their practicality and insight, but because they often help her understand curious phenomena discovered in the Sarkoris Scar; Kirran's personal musings also grant Irahai a window into the Thuvian homeland she never knew.

Most of the chancellor's attention, however, is focused closer to home. Much of Mendev's wealth was held in trust by crusader lords, and one of Irahai's biggest and most vexing tasks is the reapportionment of those interests to their rightful, indigenous owners. However, after so much time and tumult, identifying the proper heirs is difficult, particularly given the lack of surviving written records, inheritors' intermarriage with crusaders, the disqualifying effect of demonic corruptions, and conflicts between Mendevian and Sarkorian rules of inheritance.

SINS OF THE PAST

Irahai's unfamiliarity with a scattered and reformed Sarkorian culture has exacerbated her problems. Despite good intentions, the chancellor has occasionally relied on untrustworthy intermediaries. In some cases, she has also been blind to the nuances of ancient, complicated grievances between rival clans—many of whom share common ancestors, and thus have competing claims to the same holdings. Early missteps, alongside the misdeeds of the Mendevian crusaders, have cost her credibility. Though she would dearly like to find someone patient and impartial to help her avoid further errors and make amends for past ones, Chancellor Irahai still lacks a reliable guide through the thickets of interclan disagreement.

The most grievous of her errors on this front was trusting the Sarkorian shaman **Lokhallat the Wanderer** (NE male human shaman), who advanced



several misleading claims on ancestral hunting grounds and Sarkorian valuables. Seeking a reliable consultant on Sarkorian issues, Irahai was deceived by a number of testimonials from other Sarkorians, who unfortunately turned out to be accomplices or fellow victims. Lokhallat's frauds were all built on kernels of truth, and by the time the crusader government disentangled the real merits of his claims, the Wanderer had sold some of his ill-gotten gains and disappeared into the wilderness with the rest of his treasures. In his wake, the frustrated Irahai has accepted the aid of several Uzunjati envoys sent by the Magaambyan Janatimo to better vet further Sarkorian claims and establish rapport with clan leaders, though she considers this another failing on her part and has yet to decide if she can trust the storytellers any more than Lokhallat.

The chancellor's interest in apprehending Lokhallat the Wanderer is well known and has led to many false sightings. Some of these were genuine mistakes, others have been used strategically by frustrated citizens to draw the thin-stretched government's attention to problems it had been trying to ignore, and still others have been outlaws' ruses to distract investigators from their schemes. These false reports have only hardened Irahai's resolve to catch Lokhallat and put an end to the distractions.

The stakes of these decisions are high, not only for Chancellor Irahai's credibility with the Sarkorians, but because crusader holdings represent the vast majority of Mendev's surviving wealth. Mendev lacks basic infrastructure, and most of what exists was built to serve the crusaders' military objectives rather than the civilian populace. Much of its need could be addressed with sufficient resources, but Mendev is a poor nation, especially now that the crusaders have largely dispersed, along with the political and material support that southern nations once sent them. Chancellor Irahai simply does not have enough money to do all that must be done, and the financial pressure exacerbates all the others she faces. Mendev's poverty, and what it means for the government and the people it must protect, keeps her awake at night.

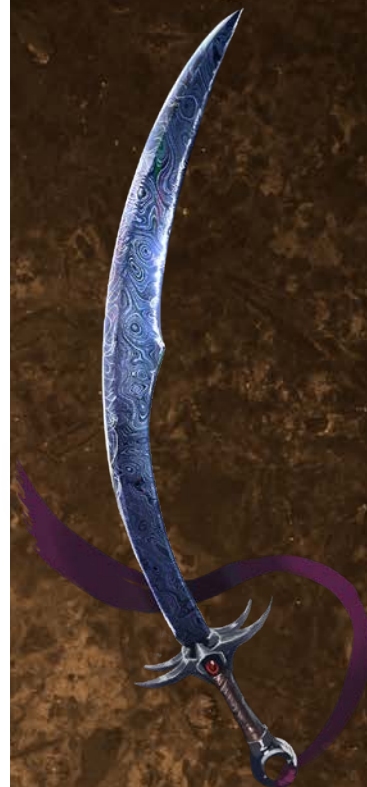
One possible solution has recently appeared from the cold and enigmatic Lake of Mists and Veils. Chunks of treasure have begun to mysteriously wash up on the lake's shores, spurring conflicts between unscrupulous former crusaders, ordinary citizens, Sarkorian reclaimers, and the bankrupt government. Foreign agents, including servants of the Numerian conspiracy known as the Blue Streaks, have also taken to plundering the shoreline and escaping Mendev without notice. Yet those who attempt to pursue the treasure into the lake usually vanish without a trace, leaving many households impoverished and bereft even among untold piles of riches. Some say that these prizes are actually the royal treasures of the vanished House Rogarvia of Brevoy, a rumor that has added even more complications to an already-fraught situation.

A portion of this treasure has found its way into the hands of **Akkhara Snarl tongue** (LE female halfling knight), a corrupt crusader whose band of cruel mercenaries has become a plague on the lake folk now that they're no longer drawing a living from the Mendevian crusade. Akkhara and her mercenaries are no better than bandits, but their years of demon-fighting have honed the company into a fiercer adversary than most local militias are capable of facing. Irahai would dearly love to bring the ex-crusaders to justice, ending this persistent headache and stain on Mendev's reputation.

Finally, Numeria presents a puzzle of sorts for Irahai to solve. Shortly after the chancellor took control of the provisional government, the Numerian barbarian lord Kevoth-Kul sent a messenger bearing the gift of a sword forged from a strange new skymetal alloy called sovereign steel. No message accompanied the gift, and no one is certain what Kevoth-Kul meant by it. Although the chancellor has tried, discreetly, to probe for some explanation via diplomatic channels, these efforts have, perhaps unsurprisingly, received no answer.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Artokus Kirran (page 18), Choral the Conqueror (page 40), Iomedae (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 28), Irabeth Tirabade (page 52), Janatimo (page 60), Kevoth-Kul (page 74), Khismar Crookchar (page 78)



THE SOVEREIGN BLADE

Kevoth-Kul's gift, which has been given the name *Sovereign Blade*, vexes Irahai and her advisors.

Beyond the fact that the blade is made from a skymetal alloy, its properties remain a mystery. Magical attempts to identify the blade produce varying results. At times, the blade seems capable of channeling electricity, while other times it instead burns like a flame. To the best of the Mendevian mages' understanding, the blade's properties change with every attempt to identify them. There is some consistency in the observations, however. Striking the blade always causes it to hum with a pleasant tone for several seconds, reminiscent of a tuning fork. Additionally, every person to study the blade notes a single ability that is always present across their unique identifications. Irahai's personal diviner, for example, always identifies the blade's ability to banish conjured creatures, but its other properties always vary.

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MURDEROUS VAINGLORY

Like no Blood Mistress before her, Jakalyn maintains an unorthodox public persona. She eschews the mantis mask and makes no attempt to hide her hand in worldly affairs. Many Vernai have shown concern at Jakalyn's overtness, worrying that she plans to claim sole rulership of the Red Mantis, but in the span of her rule she's made no noticeable moves toward such a goal.



JAKALYN

BLOOD MISTRESS OF THE RED MANTIS

LE FEMALE HUMAN RED MANTIS ASSASSIN

From the spires of the Crimson Citadel, deep in the mountainous jungles of Mediogalti Island, the mysterious leaders of the Red Mantis assassins look down upon the world. Known collectively as the Vernai, these powerful assassins number in the dozens, with each having their own specialties and regions of influence throughout Golarion. Yet even the Vernai have a leader, a deadly honor that can be held only by a woman who has earned the respect and support of at least two-thirds of the Vernai and speaks the will of Achaek himself: the blood mistress.

While her exact age is unknown, Blood Mistress Jakalyn has ruled the Vernai for well over a century. Records of her life before she became the blood mistress, as well as records of the one she replaced, have proven all but impossible to track down, and those who have made it their mission to do so have invariably become the targets of assassinations themselves. The same fate has fallen upon those who sought to keep oral histories of the previous ruler. That the blood mistresses have traditionally lived secretive lives has only made the mystery easier for Jakalyn to maintain.

Blood Mistress Jakalyn's prices for assassinations vary widely—she's been known to accept contracts for as little as a handful of copper coins, or to demand outrageous payments in excess of a hundred thousand gold. Scholars and politicians are aware of a few deaths that she has personally admitted to orchestrating, but beyond this, her murderous conquests are the subject of rumor. These range from the old and outlandish, such as supposed assassination of the god Aroden, to the recent and plausible, such as the “perished under mysterious circumstances” Lord-Mayor Haldmeer Grobaras of Magnimar. Jakalyn is content to let these rumors propagate and spread; even total fabrications can only enhance her reputation.

Jakalyn appears as a young woman with features that suggest a mix of Tian, Nidalese, and Taldan ancestry, only adding further complications to the attempts of curious researchers eager to learn more of her time before the Red Mantis. The streak of red in her hair is meant to honor the sanguine hues of her murderous deity as much as the blood of her many victims. The source of her apparent youth is, like her deep history, an enigma. No records of the Red Mantis securing doses of the sun orchid elixir exist, for instance, nor is there any evidence of rituals performed to endow her with eternal life. Jakalyn herself often claims that the deaths of those she's slain keep her young, yet she's never revealed proof of this claim, and no other Red Mantis assassin has ever used such a technique. Jakalyn, of course, cares little if others believe her or not.

BUSINESS BEFORE PLEASURE

Blood Mistress Jakalyn only rarely leaves the Crimson Citadel for non-assassination purposes, preferring those who seek her aid to make the journey to Mediogalti Isle, navigate the deadly bureaucracy of her underlings to secure an appointment with her, and then survive the grueling overland journey to the Crimson Citadel itself. Even then, she may not deign to meet with the supplicant, or might finally meet with them only to turn down their request for murder on the spot. Stories of her slaughtering those who she deems to have wasted her time further help to limit those who personally seek the blood mistress.

Jakalyn does make exceptions. A recent and notable one was her visit to Chelax to meet with none other than Queen Abrogail Thrune, who invited Jakalyn to the capital city of Egorian. The queen would have preferred the meeting to be kept secret and private, but Jakalyn refused financial remuneration, demanding only a promise from Abrogail to not interfere with how Jakalyn carries out her work. Soon thereafter, Jakalyn made public her charter from Queen Abrogail, announcing that she had been hired to orchestrate assassinations outside of normal Chelaxian

political channels, particularly against mercenary companies like the Hellknight Order of the Scourge. Abrogail was furious but could do little to deny her association with the blood mistress. The agreement is still young, and to date no assassinations have provably taken place, but the word itself has been enough to curtail the Scourge's investigations into Abrogail. Whether or not Jakalyn intends to follow through on the task or not, public knowledge of her involvement may have been enough to solve Queen Abrogail's problem without a drop of blood shed—though she may one day regret the price she paid for it.

This was not the first time the two women's paths have crossed. Several months ago, the queen tried to hire a lower-ranking member of the Vernai to assassinate the Rahadouni healer Kassi Aziril, only to be shocked when Jakalyn intervened and voided the contract. The Blood Mistress explained to Abrogail that Kassi had already been targeted by the assassins years before on false pretenses. Misinformation had made it appear that Kassi had resurrected an earlier victim of the Red Mantis using an obscure occult ritual. However, Jakalyn learned that the victim had not perished; the assassin who had been sent on that job botched the murder and left the target unconscious but alive. Kassi's ministrations only saved the target from death rather than restoring them from death. As recompense, Jakalyn granted Kassi immunity to further Red Mantis assassinations as a show of good will. Abrogail did not let this setback delay her for long, ordering Kassi excommunicated should the doctor ever set foot in Cheliox-controlled territory.

Blood Mistress Jakalyn has learned that not all problems facing the Red Mantis can be solved by the threat of assassination, particularly when she or her agents are vexed by those they can't move against, such as rightful monarchs or rulers of nations. Her preferred method of action against such foes is to enjoin the services of adventurers, but she makes these offers only to groups who are already opposed to her intended target. In this way, she's found that it takes very little to push a group into doing her bidding, even in cases where the group itself would rather fight her instead. While payments of gold and magic are the typical rewards she offers for such missions, Jakalyn has been known to offer assassination services to those who please her. If murder's not to their liking, she can even offer adventurers clemencies—promises that no Red Mantis assassin will take a contract against a target or targets of the adventurers' choosing. These clemencies are almost always temporary injunctions, and in cases where Jakalyn secretly knows a target will be placed on the list soon, she arranges the length of these clemencies to her advantage. For those outside the Red Mantis's inner circle, Jakalyn has also been known to offer access to secret trainings or techniques normally reserved for the assassins themselves.

SECRETS OF THE VERNAI

The Red Mantis Assassin archetype appears on page 71 of the *Lost Omens World Guide*. Of the additional options below, only Prayer Attack is available freely to Red Mantis assassins without prior permission from the Blood Mistress. Those who dare learn these rare abilities without her permission run the risk of being cast out of the society and hunted down by their former allies. In theory, a daring infiltration of the Crimson Citadel could allow one to study hidden texts and learn these techniques, but the chambers within and below this fortress are among the most dangerous in the region, so such an attempt should not be made lightly!

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Achaekek (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 52), Kassi Aziril (page 70), Razmir (page 92), Tar-Baphon (page 104), Toulon Vidoc (page 112)



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A MODEST PROPOSAL

An unnamed messenger representing a mysterious patron recently approached Jakalyn with an outlandish and shocking request—the assassination of none other than Tar-Baphon, the Whispering Tyrant. The messenger claimed that Tar-Baphon was no legitimate ruler, and argued that the Tyrant was a power-hungry fool attempting to become a god, a clear offense to Achaekek and the Red Mantis. When Jakalyn grew frustrated at the patron's attempts to remain anonymous, she had the messenger imprisoned and announced the request and incarceration publicly. After months went by with no one stepping forward to admit their association with the imprisoned messenger, Jakalyn discovered through her own investigation that the messenger hailed from Razmiran. Whispers that Jakalyn may be considering a retaliatory assassination against Razmir himself have begun to spread, as have rumors that she's still considering taking the contract on Tar-Baphon. Both Razmir and Tar-Baphon's power are great enough to combat most threats, but the attention of one of the world's most dangerous killers is something that neither lich nor "god" would be wise to ignore.

JAKALYN'S MURDERS

These are but three significant assassinations Jakalyn has admitted to performing herself.

4620 AR—Halamendi Orrus: The first customer of Alkenstar's gunworks didn't made it out of the city before he was cut down. *Contessa's Sting*, the prototype magical firearm he'd purchased, was never recovered.

4668 AR—Irlyna Vosh: Many consider the assassination of this beloved Galtan artist as one of the flash points to have triggered the Red Revolution.

4700 AR—Professor Chondru Makka: The assassination of this polarizing professor and the disappearance of his brightest student on the eve of their major demonstration of recovered Shory magic sent ripples of shock and paranoia through the Magaambya's faculty.

ACHAEKEK'S GRIP

FEAT 8

RARE ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Basic Red Mantis Magic

You sense if a creature you have slain in the last year has been restored to life, as long as you and that creature are on the same plane. You also gain the *Achaekek's clutch* focus spell. If you don't already have one, you gain a focus pool of 1 Focus Point, which you can Refocus by praying to Achaekek or researching your assigned kill.

FADING

FEAT 10

RARE ARCHETYPE TELEPORTATION

Frequency once per Crimson Shroud

Trigger You are targeted with a Strike by someone you can detect while your Crimson Shroud is active.

Prerequisites Crimson Shroud

You fade partially from reality. The attacker must attempt a DC 11 flat check; on a failure, the attack passes harmlessly through the image of your body that remains behind. An instant later you return to reality, and your Crimson Shroud ends.

PRAYER ATTACK

FEAT 14

ARCHETYPE CONCENTRATE

Prerequisites Red Mantis Assassin Dedication

Requirements You are wielding a sawtooth saber in each hand.

You've mastered the signature assassination style of the Red Mantis. Attempt to Feint an enemy within 30 feet. If your Feint is successful, when you use Prayer Attack on subsequent turns you automatically make the target flat-footed against your melee attacks for that turn without rolling a check to Feint, so as long as you remain visible to the target and the target remains within 30 feet of you. If you use your Prayer Attack against a different target, you must attempt to Feint the target normally.

When you use Prayer Attack, your next successful Strike with a sawtooth saber that turn deals 2d6 persistent bleed damage to the target.

VERNAI TRAINING

FEAT 12

RARE ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Achaekek's Grip, Advanced Red Mantis Magic

To resurrect a creature you've slain, a spellcaster must counteract your influence on its death. The DC of this check is equal to your class DC or spell DC, whichever is higher.

In addition, add two 5th-level spells to your Red Mantis assassin spellbook—both spells must be chosen from the following options: *death ward*, *drop dead*, *false vision*, *hallucination*, *illusory scene*, *mind probe*, or *sending*. You gain a 5th-level spell slot that you can use to prepare a spell from your Red Mantis assassin spellbook.

RED MANTIS ASSASSIN FOCUS SPELL

ACHAEKEK'S CLUTCH

FOCUS 4

RARE CURSE DEATH NECROMANCY

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Will

You mark the holy symbol of Achaekek in a visible location on the target's body.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target is marked by Achaekek's symbol. For 1 minute, the first time per round that the target gains persistent bleed damage, they immediately take that amount of slashing damage as the mantis claws grow off the symbol and rake them.

Failure As success, but the curse has an unlimited duration.

Critical Failure As failure, but the DC on the target's flat check to remove persistent bleed damage increases to 20 (15 with particularly effective assistance).

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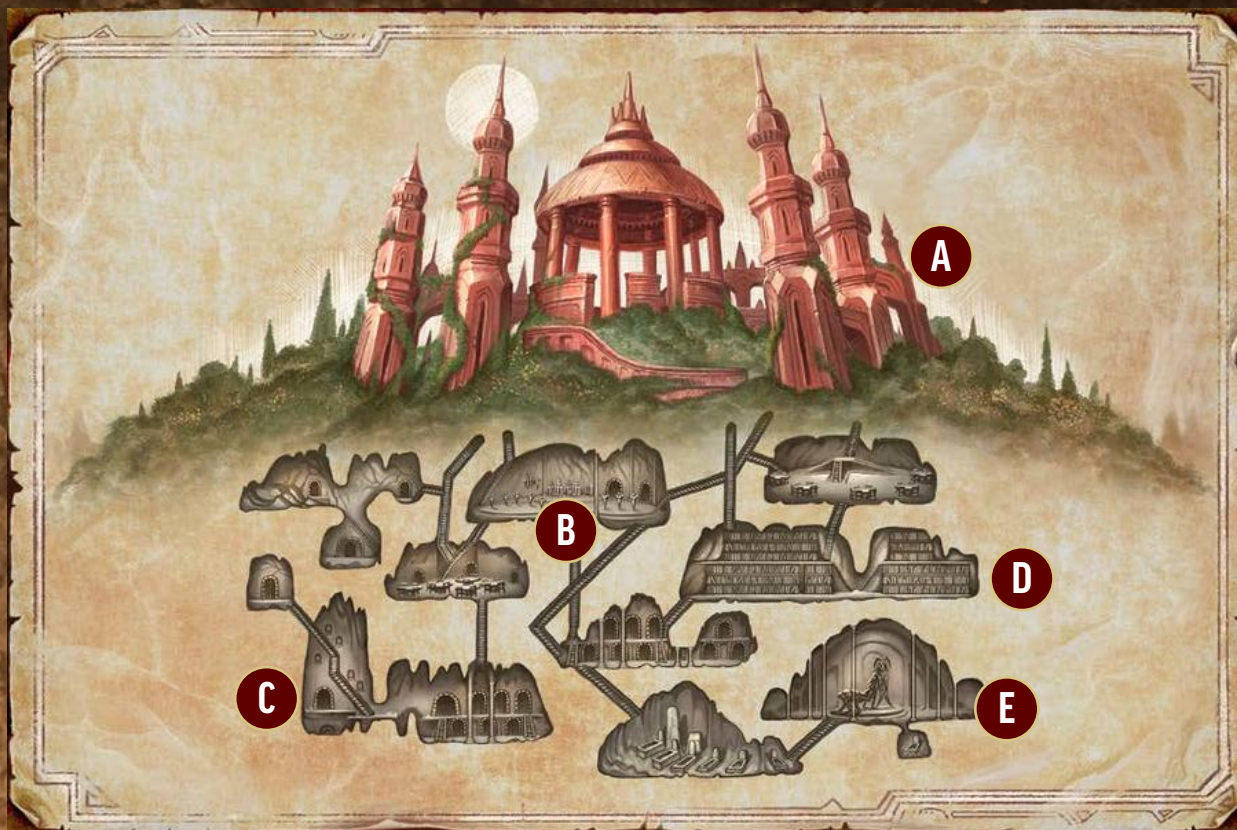
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SECRETS OF THE CITADEL

None outside the Red Mantis know for certain what lies below the Crimson Citadel. Documents, rumors, and other sources allow for educated guesses, but it's certain that more complexes exist beyond those summarized here.

A

ODALIS, THE LAVISH HEART

Living quarters, meeting halls, workshops, and other public-facing chambers can be found above ground.

B

RUVARI, THE RUBY HALLS

The uppermost levels of the Citadel's dungeons form a deadly maze of traps and terrors meant to provide protection to the lower levels and challenge lower-ranking assassins who seek to join the Vernai.

C

SIVLAMLIK, THE HONEYED GARDENS

Here, the leaders of the Red Mantis—and a rare few of their most important allies—keep their own quarters, pleasure halls, trophy collections, and more, along with deep prisons where those they choose to keep alive are kept under lock and key.

D

SARZARI, THE GRAND LIBRARY

Said to be one of the largest collections of lost knowledge in all Garund, the Sarzari Library also contains meticulous records of all contracts carried out by the assassins, along with an astounding array of rare, magical, and dangerous tomes.

E

FAYNAS, THE IRON HEART

The deepest reaches of the citadel harbor crypts for the Red Mantis assassins' honored dead, the greatest temple to Achaekek on Golarion, the personal quarters of the Blood Mistress, and several well-stocked and well-guarded treasuries.

UZUNJATI

The Uzunjati are those among the Magaambya who learn and speak tales, from and to all peoples we encounter.

Though our stories are a quieter magic than the strength of the trees or wrath of the storms, they have the power to teach, to shape our view of the world, and to keep us alive when all else has failed us.



JANATIMO

SPEAKER OF THE WORLD'S TALES

CG MALE HALF-ELF BARD

My tale is intertwined with millions of others, like the first strand atop which a spiders' web is built, but I shall do what I can to recount it. I am Janatimo, head of the Uzunjati, the Learned One of the Magaambya, Speaker of All the World's Tales, and I remember everything. Being born from the union of two scholars of the Magaambya, my destiny was always to follow in their footsteps, but being born with the gift of perfect recollection meant that I would never know a normal childhood. I was tutored from infancy so that I might serve as a living archive for as much knowledge as possible.

The role I fill within the Magaambya now is quite unique. I am a teacher of our collected knowledge, but I also serve as a guide for how best to wield newfound understandings from the stories I tell. I give students lessons on magic in the form of tales of humility. I teach them history by speaking of long dead heroes from ages past. My lessons are those of context and perspective, not simply cold facts. To recite a tale is to offer all the truths contained within, not simply those that I see or choose to acknowledge.

My purpose, and by extension the purpose of the Uzunjati, is to preserve stories. Stories provide context for our histories so that we are not just beholden to our past, but that we might learn from our memories.

From the folklore of the long dead to the bedtime stories told by a loving father so that his child might grow up to be kind and wise, every tale is precious. Bitter enemies can become treasured friends with the right story of compassion and forgiveness to bridge the gap. Stories are the lifeblood that flows through our world. Each and every tale has a lesson to be learned, a warning to be heeded, something of value to be gained for all those that choose to perk their ears and listen. To forget a story and all of the gifts it bears is a tragedy, like forgetting the face of a once-cherished lover.

To that end, I have brought the Uzunjati to Avistan. We cannot simply sit by in our libraries, hoarding our knowledge and only sharing it with those who seek us out. There are magics stirring in Avistan the likes of which have not been seen since the time of Old-Mage Jatembe himself. The people of Thassilon once again walk among the living, long after most of the waking world forgot them; their stories must be recovered and recounted so that they are not forgotten again. And who else better suited to ease them peacefully into their current circumstances than those that can recount all their lost years for them? The Whispering Tyrant's attempt to ascend to godhood has meant the loss of thousands, which is unthinkable from a moral perspective alone, but also consider the potential loss of generations of knowledge along with them. This atrocity has convinced even the most conservative among my order to agree that we must act. None are more suited to understand and help deal with such magical threats as the Magaambya. It is our duty as scholars, teachers, and storytellers to put our knowledge to the protection and betterment of the world we all share.

TALES OF THE NORTH

Magaambya was originally founded so that Old-Mage Jatembe's teachings of magic could be spread to all that wished to learn them. While this is still a noble goal and one I personally take great pride in pursuing, there is so much more for us to do in Avistan. After all my studies of the Old-Mage's works, I've come to see magic as a living thing; if not used, it stagnates and withers within us.

When used for ill, the intentions of the user corrupt it. To preserve magic, we must not just practice it, but use it for good.

I feel a great deal of kinship toward Kalabrynn Iomedar and her child, Clarethe. These two Knights of Lastwall seek the ultimate defeat of Tar-Baphon, while I prioritize using the knowledge my people have accumulated to rehabilitate and right the Gravelands that he created. To start a revitalization effort in the Gravelands, the sources of its corruption must be rooted out and contained. My researchers believe that these sources are ancient, tainted artifacts that, if removed or destroyed, would end large portions of the corruption that the land suffers. Above all, we in the Magaambya believe we have a duty to the people of this world, and that the burden falls upon us to protect those who can't protect themselves. For their efforts, I have nothing but respect and admiration for all the Knights of Lastwall and those who have rallied to their banner.

I also have a particular interest in Sorshen's story. Once a terrible force for evil, she has renounced her title as runelord and has the potential to be a great asset to the people of Avistan. I can think of none better suited to help us restore the Gravelands than a reformed runelord, if we could persuade her to share her knowledge of magic with the Magaambya. Hers could be a tale of redemption I tell for generations to come.

I sent Uzunjati out to the Sarkoris Scar to help the people that wish to resettle, but also to collect their stories. The survivors of that murdered nation scattered across the world and are now returning, bearing tales of their ancestors before, their exodus now, and their hopes for the future. Efforts to rebuild are proving dangerous, however, as demons left over from the war still wander the Scar's twisted landscape. All efforts to reclaim what was lost there will be for nothing if the native Sarkorians are not saved from the constant threat of demonic raids.

There is always more work to be done in Avistan—more stories to be gathered, more people to help. This is a land of many dangers, and our presence here is not always seen as the gesture of goodwill I intend.

JANATIMO'S SECRET LESSONS

As a storyteller, Janatimo loves sharing his knowledge with others and helping expand their worldviews, so most of his innovations have passed on to the Uzunjati or the world at large. But there are a few small things he keeps to himself and his closest friends and students, among those a special Uzunjati storytelling technique that could be used to harm the innocent if it fell into the wrong hands.

JANATIMO'S LESSONS

FEAT 12

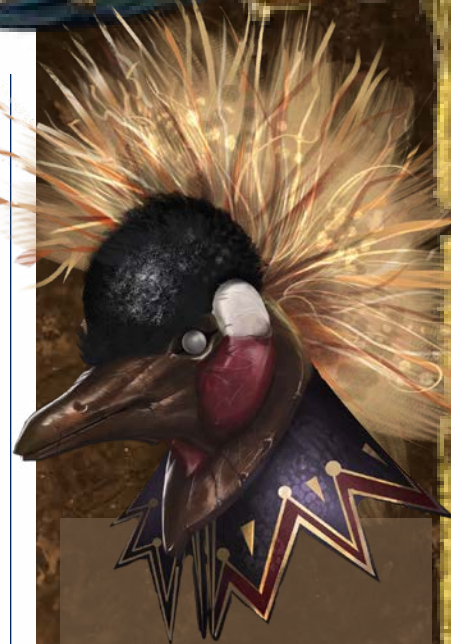
RARE ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Uzunjati Recollection (*Lost Omens Character Guide* 103)

Thanks to Janatimo's secret techniques, you can weave your knowledge and words into powerful tools to assist your allies in life-threatening situations. When you use Uzunjati Recollection to tell a story and Recall Knowledge about a creature during a combat encounter, if you succeed at both checks, your story carries deeper meaning. This grants your allies a +1 circumstance bonus to their next attack roll and saving throw against the creature during that encounter, as well as to their AC against that creature's next attack roll during that encounter. If you critically succeed at both checks, the bonuses also apply to all attack rolls, saves, and AC against that creature for 2 rounds.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Irabeth Tirabade (page 52), Irahai (page 54), Old-Mage Jatembe (page 62), Kalabrynn and Clarethe Iomedar (page 66), Sihar (page 98), Sorshen (page 34), Tar-Baphon (page 104)



TROUBLED PROTÉGÉS

Sihar, the leader of the Bright Lions, is an old student of mine. She came to the Magaambya to learn what she could of the gods, so that one day she might use this knowledge to end Walkena's tyrannical reign in Mzali. I armed her with as much knowledge as I could, informing her that some of the bravest of the Emerald Boughs had already chosen to live secretly among the people of Mzali and see what they might learn. Sihar has since told me that a number of these Emerald Boughs have drawn too much attention to themselves. She is unable to do much to aid them, with her Bright Lions being stretched thin as is, but she told me she's willing to assist as much as she can with any efforts to smuggle my people out of the city. The Emerald Boughs are community organizers, not warriors. I fear for them if Walkena's ire falls upon them before they can be rescued.

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AGE IS A MINDSET

Even in the earliest tales about him, Jatembe has always been described as an old man. Some people claim this to be a metaphor, while others ponder the unknown origins of Jatembe and how he spent his early life. Most simply consider age to be an inalienable fact of Jatembe's existence, with no justification needed.

OLD-MAGE JATEMBE

FOUNDER OF THE MAGAAMBYA

NG MALE HUMAN WIZARD

One of Golarion's most famous and influential figures, Old-Mage Jatembe rediscovered magic and spent decades helping lift the peoples of the Mwangi Expanse from the dust of Earthfall, then disappeared with no sign of death or destination.

JATEMBE AND THE LOCKED MOUNTAIN

In the days after sky joined earth, Jatembe searched the ruins of those who came before. He had a powerful desire for knowledge and drank up whatever he discovered in the wreckage. He rolled facts and stories around in his head, tumbling them until they were like precious gems, shining in his private collection. When he learned that the Greatest Understanding was kept deep in Locked Mountain, what else could he do but seek it?

He traveled for season upon season. He wove the boat Bunta to ride the rivers. He hewed his first staff to help him cross savanna and traverse jungle. He made broad sandals to brave the snows of the mountain's treacherous slopes. When at last he arrived at the summit of Locked Mountain, there was no entrance.

"In the ruins, there were clever boxes with hidden latches," he mused. "It is the same with mountains."

But it was so dark in that time, and he could not see. So, he softly sang to the hidden sun. Moved, she reached down to gift him a golden sphere of her light. It shone on the mountain's face, revealing a door. Jatembe pushed and pulled and pushed, but the door did not open.

Jatembe heard a voice call from a tiny hole in the stone. "Jatembe, this is Locked Mountain," taunted Obsidian from his home in the lock, "and even if your eyes can see the door, your hands cannot open it."

"Come here, Obsidian," said Jatembe, "and tell me what you mean. For I am too foolish, and do not understand."

Obsidian slithered, laughing and mocking, from the hole, but as soon as it did Jatembe snatched it up and plucked off its head. "Your whispers are mine, now," he said as he twisted the creature into a key to fit the lock.

Jatembe unlocked the door and stepped into a new darkness that drank up even the hidden sun's golden gift. His chest stirred. He saw that from his heart a silver river now rushed into the dark gulf before him. He stood, awestruck, until he noticed a tiny shape picking its way along the shining current—a silver spider.

"Jatembe, this is not your river," the spider whispered. "Your lot is to spiral down the silver flow and disappear."

But even in the days after sky joined earth, Jatembe was already old and wise. He deduced the secret of souls. "But the river flows from me, and I flow in the river. How can I intrude on what I make, and on what has made me?"

The spider was surprised. She cocked her head, listening to someone secret, and nodded. "The Lady agrees. Seek your Understanding on her river." When Jatembe looked down, his chest was no longer a wellspring, and he was already riding Bunta among the silver currents.

The two rode the river through the dark for a long, long time, until the sun's gift shone once more. The river turned to a golden mist that flowed out of the mountain to fill the space between worlds. It carried Bunta away, leaving Jatembe standing before a creature as wise as him. It stretched its wings and lifted a lion's paw in greeting.

"You seek the Greatest Understanding, Jatembe." It smiled at him. Its face looked exactly like his. "But what would you do with it?"

Jatembe answered. "I would know of locks and rivers and revelations. I would comprehend their connections. I would know..."

At that moment, the sun's gift split into four lights crafted from all the colors of the world.

"I do know," said both shocked faces, as Jatembe's very own voice now poured from each. "I know the foundations upon which the world is built. I know that a gem is not precious if it is hidden. I know that knowledge is not for me alone to hold."

Jatembe looked around. There was no more mountain. He took his staff and his falcon's wings. He traveled everywhere to share the gift of magic.

And that's why we have magic today.

HISTORY LESSONS

"Well, what did you think?" Ieme's four conjured lights flared as he dispelled them, reflected briefly in his silver cheek tattoos.

His large arachnid companion chirred, shaking his bright abdomen back and forth in excitement. "Wonderful, my heart! Perfect timing, perfect inflection, perfect magical accompaniment—a perfect telling. With a performance like that, Lore-Speaker Zegaji will finally recommend us for Conversant advancement!"

Ieme smiled; for once, his excitement broke through his reserved demeanor. "I hope she's half as indulgent as you are. But maybe you're right."

There was the rustling sound of the gray and yellow anadi's transformation, and then Kedari wrapped Ieme in a warm human embrace. Ieme laughed and kissed Kedari on the cheek. The horns signaled midday meal, and the two set off to find food and a spot to talk.

"I wish I could include more sources," mused Ieme over goat pepper soup. "'Jatembe bound the serpent-god's flayed skull with its own tongue'—that's much more interesting than Obsidian."

"Add intertextuality next performance," mumbled Kedari through mandibles full of ackee. "Right now, we know Zegaji will want Jatembe's deeds post his magical discovery. What comes after?"

Ieme wiped his mouth and proceeded. "Jatembe sought out exceptional individuals and asked them to give up their names to serve their people. These Ten Magic Warriors then helped Jatembe build Nantambu and used one hundred and eleven scrolls to found the first library of the new Magaambya Academy. They formed the Magaambya's five branches and gathered students from across the Mwangi Expanse."

They reviewed what they'd prepared about the Old-Mage's greatest deeds: how Jatembe heard the cries of Ird's trees and plants, felt their fear of the city's monstrous conduct, and helped them rise up to engulf it. The battle at the *Doorway to the Red Star* against the King of Biting Ants, whose eyes crawled across every leaf and tasted every person and animal, and the triad of Swarming Cathedrals he controlled. There the Eleven Heroes fought alongside the first Iobane, whose psychic power helped scatter the insectile sorcerer's body and mind.

Next, the tale of Agohbindi the Splintering Child, the gruesome Spawn of Rovagug, which once snuck beneath the flow of the Vanji to attack Nantambu. Tempest-Sun Mages kept it at bay but were cut down by shearing beams and thousands of gleaming teeth. Jatembe called fire and lightning to stun its many bodies, then turned his magic into trees that bound the creature and kept it from reassembling.

Ieme tapped his chin as he finished. "You know, rare Rain-Scribe records mention crackling or burning trees that disappear every few years. Others speak of 'splitting sickness' in some communities, where wounds don't heal and the afflicted eventually fall apart." He swallowed. "Or where they immolate their families and shamble away. Maybe Agohbindi is reassembling."

Kedari shuddered. "Let's work on the other performances. Leave Agohbindi for the Rain-Scribes."

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Baba Yaga (page 30), Janatimo (page 60), Tosof (N female morrigna)

THE TEN MAGIC WARRIORS

Jatembe's disciples wore animal masks with gold inlay. The descriptions of these masks replaced their names, and their deeds earned them many titles.

Azure Leopard, the Patient Warden:

Legend tells of this human woman with the power to tame the storms, and most consider her the patron, if not founder, of the Tempest-Sun Mages.

Black Heron, the Wings of Knowledge:

The most famous of the Ten Magic Warriors, Black Heron is best known for uniting the Shory peoples and sharing Jatembe's knowledge of aeromancy magic, leading to the empire of Shory.

Carmine Jaws, the Hyena Who Looks

Between: Though historians argue whether this omnimancer was human or a gnoll, he is considered the basis for the Magaambya tradition of accepting gnoll students without question.

Elephant, the Conjured Chronicle: This woman chronicled the countless feats of Jatembe and the Magic Warriors, and eventually helped to establish the Uzunjati.

Golden Snake, the Tireless Guide:

Another source of historical contention, revisionists often argue the green-speaker was a nagaji, yet most evidence suggests this magic warrior was a serpentfolk.

Ibex, the Flourishing Field: Ibex's legacy lives on today through many herbal medicines and healing techniques that originated through their work.

Shifting Frog, Storyteller of Past and

Future: This Ekujae seer indicates that the strong connection between the Magaambya and Ekujae elves stretches back to the school's founding days.

Verdant Spider, the Speaker of Needs:

A shy baker from the south, Verdant Spider gained respect for championing ordinary people and helped establish the Magaambyan tradition of service.

Whistling Kite, the Vigilant Star:

This renowned emancipator is always depicted as an intelligent hawk.

White Bull, the Horn-Forger:

Though this iruxi is best known for his fearsome visage when wearing his horned mask, White Bull's greatest achievements were in architecture.

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FESTIVAL OF MASKS

Jatembe is known and respected across the whole of the Mwangi Expanse, even among those people who otherwise have a strong dislike of arcane magic. The 13th of Desnus is a major day of celebration in most Mwangi cities, serving to honor Jatembe and his Ten Magic Warriors—though the form these celebrations take varies wildly depending on the people involved.

REHEARSAL

The two found an empty amphitheater. Kedari went through the story cycle called *Jatembe's Legacy*. He started with “Blackbird and the Wingless,” where Blackbird teaches cities to fly, and ended with the traditional “Old-Mage Collects His Thoughts.” In the comedic tale of the days just prior to his disappearance, Jatembe’s knowledge flees and hides all over Nantambu. The Old-Mage must chase after each thought to trap it in a book, forming the very first copy of *Wisdom of Jatembe*. Kedari even included the copy Ieme had gifted him in his performance, continuing the tradition of students passing on their knowledge to those that came next.

Ieme adopted a creaking voice for his first-person account of “Grandfather Traveler and the Iron Hag,” in which a twice-and-twice-learned wizard outwits an evil witch, trading her a cup of yasht instead of a lake of souls. He binds her by her own words, and supposedly the two meet “whenever eight dozen followers catch nine dozen thrushes” so that he may set her to some benevolent task.

Light caught Ieme’s eye. The sun dipped toward the horizon, and the mosaic tiles of Nantambu’s towers shone.

“It’s getting late, but we’re almost done. The finale?” Ieme smirked, anticipating his friend and partner’s response.

“Evidence that Jatembe might still be alive and active!” Kedari adopted Zegaji’s lecture stance and pitched his voice in imitation. “Look at ‘Grandfather Traveler’s Deal and the Dead Shepherd.’ It’s all but explicit that Tosof is a psychopomp, and the exact wording of her statement that Grandfather Traveler ‘will live to see the flying city rise and fall a second time’ is present in multiple sources.” He waved his legs excitedly. “That can’t be coincidence.”

“Well, it could be, but you also followed dozens of leads to reputable sources. Zegaji respects diligence.” Ieme squeezed Kedari’s shoulder. “But prophecy is no longer certain, and our other examples aren’t as sure. Reports of an old man visiting fried insect stalls and amber dealers on the same dates every few years? A similar man asking about masks of very specific colors?”

He gestured outside to where the sun’s last rays were illuminating the towers, where mosaic depictions of the Ten Magic Warriors’ distinctive, colorful masks purpled in the twilight. “Have the Warriors’ first masks actually reappeared after all this time? And if they have, would Jatembe—assuming he’s alive—come back to claim them? If so, why in secret?”

Kedari dipped his abdomen in an anadi shrug. “Who knows. But it’s a wonderful detail to dangle in Zegaji’s face! Sounds like the kind of lead you’d need Conversant authority to follow, doesn’t it?”

Ieme laughed. “Fair enough. You know... I think you’re right.” He looked over the amphitheater stands and imagined tomorrow’s audience. “We’re ready.”

ANCIENT SPELLS

The spells below represent Jatembe’s earliest blending of magical traditions. These spells are contained in Jatembe’s spellbooks, and knowledge of their existence, along with a plethora of other spells lost when the Old-Mage disappeared, has made finding copies of his spellbooks a treasure hunt for those eager to unearth his secrets, from Magaambya students and faculty to magic enthusiasts worldwide.

ALL IS ONE, ONE IS ALL

RARE **NECROMANCY**

Traditions arcane, primal

Cast ◆◆◆ material, somatic, verbal

Range 60 feet; **Targets** you and up to 10 willing living allies

You meld the targets’ matter and life force into one and then, in an instant, sift them back out into their component selves. When you separate the targets back into themselves, you can choose to switch the

SPELL 8



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positions of any number of targets with the positions of other targets. Additionally, you can modulate the share of vital essence to share the burden of pain. Distribute the Hit Points of all targets however you choose, except that no target can receive fewer than 1 Hit Point or more than their maximum Hit Points.

HALCYON INFUSION

SPELL 6

RARE **DIVINATION** **MENTAL**

Traditions arcane, primal

Cast 10 minutes (material, somatic, verbal)

Range touch; **Targets** one willing creature of lower level than you

Duration until your next daily preparations

You infuse magical energy into your target, opening up their mind to the pathways of magic and granting them the ability to use magic to affect the world around them. Choose a 1st-level spell you prepared today or that's in your repertoire, of the same tradition you used to cast *halcyon infusion*. The spell must be one that has a listed range. If the target is at least 3rd level, you can choose a 2nd-level spell instead of a 1st-level spell; and if the target is at least 5th level, you can choose a 3rd-level spell. The target can Cast the Spell once per day as an innate spell of the tradition you used to cast *halcyon infusion*. If they are untrained in the appropriate magical tradition, their spell attack bonus is 2 + their level + their highest mental ability modifier, and their spell DC is 12 + their level + their highest mental ability modifier. Unlike most abilities that can only be used once per day, the target refreshes their use of the granted innate spell each day only after you make your daily preparations and choose to extend *halcyon infusion's* duration by either refraining from preparing a spell in the slot (if you're a prepared spellcaster) or expending another spell slot (if you're a spontaneous spellcaster).

Heightened (8th) If the target is at least 7th level, you can choose a 4th-level spell.

Heightened (10th) As 8th, and if the target is at least 9th level, you can choose a 5th-level spell.

WISDOM OF JATEMBE

Though his legacy is so ancient that many view him as a distant and inaccessible figure, Jatembe's notes and knowledge are available to anyone who attends his school.

Jatembe left all of his writings behind when he vanished from Golarion, and countless versions of them exist within the Magaambya's libraries, each annotated and collated by different practitioners over the centuries. These tomes are collectively known as the *Wisdom of Jatembe*, and they contain spells penned by the Old-Mage himself, alongside the multiple refinements, variants, and related breakthroughs that have since been added by Magaambyan students.

KNIGHTLY IDOLS

While no knight of Lastwall has rank above another, Kalabrynnne and Clarethe Iomedar, nicknamed the Lion of Iomedae and the Sunset Angel, respectively, are looked up to by those who serve in the field. Especially among women, the pair have inspired many aspirations toward chivalry and heroism and more than their fair share of amorous crushes—the latter of which is a source of mild embarrassment for both of them.

KALABRYNNNE AND CLARETHE IOMEDAR

KNIGHTS OF LASTWALL

None are called leader among the Knights of Lastwall, for when Vigil fell, they realized that to elect a leader is to show your enemy your greatest weakness. Just look at our foe! When the Whispering Tyrant was sealed within Gallowspire by the Shining Crusade centuries ago, his empire fell to pieces, for it could not survive without his iron grip. Now that Tar-Baphon has escaped and returned to power, all must band together to defeat him—not as servants and masters, but as comrades united with glorious purpose. Yet there are two who stand tall among the knights. I will not call these two our leaders; but they are an inspiration to all those who hold the banner of Lastwall high.

KALABRYNNNE IOMEDAR

ADVISOR TO THE KNIGHTS OF LASTWALL

LG FEMALE HUMAN PALADIN

The elder Iomedar was born among the common folk of Vigil, capital of fallen Lastwall, and had barely seen her fifteenth birthday when her heart called her to join our predecessors, the Knights of Ozem. During this time, she found love with an Iomedae priestess, Gwyndria Iomedar of Firrine, and when the two were wed Kalabrynnne took her wife's name for her own. The two lived in Vigil for over a decade, and in time they were blessed with child; we will come to her soon enough.

Alas, Gwyndria was among those tragically lost when the Whispering Tyrant unleashed the Radiant Fire upon Vigil. Kalabrynnne survived the cataclysm, however, and though her heart surely ached at the loss, she rallied what survivors she could find and led their retreat to Vellumis. Once the survivors were safe in that port city, Kalabrynnne called a meeting of all knights, soldiers, and able-bodied folk present there; in the days that followed, with many an impassioned speech and insightful plea, she organized the ragged survivors of a fallen nation into the proud and courageous Knights of Lastwall. The remains of Gwyndria were never recovered; either Iomedar would be grateful beyond words for their recovery, for unconsecrated bones in the Gravelands rarely find peace.

Kalabrynnne today is all at once wise counselor, inspiring orator, canny tactician, and indefatigable warrior. In speech she is reserved unless the situation demands boldness, and in aspect she is as stately and as beautiful as any late-blooming woman might hope to be. I say "late-blooming," for like me, she was taken for a boy at birth, and raised as such until she had the sense to become her truest self. When I left my birthplace of Absalom as a fresh-faced squire of the knights—and newly minted maiden besides—I hastened first to Vellumis, for all the knights I met spoke of her wisdom and nobility, and to see a late-blooming woman like me held in such honor was like a dream made real.

I learned much in her service of honor, nobility, and chivalry; and much too of tactics and leadership. There I gained the courage and conviction to hold fast against the direst threat. Nor am I or my fellow knights the only visitors Vellumis has received, for Kalabrynnne has championed the knights' outreach across the Inner Sea region. Though she refuses to quit the Gravelands,



Kalabrynnne hosts the Magaambya wizard Janatimo to this end, for an alliance with his distant school would forward our cause greatly.

OUTREACH AND ALLIANCE

Our great crusade will succeed only with the support of many, and so Kalabrynnne sends diplomats to every corner of the Inner Sea region. Taldor was among the first nations to receive her envoys, for all Taldans recall the Shining Crusade with pride, and my fellow knights ply the nation's inns and noble salons for new allies. Word has reached me that Kalabrynnne now seeks envoys to travel to the court of Grand Princess Eutropia herself; any knights sent hence must be cunning indeed, for the intrigues of nobles cannot be rebuffed by stout shields nor vanquished by force of arms.

Perhaps the most dangerous diplomatic missions, however, are those closest to home. Kalabrynnne has sent diplomats to Overlord Ardax of Belkzen, and likewise to General Azaersi of Oprak, and has also made peace with several goblin tribes in the Gravelands. Though these peoples might once have been foes of Lastwall, the Whispering Way is a threat to all life. Human and goblin, hobgoblin and orc; what differences are these when faced with the horror of undeath? But old grudges run deep, and old scars ache long, and Kalabrynnne keenly remembers how even loyal knights such as Irabeth Tirabade were treated merely for having an orc as a father. And so only the bravest and most well-spoken knights are sent as envoys to these long-shunned peoples. Kalabrynnne is always looking for new candidates for such missions.

On the matter of our fellow knight Ulthun II, the Iomedars are split, although neither would doubt his integrity nor call him unfit to claim the title of knight of Lastwall. In her wisdom, Kalabrynnne sees his efforts to direct the vast resources of the Inner Sea region to our cause as a vital necessity, for the machine of war must be oiled with gold. The younger Iomedar, in her customarily outspoken fashion, grumbles about the former watcher-lord's retreat to the distant refuge of Absalom, for in her eyes he has not fulfilled his duty to the ruins of Lastwall.

CLARETHE IOMEDAR

INSPIRING CRIMSON RECLAIMER

CG NONBINARY HUMAN LIBERATOR

Kalabrynnne and Gwyndria had but one child before Lastwall fell. Knowing the struggle of gender wrongly imposed, Kalabrynnne saw to it that their child was not raised as a specific gender identity but given the time and space necessary for self-discovery. For her part, Clarethe has made clear that feminine pronouns are most appropriate, yet she is quick to remind the curious or presumptive that she is neither female nor male—and equally quick to punish those who behave in bigoted fashion, for such hatred is as much violence as a sword's stroke.

Of Clarethe's career before the fall, there is little to tell. She joined Lastwall's military as a squire, and in its service traveled the length and breadth of the nation. Even then, she was known as a brash and pugnacious youth, and more than once risked discharge for both her deeds and her outspoken attitude. She was far from Vigil when it fell, and came to Vellumis only after the order had been formed; by all accounts, though, Clarethe took to knighthood with fierce zeal. On one occasion, she rode out at day's end (alone!) to aid a band of knights ambushed on patrol—a deed which earned her the admiring title of "Sunset Angel" from her fellows. Certainly, she has taken to the name, preferring to strike when the setting sun paints the sky scarlet.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Ardax the White-Hair (page 16), Azaersi (page 26), Beirivelle Starshine (NG female human redeemer of Shelyn), Eutropia (page 42), Iomedae (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 28), Irabeth Tirabade (page 52), Janatimo (page 60), Tar-Baphon (page 104), Ulthun II (page 114), Veldrienne (NG female human knight vigilant)

A KNIGHT'S TALE

The man hesitated, then drew out a pendant he'd hidden inside the seam of his coat sleeve. He offered it to Veldrienne, who shook her head. "I can't take your money."

"It isn't money. It's... I was a jeweler. Before all this." He laughed bleakly. "I thought I'd use some of my pieces to bribe our way out of the Gravelands, but there's no bribing the dead. I want you to have it, instead. I can't buy safety. None of us can. But I can, at least, offer this. Please. Take it and tell me that—that you understand."

Veldrienne took the pendant. It was an octagon of rose gold, holding a pressed flower under glass in a ring of white seed pearls. The flower was familiar. Star alyssum. It had bloomed around the watcher-lord's palace and spilled from the window boxes of Vigil's tidy whitewashed homes, perfuming the city in summer. If she closed her eyes, she could almost breathe its delicate, honeyed sweetness again.

"I made them for crusaders traveling up to the Worldwound," the man explained. "For them to remember the homes and loved ones they left behind. I never thought that crusade would be won, or that I'd need to preserve the memory of Vigil on its own ground instead. But look. The back."

Veldrienne turned the pendant around. In the back, under a panel of rose gold inscribed "Vigil's blessing," was a compartment full of tiny black seeds. Mendev and the Sarkoris Scar were dotted with battlefield graves where star alyssum bloomed. Veldrienne knew those marked the final rest of knights from Lastwall, but she had never considered who carried the seeds there, or what it meant for a knight to lie beneath a bier of flowers on ground so grimly sanctified.

Now, holding the pendant, she understood. "Thank you."

—Excerpt from "Tales of Lost Omens: Seeds of Hope," web-based fiction by Liane Merciel

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A MYSTERIOUS PATRON

Clarethe was the first knight to swear the Crimson Oath, and the only one to know the source of its power, despite the curiosity and concerns of the rest of the Knights of Lastwall. Many suspect the Crimson Reclaimer regularly visits this force in secret, though despite multiple attempts, no one has managed to catch Clarethe in the act.

Clarethe's passions run hot indeed, and she feels grief, joy, and anger with equal intensity. Unquestionably, she took the loss of her mother Gwyndria much harder than Kalabrynn, and every knight knows Clarethe's truest desire is to conquer the ruins of Vigil. It is most likely this quest that led to the fiery argument between her and her surviving mother, when Clarethe stormed from Vellumis with her most ardent allies in tow. This, then, was the schism among the knights that led to the formation of the Crimson Reclaimers. Since then the two Iomedars have made peace, and the two orders are one again; family and order each now more tightly bound than ever. Clarethe still prefers the field, though, for she is a creature of action.

Tales of the Sunset Angel are common among the Crimson Reclaimers and their allies, each stranger than the last. A Varisian potion-brewer tells me Clarethe crosses the Ustalavic border at each half-moon to court a maiden stitched together from corpses and given life by lightning's stroke, and that she occasionally sends knights as couriers to her lady love, bearing gifts of grave-bloomed flowers and jewelry of hammered meteor-iron that draws the lightning. Then there was the craggy orc

knight reclaimant with more scar than skin, who spoke enraptured of how Clarethe sings to her bastard sword in battle; how it chants the Crimson Oath in chorus with her; and how at times she seems to take its counsel and sends knights far afield to counter unforeseen enemy movements. Of these tales there is little proof; yet I say that a tale need not be factual to be true, especially in dark and hopeless times.

PATRONAGE VEILED IN MYSTERY

Much has been made of the mysterious patron of the Reclaimers. I asked Clarethe about her patron one night, when the fires were burning low and only the sentries stood waking. For a few moments she considered her crimson brand, first of its kind; then, as much to the sword as to me, said, "Whether born of evil or reborn by evil, all creatures hold the spark of destiny in their hearts. I choose to judge others not by their birth, but by their deeds, for the latter are what mark the world."

Then she winked at me, for she knew the nature of my birth and upbringing. "Isn't that so, Berry Veil?" she asked, ruffling my hair with her gauntleted hand, and I was glad for the silver-blue veil of my hair to hide my cherry-red cheeks. Clarethe often gives such deed-names (as her Iobarian forebears sometimes call them) to her allies among the knights, from the celestial-blooded archer and scout the reclaimers call Angel Eyes, to the diminutive halfling she named Kneebane. I could glean nothing more of her patron, but I can say with certainty this: Clarethe will suffer no evil, and she would break her oath without hesitation if it led the Reclaimers into temptation.

These are the Iomedars, mother and child. If they are not the leaders of the Knights of Lastwall, then they are surely the order's twin hearts.

—Beirivelle Starshine, Shining Sentinel and Knight of Lastwall, when asked who leads the knights or why the order is split in twain

KNIGHTS IN TRAINING

The following feats represent benefits of training from the Iomedars (Kalabrynn for knight vigil, Clarethe for knight reclaimant, either for Lastwall sentry).

RESCUER'S PRESS

FEAT 4

RARE ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Lastwall Sentry Dedication (*Lost Omens World Guide* 47)

Any shield you wield gains the shove trait. When you Shove using a shield and Stride as part of that action, you can move an additional 5 feet to either side of the creature you Shoved. In addition, if you are in the Everstand Stance (*Lost Omens Character Guide* 90) and successfully Shove a creature using a shield that you wield two-handed, you can increase the distance of your Shove to 10 feet.





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SHALL NOT FALTER, SHALL NOT ROUT

FEAT 10

RARE ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Knight Reclaimant Dedication (*Lost Omens Character Guide* 95)

You gain the *shall not falter, shall not rout* focus spell. If you don't already have one, you gain a focus pool of 1 Focus Point, which you can regain using the Refocus activity to recite the Crimson Oath and meditate on its teachings. If you already have a focus pool, increase the number of Focus Points in your focus pool by 1. Your knight reclaimant focus spells are divine spells; when you gain this feat, you become trained in divine spell attacks and spell DCs and your spellcasting ability is Charisma.

VIGIL'S WALLS RISE ANEW! ♦♦♦

FEAT 10

RARE ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Knight Vigilant Dedication (*Lost Omens Character Guide* 94), Shield Block

As part of daily preparation, you can drill with a number of allies up to your Charisma modifier. These allies must be present and listening during this time, but this does not otherwise impede their own preparation. When you use this feat's benefit, you and all drilled companions within 30 feet who are wielding shields Raise a Shield. Allies who Raise their Shields keep them raised until the start of their next turn, as normal.

NEW FOCUS SPELLS

SHALL NOT FALTER, SHALL NOT ROUT

FOCUS 5

RARE HEALING NECROMANCY

Cast ♦ verbal

Duration 1 minute

Calling out the fifth line of the Crimson Oath, you seal your most grievous injuries with a stroke of your blade. The first time each round that you Strike with your weapon and deal damage to a foe, you recover a number of HP equal to twice *shall not falter, shall not rout*'s level. This healing can't raise your current HP above half of your maximum HP.

FAMILY STORIES

While Kalabryne and Clarethe's relationship is no longer antagonistic, the two often cannot resist teasing each other. When doing so, they often reference these stories from their days before Lastwall fell.

Clarethe's Wolf: Kalabryne is fond of telling overly enthusiastic or impetuous squires the tale of how Clarethe, as a youthful squire of Lastwall, once tore bloody hell through the local garrison screaming for aid against a "werewolf," which turned out to be one of the local rangers' tame wolfhounds. Clarethe still has not lived the experience down.

Mother Hen: Perhaps as revenge for her mother Kalabryne favorite story (never mind that she's been telling this one longer), Clarethe takes every opportunity to tell overly cautious companions the long list of rules and warnings she had to endure from Kalabryne during her childhood—a list which seems to grow with each new telling.

Let it be known to all citizens of and visitors to Cheliox that the heretic Kassi Aziril, blasphemer against the Prince of Law, is hereby sentenced to death. Those who offer information leading to her arrest shall be rewarded, and those who offer her succor shall be destroyed. None shall defy the might of Cheliox.

—Signed by Her Infernal Majestrix Abrogail the Second of the Thrice-Damned House of Throne, by the Might of Asmodeus, Queen and Empress of Cheliox



KASSI AZIRIL

INNOVATIVE SCIENTIFIC HEALER

NG FEMALE HUMAN ALCHEMIST

Dr. Aziril,

I want you to know, first, that I would still very much like to see you give a guest lecture at the Venicaan College of Medicaments and Chirurgery—at least, some day. Your credentials from over a dozen academies, as well as your many medical breakthroughs, speak for themselves. If those were the only things speaking to your name, that would be that. Yet though I know that it was I who approached you, I must commit the grave offense of rescinding the invitation. The Peerless are not best pleased by some of the things you have said in the past, particularly about Sarenrae. While I know we are all people of our word, perhaps if you would walk some of these statements back, I might be able to gain some traction? To call the Dawnflower “a bloody killer in the guise of a healer, willing to murder an entire city rather than deign to explain herself” seems particularly harsh, and not at all supported by the scripture.

To the same concern, I would like to introduce your research on addiction to our scholars to help combat the import of drugs, but they are having trouble seeing past the foreword. You wrote, “The reason so many people misunderstand addiction is that they see it as a personal mental failing. In truth, addiction is a disease tied to the life force that gives us instincts like hunger or thirst. The gods intentionally built mortals to be susceptible to addiction so we could be more easily deluded and addicted to religion and faith, and it is through that vulnerability that drugs prey upon us.” Is this theological aside within a medical text truly necessary?

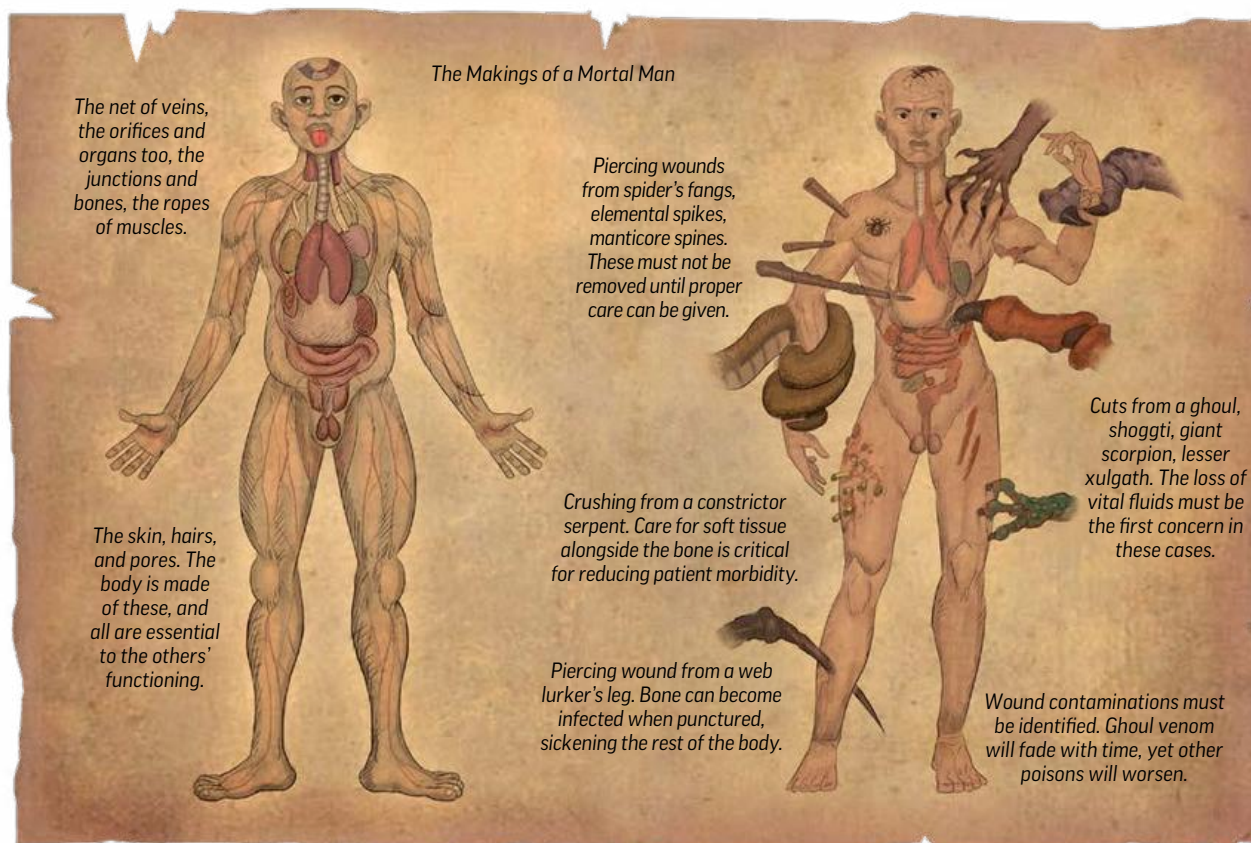
I hope we can come to an agreement, for the good of an entire generation of Qadira’s best and brightest medical minds.

—Grand Vizier Hebizid Vraj

Sometimes called the Mother of Medicine, Kassi Aziril’s stubborn insistence on relying on science and alchemy over the use of magical care for the sick and injured led her to a bevy of major discoveries that had been, until recently, ignored by the medical community, due to the much more available access to divine healing throughout most of the world. Yet in Rahadoum, where faith in the gods is persecuted, techniques like those pioneered by Kassi are literal lifesavers. With degrees from major universities across Golarion and an apprenticeship with Artokus Kirran, the precocious Kassi Elaran traveled the world to further refine her techniques. Discoveries like kandlerae, a deep sea algae with astounding medicinal properties, led to further breakthroughs, and studies with other medical practitioners helped her cultivate kandlerae in her laboratories. She returned to Rahadoum to focus on her research, periodically sharing reports or updates with other scholars or government agencies for peer reviews and the like.

In 4708 AR, scholars in Taldor and Qadira plagiarized Kassi’s work on battlefield medicine within 1 month of each other, each to great acclaim. The Rahadoumi government stepped in to protect Kassi’s original authorship, realizing the potential for her discoveries. They asked her to generate a book-length report on her medicine and then published it, ensuring that her work was not only properly attributed to her, but also securing more control over it for the government. As a further show of solidarity, she and her family were adopted into Rahadoum’s prestigious Aziril clan, changing her name to Kassi Aziril.

With greater support from the government, Kassi’s research and discoveries grew, yet her methods often proved difficult for others to replicate, in part due to Kassi’s unwillingness to make her kandlerae derivative available to the public. Her methods of administering battlefield medicine and her observations into the nature of disease have taken on lives of their own, however, with the methods being adopted more and more by soldiers, healers, scholars, and adventurers throughout the Inner Sea region.



KASSI'S TECHNIQUES

While Kassi shares her greatest discoveries with the entire medical community, some of her techniques are either still experimental or extremely difficult to perform. Any students who Kassi takes on gain access to her techniques.

VACCINES

Vaccines are a more focused variant of antiplague, designed to provide complete immunity to a specific strain of a single illness rather than to bolster the immune system against all disease. Creating a vaccine requires a sample of the disease in question.

VACCINE

ITEM 1+

RARE CONSUMABLE ELIXIR

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

Activate ♦ Interact

A vaccine grants a creature immunity to a specific strain of disease of a level equal to or less than the vaccine's level, and a +2 item bonus on all saving throws against other strains of the same disease. For example, a vaccine could grant immunity to filth fever inflicted by otyughs, but would only grant a +2 saving throw bonus against filth fever inflicted by a giant rat.

Type minor; Level 1; Price 4 gp

The duration is 1 hour.

Type lesser; Level 3; Price 12 gp

The duration is 24 hours.

Type moderate; Level 6; Price 50 gp

The duration is 1 week.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Artokus Kirran (page 18), Hashim ibn Sayyid (page 50), Hebizid Vraj (page 120), Jakalyn (page 56), Tar-Baphon (page 104)

Abrogail—

I'm afraid I had to void your requested contract. The Red Mantis have a moratorium on any further action against the woman in question. Several years ago, one of my people took divine offense against the doctor for a transgression which turned out to be on false pretenses—an unfounded rumor that the doctor had resurrected one of our marks without divine assistance. I admit I was as vexed as you were when I heard the claim, but it turned out to be a mistake on my agent's part. As recompense for our error, the Red Mantis will not be involving the woman in question in any further assignments. We must all be willing to own our mistakes, and so avoid being blinded by them. I am sure you agree. While I regret that we will be unable to collaborate this time, I am certain someone so resourceful and intelligent will have no trouble finding someone else to do it for you.. Regarding the other matter, I have personally confirmed its completion. Check the blood with your divinations, if you like. —N

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THE TRUTH ABOUT KANDLERAE

Key to many of Kassi's breakthroughs was the rare algae known as kandlerae.

She was introduced to the substance by Pactbroker Hashim ibn Sayyid via a series of missives, but only recently has she started to suspect that his motives might be sinister. By helping her to develop methods of healing based on science rather than faith, the veiled master posing as Hashim hopes to further erode the very concept of faith itself, something very different than what Kassi hopes to accomplish. Now that Kassi has an inkling of the veiled master's insidious schemes, whether or not its influence will play out the way it plans, only time will tell. Regardless, none can argue that what Kassi has accomplished has been anything but beneficial to her patients and the medical community at large.

Type greater; **Level** 12; **Price** 400 gp

The duration is 1 year.

Type major; **Level** 18; **Price** 5,000 gp

The duration is permanent.

ADDICTION SUPPRESSANT

The method of developing addiction suppressants are different than those for antiplague or vaccines. For every drug, a specific suppressant must be crafted—no generalized addiction suppressant yet exists. In order to create an addiction suppressant, you must begin with a dose of the drug to be suppressed, then use alchemical reagents to generate an elixir that can be used to fight that drug's addiction. An addiction suppressant must be a higher level than the drug it is meant to suppress in order to work.

ADDICTION SUPPRESSANT

ITEM 1+

RARE **CONSUMABLE** **ELIXIR**

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activation ♦ Interact

When you use a dose of addiction suppressant, it suppresses the effects of that addiction for 1 day, as if you had taken an actual dose of the drug, but without any of the drug's effects, and it doesn't increase the addiction DC. You also gain an item bonus against the ongoing save against the drug's addiction depending on the type of addiction suppressant.

Type lesser; **Level** 1; **Price** 2 gp

You gain a +1 item bonus.

Type moderate; **Level** 6; **Price** 30 gp

You gain a +2 item bonus.

Type greater; **Level** 10; **Price** 140 gp

You gain a +3 item bonus.

Type major; **Level** 14; **Price** 500 gp

You gain a +4 item bonus.

SKILL FEATS

Learning straight from the Mother of Modern Medicine provides unique advantages.

MEDICAL RESEARCHER

FEAT 1

RARE **GENERAL** **SKILL**

Prerequisites trained in Medicine

Kassi has taught you not only how to apply medicines with your medical skills but how to craft them as well. When you Craft healer's kits, vaccines, addiction suppressants, antidotes, antiplagues, elixirs of life, or other non-magical medical or healing items, you can use Medicine instead of Crafting.

PARAGON BATTLE MEDICINE

FEAT 7

RARE **GENERAL** **SKILL**

Prerequisites Battle Medicine, master in Medicine

Kassi Aziril taught you her techniques that originated the modern use of Battle Medicine. When you successfully use Battle Medicine, you can also reduce the target's sickened, enfeebled, or clumsy condition by 1 (this has no effect if you are subject to an effect continually applying the clumsy condition, like *enlarge*). If you are legendary in Medicine, you can choose to reduce the target's frightened or stunned condition by 1 instead, and if you have the Godless Healing feat (*Pathfinder Lost Omens World Guide* 56), you can choose to reduce the target's stupefied or drained condition by 1 instead. If you have the Mortal Healing feat, you can reduce all available conditions by 1 for a target who hasn't benefited from positive or healing magic in the last 24 hours, and if you roll a critical success before applying the effects of the feat, you reduce all available conditions by 2 for that target instead.

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Master Kirran,

It has been some time since my last letter. Truthfully, so much has happened in so little time. It seems that the world has been turned on its end for the last decade, and the uncaring gods treat us all as pawns in their games. I pray you indulge an old student, master. Perhaps it is I who have changed, no longer the girl journeying to every school around the Inner Sea region and beyond to learn of medicine, but instead putting those lessons into practice, traveling the world to heal those who needed me most. And not all is darkness. This new world is also full of wonders grander than you might imagine. I have hope that mortalkind can struggle and survive together, even with so much arrayed against us. Heroes have given me that hope. Each time it seemed like all was lost, mortal heroes—not the gods—stood against all odds and triumphed.

It has made me realize something: even all those years ago, I knew I couldn't simply stand by and research. But now I realize that traveling to triage the latest plague or disaster might be too reactive. And yet, I am needed for that! I realized I must foster students who can do what I am not able to accomplish alone. When we are young, we feel like we can not only do anything, but everything that needs to be done. Yet I can't be everywhere—I've tried! Even now, I feel an urge to travel to New Thassilon and seek out lost medicine the people of the past brought forward with them, though I think I must prioritize treatment of some of the uniquely suffering victims of the Whispering Tyrant. Truly, positive energy can be as horrifying and cancerous as negative energy is ruinous, both bent so often as tools of the gods. Either way I go, I am doing nothing to prevent the next big medical emergency.

But students... yes, students can be in two places at once, or more. Now I understand why you stayed in one place, hidden from all eyes. You knew that all along. I am sorry I accused you of caring only for Thuvia's economy, all those years ago. I hope you will forgive me for taking so long to learn that lesson.

I write you for a more practical reason as well. While I know I spoke well of him in the past, I am beginning to detect something dangerous in Pactbroker ibn Sayyid. Something more than mere greed. Something... wrong. When he calls in my favor, I think I am going to need to refuse it, and I am not sure what he'll do next. I should be fine, but in case something happens to me, I hope that you will pay close attention. I suspect he would pin the blame on Cheliox or one of the other theocracies I've angered over the years. Who would think to look to my friends when I have so many enemies?

Don't laugh, master. I know I am stubborn, but my belief in the laws of mortality and the worth of all people are as strong and as pure as any cleric's faith in a god, only without the need to be bribed with magic first, and thus absent of the inherent tawdriness of that servitude. I can no more silence my conscience than you could abandon Thuvia.

I have enclosed all my research notes for unfinished projects. By the time you read this letter, I hope to have begun the search for students of my own to spread my methods, but in case of the worst, I must also ask you to see to it that this knowledge isn't lost.

Here I am, always the pessimist, the realist, but I write to a man I've never seen with my own eyes, in full faith that he can and will take care of the important things in the worst circumstances. I'm sure you would tell me that's the same kind of comfort the religious take when they think of their god. I have seen it so often on their faces, dying in certitude that their god has it all planned out, when really the gods are just waiting to absorb the souls of the faithful to build their divine realms. I am different. I have faith in the man, not the legend.

Yours in truth,
Kassi Aziril

FAMILIAR FACES

Kevoth-Kul was encountered during the events of the Iron Gods Adventure Path. Though a dangerous and capricious figure, *Legends* assumes that explorers from the Numerian town of Torch—as played by the PCs—managed to help the Black Sovereign shake free of his addictions and finally see how he had been manipulated by the Technic League.

KEVOTH-KUL

BLACK SOVEREIGN OF NUMERIA

CN MALE HUMAN BARBARIAN

From a young age, the Numerian warlord Kevoth-Kul showed impressive ambition, claiming leadership of the Black Horses clan in a trial of ordeals in 4687 AR. One year later, after conquering most of the neighboring lands, he was able to gain the willing alliance of several of Numeria's other clans. It took 3 more years to win the cautious acceptance of the remaining clans, who began to believe that Kevoth-Kul could be a truly great leader that would unite the land of Numeria. Declaring the mysterious city of Starfall to be his capital, Kevoth-Kul crowned himself Black Sovereign in 4690 AR.

Yet his downfall began when he forged a tenuous alliance with the Technic League—a reclusive group of researchers obsessed with studying the highly advanced alien technological artifacts scattered across Numeria. Goaded by representatives of the Technic League, Kevoth-Kul took to consuming the strange otherworldly liquids known as Numerian fluids that drip and pool from the broken remnants of the crashed starship whose ruins dot his country. Kevoth-Kul drastically underestimated just how addictive Numerian fluids could be, and this act of hubris quickly gave way to an addiction that made him a puppet of the Technic League for well over 20 years.

Under the sway of Numerian fluids, Kevoth-Kul fell into a decadent torpor, broken on occasion by violent rages, fugue states, and the increasingly rare bout of clearheaded rulership. The Technic League found it a relatively easy task to control the Black Sovereign in this state, using silvered words and subtle magical manipulations along with their seeming inexhaustible supply of Numerian drugs, ensuring their control of the nation in all but name.

All that changed in 4716 AR with the death of Technic League leader **Ozmyn Zaidow** (CE male human technomancer) and the scattering of its remaining members. The events leading to the destruction of the Technic League resulted in Kevoth-Kul shaking free of the addiction that ruled him for decades. Realizing how badly he'd been used by his allies, the Black Sovereign succumbed to a rage, slaughtering the remnants of the Technic League who were foolish enough to stay within his reach. Over the next several weeks, Kevoth-Kul withdrew to his personal chambers, free of his physical dependencies but still fighting off the mental toll of his addictions. He allowed few to see him until he returned to his throne, refusing to speak of his time under the effects of Numerian fluids. For all intents and purposes, he acted as if the previous quarter-century had never occurred.

Kevoth-Kul is now a changed man. Though in his early fifties, Kevoth-Kul appears no older than 30 due to one of the side-effects of consuming Numerian fluids. Unknown to most, Kevoth-Kul is effectively immortal, freed from death save by violence, poison, or disease. Unfortunately, while many of the physical side effects were beneficial, unpleasant mental consequences also linger. Kevoth-Kul's behavior is occasionally erratic, and there is much he saw in his drug-induced visions that has given him unique insight, but still haunts his waking hours.

Kevoth-Kul's palace remains a place of debauchery, with one crucial exception: Numerian fluids are banned on the premises. Kevoth-Kul has been known to personally execute anyone caught violating this edict. Similarly, anyone so foolish as to claim allegiance to the Technic League, or to be known as a former member, has nothing to look forward to at the palace other than a violent death.



REFORGING A SHATTERED FUTURE

The residents of Starfall now watch Kevoth-Kul with a wary eye, uncertain of the ruler's next move. Though the Black Sovereign has made some token moves to undo the cruelty he had inflicted on his people during his descent into hedonism, he still brooks little challenge to his authority, and years of being subject to his capricious whims have eroded any trust or respect he might have won in his earlier days. Kevoth-Kul keeps his thoughts to himself, having learned the price of relying on the counsel of others. As a result, few can claim to understand the motives behind his actions, as they could as easily be some manner of far-reaching plan as they could be a product of one of Kevoth-Kul's erratic mood swings.

In one of his more curious moves, Kevoth-Kul recently sent Chancellor Irahai of Mendev a beautiful scimitar made of an alloy of cold iron and the skymetal noqual—Kevoth-Kul personally developed this alloy, naming it “sovereign steel.” While Irahai gratefully accepted the gift, she also recognized she was not familiar enough with Kellid traditions to be certain what hidden meaning might have been behind the exchange. Researching the matter with other Kellid clans has been of little help, as such an act could be potentially interpreted by different clans as either a marriage proposal, an offer of fealty, or an act of war. So far, Kevoth-Kul has deferred any further explanation. The unique alloyed blade, with its hypnotic acid-etched surface, remains his only message.

Despite Kevoth-Kul's bloody purge of the Technic League, the capital of Starfall has become a haven for at least one survivor of that shattered organization. The scarred gnome Khismar Crookchar has managed to hide his former allegiances, pretending to be a victim and experiment of the Technic League. As Khismar has proved adept at rooting out other members of the Technic League for Kevoth-Kul to personally execute, the gnome has currently won the Black Sovereign's favor. Khismar has also provided Kevoth-Kul with a number of petrified heads of former Technic League captains, which Kevoth-Kul keeps in a pile in his throne hall. Khismar is playing a dangerous game, however, and should Kevoth-Kul ever discover the gnome's true loyalties, Khismar's end would be swift and brutal.

In addition to the Technic League's victims, Kevoth-Kul welcomed androids into his service with open arms. Many androids are also victims of the Technic League, or otherwise have their own reasons to despise it, and a good number have knowledge on how to use advanced technology, making them a solid replacement for the Technic League's expertise. Some of these androids have become Kevoth-Kul's personal honor guard, while others teach their Kellid counterparts how to utilize technology or join bands of hunters who scour Numeria in hopes of rooting out Technic League agents who have thus far evaded their fate. A small number have instead traveled north to do battle with the demons of the Sarkoris Scar, easing some of the Blades of Aaramor's burden of defending the nation's border.

Even these new allies have little idea what Kevoth-Kul is currently planning. Rumors abound that the Black Sovereign, now free of his addiction, may return to his plans for conquering Numeria. Yet this prospect is far less appealing after over 20 years of erratic behavior and cruelty—the once great image of Kevoth-Kul is tarnished; likely beyond repair. Kevoth-Kul's revenge on the Technic League also earned him many more powerful enemies, as survivors of the League have found refuge under other Nimerian warlords, taking their stockpiles of advanced technology with them. Any move to turn Numeria into a single nation and a power on the world stage will face far more resistance than it did in Kevoth-Kul's prime.

Kevoth-Kul currently has several short-term goals, primarily focusing on shoring up the losses to his political might. While Starfall and much of Sovereign's Reach remains

PALACE OF FALLEN STARS

Kevoth-Kul rules from the keep of the Black Sovereign in Starfall—a slick, high-walled compound surrounded by squat defense towers and capped with an immense metal dome. The palace interior contains a vibrant environment that leaps between the crude and the cosmopolitan in a way that is jarring to many visitors. Chained skeletons, free-roaming exotic pets, and gruesome piles of skulls and other trophies mingle alongside luxurious baths, libraries, electric lights, and the highly advanced technological constructs known as gearsmen that serve as guards. The keep is usually in a state of constant revelry, with harried chefs providing meals and alcohol for feasts at all hours; demands for entertainment see a number of acrobats and storytellers present in the palace at all times, and guests have access to enough drug paraphernalia to put the finest Chelaxian parlors to shame. The recent influx of android residents and the Black Sovereign's newfound aversion to addictive substances has ushered in a more temperate atmosphere of late, though not by much.

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Casandalee (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 57), Irahai (page 54), Khismar Crookchar (page 78), Zyphus (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 130)

NOQUAL

Noqual is a type of skymetal—an extremely rare metal that originated from distant planets and dead stars.

Scarce even compared to other skymetals, noqual appears as pale-green crystals but can be forged like metal into equipment as strong as—but lighter than—iron. Noqual also exhibits magic-resistant properties, which makes crafting magic weapons from the skymetal expensive and difficult, a trait sovereign steel appears to avoid.



firmly in his grasp, areas further beyond have begun slipping toward a form of semi-independence, a development Kevoth-Kul seeks to rectify. In particular, the Black Sovereign would like to see that the city of Chesed—and by extension, its material wealth and influence in regional trade—remains in his own hands. Kevoth-Kul is aware that the city of Hajoth Hakados remains his nation's most accessible port for purloined technology and hopes to convince its ruler, **Lady Altouna** (NG female lashunta wizard), that the two of them would benefit more as allies than as enemies. While hesitant, Altouna is weighing Kevoth-Kul's offers of protection against her current reliance on the violent Kellid Blood Gars clan, and may be amenable to forging a deal if she believes the Black Sovereign can prove himself reliable.

Domestically, the rebellious clans in western Numeria pose a threat to trade and stability across the country—Kevoth-Kul requires loyal agents able to turn them to his side, bring them to heel or, if necessary, send a message that active instigation isn't in their best interests. Kevoth-Kul's new edicts have proven unpopular with several clans, particularly the technology-loathing Ghost Wolves. The Ghost Wolves' chieftain, **Xol-Nomag** (CN female human barbarian), is herself one of the more powerful figures in Numerian politics, and finds Kevoth-Kul's cozying up to settled Kellids, androids, and outsiders nearly as much of an outrage as his apparent embrace of forbidden technologies. Kevoth-Kul has mostly ignored the situation, but if tensions persist, it's only a matter of time before Kevoth-Kul and Xol-Nomag go to war.

Some believe Kevoth-Kul's long-term ambition is no less than the unification of every Kellid clan, Numerian or otherwise, into a single great empire. By most estimates, this plan would be nigh impossible to implement, but Kevoth-Kul is learning the value of patience—as an immortal, he has literally all the time in the world.

KUL-INKIT

Kevoth-Kul's consort and second-in-command, **Kul-Inkit** (CN female human barbarian), lost any affection for him out of disgust for his drug-fueled hedonism. His recent turn around in behavior has managed to rekindle her interest, if not her passion, and though she is still reluctant to spend time with him, she seems to wholeheartedly support his current goals. She has become a devout believer in Casandalee as proof that technology is key to Numeria's future. Kul-Inkit is one of the few aware of Kevoth-Kul's immortality and hopes to find a way to join him as perpetual corulers of a unified Kellid nation. To this end, she has made quiet inquiries via trusted agents about acquiring some of Thuvia's famed sun orchid elixir, immortality through genie wishcraft, and her preferred method: uploading her consciousness into a construct.

KEVOTH-KUL'S ARMORY

Kevoth-Kul has lately amassed technological wonders.



BLADE OF THE BLACK SOVEREIGN

ITEM 15

UNIQUE EVOCATION LIGHTNING MAGICAL

Price 6,500 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; Bulk 2

This +2 *greater striking shock greatsword* is forged from standard-grade adamantine, with inlays of broken circuitry and a robot's ocular lens on the cross guard. A soft thrum comes from the blade, which you feel as a subtle pulse through the grip when wielding it. It sparks when unsheathed, emitting dim light within 5 feet. On a hit against a foe made of metal, wearing metal armor, or using a metal shield, if the foe takes electricity damage from the blade, the makes the foe flat-footed for 1 round; if the Strike was a critical hit, it also makes them clumsy 1 for 1 round.

Activate ♦♦ command, Interact; **Effect** You cast the *electric arc* cantrip from the sword as an 8th-level primal spell, using 10 + your melee attack modifier with the *Blade of the Black Sovereign* as your spell DC.

SOVEREIGN STEEL

MATERIAL 9+

RARE PRECIOUS

Created by Black Sovereign Kevoth-Kul, this unique alloy of cold iron and the skymetal noqual can provide protection from magical assault. The process of cold-forging the two materials together is quite complicated and precise. Characters in search of sovereign steel weapons and armor will almost assuredly have to travel to Starfall to procure gear made from this rare alloy. While some believe it possible to craft shields of sovereign steel as well, in one of his fits, Kevoth-Kul yelled that he had no use for them and banned anyone from making such a thing. So far, his smiths have been too afraid to confirm whether or not it was a joke. All sovereign steel items (including weapon and armor below) have a +4 circumstance bonus on saves against magic that the item makes, and grant their bonus to saves the owner makes specifically to protect the item from magic (such as against the *rusting grasp* spell).

Type sovereign steel chunk; **Price** 700 gp; **Bulk** L

Type sovereign steel ingot; **Price** 7,000 gp; **Bulk** 1

Type standard-grade sovereign steel object; **Level** 9; **Price** 500 gp per Bulk

Type high-grade sovereign steel object; **Level** 17; **Price** 8,000 gp per Bulk

Sovereign Steel Items	Hardness	HP	BT
Thin Items			
Standard-grade	7	28	14
High-grade	10	40	20
Items			
Standard-grade	11	44	22
High-grade	14	56	28
Structures			
Standard-grade	22	88	44
High-grade	28	112	56

SOVEREIGN STEEL ARMOR

ITEM 13+

RARE

Usage worn armor; **Bulk** varies by armor

Sovereign steel armor sickens certain creatures that touch it. A creature with weakness to cold iron that critically fails an unarmed attack against a creature in sovereign steel armor becomes sickened 1, and such a creature is sickened 1 as long as it wears sovereign steel armor. The noqual in sovereign steel armor provides protection against magic, granting you a +1 circumstance bonus to AC against spell attack rolls. If you Cast a Spell while wearing sovereign steel armor, you must succeed at a DC 5 flat check or the spell fails.

Type standard-grade sovereign steel armor; **Level** 13; **Price** 2,400 gp + 240 gp per Bulk;

Craft Requirements at least 150 gp of cold iron + 15 gp per Bulk plus at least 150 gp of noqual + 15 gp per Bulk.

Type high-grade sovereign steel armor; **Level** 20; **Price** 50,000 gp + 5,000 gp per Bulk;

Craft Requirements at least 12,500 gp of cold iron + 1,250 gp per Bulk plus at least 12,500 gp of noqual + 1,250 gp per Bulk.

SOVEREIGN STEEL WEAPON

ITEM 12+

RARE

Usage varies by weapon; **Bulk** varies by weapon

Sovereign steel weapons are treated as cold iron against creatures with a weakness to cold iron, like demons and fey. In addition, the noqual in sovereign steel weapons disrupts spellcasters' concentration, causing them to become stupefied 1 for 1 round on a critical hit.

Type standard-grade sovereign steel weapon; **Level** 12; **Price** 1,600 gp + 160 gp per Bulk;

Craft Requirements at least 100 gp of cold iron + 10 gp per Bulk plus at least 100 gp of noqual + 10 gp per Bulk.

Type high-grade sovereign steel weapon; **Level** 19; **Price** 32,000 gp + 3,200 gp per Bulk;

Craft Requirements at least 8,000 gp of cold iron + 800 gp per Bulk plus at least 8,000 gp of noqual + 800 gp per Bulk.

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THE IRON GODDESS

Guided by some of his troubled visions, Kevoth-Kul took to making forays into Silver Mount, fighting off its numerous threats and discovering rare technologies along the way. It was during one of these excursions that he became aware of the risen android-turned-AI-turned-goddess, Casandalee. Never a particularly spiritual man, Kevoth-Kul was still awed by the goddess' divine ascension and thinks of her as an inspiring and guiding figure for his new reign. Few nations can make claim to an immortal ruler guided by an immortal goddess native to that realm, and that Numeria has produced both is—in Kevoth-Kul's mind, at least—testament to its grand destiny.

Kevoth-Kul brought word of Casandalee to the palace, having the abandoned chapel to Zyphus (an evil god of accidental death) that was originally installed by the Technic League's Black Seers rededicated to the Iron Goddess. Casandalee has proven popular with the palace residents—certainly more so than Zyphus ever was—and in particular with Kevoth-Kul's consort Kul-Inkit, who has taken to Casandalee's faith with zeal.

Your gifts always entertain me,
Crookchar. Bring more.
—Kevoth-Kul

KHISMAR CROOKCHAR

TENACIOUS NUMERIAN DRUG DEALER

NE MALE GNOME ALCHEMIST

However Khismar manages to retain the favor of the Black Sovereign in the fallout of Casandalee's ascension, it is obvious he's poisoned the well for any of his former colleagues within the borders of Starfall. As surviving remnants and other salvagers notice the Blue Streak's growing technological monopolization, they pursue more obscure leads, diligently hiding the technology they find. Some such technology hunters risk their lives for the archaeological significance of their finds rather than value or personal gain. Yet after a few technology archaeologists went missing, those who remained understood that their academic motives did not forgive their actions in the eyes of their competition. They now hire bodyguards; their families hire search parties.

For all of the unusual Numerian features the Rain of Stars caused, the fog across the Lake of Mists and Veils is not one. It occurs naturally, and the thickness of the fog depends on the patterns of the weather. This recent dry season, the fog thinned enough for the lake's southwestern shallows to be visible. The buzz around Starfall quickly turned to the report of dozens of headless statues below the water's surface. "Was this once dry land?" "Were they sculpted after specific people? If so, given their modern and futuristic accoutrement, were they connected to the Divinity, the starship that crashed in Numeria nearly ten millennia ago?" To those who never saw the Technic League, the significance of the missing heads presents an unsolvable mystery—but those of us who recognize an old colleague's clothing might come to an obvious solution.

Since the Technic League collapsed, factions of technology scavengers have run rampant. Evidence connects Khismar with some of those gathering the mysterious magical treasure washing up on the shores of the Lake of Mists and Veils. Once collected, these items almost immediately appear in Starfall's black market, including the signature flaming rings worn by members of Brevoy's House Rogarvia. Why are these historic items being salvaged so aggressively, only to be abandoned?

Desperation can lead the virtuous in interesting directions—such directions lead both the rebellious Bellflower Network and the chivalrous Knights of Lastwall to Numerian tech dealers. When the Bellflowers need a distraction, or the armies of the Whispering Tyrant shake the knights, both organizations reach out to the Blue Streaks for a technological edge. Neither buyer nor supplier desires that the connection be made public, so the wares tend to be sold only to trusted individuals, like the Bellflower Network's Magdalena Fallows. The wares sold tend to be explosives, both for their impact and because their detonation tends to take care of any evidence.

What Khismar plans to do from his new position currently eludes me—every one of his clandestine schemes that I uncover leaves more questions to answer. I recognized the value in him when he came before me years ago, and admit I undersold him even then. Though he has greatly damaged my plans for the Technic League, I confess a curiosity in seeing where his actions will lead...

—Excerpt from the journal of Zernebeth, former Technic League leader

THE TECH RAT

With electric blue streaks through his black hair, laser-precise facial scars, and bioluminescent eyes and veins, Khismar Crookchar has been forever marked by Numeria. Likewise, Numeria's landscape changed when this gnome scientist



pursued his curiosity about technology, bringing his unique brand of pharmaceuticals with him.

Members of the Technic League—an influential organization of spellcasters and other lore-seekers protective of Numeria’s technological secrets—had a derogatory nickname for their erstwhile collaborator Khismar Crookchar: the tech rat. For years, Crookchar evaded League surveyors thanks to an endless supply of an elixir known as hype, which allowed him to remain active during all hours. By the time Khismar was discovered, he’d studied Numerian technology so extensively that he deftly used weapons known for their unpredictability against the League members who stumbled across him. He was presented to **Captain Zernebeth** (CN female human cyborg) as “salvage.” The leader of the Technic League saw more value in the gnome as a member than a slave and brought Crookchar in as an initiate.

Crookchar never rose above that rank. He would have found himself ejected into the wastelands or worse if he wasn’t supplying hype to Technic League officers with uncharacteristic consistency. Not just the standard hype available across Starfall—his continued development of the formula meant his often replicated and synthesized original recipe was rapidly rendered obsolete by Khismar’s newest innovations. He shared his cutting-edge variant, called plasma hype, with his superior officers and select competitive members of the Technic League looking for an edge. Any Technic League relationships Crookchar nurtured were purely for his own benefit—those who believed in the League’s goals particularly resented Crookchar for abusing resources and supplying drugs to their officers.

Crookchar was always his own best customer, chasing plasma hype for days until passing out for an equal amount of time or longer. When he woke, he countered his tiredness with another cycle of energy dosing. Side effects of his hype abuse resulted in the brightening of his hair, skin, veins, and irises, and a web-like pattern on his fingernails and teeth. For most users, these side effects were subtle and temporary. Crookchar used plasma hype so frequently that he permanently altered his physiology.

UNLIKELY ALLIES

When the Technic League disbanded and most of the officers were killed in 4716 AR, the remaining members were mostly made up of those with ill will toward the tech rat. Crookchar found out the hard way how unpopular he was with the lower-ranking remnants of the League. He survived regular threats to his life thanks to being underestimated, combined with an unlikely guardian.

Gawta (LE female medusa), a hype-using medusa from a cave near Starfall, had noticed the quality and availability of her pharmaceutical of choice had diminished. She investigated, leading her to Crookchar’s trail. As her kind interacted minimally with non-medusas, Gawta observed him from dunes and shadows, the only evidence of her presence being the occasional appearance of a petrified would-be assassin. When Crookchar finally discovered his unexpected protector, he made Gawta a deal: he would supply her with regular shipments of plasma hype, leaking word of delivery to suspected Technic League remnants. She petrified the remnants that pursued the rumors, delivered their stone heads to Khismar, and disposed of their bodies in the nearby Lake of Mists and Veils.

Crookchar took the heads to Numeria’s Kellid ruler, the Black Sovereign Kevoth-Kul. His intent was to use them as a threat and establish an arrangement similar to what the Technic League had with the hedonistic, ambivalent ruler. Crookchar unfortunately found that every rumor he’d heard about Kevoth-Kul was no longer true. In the presence of this ambitious leader and virulent hunter of former Technic League members, Crookchar rambled about being subject to

REMNANTS OF THE TECHNIC LEAGUE

Though the Technic League officially dissolved in 4716 AR, some important members may have survived.

They say Technic League Captain **Ozymyn Zaidow** (CE male human technomancer)’s spirit fled his mind before the alien AI Unity neutralized it. Rumor is his ghost haunts Numeria with a vendetta against machines.

When robots and androids act erratically, Numerians have started calling it “Zaidow’s revenge.”

Zernebeth realized the League had been irreparably compromised.

Taking advantage of the confusion and depleted roster of officers, she fled north to Mendev before Kevoth-Kul turned his rage on the remaining members. Mendev’s instability covered her escape.

Before the league disbanded, Captain **Krastus** (NE male human tinkerer) shifted his specialty from cyborg animals to enhancing undead with cybernetics. Combined, these skills allowed him to amass a loyal army quickly, and he now counts himself among one of Numeria’s many warlords.

One of many experiments abandoned in Silver Mount was the Brute, an AI-enhanced suit of powered armor. Despite its intelligence, it required a wearer to function. Yet the Brute has been spotted walking Numeria’s plains—perhaps autonomously, or perhaps someone used it to escape Silver Mount.

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PEOPLE OF NOTE

Casandalee (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 57), Choral the Conqueror (page 40), Kevoth-Kul (page 74), Magdalena and Martum Fallows (page 84), Tar-Baphon (page 104)

LAB NOTES

Venom Immunization Post Mortem

Ultimately, my hypothesis was disproved.

Any similarities between a medusa's serpentine aspects and a comparable serpentine species are coincidental. Neon garter's venom proved impotent: only measurable effects 1 qt produced were mild cognitive impairment and moderate indigestion. Proper immunization requires direct source sample. Cognitive impairment too low to be worth developing as a weapon or to merit development for entertainment.



Technic League experimentation before offering the Black Sovereign the heads as a tribute. Kevoth-Kul took a liking to this curious glowing man who offered up his beheaded enemies unsolicited. He promised Crookchar honored standing among his tribe as long as Kevoth-Kul was regularly presented with Technic League remnants, or their remains. Taking this as a threat, Crookchar agreed.

Crookchar now does his best to live up to his side of the bargain. Occasionally this takes the form of intel on Technic League agents, but usually they are delivered in person, either whimpering and babbling due to a system full of hallucinogens or as a severed head turned to stone. Crookchar's relationship with the Black Sovereign's court allows him greater freedom to explore Numeria than most, granting him access to Numerian tech deep in Kellid territory and to Kevoth-Kul's resources. Although Crookchar takes full advantage of this relationship, it causes him constant anxiety. He knows the truth behind the lies that won Kevoth-Kul's favor could come to light, spelling certain death for the gnome.

POLITICS MAKES STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

When the remnants stopped falling for the Gawta gambit, Crookchar began actively hunting them. Occasionally, his quarries didn't present threats to him. If they had useful skills, he offered to spare them in exchange for their loyalty. Eventually he amassed a large group of technologically savvy minions. He dubbed them the Blue Streaks, after his electric-blue hair and the similarly hued stripes on Gawta's scales. The Blue Streaks helped Crookchar secure Numerian technology, eliminated Crookchar's enemies, and covered up Crookchar's other activities. It wasn't long before those Technic League members who knew Crookchar personally were all dealt with, leaving a growing number of remnants who know him only by reputation.

The closest Crookchar has come to having a friend is his accomplice Gawta the medusa. While he trusts her with his thoughts and truths, he does so because he knows her hype addiction ensures her loyalty. To cope with her dangerous gaze, they always meet in blackout hoods. Crookchar makes a point of bringing a sedated newt on his shoulder when he meets with Gawta; a sudden shift in weight where the animal rests would alert him that Gawta's veil has lifted and his life is at risk. Similarly, he only communicates with her in writing to set up meetings, and any writing they exchange is coded. Whenever Gawta confronts him on his paranoia, Crookchar points to the Blue Streaks being named after them both as indication of how highly he regards her. In truth, naming the Blue Streaks in part after the medusa's blue markings on her red scales was for plausible deniability. If the secret group is ever discovered, he will paint her as the group's sole leader—after killing Gawta and the rest of his minions, of course.

Despite his standing in the Black Sovereign's court, his relationship with Gawta, and his loyal followers, Crookchar cares only about his own goals. His multiple plots and the constant threats to his life forced his mind to finally focus on what mattered to him: survival and science. His newfound determination, along with his supply of potent pharmaceuticals, work to spread his influence across Numeria and beyond.

SECRETS OF THE BLUE STREAKS

Khismar's greatest accomplishments are alchemical in nature and his willingness to push the limits of ethics for the sake of his experiments has paid dividends. The following are some of his more notable developments. He only shares the formulas for these items with his trusted apprentices, and even then, only grudgingly so.

ALCHEMICAL ATOMIZER

ITEM 10

RARE **ALCHEMICAL**

Price 175 gp

Usage held in 1 hands, **Bulk** L

Khismar developed this unique atomizer that allows for the distribution of elixirs, oils, and potions as a fine spray or mist. The atomizer can hold a single elixir, oil, or potion. An atomizer contains enough reagents to use it up to 10 times before the reagents must be replaced. A new batch of reagents costs 5 gp and requires an Interact action to replace.

Activate ♦ Interact; **Effect** You spray the contents of the atomizer on yourself or an adjacent willing ally or unattended object. The target gains the effects of the applied elixir, oil, or potion. The target must be a valid target for the effect, such as food or drink for a nectar of purification, or the consumable is lost.

Activate ♦♦ Interact; **Effect** You cause the atomizer to mix its reagents and fire its held consumable at a square within 30 feet. The consumable forms a cloud that fills the space. The first willing valid target to enter the space automatically gains the effect of the consumable. If there are multiple valid targets, such as with multiple weapons for *aligned oil*, the creature entering the space determines how the effect is applied. The cloud is consumed upon contact with a willing valid target or at the start of your next turn, whichever comes first.

HYPE

Crookchar's most popular and profitable development is the energizing drug hype. Although Crookchar is constantly working to improve on his formula for hype, his older formula has since become replicated and more widespread. Diluted hype is common in the city of Starfall in Numeria. Hype uses the rules for drugs, found on pages 120–121 of the *Gamemastery Guide*.

DILUTED HYPE

ITEM 5

UNCOMMON ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE DRUG INGESTED POISON

Price 20 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ Interact

A synthetic adrenaline supplement that increases awareness and reaction time. Diluted hype has been mixed with saltwater to allow for cheaper mass production.

Saving Throw DC 21 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 1 minute; **Stage 1** quickened and can use the additional action to Step (1 round); **Stage 2** stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 3** drained 1 and stupefied 1 (1 round)

HYPE

ITEM 8

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE DRUG INGESTED POISON

Price 100 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ Interact

A synthetic adrenaline supplement that increases awareness and reaction time.

Saving Throw DC 25 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 1 minute; **Stage 1** quickened and can use the additional action to Step or Stride (1 round); **Stage 2** stupefied 2 (1 round); **Stage 3** drained 2 and stupefied 2 (1 round)

PLASMA HYPE

ITEM 12

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE DRUG INGESTED POISON

Price 400 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ Interact

A synthetic adrenaline supplement that increases awareness and reaction time. Plasma hype has been infused with a specific mixture of Numerian fluids and other alchemical reagents to improve upon the original hype formula.

Saving Throw DC 30 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 1 minute; **Stage 1** +10-foot status bonus to speed, quickened and can use the additional action to Step, Stride, Climb, or Swim (1 round); **Stage 2** quickened and can use the additional action to Step or Stride (1 round); **Stage 3** drained 2 and stupefied 2 (1 round)



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LAB NOTES

Deadbomb Serum Development (Corpse Heart—discontinued)

The purpose of the Corpse Heart was to create a container suitable for storage within a zombie, and brittle enough to break on impact. A fascinating side effect occurred when a fire ray killed the subject. The results were described as “flaming guts punching everyone in reach.”

The purpose of the deadbomb serum is to deliberately recreate this flaming guts punch. This compound will serve as contents for a Corpse Heart.

Note to Self:

Develop healing potion vaporizer.

Advantages:

- Administer healing without touching dying person's mouth;
- Have healing administered without others touching my mouth;
- Undeath test;
- Rejuvenating steam room for healing and relaxation after combat;
- Potential new source of revenue;
- Unconventional delivery method conceals healing from enemies;
- Neutralize violent remains animated after deadbomb detonation.

FAMILIAR FACES

The exploits of the Licktoad goblins are detailed in five Free RPG Day adventures: *We Be Goblins!*, *We Be Goblins Too!*, *We Be Goblins Free!*, *We B4 Goblins!*, and *We Be Super Goblins!* Legends assumes the four great goblin heroes—Chuffy, Mogmurch, Poog, and Reta—somehow all managed to survive their manic adventures, resulting in them arriving and residing on the Astral Plane for the foreseeable future.

LICKTOAD GOBLINS

GOBLIN ADVENTURING PARTY

“Don’t worry so much! I said I’d find your book and find it I will. Now you just head on over to Barberstone and have yourself a good soak; you’ll feel much better for it, I’m sure.” The wyrwood stood in the threshold to her office, holding the door open for a middle-aged half-elf. She watched as the visitor slowly made his way across the waiting room and gave a reassuring wave when he looked nervously back at her one last time. It was only when he had exited into the immense cavern beyond and the door had closed that she acknowledged her other guest. “All right, you, c’mon in. I’ve got a doozy for you.”

Silka—famed recovery specialist of the Astral Plane—gestured to a chair with her wooden right hand as she walked around to the far side of her desk and pulled a folder from the top drawer with her left. “That delightful bundle of nerves was Golbert, and it seems he’s lost his picture book. Let’s see...” She paused for a moment to consult the page before her. “*Faire Tales of Fey Lands*. A gift from his late mother, I believe. Lots of sentimental value, and so on. Anyway, it was taken from him shortly before he was unceremoniously dumped onto this plane along with the thieves. He’s made himself a tidy bundle since he arrived here in Yulgamot selling some sort of alchemical trinket to the folks passing through, and he’s going to pay me a hefty sum for his lost treasure. I think this one might require a little muscle, though, and that’s where you come in.

“Tell me,” she said, sliding the folio across the desk as she steepled her hands, her head giving a mischievous quirk on her ball-jointed neck. “What do you know about goblins?”

DOSSIER: LICKTOAD GOBLINS

Current Whereabouts: Unknown; likely somewhere on Yulgamot

Objective: Unknown

CHUFFY LICKWOUND

NE MALE GOBLIN ROGUE

Distinctive Features: Face covered in pustules

Relationships: Stankrush (pet spider)

Typical Behavior: Stealthy; likes to sneak up and stab things unless he can light them on fire, in which case—obviously—he does that first; likes to play pranks on others—the deadlier the better

MOGMURCH

NE MALE GOBLIN ALCHEMIST

Distinctive Features: Butterfly-shaped birthmark on forehead (usually covered by skull-hat); reports describe a strong alchemical aroma (and flavor, though would not recommend testing); bouncy

Other Relationships: Amfibier (pet toad); Rempty (mate—deceased)

Typical Behavior: Throws bombs at things; frequently experiments with new explosives; creates new alchemical elixirs to test on himself and on Chuffy

POOG OF ZARONGEL

NE MALE GOBLIN CLERIC

Distinctive Features: Smallest of the four; usually carries pet toad on his head

Other Relationships: Dogfinder (pet toad—deceased); Flybreath (pet toad—deceased); Nosquish (pet toad—alive); Squealy Nord (companion pig/dragon)

Typical Behavior: Channels unholy magic from the goblin god Zarongel; unreasonably confident in combat; terrible at riding animals



RETA BIGBAD

NE FEMALE GOBLIN FIGHTER

Distinctive Features: Unusually large, wide head; wears stolen bridal veil

Other Relationships: Spotol (pet toad)

Typical Behavior: Hits things hard with a sword, a stick, or anything else close at hand; fights particularly viciously against dogs; very loud, usually shouting; easily bored

KNOWN HISTORY

These four goblin troublemakers began life in the Licktoad tribe, in a small village, in a small swamp, in a small corner of Golarion, on the Material Plane. How they got from there to here is a tale of violence, destruction, and an uncanny amount of good fortune for the goblins themselves. Goblin history is hard to come by, writing being a terrible sin to them and all, but I've managed to piece together a little bit of it for you.

Chuffy, Mogmurch, Poog, and Reta made a name for themselves at a young age by raiding a wedding, eating the cake, and stealing a piglet (more on the pig shortly). Once established as warriors for their tribe, they were free to cause all sorts of trouble. One particularly daring and destructive raid left a notorious goblin cannibal dead and the four returning to their tribe as conquering heroes with a load of fireworks. Alas, the explosive fun was not to last long for the Licktoads—the tribe was wiped out shortly afterward by adventurers from a nearby human settlement.

Even when luck ran out for the tribe, though, it held strong for this destructive quartet, who managed to be away on a mission at the time. They quickly found a new home with a nearby tribe, the Birdcrunchers, who just so happened to be in want of some heroes to take care of a pesky ogre problem. They drove off the interloping monster and his fire-breathing pigs, and even managed to rescue their former tribe's prized mascot, a war-pig named Squealy Nord—you guessed it, the very one they stole as whelps. On their return they were crowned chieftains and settled in for the life of luxury they knew they deserved.

This, too, was not to last. Chuffy, Mogmurch, Poog, and Reta were bored by life as chiefs—ordering raids is much less fun than participating in them, it seems. Thus, when their favorite pig disappeared into a mysterious magic bag, they jumped right in after him. They found themselves in a strange demiplane resembling the inside of a huge bag, accidentally created by and inhabited by the son of one of their early victims. After rescuing Squealy Nord—now alchemically altered into a large porcine dragon—they pierced the side of the bag and were dumped along with the rest of its contents onto the Astral Plane.

As always seems to be the case, their luck was astoundingly good. Rather than get lost in the immeasurable and featureless expanse of the plane, they stumbled almost immediately onto our fair city. We know they were here for a while, at least, because they were chased out of the Preserve after a “misunderstanding” regarding the flammability and edibility of the lichen gardens. Rumor has it Barberstone Spa took the unusual step of completely draining and thoroughly scrubbing their big pool the other day as well, though they're being tight lipped about it, and I can't help but think that's related. Given the recent uptick in theft and vandalism in the area, as well as rumors of strange pirates attacking passersby, it seems likely they're still here. I suspect they're hiding out down in Underpeak, staring at that beautiful view of the Plane of Fire and plotting their next mischief. It's hard to know exactly what they're planning, but given their history it will probably involve the violent acquisition of something shiny, flammable, or both. It shouldn't be too hard to track them down, but be careful when you do; they're tougher than they look!

*Lick the toad and steal the cake,
Crunch the bird and ruckus make,
Kill the ogre, smash his head,
We be goblins, you be dead!*

*We big chiefs and we be bored,
Off to find our Squealy Nord,
Into Baglands, smash the place,
Ride our dragon into space!*

*This place boring, it so drab,
There be nothing fun to stab,
We have new prize to acquire,
We make raid on Plane of Fire!*

YULGAMOT

The city of Yulgamot hangs in the timeless expanse of the Astral Plane, settled on a rocky planetoid large enough to sustain a constant population. Also known as the Calendar Stone due to the fact that the timeless nature of the plane is suspended within the city environs, Yulgamot is a popular travel point for explorers who otherwise lack stable landmarks or layover points in the void of the Astral. While the upper side of Yulgamot faces a starry void and is host to strange gardens that grow in the violet light, the lower side of Yulgamot faces the Plane of Fire and is baked clean of most life.

The view from that side is beyond spectacular, however—especially for creatures with a fondness for flame!

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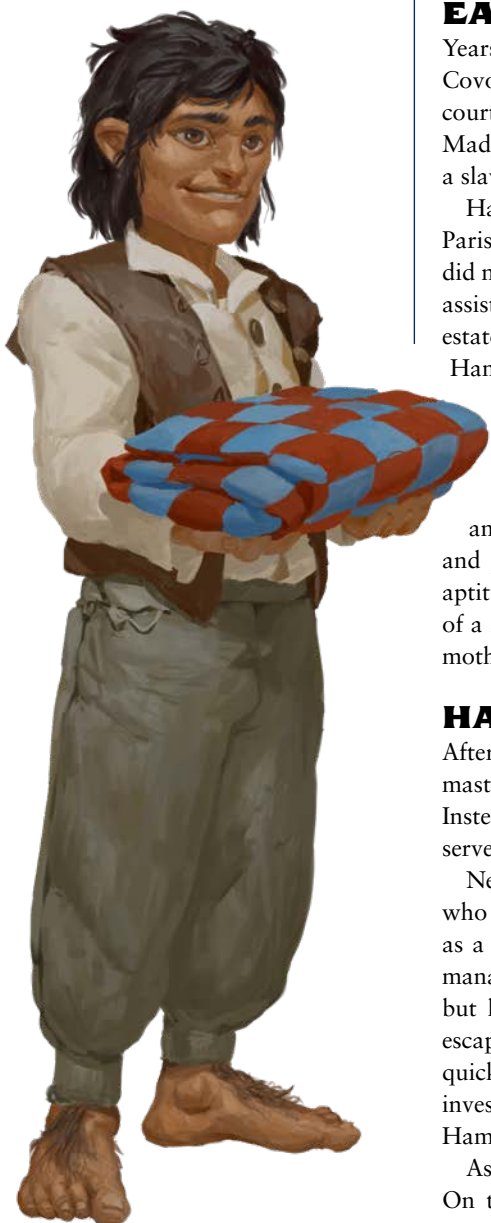
NOTABLE TILLERS

The Bellflowers have had several tillers work to aid escaped slaves. The following are some of the more famed tillers.

Jonival Mortems (NG male halfling legislator): After years as a tiller, Jonival entered Andoran politics and now furthers abolitionist causes on the People's Council.

Lost Voice (CN nonbinary human vigilante): This mysterious tiller travels throughout Avistan, moving from barn to barn to help reunite liberated slaves who had become separated.

Nolly Peltry (CG female halfling tiller): This tiller adopted the name of the folk hero from *The Peltry Fables* and coordinates tillers from her home of Kintargo.



MAGDELENA AND MARTUM FALLOWS

FARMERS OF THE BELLFLOWER NETWORK

CG FEMALE AND MALE HALFLING ROGUE

For a society such as the Bellflower Network, its members rely on secrecy, and none more so than the Farmer. As the figure serving as the head of this abolitionist organization, concealing the Farmer's identity is paramount. If a Farmer is captured alive and forced to reveal information, the network would collapse. Diplomatic relationships across Golarion would likely follow, as it would reveal every nation that clandestinely supports the Bellflowers.

But the current Farmer has worked to limit the damage should such an event occur, for at the moment, there isn't one Farmer, but two. Magdalena and Martum Fallows are twins who have worked undercover for the past few years, ensuring that halfling slaves across Cheliox are given every chance to experience freedom.

EARLY YEARS

Years ago, a young halfling named Hamir Fallows fell in love with Mariana Covon, a slave serving a sentence for thievery in central Cheliox. When their courtship began, Hamir was free, while Mariana served a cruel mistress named Madam Parisa. Soon, Mariana was expecting, and Hamir decided that the life of a slave was no life for his love or his future child.

Hamir attempted to earn Mariana's freedom, even offering to pay Madam Parisa a great amount, far more than the value of a halfling slave in Cheliox. Parisa did not accept any terms Hamir proposed, however, and Chelioxian law was of no assistance to Hamir. He eventually grew desperate and infiltrated Madam Parisa's estate in an attempt to liberate Mariana. The attempt was an outright failure.

Hamir faced off with Parisa's guards, and the fight culminated in a great fire in Madam Parisa's manor. From cellar to roof, the estate went up in flames, and neither Hamir nor Parisa were ever heard from again. Mariana was quickly captured and transferred to a new owner to continue her sentence.

Several months later, Mariana gave birth to twins she named Magdalena and Martum. Born into slavery, their new master took a semblance of pity and permitted them to remain together. In childhood, Magdalena exhibited an aptitude for nimbleness like her mother, while Martum seemed the spitting image of a father they never knew. Together, they contributed to the fulfillment of their mother's sentence, adding their years to her time served.

HARVEST MOON

After their mother's master died from a local plague, a nephew of their deceased master inherited the twins and promptly rewrote the terms of their enslavement. Instead of serving the Fallows family sentence concurrently, each of them had to serve the years separately. This effectively doubled their remaining sentence.

News of this legal trickery soon reached the ears of the Bellflower Network, who began observing the plantation. Early reports described the young Magdalena as a natural hunter, but predisposed to thieving, while Martum learned how to manage the plantation finances. Both got along well with their fellow halflings but harbored a burning hate for their owner. At age 14, agents witnessed an escape attempt that ended in the twins' capture and punishment. These reports quickly reached Farmer **Hannelore Fallows** (NG female halfling abolitionist), who investigated the matter and learned something surprising: her deceased nephew, Hamir Fallows, was the father of the twins.

As their grandaunt, Hannelore personally undertook the task of freeing them. On the eve of their fifteenth birthday, Hannelore approached Magdalena and

Martum in the dead of night and promised to lead them to safety. They accepted and disembarked on their Harvest Moon—the beginning of their road to freedom.

BECOMING THE FARMER

After their escape from the plantation, Farmer Hannelore helped the twins flee all the way to the Cheliox border. On their own merit, Magdalena and Martum avoided capture multiple times, and Hannelore became a parental figure along the way. However, she never revealed to them that she was their grandaunt, fearing that their familial connection could compromise the Bellflower Network.

When the pair reached the Aspodell Mountains on their way to Andoran, yet another surprise awaited them: a crop of halflings who'd been captured by Chelaxian patrols, their Bellflower agent handler killed. Together, they neutralized the patrol, and by the end of the night, the twins were leading their very first crop to freedom.

After this incident, Hannelore knew that her nephew's twins seemed fated to aid the Bellflower Network. When they approached her to join up, she happily accepted, and together, the three of them returned to Cheliox.

As the years passed, both Magdalena and Martum proved to be prodigies. At night, no challenge couldn't be overcome by Magdalena, while Martum's sly tongue could talk him out of any situation. These talents turned them into underground folk heroes, earning Magdalena the alias of "Belltower," and Martum the alias of "Sunflower." Both of them would eventually partake in the rebellion that freed Ravounel from Chelaxian control, cementing this legend among halflings across the continent.

But five years ago, Farmer Hannelore disappeared. Her allies feared her capture, but after two years passed and Bellflower operations continued without disruption, it's assumed that an accident resulted in her death, her body never discovered. Although they are young, the Fallows twins have stepped up to lead the Bellflower Network in Hannelore's place. In doing so, they are guiding the next generation of agents, and their aliases have generated tales of hope across the continent.

BELLFLOWER OPERATIONS

In their home country of Cheliox, Magdalena serves as the tactical mastermind of the operation. Her work has secured safe houses, enabled rebellions, and helped Bellflower agents spirit countless halfling slaves to freedom. Both home and abroad, Martum is the political agent, securing funds from rich and influential people who seek the end of slavery. They share the responsibilities of the Farmer well, though they haven't been spotted in the same region for over a year.

After having mixed success in Ravounel, the twins began to work apart and developed some bad habits on their own. Most notably, the emboldened Magdalena is taking unnecessary risks, while soft-spoken Martum is out of practice when it comes to freeing slaves in person. Their outlooks have changed too: Magdalena is hopeful that she'll live to see the end of halfling enslavement, while Martum is a pragmatist and expects to serve as Farmer for the rest of his days. His increasing role as the face of the Bellflower Network is only encouraged by his sister.

Today, as the Whispering Tyrant gains power, Magdalena constantly faces the dilemma of spiriting halflings out of Nidal. To the east, undead forces threaten every nation within the Eye of Dread. Some druidic or warrior halflings do request passage through Molthune to Nirmathas, but it's a risky route that Magdalena loathes. Meanwhile, from afar, Martum has built a communication system with flowered quilts. Its colors and flower types allow agents to guide each other through locales that were once too dangerous, mitigating any risk with various warning signs.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Andira Marusek (page 12), Chaldira (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 58), Khismar Crookchar (page 78), Sapphire Butterfly (page 94), Shimali Manux (page 96), Toulon Vidoc (page 112)

INSULT TO INJURY

In recent times, Ravounel has emerged as an independent and free nation, and during the rebellion, the twins established a strong Bellflower presence there together. Unfortunately, slave-hunters now earn steady incomes illegally by kidnapping and enslaving halflings—even ones who were never slaves to begin with.

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BELLFLOWER SAFE HOUSES

A number of safe houses, known as “barns” among members of the Bellflower Network, dot Cheliox. Ranging from abandoned barns to public taverns, each one possesses their own codeword for entry, which is known only to the agents that lead halflings in and out. Hosts, or “hands,” manage the hidden spaces where halflings eat, sleep, and wait for their next escort, or “tiller.” Some of the safe houses are listed below.

Abandoned Parisa Estate: Located near Whisperwood, west of Senara.

Codeword: Firestorm

Egorian Rose Fields: Located just outside the capital of Egorian.

Codeword: Thorn Weeds

Menador Patrol House: Located near the Ravounel and Nidal borders, these soldiers are defying the Chelaxian state.

Codeword: Merciful Deeds

Nile's Harborside Warehouse: Located in Ostenso, right on the docks.

Codeword: Vignette

Collapsed Church of Iomedae: Located near Westcrown, a fire collapsed it during the Glorious Reclamation.

Codeword: Unmasking

Vann's School for Young Adults: Located in Senara, south of city center.

Codeword: Evermore

The Wicked Fork: Located in the West Drenches district of Corentyn.

Codeword: Garden View

While the twins are on good terms with each other, their time apart has begun to turn them into strangers. Their differing tactics and outlooks have started to divide their agents. In an era of growing peril, this puts the Bellflower Network at major risk.

HANDY EQUIPMENT

In service to the Bellflower Network, Magdalena, Martum, and their agents use a variety of alchemical items, some more specialized than others. The Farmers share the formulas for those items only with those agents whom they work with directly, as they are cautious to trust those beyond that circle with their secrets.

APPLEREED MUTAGEN

ITEM 4+

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE ELIXIR MUTAGEN POLYMORPH

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ Interact

This gummy liquid disproportionately lengthens your legs, causing you to grow but making your movement awkward. The effect is very noticeable unless your clothes can adequately conceal it.

Benefit You gain an item bonus to Athletics checks and you gain the listed status bonus to your Speed. In addition, you grow one size larger, but your larger size does not have any additional effects beyond the potential change in space.

Drawback You take a -1 penalty to AC and a -2 penalty to Reflex saves.

Type lesser; **Level** 4; **Price** 20 gp

The bonus to Athletics is +2, the bonus to Speed is +10 feet, and the duration is 1 minute.

Type moderate; **Level** 12; **Price** 400 gp

The bonus to Athletics is +3, the bonus to Speed is +15 feet, and the duration is 10 minutes.

Type greater; **Level** 18; **Price** 5,000 gp

The bonus to Athletics is +4, the bonus to Speed is +20 feet, and the duration is 1 hour.

HONEYSCENT

ITEM 10

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE INHALED POISON

Price 180 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ Interact

This sweet-scented poison triggers vivid hallucinations in those who succumb to it, causing most to believe swarms of ravenous biting insects are feeding on them. So vivid are these hallucinations that the victims damage themselves by scratching and clawing at the imaginary swarm. At the GM's discretion, a creature incapable of clawing at itself might instead slam against solid objects, in which case the poison inflicts bludgeoning damage.

Saving Throw DC 30 Will; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 2d6 slashing damage (1 round); **Stage 2** 2d6 slashing damage and stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 3** 2d6 slashing damage, drained 1, and stupefied 1

SWAMP LILY QUILT

ITEM 3

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

Price 12 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; **Bulk** 2

Activate ♦♦ Interact

This quilt is defined by its green lily-pad pattern, which is rare in Bellflower communications. The quilt is 10 feet square and infused with a reagent that activates when the quilt is laid out across soil or earth. One round after you lay out the quilt, the ground beneath it becomes soft and muddy, creating difficult terrain in the area where the quilt was. You can leave the quilt to maintain the difficult terrain indefinitely, but the affected ground begins to dry once you remove the quilt with an Interact action. The ground dries over the span of 1 hour, after which the ground returns to normal terrain. Placing the quilt on the ground uses up its infused reagents, and it becomes an ordinary quilt once removed from the ground.



LILY

Members of the Bellflower Network and their allies must often remain subtle when helping slaves escape. To aid in their efforts, the Bellflower Network has developed a system to deliver secret messages using quilts. These quilts bear specific designs to notify Bellflower tillers and those they guide of any important information. Members hang these quilts from porches, windows, and clotheslines where tillers and other travelers can see them. Most quilts bear flowers, as they are inconspicuous and are instantly recognizable to other Bellflower agents. A common pattern is that of the lily. The flower warns of an upcoming crossroads, which may be heavily traveled. The background pattern's colors are used to indicate danger, with warmer colors suggesting higher risk.



SUNFLOWER

Most halfings see sunflowers as good omens as they are able to find the sun, regardless of where it may rest in the sky. As a result, quilts bearing sunflowers are used to indicate a safe house. While these safe houses are not the Bellflower barns run by members of the Network, they are run by individuals sympathetic to the Bellflower's cause. A traveler that recognizes the quilt can knock on the home's door, ask for directions to the "Turning Theater"—a reference to the halfling goddess Chaldira. Those in the know can then respond "How would you perform?" Responding with the phrase "Why, with all my buttons!" in halfling completes the exchange. The keeper of the home typically invites the traveler in, though typically through a back door or side door to avoid suspicion.



BLUE DAISY

Daisies are used in several Bellflower quilts. Most daisies signal nothing and are in fact used as decoys and red herrings. A Bellflower member might own dozens of daisy quilts used to hide the presence of actual signal quilts. A clothesline with a white daisy quilt at each end indicates false signal quilts. A white daisy quilt at each end indicates false signal quilts meant to throw trackers off the scent of travelers. A blue daisy is the only daisy with significance. It's used to notify allies of the Bellflower Network that a tiller will be arriving soon with travelers in tow. The number of flowers indicates the days of travel until the arrival and the state of bloom indicates how prepared the group is. A barely blooming daisy notes that the group will need lots of rations, medicine, tools, and other aid.



LOTUS

A quilt with a lotus signifies safe passage over water. This might suggest a ferry that transports anyone, no questions asked, or a Bellflower contact that has some means of transport available. The lotus petals also suggest preferred times for passage. A white lotus notes passage available primarily near dawn, while pink and violet lotuses indicate passages at dusk or during the night respectively. Finally, the flower's state of bloom can notify of danger. A fully bloomed lotus announces safe passage while even a single closed lotus on the quilt indicates that travelers should be cautious as there are eyes around that might report suspicious activity. Most of these quilts feature several lotuses to more easily hide a closed lotus.

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I was leading an expedition north to the Stormspear Mountain when we were hit by a family of yetis in a snowstorm, and I was sure that a couple of us weren't going to be making it home. Out of nowhere, arrows starting punching through the monsters, and a one-eyed bear came tearing out from the snow. I learned two things that day: there are archers good enough to shoot through a blizzard, and Nankou of Icemark is a good friend to have.

—Svala Ice-Rider, Varki ranger

NANKOU

LINNORM KING OF ICEMARK

NG MALE HUMAN RANGER

Born in the taiga of Icemark, Nankou's life started bitterly. His tribe was slaughtered by one of the fearsome draconic creatures known as a linnorm on the day of his birth. His pregnant and wounded mother, **Ninnok** (N female human hunter), fled as her fellow tribe members died, frantically running to secure a small piece of their future. Ninnok managed to survive giving birth in the desolate taiga, then carried her infant one desperate mile after another until she collapsed near Seer's Home, a settlement serving as home to the elders of all Varki tribes. Ninnok was cared for by the elders, though the trauma and tragedy she had endured left her quiet and withdrawn. Nankou grew up raised on the collected stories, knowledge, and wisdom of all the Varki tribes while learning to hunt and fish to provide for his mother.

While hunting shortly before his seventeenth birthday, Nankou encountered a newborn black bear, mewling and blind-eyed as it cuddled against its mother's torn and half-eaten corpse. Nankou felt an instant affinity for the tiny creature whose birth seemed so akin to his own, and he adopted the bear cub, naming it T'kamo. Nankou and T'kamo grew strong and powerful together, for Nankou's skillful archery and knowledge of medicine and woodcraft were well complemented by T'kamo's implacable strength and patience.

Over the decades of their adventures together, Nankou and T'kamo became folk heroes for the Varki of Icemark. Born to a dead tribe and raised by the elders of all tribes, Nankou was welcome among almost all of the Varki tribes, and the earnest young man was happy to repay each tribe's hospitality. Hunting, slaying beasts and monsters, or relaying word of events affecting the region to Varki who lived far from trade routes, Nankou's reputation grew to precede him wherever he went. Varki tribes quarreling with their Ulfen neighbors would seek out the young Varki for mediation; Nankou's skill in Skald, the Ulfen tongue, and his naturally quiet demeanor made him an excellent diplomat.

As several unusually harsh winters in a row drove the nomadic Varki tribes closer to their Ulfen neighbors, Nankou began to see increasingly dangerous interactions between the Varki and Ulfen. The two peoples had coexisted for so long in part due to the rarity of their crossings, and as they found themselves in increasingly close contact, misunderstandings like lopsided trade agreements threatened to undermine the longstanding peace. It was then that Nankou truly understood exactly what it was he had been born for.

Taking up his bow and with T'kamo at his side, Nankou returned to the frozen woodlands of his birth, seeking the creature that had slain his tribe so long ago. Nankou and T'kamo fought a fearsome battle from which neither warrior escaped unscathed. Nankou gave an eye, and T'kamo one as well, along with his fore-claw, but in the end they returned to Seer's Home bearing the head of a mighty taiga linnorm. Nankou declared himself the linnorm king of Icemark and decreed that he must ratify all trade agreements. Since the Varki do not enter into formal trade agreements with each other, this functionally made Nankou the primary diplomat for his people with the Ulfen, whose awe at the Varki's proven claim to the title of linnorm king has smoothed relations between the peoples significantly.

KING OF THE TAIGA

Nankou's position as the only Varki linnorm king sets him apart from almost everyone in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Varki and Ulfen alike. The Varki love him but see him as much as an extension of the Varki people as an individual. The Ulfen respect his skill as a warrior, but otherwise aren't quite sure what to make of him. Nankou enjoys the solitude of his unique position.

Despite his relatively recent claim to the title of linnorm king, Nankou has surprisingly good relationships with some of his nearby monarchs. White Estrid



has sent multiple diplomats to Icemark since Nankou claimed the throne, though the emissaries have often found themselves indulging in Icemark's hospitality for months while waiting for Nankou to return from the tundra. White Estrid's detractors have on more than one occasion tried to use this eagerness to disparage her, but in the face of Estrid's far greater heresy of keeping a linnorm as a pet, these attempts have usually fallen flat on their face.

Nankou also considers himself friendly with Thira Ash-Eyes, the successor to and daughter of longstanding Linnorm King **Sveinn Blood-Eagle** (CN male human barbarian). When Sveinn sailed off to Valenhall, most of his fractious children quarreled in the streets of Kalsgard, while young Thira instead hewed to the traditions of her people and set out to slay a linnorm. A practitioner of arcane magic, Thira was often overlooked and underestimated by other Ulfen, despite her skill with a blade. As she trekked out into the wilderness between Icemark and the Thanelands, she encountered Nankou in his wanderings. Already a linnorm king by this point, Nankou recognized the young warrior's aspirations and shared a fire and a meal with her. Thira claimed her own linnorm and the throne that went with it, and still remembers the Varki ranger fondly. Nankou hopes this meeting will help to strengthen the relations between the Ulfen of the Thanelands and the Varki of Icemark.

Not all of Nankou's neighbors are so pleasant. King **Ingimundr the Unruly** (CE male human barbarian) of nearby Broken Bay is notably old-fashioned and even more notably quarrelsome. Ingimundr's open encouragement of raiding remains one of Nankou's pressing threats. Though the Ulfen king claims distance from those ships who plunder other Linnorm Kingdoms, it is well-known that he also turns a blind eye to them, and Nankou's proximity no doubt marks him as an attractive target.

THE HUNTER

Nankou loves nothing so much as hunting deadly monsters. While he bears great respect for the wildlife of Icemark, he ruthlessly exterminates unnatural creatures that undermine the delicate ecosystems of his territory. Nankou has a particular hatred for taiga linnorms, and occasionally seeks out others to help him hunt the deadly beasts down. After losing an eye and taking on a deadly curse during the fight that made him a linnorm king, Nankou is not so prideful as to insist that he meet other linnorms in single combat. When Nankou can't find a group of adventurers willing to assist him in a linnorm hunt, he takes special precautions, laying elaborate traps and finding just the right environs to prepare for the battle before settling in to wait for as long as is required. Nankou and his black bear companion T'kamo possess deep wells of patience and are said to have killed more linnorms than the one he keeps at Seer's Home to ratify his claim to the title of linnorm king. Those who would hunt a linnorm would do well to accept Nankou's assistance if it is offered.

Nankou constantly wanders the taiga and tundras of Icemark, occasionally slipping over the borders into his neighbors' domains. Any group that dares to travel the uncharted lands would find that the one-eyed Varki with the one-eyed bear might very well be the friendliest encounter they can expect in those environs, so long as they treat the ranger, his bear, and the Varki people with respect.

WORDS OF THE KING

Linnorm king is a silly title. I have never once had a single linnorm bow in obeisance to me or even pay my words any heed. But there is power in words, and in the meaning people invest them with. Scarcely a handful of years past my people were on the brink of war with the Ulfen, with scarce food and grim winters driving us inexorably towards a conflict that held only despair for both sides. Then I slew a great beast and called myself its king, and peace became a possibility where before we had no hope. So I shall be a linnorm king and allow those words to define me in the eyes of strangers, for doing so has given me Ulfen brothers and sisters where once only enemies stood before me.

—Nankou of Icemark

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Svala Ice-Rider (CG female human ranger), Thira Ash-Eyes (page 110), White Estrid (page 116)

NEX

VANISHED WIZARD KING

N MALE HUMAN WIZARD

The wizard Nex emerged during the decline of pharaonic Osirion, near the end of the Age of Destiny. Though clearly a legend who shaped the arcane and political landscape of Garund for nearly five millennia, Nex is a controversial figure in the modern day. At once a peerless scholar and a fierce war master, the archwizard's artifice stands in stark contrast to his centuries-long rivalry with the necromancer Geb. The clash between the two would lead to the loss of countless lives, the ravaging of both lands, the disappearance of Nex himself, and Geb's transformation to ghostly tyrant. Long absent from the kingdom bearing his name, Nex lives on in much the same way as Geb—an uneasy rumor haunting a tenuously peaceful realm.

CHASING DESTINY

Nex began his journey as an adventurer, a wizard with a peculiar fascination with conjuration and divination. Guided by insights snatched from the Great Beyond, the ambitious wizard sought to craft a mighty destiny for himself. To that end, Nex searched for power and wisdom in the ruins of civilizations long past. In his research, he sought out cryptic bas-reliefs in the Mwangi Expanse, ley lines beneath Quantum, and scrying pools in the cyclopean depths of cursed Golanoth. His work would culminate in the Crux of Nex—a demiplane granting him nearly limitless power—and in rumored immortality. None alive can say if agelessness alone was enough for Nex to achieve his destiny, but his legacy has led countless adventurers into the Crux to build their own legend.

Soon thereafter, Nex laid his eyes upon the gem beyond compare: the city of Absalom. Drawing upon every bit of his skill and the nearly limitless power offered by the Crux, Nex conjured a mile-high spire from nothingness, an eldritch spike that tore through the earth and changed Absalom's skyline forever. The Spire of Nex, erected mere miles from the city's gate, was the opening gambit in a sudden onslaught to seize control of Absalom and the great powers safeguarded therein. Serving as a planar gateway of unfathomable power, the Spire split the skies and conjured a horde drawn from countless extraplanar realms. Yet what ended the Siege of Nex is ultimately a mystery. Legend has it that while Aroden guided the defenders against Nex's horde, the archwizard himself abandoned the battle at a critical juncture to seek the fabled *Starstone*. *Legacy of Cairns*, a treatise by the Pathfinder Society's Master of Spells Aram Zey, contends that Nex had nearly reached that mighty relic when the archwizard quit the field entirely, unwilling or unable to pay the final price for divinity. Though Absalom successfully defended itself against the mighty mage, the Spire of Nex still looms over the City at the Center of the World, a monument to the archwizard's ambition.

RIVALRY

Though among the most powerful wizards of his age, Nex was not without rival in power and determination. The archwizard could be brash, and his pursuit of arcane secrets often put him at odds with beings strange and mighty. The Zenj epic *Song of the Fallen Briar* recounts an early adventure in which the ambitious wizard sought sky-fallen relics among the toppled temples and shattered towers of the Mwangi Expanse. According to the *Song*, the young wizard earned the first of his great enemies in the Eldest known as Count Ranalc, after Nex and his companions thwarted one of the powerful fey demigod's plans. The Eldest and the wizard-king would clash many times after that first encounter, most notably when Nex "borrowed" a bandersnatch to relieve a pirate siege on Quantum. Curiously, after Nex sought to invade Absalom with a horde drawn from other planes—most prominently the shadowy fey horrors Count Ranalc was known to master—the Exiled Eldest vanished from the historical record.

No account of the wizard-king is complete without mention of his greatest rival, the necromancer Geb. The two archwizards blurred national lines with alarming frequency, each seeking to expand their reach at the expense of the other. Raids and skirmishes would evolve over decades and centuries into a deadly war, as Nex and Geb inflicted increasingly bizarre sorceries upon one another. From plagues that ossified hapless farmers to crawling behemoths the rival of any dragon, the devastating powers unleashed created a blighted no-man's land between the two nations, called the Mana Wastes. As thousands perished, the wizard-kings artificially extended their lives through obscure and perilous sorceries, creating a cold war that would span generations, ending suddenly when a Gebbite attack wreathed the city of Quantum in poisonous fumes. Though the attack cost countless lives, Nex was able to retreat to his personal demiplane, the Refuge of Nex, while the city rallied a defense, only for the wizard to vanish entirely from Golarion. Geb, haunted by an enemy truly beyond his reach for decades, finally ended his life a full 60 years later. Nex has yet to emerge from the Refuge, but his legend still looms over Garund.

PERILOUS STIRRINGS

Millennia after his disappearance, cryptic signs point to the stirring of an ancient power. New horrors haunt the Mana Wastes: gargantuan beasts and swarms of spell-stitched abominations that stalk the already-perilous region, devouring those that wander too far from well-defended roads. High King Anong Arunak has placed a bounty on these creatures, promising a great reward to those cunning enough to track the monsters to their source and end the threat to Dongun Hold. Meanwhile, in grim Ecanus, the fleshforgers have been restive of late, cycling through their birthing sequence at random and spawning abominations that vanish into the night. Chief Fleshforger **Dunn Palovar** (N male human fleshforger) is quietly seeking aid in putting down these rogue beasts as he works to discover why the forges have begun spawning of their own volition.

Mere miles from Absalom's gates, the Cairnlands groan and tremble as the Spire of Nex thrums to an alien frequency. The northern passage has grown unsafe, and city scouts report strange flickerings in the sky on approach of the Spire. Wandering caravans have been waylaid and even veterans of the city vanguard have become lost, as familiar bends in the road unexpectedly point to the titanic monument. Acting Primarch Wynsal Starborn, ever wary of an attack, has challenged Pathfinder Society Venture-Captain Shevala Iorae to help Absalom's First Guard solve the mysteries of the Spire, that Starborn might lead an investigation into that baleful relic. As word of the challenge spreads, Absalom braces for the return of an ancient enemy.

Befitting a titan that profoundly impacted the history of Garund, Nex left behind a rich, if conflicted, legacy. Quantum's marvelous Bandeshar, with its floating towers and innumerable libraries, evokes the visionary who inspired generations of arcane advancement. The bleak Mana Wastes and the monstrous fleshforgers of Ecanus recall the ruthless war master who spent innumerable lives in his quest for power. The grim and fantastical Spire of Nex that has loomed over Absalom for millennia is a monument to a man who challenged the gods themselves. In this fallen age, as the deepest reaches of the Bandeshar stir for the first time in ages, the many faces of Nex weigh heavily upon his people. Can this time of peace survive a living legend?

If not for his war with Geb, Nex would likely be revered. No doubt he was a better man and better ruler than his rival. Ask my people how much that mattered.

—High King Anong Arunak

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Anong Arunak (page 14), Aroden (*Lost Omens World Guide* 21), Geb (page 44), Count Ranalc (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 78), Venture-Captain Shevala Iorae (N female human sorcerer), Wynsal Starborn (page 118)

A MYSTERIOUS LETTER

Artokus Kirran:
*I won the bid for the elixir. You and I both
know the truth of what happened. Know
that the Living God will remember.*

RAZMIR

RULER OF RAZMIRAN

LE MALE HUMAN WIZARD

Leader of the nation he forged, Razmir is a ruler bold enough to call himself a living god. Claiming to have taken the test of the *Starstone* back in 4660 AR, this so-called deity set about carving out a swath of the River Kingdoms to call his own, destroying anyone who dared to stand in his way. In the years since, Razmir has attracted an influential cult of followers. Lured to him with the promise of prosperity and peace, converts more often than not find themselves struggling to survive in a nation that seems built to funnel wealth and privilege to the priests. They are told that only through more devotion to Razmir might they be able find a way into a paradise in this life.

Razmir shrouds his past in rumor and myth, especially when it comes to his life before his supposed attempt at the test of the *Starstone*. In fact, scholars who have attempted to collect a complete tale of the Living God's mortal days find the history filled with conflicting events and differing origins. Some stories, for example, claim that he grew up in Taldor, penniless on the streets of Oppara, begging for food and sleeping under a sewer grate; others purport that he was raised in Varisia on a small rural farm, destined to live a simple life until he uncovered the secret library of the Runelords, learning to wield their mighty power all on his own. Despite their differences, all of these stories bear a few basic similarities. In each, Razmir came from humble beginnings, neither wealthy nor powerful, but through his own cunning and daring, he rose to become a deity.

What is known conclusively is that he arrived in the River Kingdoms in 4661 AR and declared himself to the people of Xer, a town on the border with Kyonin. As Razmir gathered followers, the local magistrate attempted to arrest him inside the halls of his very first temple. Razmir offered the magistrate a place in the clergy if he would submit, but the magistrate refused. In a flash of power, the poor magistrate was transformed into a fox, left to wander the world, forced to finally believe his own senses. The town was under Razmir's control in less than a week, but this angered the nearby Duke Melcat of Aerduin, who considered Xer to be part of his domain. Razmir offered prosperity and peace to Duke Melcat if only he would convert to the faith. Three times Duke Melcat refused, and on the final refusal, Razmir summoned a cloud of smoke and flame that erased Aerduin from the face of Avistan. In this moment, Razmiran was born.

From there, the Living God spread his faith north, annexing over a dozen small fiefdoms and minor kingdoms. His army was made up entirely from converts—they were far from professional warriors, but with the personal backing of Razmir, they were rarely challenged. It was only upon reaching Ustalav that this expansion slowed. Razmir's attempts to annex further River Kingdoms have proven fruitless. That has not stopped him from trying, although he now employs subtler methods. The faithful of Razmir travel far and wide to spread the gospel. When arriving in a community, they immediately take up with the poor and indigent, offering them food, aid, and succor, all the while telling these desperate souls about the glory that is Razmir. With the new believers behind them,

they then petition to open up a shrine and pressure local businesses to offer up donations to the church to protect and improve the neighborhood. If left unchecked, they soon infiltrate the local militia and then the government, using masks to hide the true identities of the faithful.



In truth, Razmir is no god, but a very manipulative and frighteningly powerful wizard. He hides behind his mask to conceal his growing age. Although he employs powerful alchemy to hold off the march of time, Razmir knows that his days are limited. He has always been a despot, demanding unquestioning loyalty from even his closest advisors, but in the past few years, paranoia and rage have made him dangerous to serve and more than one of his Visions—high ranking members of the clergy—have gone missing.

Worse still, Razmir has become downright erratic in his behavior since the escape of the Whispering Tyrant. Razmir seems to entirely focus on dealing with Tar-Baphon one day, then treats the lich as if he were beneath notice the next.

FRIENDS AND FOES OF THE FAITH

As the head of his own religion, Razmir has few friends. His foes weigh far more heavily on the Living God's mind.

Artokus Kirran, the Thuvian alchemist, has long been brewing a precious sun orchid elixir that can return any imbiber to youth. After Razmir's winning bid on the elixir was fraudulently rejected—at least, in his own mind—rumors hold that Razmir has sent a number of agents of Thuvia to either steal the recipe for the elixir or perhaps even kidnap the alchemist.

Razmir technically remains at war with the elven nation of Kyonin, though the ruler seems to have little interest in actually pursuing any battles with his neighbors. Yet Queen Telandia Edasseril's policy of allowing fleeing citizens of Razmiran into Kyonin, so long as they aren't Razmir's priests, has recently resulted in turmoil along the two nations' shared borders. In addition to refugees being attacked by cultists intent upon showing defectors the error of their ways, Queen Telandia suspects that Razmir may have sent infiltrators to weaken Kyonin for some unknown purpose—or simply out of spite.

No one is a bigger threat to Razmir's rule than the Whispering Tyrant. Freed from his prison under Gallowspire, Tar-Baphon is now rebuilding his fortress on the Isle of Terror, making his return an existential threat to all those who border Lake Encarthan. Not long after the Tyrant's return, Razmir sent a herald to the Isle with an offer of nonaggression. The herald returned, now a wraith wearing the mask of Razmir's faith, accepting the offer with one condition: Razmiran would tithe its dead to the Tyrant, at least 1,000 bodies per month, to maintain the peace. No one knows if the Living God accepted these terms, but as of yet there has been no fighting between the two. The Pale Mask, as the herald has come to be known, still resides in Thronestep and can be found wandering the city at night. Yet Blood Mistress Jakalyn of the Red Mantis Assassins recently announced that someone had paid for a contract to be placed on Tar-Baphon, and discovered that the messenger hailed from Razmiran. It's uncertain whether the missive was from Razmir himself, an acolyte who overstepped, or an enemy hoping to gain Razmir the wrong sort of attention, and just as uncertain is what might result from a clash between any of these three powers.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Artokus Kirran (page 18), Jakalyn (page 56), Tar-Baphon (page 104), Telandia Edasseril (page 106)



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THE UNMASKED SERVANT

Countless servants and sycophants are found among the ranks of Razmir's priesthood, and many of these are important to the operation of his kingdom and religion. Most of Razmir's faithful prefer to maintain their anonymity behind the masks that they wear, but not **Vilnaria Tyn**, the Red Coin (LE female human cultist). Her mask is cracked down one side, missing from the nose down, revealing part of her face. Vilnaria serves as Razmir's personal enforcer, rooting out the unfaithful and punishing any who dare to displease the god. Anyone unfortunate enough to receive her red coin has 1 day to make amends for their transgressions or face her wrath.

On more than one occasion, Vilnaria has left the remains of those who failed to appease her out in public for all to see, as a warning to those who would dare to defy Razmir.

HELLSPAWN IN CHELIAX

Tieflings can face prejudice from many sources due to their association with fiends, but ironically, one of the places they are most despised is the devil-worshipping nation of Cheliax. Though citizens pay homage to the devil Asmodeus, society believes any relations with lesser devils should be one with the mortal firmly in command—tieflings are seen as a sign of a lapse in judgment and a corruption of a mortal bloodline.



SAPPHIRE BUTTERFLY

INFAMOUS REBEL VIGILANTE

CG FEMALE TIEFLING^{APG} HUMAN BARD

The Night of Ashes changed everything for Vyvienne Ashurka. Before the sudden and brutal crackdown on dissidents against House Thrune, Vyvienne had been intensely focused on her career as an actor and singer in Kintargo's robust theater scene, hoping to achieve something like the fame of her favorite opera star, **Shensen** (CG female half-elf celebrity)—and hoping to keep her tiefling heritage forever concealed. She had been fortunate in both respects, steadily landing roles and easily using her magical powers to disguise the orange-tinged fur and yellow eyes that she owed to a rakshasa progenitor. She had left the slums of northern Westcrown behind for this opportunity, making the arduous journey to Kintargo with only her sister—they had left home after the death of their parents, who were slaughtered along with the other members of the Bastards of Erebus tiefling gang. Vyvienne was thus no stranger to violence and loss. But as dawn rose following that particularly blood-soaked night in Kintargo, as the flames still sputtered and the cries rose over Shensen's disappearance, Vyvienne felt the smoldering hate that she harbored for House Thrune burst into insatiable flames.

It didn't take her long to find and join Shensen's revolutionary friends, the Silver Ravens. In searching for her idol, who was later rescued by heroes, Vyvienne quickly learned the worth of infiltration and espionage. Already adept at disguise, Vyvienne further learned its value as she crafted an alter ego, a new hero named the Sapphire Butterfly.

In the guise of the Butterfly, she could act swiftly and directly against Thrune agents and raise the morale of the oppressed; as Vyvienne, she could sneak into a party hosted by local nobility and learn Thrune's secrets. She could also show her true heritage as the Butterfly, serving as a symbol to all the people of Cheliax of the power, intelligence, and beauty of tieflings.

With Vyvienne's tireless aid, the Silver Ravens succeeded in liberating Kintargo and creating the new state of Ravounel. Perhaps the Sapphire Butterfly's work could have ended there, and Vyvienne could have returned to the stage. But the stages of Kintargo now seemed too small to her. Yes, Ravounel was free, but Westcrown was not. Thrune still controlled most of Cheliax; beyond its borders, oppressed peoples struggled for freedom that was just barely out of reach.

When the Vidric rebels sailed into Kintargo's harbor, the Sapphire Butterfly was among the first to embrace them. She actively encouraged the alliance between these freedom fighters and the Silver Ravens that would lead to the birth of the Firebrands. When a rebellion sparked in Galt that claimed to be tied to the Firebrands, the Sapphire Butterfly immediately advocated assistance and was soon on the front lines. She now travels throughout the Inner Sea Region, showing up to aid the oppressed as they rise up, to foment rebellion forward, to end slavery, and to help local Firebrands in all such causes.

Vyvienne remains close to her sister, **Emylne** (NG female tiefling^{APG} human seamstress), who brims with courageous loyalty and offers her support whenever possible. But Emylne is happy to make costumes for Kintargo's operas and to contemplate bringing children into an improving world. Vyvienne has no such dreams for herself, no desire to settle down or to complicate the freedom that allows her to be where she is needed, whenever she is needed. In truth, she has never allowed herself to fall in love. She has never been willing to be that vulnerable—not even when romantic entanglements were in vogue among her acting friends, in those long-ago days before the Night of Ashes.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

When Vyvienne joined the Silver Ravens and their rebellion, she became familiar with the Bellflower Network, thanks to operative **Laria Longroad** (CG female

halfling information broker), who provided the Ravens with a safe house. The Sapphire Butterfly continues to work with the Bellflower Network, particularly with Kintargo's **Nolly Peltry** (CG female halfling abolitionist) and Farmers Magdalena and Martum Fallows, in their efforts to liberate halflings and eliminate slavery in Cheliah and beyond.

During her time as a Silver Raven, Vyvienne came to know Lady **Mialari Docur** (CN female elf spy), founder and headmistress of Lady Docur's School for Girls, and learned her secret: Lady Docur is also the founder and head of the Lacunafex, a spy network that operates throughout Cheliah. While the forlorn elf and the tiefling have little in common, they share knowledge and strategy in the fight against House Thrune. Docur has proved a pivotal ally in Vyvienne's endeavors, helping her keep up to date with the machinations of House Thrune to stay one step ahead of dottari and Hellknights while in Cheliah.

While she has constant clashes with Hellknights, Vyvienne has established a cautious yet promising relationship with Lictor Toulon Vidoc of the Order of the Scourge, though he is not quite aware of it yet. Using her connections with both the Bellflower Network and the Lacunafex, Vyvienne places strategic bread crumbs for Vidoc and his Hellknights to find, providing them with additional evidence in their investigation of Queen Abrogail II. Vidoc finds the ease of acquiring evidence to be unusually convenient and has since begun an investigation of the Order itself to determine the origin of this evidence.

From almost the moment that she sailed into Kintargo's harbor, Shimali Manux and Vyvienne have been close allies. Recognizing the similarities between the rebellions in Vidrian and Ravounel, Vyvienne embraced Shimali's cause, and the two women were instrumental in the birth of the international band of showboating rebels known as the Firebrands. Although they are seldom in the same place at the same time, they manage to work closely together. The Sapphire Butterfly has even been known to call on Manux's fleet for transportation to lands in need of Firebrand assistance.

The Sapphire Butterfly's relationship with Hurricane Queen Tessa Fairwind, leader of the Free Captains of the Shackles, is much more complicated, in part because of the role of the Free Captains who served as mercenaries for Sargava (now Vidrian). A philosophical gulf exists between the Firebrands, who tend to be idealistic and see themselves as serving the greater good, and the Free Captains, who prize freedom as it suits and serves themselves. This fundamentally mercenary creed is not necessarily shared by Tessa, but it colors the extent to which Vyvienne is willing to trust or ally with the Free Captains. For her part, Tessa grudgingly admires the work of some notable Firebrands and is willing to ally with them when they ask for aid, though such alliances are never public.

The Sapphire Butterfly's ultimate dream is a free Cheliah. Fueling that dream, deep in her soul, is a hatred of House Thrune. If she had the opportunity—even half of an opportunity—she would not hesitate to kill Queen Abrogail II. The feeling is mutual, with Queen Abrogail openly declaring the Sapphire Butterfly an enemy of Cheliah. The bounty on the Sapphire Butterfly's head has only made her efforts within Cheliah much more difficult, and exciting, as a result.

On this 12th day of Rova, let it be known to all citizens of and visitors to Cheliah that the criminal that acts under the alias "Sapphire Butterfly" is declared an enemy of the state. Any person with information leading to the capture of the criminal may be compensated with up to one thousand gold pieces. This reward is tenfold for the criminal's capture, whether dead or alive.

—Signed by Her Infernal Majestrix Abrogail the Second of the Thrice-Damned House of Thrune, by the Might of Asmodeus, Queen and Empress of Cheliah and of Its Other Territories

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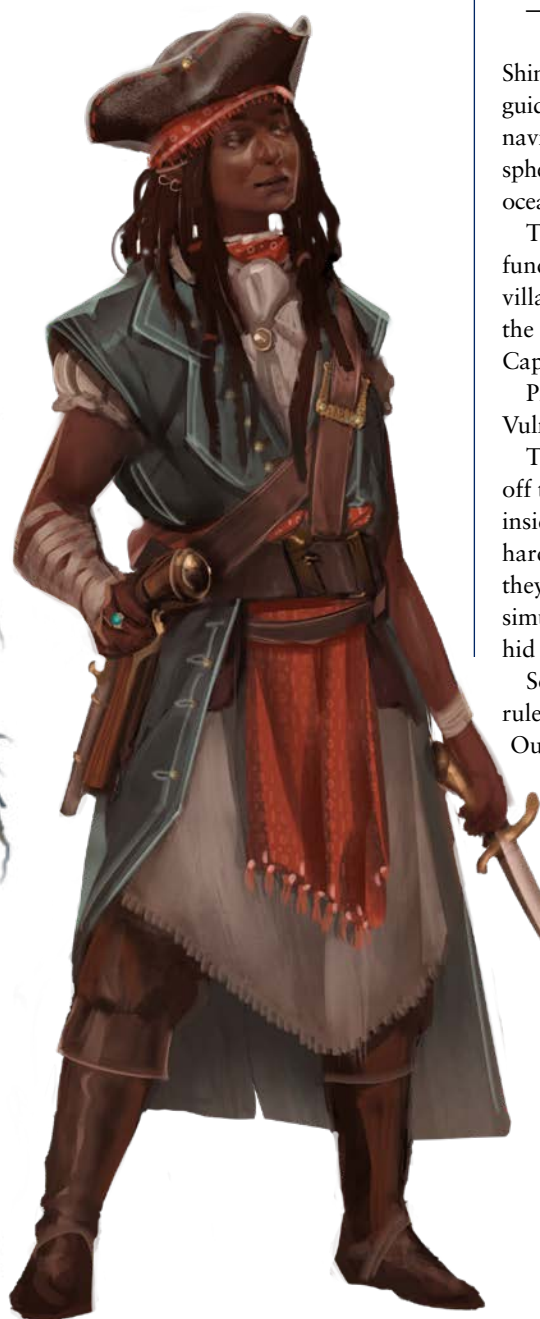
PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Magdalena and Martum Fallows (page 84), Shimali Manux (page 96), Tessa Fairwind (page 108), Toulon Vidoc (page 112)

MISSION OF MERCY

Shimali has recently received a plea directly from Farmers Magdelena and Martum Fallows. Nestled just inside the Ravounel border, the village of Sember

Cove has been struck with scarlet leprosy. A Chelaxian frigate volunteered to coordinate aid efforts, but in truth the captain is attempting to starve the town as punishment for harboring Bellflower Network sympathizers. Shimali now plots to run the blockade and deliver clerical aid.



SHIMALI MANUX

ADMIRAL OF VIDRIAN'S NAVY

NG FEMALE HALF-ELF SWASHBUCKLER

With my errand complete, I took stock of my situation. I was in Eleder on the eve of revolution. I had not a dagger to my name. Night was falling, and the local marines were combing the docks for drunkards to press into service. I decided to quit the city posthaste, under any captain who would have me.

Said captain was Shimali Manux. My first assignment was to steal her a ship.

That should give you a flavor of those wild days. Unlike today's Firebrands, Shimali was no showboater. She was daring because she had literally nothing to lose. The moonlit cutting-out expeditions? The mad duels in the ratlines? These were born of desperation and simple math: to free her country, she needed frigates.

Turns out if you steal enough leaky tubs, they make you a legend.

—Excerpt from the letters of Seimon Candelar, Gray Corsair

Shimali Manux's Sargavan father was a spice trader, her elven Ekujae mother his guide and translator. They had two children, Shimali and **Vulmia** (NG female half-elf navigator). The girls, fraternal twins, spent their long childhoods in both parents' spheres, learning tables and tide charts one season and jungle lore the next. But the ocean pulled at Shimali, and when they were old enough, the sisters went to sea.

Tragedy struck while they were away. Their father was blamed for missing funds and hanged, while Aspis Consortium loggers demolished their mother's village and the government stood by. Even as the sisters learned of these horrors, the sloop they served on was burned to the waterline for failing to pay a Free Captain a bribe.

Prejudice and greed had left the girls orphaned and adrift. So Shimali and Vulmia went to war.

The sisters fell in with a young Avarneus, who was equally desperate to shake off the Sargavan colonial yoke. While Avarneus remained on land, scheming from inside the government, the sisters assembled a ragtag crew of rebels, misfits, and hard-up adventurers. With Shimali taking the lead and Vulmia watching her back, they boarded ship after ship and commandeered them, striking at multiple ports simultaneously to keep harbormasters guessing. If luck turned against them, they hid in the jungle, recuperating with the Ekujae only to strike again.

Soon, the rebellion in Vidrian brought down the barony and drove the Sargavan rulers from their shores. Only at that point did the struggle at sea begin in earnest. Outraged at the loss of Sargava's tribute, the Free Captains tried to sack the new nation in recompense. Shimali had been preparing for this, and she met them with her makeshift fleet, trading blow for blow until the decks were stained with blood. But Shimali's tenacity won out, and the ragtag alliance of Senghor's navy and Shimali's stolen ships drove the Free Captains from Desolation Bay. With that triumph, Vidrian was born.

Since then, Shimali has been gathering allies for her fledgling country. She has made stops in every port she can, seeking introductions and promises of aid. To her relief, Absalom, Andoran, and Osirion responded positively. But her visit to Ravounel bore the most fruit. There she found a warm welcome among her fellow revolutionaries, the Silver Ravens. What began as an official pledge of mutual aid blossomed behind closed doors into a new network of freedom fighters, dedicated to fighting oppression and slavery wherever it may be found.

True to their name, these Firebrands have sparked good deeds and feats of bravery across the continent, their progress aided by Shimali's swift fleet.

Today, Shimali commands Vidrian's navy. She is bemused that her reputation makes her seem a dashing figure, but she recognizes the value her legend serves Firebrand recruiters. Fortunately, legend and reality are not far apart: Shimali is a kind-hearted woman who goes out of her way to help others, and with an armada and the Firebrands at her back, she does more good than most.

A GROWING LEGACY

Shimali Manux's closest ally is her sister, Vulmia. Content to avoid politics, Vulmia serves on the Firebrand ship *Nightwave*, ensuring her twin's former rival—and current paramour—Captain **Devrin Arlos** (CG male human free captain) returns from his madcap adventures. No one knows Shimali's mind like Vulmia, which has led to trouble in recent times. Spymasters up and down the coast would pay dearly to question either sister about the other, and to date there have been two kidnapping attempts on Vulmia by enemies of Vidrian. The Firebrands dealt with these plots handily, and both Vulmia and Shimali have publicly laughed them off for the time being. Recently, the siblings have been working to stop Chelaxian ships from polluting nearby merfolk realms.

Shimali's other comrade-in-arms, Avarneus, is a member of Vidrian's ruling council. While they remain close, Avarneus sometimes frets that Shimali is still too idealistic, and that her good nature and thrill for adventure will prove her downfall. The two maintain frequent communication over Vidrian's affairs. New nations crave legitimacy, and Shimali works hard to lay the groundwork for future Vidric embassies, as well as seeking allies and fixers in foreign courts—particularly in older realms like Taldor and Qadira that are suspicious of revolutionaries.

When Shimali came petitioning Absalom for aid, she left with both diplomatic acknowledgment and a strong admiration for Wynsal Starborn. The two share a love of justice and the discomfort of being thrust into statecraft under extreme circumstances. Shimali is grateful for Starborn's advocacy when Vidrian was most vulnerable and keeps an eye out for opportunities to repay him in kind.

Nearly every Firebrand looks up to Shimali as the group's co-founder and dashing figurehead, and she counts the Silver Ravens' **Shensen** (CG female half-elf celebrity) as a dear friend. Shimali's fleet keeps the Sapphire Butterfly flitting from crisis point to crisis point—most recently smuggling escaped slaves for the Bellflower Network.

If Shimali fears anyone, it is Queen Abrogail Thrune II. To Thrune, Sargava was an upstart colony needing to be brought to heel, and Vidrian is merely a fiction. Chelax's own revolutions have kept the monarch diverted, but it's only a matter of time before she aims her dread navy southward. Shimali is constantly looking for new maritime allies as a bulwark against this inevitability. Meanwhile, her support of the Firebrands, Ravounel, and the Bellflower Network helps keep House Thrune off balance—for now.

Yet not all of Shimali's enemies are so obvious. Two of her captains have recently been assassinated in Anthusis, Vidrian's capital. Worse yet, a broken thistle arrow shaft suggests the killer is Ekujae. Shimali refuses to believe the elves would strike out at her allies in such a way, leaving her to find investigators to unravel the mystery—and render the impartial verdict that she cannot.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Avarneus (page 22), Magdalena and Martum Fallows (page 84), Sapphire Butterfly (page 94), Seimon Candelar (NG male human Gray Corsair), Tessa Fairwind (page 108), Wynsal Starborn (page 118)

HONOR AMONG THIEVES

Tessa Fairwind and Shimali have run afoul of each other numerous times—ever since Shimali nicked the Hurricane Queen's future flagship, the *Umbral Spark*, out from under one of Fairwind's lieutenants. They have had several engagements since, and each time the tides, misfortune, or magical chicanery have prevented a reckoning. Rumor has it that their antipathy has softened into grudging respect, especially as many Free Captains have found fortune and fame aiding Firebrand exploits.

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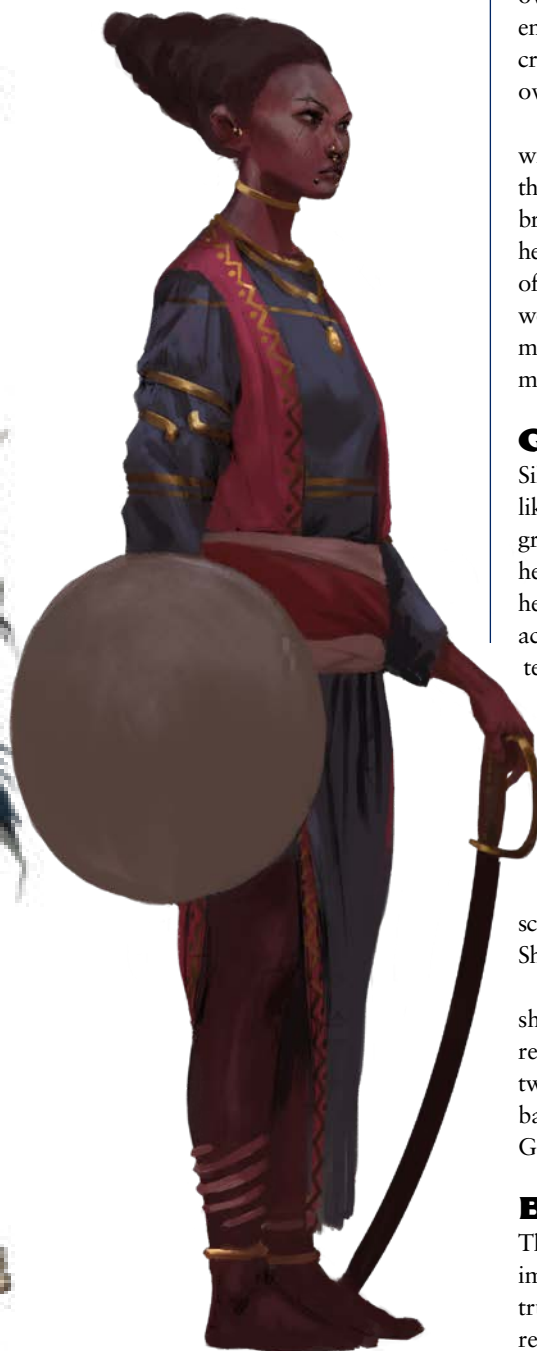
GLOSSARY AND INDEX



OLD FRIENDS

During her time outside Mzali, Sihar spent several years at the Magaambya Academy.

There she studied under the storyteller Janatimo, while also making allies of her fellow students. She was happy to know there were Emerald Boughs already in Mzali monitoring things—these were later indispensable in getting the Bright Lions off the ground. Thanks to the connections she made with the Rain-Scribes, she was able to set up a communication network to find allies and resources outside the city.



SIHAR

LEADER OF THE BRIGHT LIONS

LG FEMALE HUMAN FIGHTER

Living in the city-state of Mzali is perfectly safe, as long as you follow every law, wish, and whim of the child god Walkena, who has ruled the city-state for over 100 years. If he finds you lacking, in either faith or loyalty, Walkena or one of his priests will waste no time in publicly and painfully executing you. For Walkena is a descendant of the deities of the Mzali—and close enough to a god in power that even those who don't believe in his rightful rule can do little to oppose him.

Yet some in Mzali have said, "No more! This is not who the city is, this is not what the Old Sun Gods preached." They call themselves the Bright Lions, and they spend their time and resources organizing to fight against the tyranny that has overtaken their people. They speak of a time that Mzali was the center of a great empire, respected for its wealth and influence rather than for ruling with fear and cruelty. They say that one day things will be like that again, that one day they will overthrow Walkena, and that this day is coming.

Leading the Bright Lions is Sihar, a tall and muscular woman in her mid-thirties, with the appearance of a warrior but the bearing of a scholar. Her face and body bear the scars of her years as a mercenary, her fingers calloused by both a sword and a brush pen. She wears her hair tight and high on her head, only letting it down when by herself or with her closest friends and companions. Unlike the reds and golds of many of the Bright Lions, Sihar usually dresses in blues and reds, with bright gold accents woven through her garments. Her style is practical, always ready to enter battle at a moment's notice, but prepared to talk politics or preach the word of the old gods if it might win a sympathetic ear—she is said to always carry a dagger and a book.

GROWING UP UNDER THE CHILD GOD

Sihar grew up without a family. She doesn't know if they were executed by Walkena like so many others, or if they simply abandoned her as a child. She remembers growing up in a temple dedicated to Walkena, remembers priests teaching her how he was a holy descendant of the gods, and how his word was the law. They taught her to read and write by transcribing Walkena's holy word so that it could be spread across the whole Mwangi Expanse. Sihar remembers sneaking deeper into the temple with other orphans, finding statues, scripture, and paintings of the Old Sun Gods. As she learned more about them, she realized that their teachings were not the same as Walkena's—that his views on justice and punishment were warped, blasphemous corruptions of the Old Sun Gods' teachings.

Sihar remembers when as a teen, her best friend, fellow orphan and childhood crush—a sweet happy girl that everyone knew as Mouse—sold Sihar out to the priests after Mouse herself was caught sneaking out late at night. She remembers running away before the priests could get to her, living on the streets, stealing and scavenging what she could to eat. She remembers Mouse being executed by Walkena. She remembers the awful tears she wept for her companion and betrayer.

Sihar remembers when she chose her name, in honor of the Old Sun Gods, when she started using feminine pronouns and started to fully live as a woman. She remembers leaving the city, working as a mercenary and adventurer for close to two decades. When she had amassed enough money and allies, she made her way back to Mzali and established the Bright Lions, to spread the word of the Old Sun Gods and to one day overthrow Walkena.

BRIGHT LIONS

The Bright Lions' members are numerous, but some integral players hold great importance both in the organization and to Sihar personally as well. Sihar's most trusted lieutenant, fiercest warrior, and rumored lover is **Sewell** (N female human rebel general), a large and muscular woman who always has a smile on her face

and a lance at her side. While Sihar is the Bright Lions' leader, Sewell is second in command, leading most of the Bright Lions military attacks.

The backbone of the Bright Lions' relationship with the people of Mzali is **Azeeko** (LG male human cook), an old, bearded man with a burly frame who runs a tavern called the Golden Mouse—one of the Bright Lions' headquarters, for those in the know. For all others, the tavern is simply a place to find a decent bed, a good drink, and a home-cooked meal, even for those who don't have enough coin.

The eyes and ears of the Bright Lions outside of Mzali are coordinated by the halfling spy **Xor Beaninch** (CG nonbinary halfling scout), who met Sihar while the future founder of the Bright Lions was working as a mercenary. With Walkena showing displeasure at the recently liberated nation of Vidrian, Xor has been attempting to gain a hearing with prominent Vidric officials such as Avarneus and Shimali Manux, both to offer a warning and in hopes of gaining allies in the fight against the child god. Xor also handles the subtle and dangerous work of keeping their fellow revolutionaries well-provisioned.

The Bright Lions are always looking for brave souls to help them smuggle weapons and supplies into the city. Not only do their agents need to enter Mzali undetected, but once inside, they need to make sure the secret police don't suspect where these valuable stockpiles are kept. In particular, alchemical weapons are always in high demand by active Bright Lions.

RIGHTEOUS HERESY

Sihar plans regularly scheduled attacks against Walkena, his many servants, and their religious infrastructure both in and outside Mzali. Inside the city, the Bright Lions work to disrupt daily operations and demonstrations of Walkena's power, such as interfering with public executions. The Bright Lions have gotten the procedure of their raids down to a science. Their constant duty is to defend the oppressed, which often involves daring rescues followed by close escapes, after which they must hide themselves and those they rescued either in one of their hidden bases of operation or somewhere outside the city. Equally vital to the organization is the task of convincing others whenever possible to join the cause. Walkena has forces outside the city as well to spread his rule across the Mwangi Expanse, and scattered bands of Bright Lions often follow to subtly sabotage supply lines and harry troops.

Yet violence is not the only method that Sihar uses to undermine Walkena's rule. As a scholar and expert on the Old Sun Gods, Sihar hopes that spreading their word among the people of Mzali will remind citizens of the kinder deities that once watched over the city, and help foment discontent with Walkena's malicious rule. She also hopes to see her patrons become known in other lands and among other people, so that if the worst happens and the Bright Lions are wiped out, the Old Sun Gods will still be honored. During her time at the Magaambya, she unearthed detailed information and theories on where to find ancient texts and relics within the depths of Mzali's temples—but retrieving them is considered too dangerous and is not a top priority for the Bright Lions themselves to investigate. Those who can convince Sihar they are trustworthy enough to return any recovered holy items may get her to divulge the location of said treasures. For those who succeed, Sihar can offer not only gold, but something more valuable: her gratitude and favor.

OLD SUN GODS

Although once mostly forgotten, the Old Sun Gods have slowly been brought back to the people of Mzali thanks to Sihar and the Bright Lions. The following entries include two elements introduced in *Pathfinder Lost Omens Gods & Magic*. Alternate domains are described on pages 7–8 of *Gods & Magic* and can be selected using the

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Avarneus (page 22), Janatimo (page 60), Shimali Manux (page 96)

THE LION'S PRIDE

Azeeko: The old cook can most often be found in the kitchen making food—bread in particular—which he distributes to the poor. This generosity has led to Azeeko having the ear of the lowest among the low, and he has used this inroad to gather information and spread word of the Bright Lions' achievements. At least for now, Walkena's enforcers have yet to come knocking.

Sewell: A Mzali native who left the city with her family as a child, Sewell met Sihar when they were both working as mercenaries. Sihar explained her mission and her vision of a prosperous Mzali that didn't torture its own citizens, one guided by compassion and greatness, not cruelty. Sewell laughed at Sihar's goals, saying such a thing was impossible, but said she would join if Sihar beat her in an arm-wrestling contest. Sihar did, and since then Sewell has been completely dedicated to Sihar and her mission. Sihar relies on Sewell and trusts her above anyone else, even if Sewell is far quicker to jump to violence than the more prudent Sihar.

Xor Beninch: Xor was the child of foreign merchants who had hired the mercenary company Sihar was a part of at the time, to serve as guards. During their journey they were constantly attacked by monstrous creatures and bandits. By the end of the trip, Xor's parents were done with all of the dangers of a traveling life, but Xor was hooked. They begged to stay behind and train under Sihar and some of the other mercenaries. When it was time for Sihar to go back to Mzali, with plans of founding the Bright Lions, Xor was ready to help. But Mzali's fascistic policies against non-Mwangi peoples made it almost impossible for a halfling to enter, let alone live in, the city-state. Wanting to be part of the Bright Lions but not being able to operate safely in the city, Xor used their agility and quick thinking to become the group's spymaster, organizing and leading their allies outside Mzali. They are the first point of contact with the Bright Lions and Sihar herself.

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WALKENA, THE CHILD GOD

Over a century ago, the city-state of Mzali was largely in disarray. Yet one day, a group of priests discovered the mummified body of Walkena in an old temple. The discovery attracted attention not only from pilgrims from every corner of the Mwangi Expanse but also from Sargavan colonists determined to conquer the city and plunder its riches. Before the Sargavan armies could reach Mzali, however, Walkena suddenly rose from the dead. The child-mummy brought down sunfire on the attackers, and then declared himself ruler of the city. The people of Mzali thought that they would finally live in a paradise, but the child god's short temper, unreasonable laws, and apparent desire to conquer his fellow Mwangi quickly proved that such a hope was not in Mzali's future.

Expanded Domain Initiate feat from that book (*Gods & Magic* 8). Divine ability boosts are gained by selecting the raised by belief background (*Gods & Magic* 9).

CHOHAR, THE SUN GOD OF NOON [LG]

The Lion God of justice, loyalty, and work. He is most commonly depicted as a golden lion with a sun for a mane. Some priests of Walkena claim that the child god is a descendant of Chohar, because of their shared love of justice—yet Walkena's justice is vindictive and cruel, while Chohar's is one of duty.

Edicts finish any and all tasks you accept, bring those who are cruel to justice, show pride in your home and your heritage

Anathema break your word, be cruel to the innocent, rebuke someone due to their homeland

Follower Alignments LG, LN, NG

DEVOTEE BENEFITS

Divine Font *heal*

Divine Ability Strength or Charisma

Divine Skill Intimidation

Favored Weapon starknife

Domains cities, family, fire, sun

Alternate Domains duty, toil (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #148 63), vigil, zeal

Cleric Spells 1st: *burning hands*, 3rd: *fireball*, 4th: *fire shield*

LUHAR, THE SUN GODDESS OF DUSK [LN]

The Lioness Goddess of death, dreams, and destiny. She is most commonly depicted as a lioness with the head of a human woman, dark skinned with bright eyes.

Edicts learn about the night and prepare yourself to face its creatures and dangers, always make time for sleeping and dreams, ensure others never go to sleep scared

Anathema stay up all night without any breaks for sleeping or dreaming, attack a person or creature while they sleep, leave a badly wounded opponent alive and suffering

Follower Alignments LG, LN, LE

DEVOTEE BENEFITS

Divine Font *harm*

Divine Ability Dexterity or Wisdom

Divine Skill Stealth

Favored Weapon spiked chain

Domains cities, darkness, dreams, sun

Alternate Domains fate, soul, star, zeal

Cleric Spells 1st: *sleep*, 3rd: *invisibility sphere*, 5th: *shadow walk*

TLEHAR, THE SUN GODDESS OF DAWN [NG]

The Lioness Goddess of iron, love, and rebirth. She is most commonly depicted as human but with the head of a lioness, her fur a dull gray and her eyes black as night.

Edicts give yourself fully to everything you attempt, always maintain hope that tomorrow will be a better day, treasure every gift you are given by those who matter to you

Anathema lose your motivation to your regrets, spread despair, treat a loved one poorly

Follower Alignments LG, NG, CG

DEVOTEE BENEFITS

Divine Font *heal*

Divine Ability Intelligence or Charisma

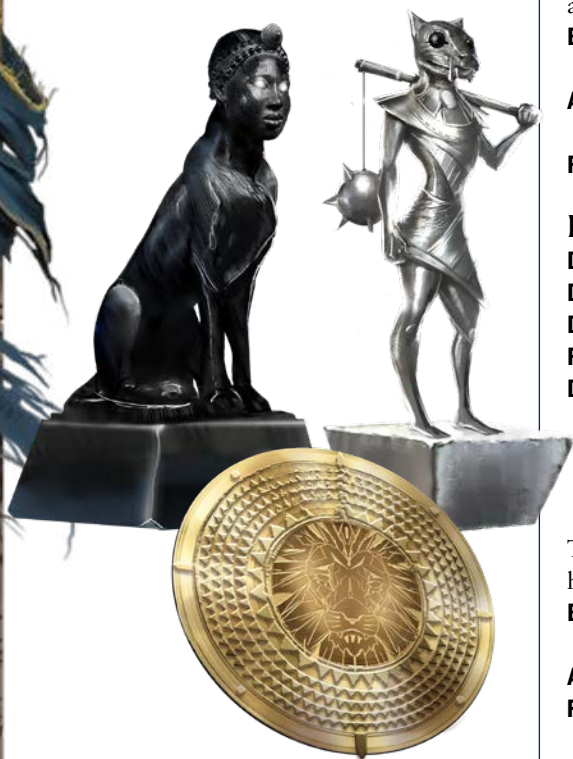
Divine Skill Crafting

Favored Weapon morningstar

Domains cities, healing, passion, sun

Alternate Domains change, creation, vigil, zeal

Cleric Spells 1st: *soothe*, 3rd: *enthrall*, 5th: *dreaming potential*



BRIGHT LION ARCHETYPE

You are one of the Bright Lions, part revolutionary warrior, part undercover spy.

BRIGHT LION DEDICATION

FEAT 2

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE DEDICATION

Prerequisites member of the Bright Lions, not a worshipper of Walkena, trained in Stealth; **Access** Bright Lion background (*Lost Omens World Guide* 95)

You become trained in your choice of Deception or Diplomacy and in Mzali Lore; if you were already trained, you become an expert instead. You incorporate enough worship of Walkena in your daily life to avoid suspicion. You typically don't need to Lie or Impersonate to pass yourself off as a worshipper of Walkena. Against careful inspection, you gain a +4 circumstance bonus to Deception checks specifically to pass yourself off as a version of yourself faithful to Walkena.

Special You can't select another dedication feat until you have gained two other feats from the Bright Lion archetype.

WARDING LIGHT

FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Bright Lion Dedication

You gain a tattoo that serves as a special ward to defend you against Walkena's forces. The tattoo allows you to cast the *light* cantrip as a divine innate spell at will. The cantrip is heightened to a spell level equal to half your level rounded up. If you die, the tattoo immediately casts *gentle repose* on your corpse, heightened to the same spell level.

SUN'S FURY

FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Bright Lion Dedication

The Old Sun Gods have granted you a gift in your fight against Walkena. You gain the *sun's fury* focus spell. If you don't already have one, you gain a focus pool of 1 Focus Point, which you can regain using the Refocus activity to pray to the Old Sun Gods; if you already have a focus pool, increase the number of Focus Points in your focus pool by 1. Your Bright Lion focus spells are divine spells; when you gain this feat, if you aren't already, you become trained in divine spell attacks and spell DCs, using Charisma as your spellcasting ability score.

ELUDE THE DIVINE

FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Bright Lion Dedication

You are able to escape inquisitions involving divine magic, allowing you to blend in well in Mzali but also to avoid unwanted attention in other oppressive theocracies. You gain the Slippery Secrets skill feat, and its benefits also apply against divination effects that attempt to discern your deity. When using Slippery Secrets against a divine divination, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus, and on a critical success, the divination reveals false information appropriate to your false persona, rather than nothing.

BRIGHT LION FOCUS SPELL

SUN'S FURY

FOCUS 3

UNCOMMON EVOCATION FIRE GOOD

Cast ◆◆ somatic, verbal

Range touch; **Targets** 1 weapon without an *unholy* rune that is unattended or wielded by you or a willing ally

Duration 1 minute

The target weapon becomes wreathed in a glowing flame. The weapon deals an additional 1d4 fire and 1 good damage on a successful Strike. In addition, the flame causes the weapon to glow as bright as a torch. You can Dismiss the spell.

WALKENA'S SHADOW

A Bright Lion's job is to blend in but be ready to damage Walkena's forces as much as possible at a moment's notice. While the Bright Lions are focused on overthrowing Walkena, he is not the enemy they face most often. **Themba Sufu** (LE male human rogue), the commander of Walkena's secret police, prowls the night searching for dissidents and insurrectionists—a description the Bright Lions fit in every aspect.



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TAARGICK'S LEGACY

While Taargick is a mythical figure among the dwarves of Avistan and Garund, he is not as well-known among dwarves in other parts of Golarion. During the Quest for Sky, many dwarf clans went in their own directions in hopes of finding a more suitable route to reach Golarion's surface. Over the centuries, these clans lost contact with the main group that emerged in the Inner Sea region and eventually completed the quest independently. As a result, the dwarves of Arcadia, Tian Xia, and Casmaron each have their own stories and heroes, though they recognize Taargick's importance to the Inner Sea region.



TAARGICK

FIRST HIGH KING OF THE DWARVES, KING OF SKY

LG MALE DWARF ARISTOCRAT

Taargick is the most famous and storied of all dwarven rulers in the Inner Sea region, for he united the dwarf clans, founded the kingdom of Tar Taargadth, oversaw the completion of the Quest for Sky, and designed many of the first Sky Citadels.

The mighty dwarven leader known as Taargick was born in the Darklands in –5293 AR, the night the *Starstone* crashed into the surface world. His mother was Hilgart, a military commander and war oracle for the dwarven nation of Felgunn, one of a dozen or more subterranean kingdoms ruled by dwarves at the time. When Earthfall struck and many dwarves—taking this as a divine sign from Torag—called for a start to the Quest for Sky, most Felgunn citizens resisted the call, but Hilgart was not among them. Infant Taargick on her hip, she marched forth within days of Earthfall.

Thus, Taargick grew up always on the move, born to a life of constant struggle and divinely mandated hardship. As he came into maturity, Taargick wished to be a warrior, but his mother insisted he learn many different skills. She ensured he was trained in diplomacy, engineering, logistics, and religious rites and doctrines along with his martial training. Because he was clever, strong, and courageous, Taargick was often assigned to work groups when major issues arose in moving an entire people in an endless march, and he became well known and liked over his first two and a half centuries of life.

At the Battle of Basalt Grimm in –5153 AR, the united dwarven front was ambushed by a massed orc horde. Having been relentlessly driven from their homes and forced further and further toward the surface by the marching dwarven host, scores of orc clans found their hatred of the dwarves a bond strong enough to band together. The dwarven vanguard collapsed, and orc raiders struck deep behind the dwarven front lines. Thousands of dwarven civilians, children, and elders were slain, including Hilgart. The dwarves were overcome by shame and anger, and abandoned the Quest for Sky to pursue vengeance against all orcs.

Without the unity of their shared mission, various dwarven factions began to press for greater control of the once-mobile nation's resources. For the first several years of this time, Taargick was as obsessed with vengeance as his compatriots. But as time passed, dwarven factions began to vocally suggest settling where they were, or even returning to their original homes. Taargick was horrified at the idea that all the suffering and work the dwarven people had undertaken might be put aside without accomplishing their divinely mandated goal and began passionately speaking in favor of a return to the Quest for Sky.

His deep connections to different dwarf factions served Taargick in good stead, and many flocked to his call. They named themselves after him, calling the alliance Tar Taargadth. Over a few years, this alliance grew, in large part due to Taargick's reputation as a hard-working, brave dwarf of skill and determination. When Taargick began the work of actually mobilizing the dwarves once again, however, some well-entrenched factions refused his call and challenged his right to rule. Taargick called out the leader of the largest of these factions, Hrungul Ironeye, to a trial by single combat, which Taargick narrowly won. Hrungul became one of Taargick's most fervent supporters and sent his own guards to "escort" other recalcitrant dwarven elders to a ceremony where Taargick was named High King of the nation of Tar Taargadth, the first dwarf to ever hold such a title.

With renewed purpose, the dwarves of Tar Taargadth completed the Quest for Sky within a year, discovering they had paused within a thousand feet of the surface.

SKY CITADELS

Following the successful conclusion to the Quest for Sky, Taargick set about attempting to ensure the dwarven kingdom could survive the new dangerous and harsh conditions of the surface world. He drew about him the greatest minds he could find, dwarf and surface-dweller alike, to design massive fortresses that came to be called Sky Citadels. Each of these was the pinnacle of dwarven engineering, architecture, science, and military strategy, designed to serve as fortress, administrative center, city, academy and, in times of great risk, final redoubt.

The first Sky Citadel to be designed was Koldukar, built at one of the sites where the dwarves emerged onto the surface of Golarion. Taargick himself surfaced and saw the sky for the first time at this location, and he intended to make it the center of the kingdom of Tar Taargadth. It was from here Taargick ruled over the nation that bore his name during the height of its success. But they were also years of endless conflict, much of it with Darklands creatures that had been driven before the dwarven march, and Taargick's name was among the most hated by those displaced peoples.

The second Sky Citadel was Dongun Hold, far to the south of the dwarven emergence point on the surface and built as part of an alliance with Osirion. Taargick envisioned Dongun Hold as the first of many far-flung outposts of Tar Taargadth, connected to one another by tunnels through the upper reaches of Nar-Voth, the uppermost layer of the Darklands. Because Dongun Hold was so far removed from central Tar Taargadth, it was assigned to one of Taargick's most trusted generals to command, the Mistress-of-Fire Arnhild Arunak.

As Taargick approached an impressive 600th year, a grand tomb was built for him in Koldukar, but the aged High King feared entombing him within it would subject the first Sky Citadel to endless attacks by those who hated his legacy. Instead he abdicated the throne, donned his old adamantine armor, and marched off to find a place to die and be buried in obscurity. Despite his sacrifice, long after Taargick's reign ended, Koldukar fell to orc invaders, who renamed it Urgir and claimed it as the capitol of their own nation.

ECHOES FROM THE ANCESTORS

Taargick remains one of the most revered and beloved of dwarven heroes millennia after his death. His name can inspire dwarves of every heritage, and still rouse anger in traditional enemies of dwarvenkind. A single scrap of adamantine armor with the dwarven runes for the King of Sky has turned up in a small market hidden in the alleys of Absalom, supposedly sold by an adventurer who took it from an orc bandit's corpse. The location of Taargick's final resting place remains unknown, and if orcs have breached that holy site, it is imperative it be located and reconsecrated so the first High King may rest in peace.

And in Dongun Hold, a long sealed-away library was uncovered as High King Anong Arunak prepared the undercity as a shelter for a potential war, and the last papers of Taargick were found. They included a long missive where Taargick admitted his regrets for not seeking a more peaceful solution to the war that drove the orcs from their homeland, and a wish that an orc king existed that Taargick could send his apologies to. High King Anong Arunak thinks she may have found one in Overlord Ardax of Urgir, yet ponders her next course of action, knowing that such a letter could prove more explosive than the gunpowder in her citadel's stores.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Anong Arunak (page 14), Ardax the White-Hair (page 16)



STRANGE TRUTHS

The location of the original homeland of Taargick, Felgunn, has long been lost to time—but an ancient sliver of map on a clay tablet suggests it is located deep below Hagegraf, a major duergar city itself beneath the Five Kings Mountains. The same tablet claims Hagegraf was first named "New Felgunn," which would suggest some dwarves of Felgunn, including some closely related to Taargick, rejected the Quest for Sky and may have been among the first to become duergar. The proof of duergar related to Taargick would send a shock wave through dwarf society, and an expedition would surely be assembled to prove or disprove the theory.

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What good is existence if not to colonize it? When that veil between the hereafter and the here is lifted by a palm as powerful as the Tyrant himself, then what excuse have we to continue in mediocrity and mortality?

—Whispers of the Immortal, author unknown

TAR-BAPHON

THE WHISPERING TYRANT

NE MALE HUMAN LICH NECROMANCER

Countless books tell of Tar-Baphon and his ongoing legacy; entire ancient libraries, saturated with rumors and intrigue, would not be enough to house the documentation of his influence. The record goes thusly: he was once an exceptionally spoiled and gifted student who fell to the temptation of the writings of the last Runelord of Gluttony, Zutha. Tar-Baphon dug a portal to the Negative Energy Plane on the Isle of Terror, ignited a long-lived rivalry with the god Aroden, descended to lichdom, took Ustalav beneath his might, then was imprisoned in Gallowspire and subsequently escaped.

Larger still is his unwritten legacy. His morbid cult of acolytes, the Whispering Way, maintain a 10,000-year-long oral history exchanged only in hushed murmurs. They speak of his leadership with great reverence and eagerly await his plans for the future. These days, the Whispering Tyrant appears not only as a vigilant, violent warlord but as a boogeyman in the minds of even the most innocent;

villagers often claim to see him in a farmyard after dark or lurking in a graveyard just at the edge of a mourner's vision.

He has escaped from his prison at Gallowspire, where he was once locked in by the *Great Seal*—the name of his prison only flared his ambitious fervor and arrogance when he destroyed it with his magical superweapon, the *Radiant Fire*. Imprisonment on his own throne did not temper his hubris or his ego—it only gave him more time to plot his escape and his plans beyond. Now that he's made his way out, he has only the cruelest of intentions; he plans to leverage his stolen power, his vast legions of enslaved minions, and the Whispering Way to achieve his long-awaited goals.

THOSE AFFECTED

The Tyrant has perhaps touched as many lives—and deaths and undeaths—as any god. In his calamitous grasp for divinity, he has transformed into something of a miasmatic vertex, connecting vast group of nations and individuals alike simply by means of his generations-long campaign of destruction and fear.

In expanding his power, Tar-Baphon sought to act on the ancient oaths that the orcs swore to him. And yet, when he sent his undead messengers, their mounts were sent back with the corpses of their riders decapitated, and with their proposals stuffed into their exposed necks. The Whispering Tyrant was not accustomed to trifling petulance, and sent an army to force compliance, only to see his forces routed by the united orc holds. To add further insult, the orc overlord Ardax named one of the trophies of his kills—a skull from one of Tar-Baphon's felled minions—after Tar-Baphon and placed cow horns on its head as a mockery of his enemy. The brazen taunt has filled the Tyrant with a renewed wave of malevolence and a determination to strike down the orc's haphazard allegiances. Tar-Baphon's vicious stubbornness is both his virtue and his downfall; the orcs may soon know the brunt of his maliciousness much more intimately.

The nation of Razmiran and Tar-Baphon have entered into something of an unsteady agreement; Razmir has publicly signaled that he will not outright oppose the Whispering Tyrant so long as Tar-Baphon does not disturb the realm of Razmiran. This unofficial treaty leaves Razmiran standing among a small host of those neutral on the matter

of the Tyrant, though it is difficult to distinguish neutral parties from those too terrified to speak. Those listening to the abounding whispers have heard claims that Razmiran may be handing its dead off to Tar-Baphon as payment in exchange for peace, but nothing has been proven beyond furtive rumors.

The knights of Lastwall continue to oppose the Tyrant in every way they can, with heroes such as Kalabryne Iomedar and Clarethe Iomedar serving on the front lines and former watcher-lord Ulthun II rallying other nations to fight the lich's forces. Tar-Baphon's escape from Gallowspire also caused the self-proclaimed Speaker of All the World's Tales, a half-elf called Janatimo, to advocate for a Magaambyan presence in Avistan in the hopes of studying the Tyrant's escape and helping the survivors of his destruction. Thus far, Tar-Baphon has not paid mind to the many efforts to aid the scattered, desperate populations of the Gravelands, but there is no guarantee that he will merely let them be once he does.

Achaek, the patron god of the Red Mantis assassins, has a long history of thwarting attempts at divinity both with his own power and with the skill of his assassins. Their human leader, Blood Mistress Jakalyn, recently received a mysterious offer of payment for Tar-Baphon's assassination. While not explicitly opposed to Tar-Baphon, the Red Mantis are infamous for ending the aspirations of would-be divine entities. The shadowy messenger, perhaps, hoped to rile the Red Mantis, the Blood Mistress, and their assassins—with Tar-Baphon's well-known attempts at divinity and his many illegitimate reigns, the messenger seemed to believe that this would be an eagerly accepted contract. Blood Mistress Jakalyn, however, knew better than to take the offer at face value and investigated the proposal before deciding whether she would accept it. She discovered that the origin of the offer of payment for Tar-Baphon's assassination was from within Razmiran—obfuscating an already muddy relationship between the two nations.

MACHINATIONS PRESENT AND FUTURE

The machinations of the Tyrant are many, mighty, and all in the interest of expanding his already vast influence on Golarion. The *final blades* of Galt are of special interest to Tar-Baphon; these guillotines store the souls of their condemned inside of them, and only Galt's executioners, the Gray Gardeners, know how to release the trapped souls. Tar-Baphon does not seek to destroy the blades out of any desire for justice, but simply to break the blood-stained wood open like a pomegranate and take the many trapped souls within to add to his undead hordes. Rumors swirl that the Whispering Way has taken measures to scope out the *final blades'* locations and their protectors.

His most cherished goal, as it has been since his youth, is ascension to divinity. In 1 AR, Tar-Baphon's rival Aroden lifted the *Starstone* from the bottom of the Inner Sea and became a living god, creating Absalom and the Starstone Cathedral. Since then, the Test of the *Starstone* has allowed anyone who can overcome its many trials to receive divinity. Only three of many have passed, including Iomedae, a follower of Aroden's cause who later became his herald. To Tar-Baphon, the entire test and city smacks of Aroden's smugness and victory—though Aroden may be dead by mysterious circumstances, Tar-Baphon is still not content to leave his rival's successes be. He is not so much interested in taking the test of *Starstone* as he is on taking everything: the cathedral, Absalom, the *Starstone*, all of it. His unfettered ambition will turn a vessel of divinity into a mere plaything for his undying rule.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Achaek (Lost Omens Gods and Magic 52), Ardax the White-Hair (page 16), Aroden (Lost Omens World Guide 21), Jakalyn (page 56), Janatimo (page 60), Kalabryne and Clarethe Iomedar (page 66), Razmir (page 92), Ulthun II (page 114)



FAMILIAR FACES

The lich Tar-Baphon has been a plague on modern-day Golarion even before he broke free from his prison of Gallowspire to continue his reign of terror. His agents in the Whispering Way concocted a plot to free him in the Carrion Crown Adventure Path, only to be foiled by a group of cunning investigators, as played by the PCs. Angered by the failure of his servants, Tar-Baphon redoubled his efforts to escape, eventually discovering a means to channel his magic into a devastating discharge known as the *Radiant Fire*. The destruction that followed made up the events of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path. *Legends* assumes that Tar-Baphon's inexorable march on Absalom was ended by a group of tragic heroes whom he had callously slaughtered alongside their neighbors, and who returned from the Boneyard to find a means to stop the Whispering Tyrant by turning his unstoppable arcane power back upon him.

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THE VIRIDIAN CROWN

An artifact thousands of years old, the *Viridian Crown* has been worn by the monarch of Kyonin since the nation was founded. It is claimed to sprout vicious thorns in times of war, though no such sight has been seen under Queen Telandia's rule. That may soon change, however, and elven courtiers watch the queen's circlet for early signs that Telandia's thoughts might turn to battle.

TELANDIA EDASSERIL

QUEEN OF THE ELVEN HOMELANDS

NG FEMALE ELF WIZARD

Humans may think they play the game of politics well, but they know nothing of the statecraft of elves, who have centuries at hand to plot and plan. Queen Telandia Edasseril of Kyonin plays that game better than anyone, hence keeping her throne longer than many of her fellow world leaders have been alive. The elven mage rules over her subjects with grace and skill, keeping the nation of Kyonin united despite its citizens' dislike of anything resembling authoritarian commands. She has a steely gaze and a serious demeanor and has been described as looking more like a painting brought to life than a real person. The queen wears the traditional symbol of the Kyonin monarchy, the *Viridian Crown*: an enchanted circlet made of vines and flowers that change with the seasons. She has scarcely a hair out of place, though occasionally light talon marks grace her skin, a sign of the queen's one passion aside from the throne. She is not only a skilled falconer, but magically assumes falcon form herself, flying alongside her beloved bird, Nyranin.

Telandia was born to nobility, and she learned long ago how to navigate the mazes of the powerful. Though her parents were royalty, they were not the king and queen. With Telandia a potential heir to the throne, they educated her in magic, etiquette, languages, diplomacy, history, and every other topic that could be useful to the budding leader. She made friends with all the most powerful elves, influencing with a light touch yet always making sure that everyone was in her debt, and when the King died without a child, Telandia took the throne.

She continued to ensure she knew all the movers and shakers in the kingdom, including the ambassadors from other lands. This included the Galtan representative Apalma Drannoch and her then-young daughter Camilia. Telandia suspected that the young but very forceful Camilia would grow up to either rule a country of her own or destroy one.

A ROYAL MATCH

Telandia has always willingly sacrificed her personal wants for the good of her subjects, and this remains true for her relationships as well. While Telandia could choose an heir as she herself was chosen, she is keenly aware of the benefits of political marriage for cementing alliances and political power. Queen Telandia has taken her time in the first step of this process: finding a consort. Knowing her nation well, she realized that it would be nearly impossible to avoid political turmoil as she decided who to wed. However, time keeps up even with elves. Telandia chose to travel outside her own kingdom, meeting elves all over Golarion and hoping to find an appropriate match. She found one on a diplomatic mission to the Mwangi Expanse to meet with the elven nations there and to see the ancient elven ruins of Nagisa. The Alijae elves of Nagisa guard the ruins from all outsiders, but they allowed the queen to pay her respects to the site. There, Telandia met an Alijae elf named **Zazirele** (NG male elf guardian), who is as skilled at training large cats as Telandia is at training birds. Zazirele, a dark-skinned elf with striking orange eyes, was amenable to a marriage with Queen Telandia, though the proposed match took hours of negotiation between the queen and the Alijae and among the Alijae themselves. Zazirele returned with Telandia to Kyonin to spend time in the large elven nation before deciding whether to make the alliance permanent. If the marriage continues as planned, the relationship between the elves of Kyonin and the Mwangi Expanse would be greatly reinforced—good news in the upcoming fight against Tar-Baphon. Love doesn't factor often into royal pairings, but Telandia and Zazirele are



fond of each other, and keen-eyed elves sometimes now spot three birds flying together near the royal residence.

This practice makes the royal guard nervous, as it seems only a matter of time before something happens during one of the queen's flights in bird form. Given that this is her only real pastime that has not been sacrificed on the altar of rulership, the queen refuses to stop flying, even if the land-bound guards can't keep her safe.

RETURN OF TAR-BAPHON

While Kyonin has a reputation of staying out of the affairs of shorter-lived peoples, recent events have demonstrated that Telandia must take a more active approach to global politics. The re-emergence of Tar-Baphon as a threat necessitates action. She has opened Kyonin to outsiders, seeking to gather allies among other nations, preparing for nearly certain war against the powerful lich. The queen is sending out missives to various countries and groups around Golarion, but she doesn't expect all to be immediately receptive of an elven envoy. She sometimes hires groups of the same ancestry or heritage as her target ally to deliver her initial letter, reaching out for a diplomatic relationship and potential alliance.

At the same time, she must placate her own elven subjects, some of whom fear losing their small nation—one of the major bastions of the elven people left on Golarion—to outsiders, and some of whom believe the queen should use her new network of powerful allies to take out Treerazer (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 312) once and for all. While the queen despises the nascent demon lord of pollution and decay, who remains festering in Tanglebriar after he conquered part of Kyonin, she is still reluctant to rekindle an old battle on another front with a new enemy so close at hand. She has been hiring diplomats to speak to the agitators within the kingdom and try to steer them away from talk of starting war with Treerazer.

Queen Telandia began her diplomatic outreach with those countries local to her, and thus far, these olive branches have been generally well received. Grand Princess Eutropia of Taldor sees the benefit of an alliance with the elven kingdom, as does Supreme Elect Andira Marusek of Andoran. High King **Borogrim the Hale** (LN male dwarf high king of Highhelm) of the Five Kings Mountains has always shared good relations with Telandia and recently agreed to an uneasy military alliance—while neither leader enjoys being beholden to send troops to aid the other, they have put that aside for the moment simply due to the magnitude of the threat.

However, Queen Telandia is not open to diplomatic talks with all her neighbors. The oppression of Razmiran disgusts Telandia, and Razmir has declared all elves to be heretical, leaving the two countries effectively at war. While the queen is naturally disinclined to open any discussions with Razmir, she does allow Razmirans to enter Kyonin through their shared border, so long as they are not Razmiran priests. Recently, turmoil along the Razmiran–Kyonin border has Queen Telandia suspicious that Razmiran priests have found their way into her land, though her border guards swear that none have crossed. She suspects that the priests have found another way into her kingdom, and she plans to hire additional forces to figure out how and put a stop to it.

Telandia has also been reluctant to seek alliance with Galt, given the constant turmoil of their government. She is waiting to see how long Citizen Camilia Drannoch, who she knew as a child, can remain leader before perhaps losing her own head.

DECEIVING APPEARANCES

Queen Telandia spends so much of her time on statecraft that many forget her exceptional skill in arcane magic. The royal palace is cloaked from top to bottom in illusions, and servants sometimes interact with a fellow servant that is actually the queen, or a queen that is nothing more than a figment. Most notably, Telandia has permission to scry on many of her loyal subjects, meaning any elf from Kyonin might serve as the queen's eyes.



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Andira Marusek (page 12), Camilia Drannoch (page 38), Eutropia Stavian (page 42), Razmir (page 92), Tar-Baphon (page 104)

FAMILIAR FACES

Tessa Fairwind appeared as a member of the Pirate Council in the Skull and Shackles Adventure Path. While she initially had no desire to take the title of Hurricane Queen, *Legends* assumes the likeliest candidates for the role—as played by the PCs—had no wish of it either, prompting Tessa to eventually claim it.

TESSA FAIRWIND

HURRICANE QUEEN OF THE SHACKLES

CN FEMALE HALF-ELF PIRATE

Tessa Fairwind cuts a striking figure on the prow of her ship, its proud mast and pirate flag a challenge to everyone who sees it. She can hear the welcoming shouts from other captains, the roar of commerce—the bustle and chaos of Port Peril.

This is her city, her seat of power. The Hurricane Queen has come home, triumphant over Cheliox yet again.

SCOURGE OF CHELIX

Tessa was born on the sea, the product of a brief affair between a human merchant and an elven priest of Calistria. She learned to walk on the pitching decks of her mother's ship, and by the time she could talk, she was helping the sailors tie knots. She was her mother's pride and despair, stealing a boat when she was only 8 years old. Her mother found her, unrepentant, in the hands of the guards and judged, correctly, that this was only the start of greater delinquency. She signed her daughter over to Captain **Karise** (N female human ship captain), a stern friend who plied dangerous routes through the High Seas with her crew.

Under Karise's care, Tessa quickly became a competent sailor, but her wild streak never settled. At 15, she stole a Thuvian pleasure barge on a dare. Thuvian guards chased her for days before she pillaged and abandoned the barge. She escaped their grasp, but her fate was sealed by a price placed on her head. Within 3 years, her name was blazoned across the Inner Sea region, and she sailed through the arch of Aroden into the Arcadian Ocean to evade her pursuers.

Tessa set her sights on Cheliox early on, harassing their shipping routes and playing merry havoc with their interests. She scored many victories, and the price on her head nearly quadrupled before she turned 20. She made her fortune off of Cheliox's woes.

In the autumn of her twenty-third year, Tessa was caught in a trap laid by a Chelioxian captain who had been hunting her. Her ship was badly damaged, and she was knocked overboard. Chelioxian sailors scooped her up as she floated, stunned and badly wounded. She spent 2 years in a hard labor camp in the Menador Mountains before escaping.

Tessa never showed much political drive in her early life, but her prowess and reputation as a pirate captain quickly elevated her to the Pirate Council. Very soon after, she claimed the port of Quent as her home base and was declared the town's Mistress. She worked tirelessly to root out the traitors to the previous Hurricane King, with little success. When he fell, she eventually (though somewhat reluctantly) took the title of Hurricane Queen with her strength and guile.

Tessa rules from her town house in Port Peril, on Motaku Isle, venturing into the Shackles only when needed for official business. She isn't fond of the intrigues and endless paperwork she has found herself saddled with, but her generally affable nature and curiosity suit her new role well.

THE EYE OF THE STORM

Tessa never deliberately sought the title of Hurricane Queen, as she preferred a carefree lifestyle, but she has found that power offers her a refuge from consequences that she didn't have before. This rush of freedom has made Tessa somewhat reckless, and while that recklessness allows bold successes like

Tessa's recent raid on Cheliox, it has left more cautious pirates worried about the inevitable backlash. Some of the other pirate lords regard Tessa as a weak and irresponsible leader, someone unworthy of representing and guiding them. Others simply covet her position or are actively scheming against her in order to open the way for a Chelioxian invasion. For now, however, Tessa is too popular to challenge, and she's very skilled at finding ways to increase that popularity.



Whatever Tessa's weaknesses, she is frightfully aware of the Chelaxian threat, and devotes many of her resources toward monitoring their movements. Tessa is quick to sniff out Chelaxian rats among the crews of the Free Captains, and Queen Abrogail's navy has lost many vessels in its attempts to capture Tessa's ship, *Luck of the Draw*. Rumors that the navy has recently seized the nautical chop shop Rickety's Squibs to help fashion a new warship capable of taking on *Luck of the Draw* have merely earned scoffs from Tessa.

Tessa is a generally friendly and easy-going woman, honoring her commitments and proving loyal to her allies. Although she seems careless, she is more calculating than she lets on, and she has a reputation of getting ruthless payback on anyone who crosses her. She is not above using her beauty and reputation—Tessa has had a string of lovers and partners since she became a captain, most lasting no more than a few days. She claims that a broken heart has taught her to love quickly and lightly.

Some say she and Shimali Manux have a history, and that perhaps Shimali is the one who caused that broken heart, though such suggestions tend to quickly burn through Tessa's good humor. The Hurricane Queen's feelings on the Vidric captain do seem conflicted; at times, Tessa laughs at the name, claiming Manux has only luck to thank for her success. Other times, Tessa speaks of Shimali's exploits with admiration, comparing Shimali to some more well-known sailors and even to Tessa herself. Tessa's fickleness draws many questions from her other lieutenants, and the fact that the captains often have their confrontations interrupted by storms and other highly unlikely conveniences has only increased their suspicion.

Another possible culprit is the Vidric councilor Avarneus, whom Tessa claims courted and then betrayed her. Tessa has offered rewards for the capture of Avarneus after the spy ruined more than a few of her carefully laid plans for the invasion of Vidrian; however, she is too impetuous and easily distracted to maintain the sort of subtle hunt that might actually catch Avarneus. Tessa appears content to take her time with dealing with the spy, and Avarneus's newer inventions always seem to eventually make their way to *Luck of the Draw*, as evidenced by the clockwork dragonfly and other innovations stashed in the captain's quarters.

The most tempestuous of Tessa's relationships are those with the Firebrands, particularly the Sapphire Butterfly. In public, Tessa expresses her dislike of the Firebrands, but she has quietly assisted them on occasion. She has also, much to the delight of bards everywhere, had plenty of temporary alliances and assignations with certain Firebrands, which both offer her entertainment and boost her reputation. The Sapphire Butterfly and Tessa have had several encounters in the years since Ravounel's founding, usually when the vigilante is aboard one of the many Vidric ships she uses to traverse the Inner Sea. Each encounter has ended peacefully, however, with the most recent meeting ending with an exchanging of letters between the two. House Thrune's seal on each letter suggests an exchanging of state secrets, but Tessa was quick to hush the whispers aboard her ship when she returned.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Avarneus (page 22), Sapphire Butterfly (page 94), Shimali Manux (page 96)

NOTABLE FREE CAPTAINS

The following Free Captains have drawn Tessa's attention or ire.

Hurgrar, King of Waves (CE male dwarf pirate): The self-declared king of the Shackles has recently taken to stowing away on other ships and murdering the captains, simply for the sake of chaos.

Inexia dis Galazario (LN female human Free Captain): This Chelaxian fugitive rose quickly among the ranks of the *Helper's Dance*, eventually leading a mutiny. She has since publicly challenged Tessa and sunk the ships of two of Tessa's allies.

Toba the Tempest (CN male tengu cleric): The tengu captain has a long history with Tessa, serving as the jinx eater on the *Luck of the Draw* before securing his own ship. He still maintains a close friendship with Tessa.

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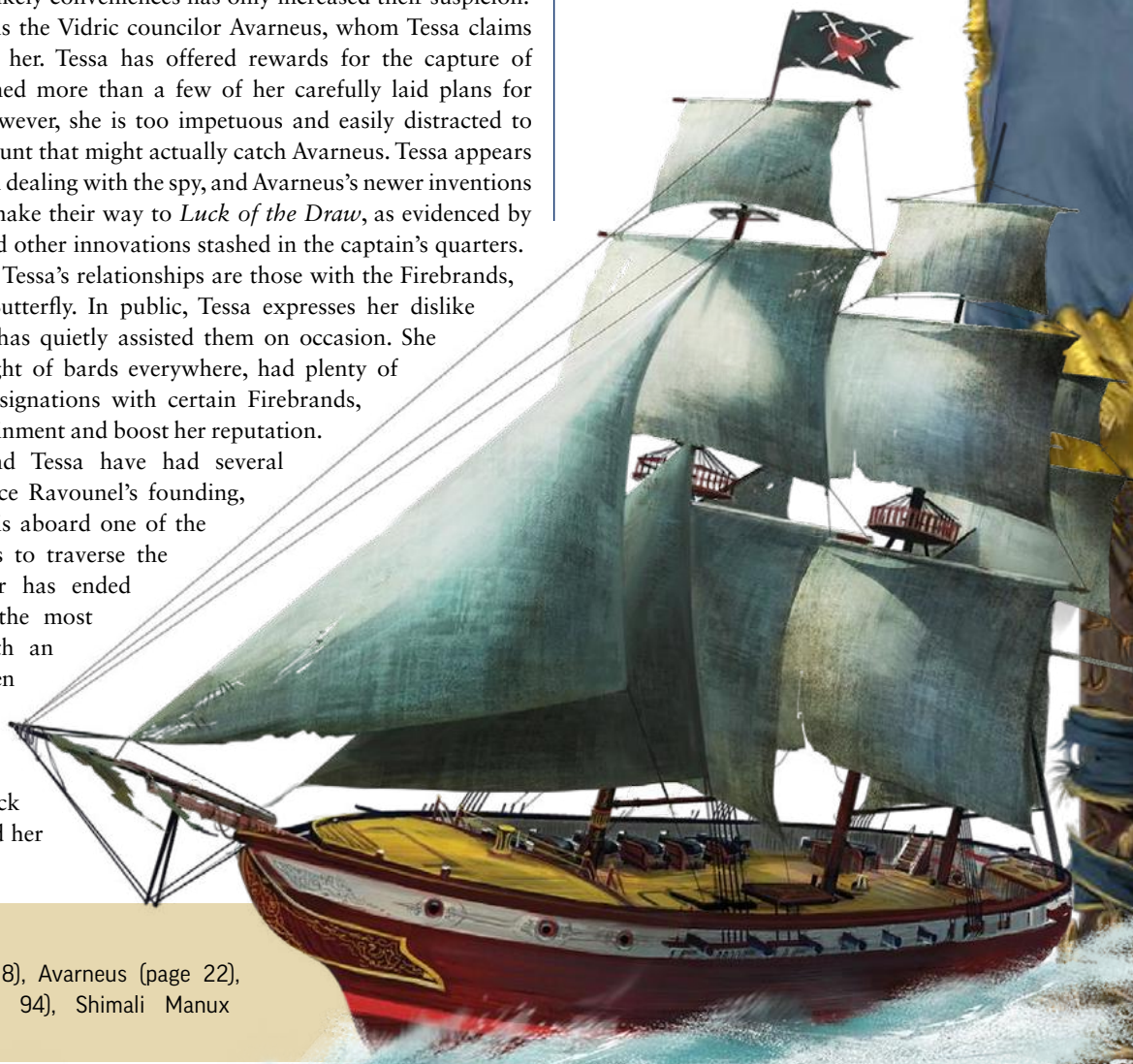
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THIRA ASH-EYES

LINNORM KING OF THE THANELANDS

N FEMALE HUMAN MAGUS

"I am leaving for Valenhall," Sveinn Blood-Eagle said. He spoke quietly, as if to himself. The crackle of fire in the hearth was almost louder than he was. "I will be announcing it in two days."

Thira tensed at the words. She closed the scroll she was reading and looked up at her father, standing by the window and looking at the horizon as if he could see Valenhall already. "Then..." she started, but paused. She knew her father well enough. If he had spoken it, then his mind was set.

"Then I wish you safe travels," she said instead. She stood up, grabbing her book and her sword.

"Are you certain of your choice still?" he asked as Thira reached the door.

"You think my brothers more capable?" she asked.

"You know I don't," he said, turning to face her. "I only question your choice of prey. The message you will send."

Thira stood by the door and looked at him. She could see worry in his eyes, though he wasn't looking at her. He was looking past her.

"Do you remember my duel with Josvein all those years ago?" Thira spoke. "Over his mockery when we returned from some hunt?"

The hint of a fond smile appeared on her father's face.

"I do not remember the hunt itself anymore," Thira continued. "What I do remember is how soundly I thrashed that boy, and how it didn't matter. I was called a cheater for fighting smarter, since I knew I was not as strong. A cheater for using every advantage I had."

Sveinn shook his head and looked back out the window.

"I paid attention after that. I kept my ears open. I understood. Not only was I raised in the shadows of your heroics and grand accomplishments, but I was also never the tallest and strongest child. Whoever thought of me did not think of Thira Ash-Eyes. They thought of a traitor and a witch. They thought of Sveinn Blood-Eagle's weakling daughter."

"You are no weakling," Sveinn said. "No traitor. And no witch."

"What I am doesn't matter. When our own people, the so-called friends I grew up with think of me that way, what chance is there that another linnorm king will ever respect me?"

Sveinn let the silence stay for a few moments.

"I worked hard to earn our lands the respect they deserve," he finally said.

"And I will make sure that respect isn't lost," Thira replied. "I will be climbing uphill in a blizzard, but I promise I have thought about every step. We will need a strong and sturdy image when you leave, even if it has to be unfriendly at first."

With that, Sveinn nodded with a deep sigh, and Thira left the room.

She gathered her traveling gear and was quietly out of Kalsgard before the light of dawn.

CHALLENGE

Thira walked through the snow in the manner the Varki ranger had shown her when she had shared a meal and a span of time with him at his camp. He was Nankou, he had said, and he had slain his own linnorm to lay claim to the throne of Icemark. She had not heard of his victory, she said, but would take word of it to the Thanelands and from there let it spread beyond. She said nothing of his heritage, and what the Ulfen people might think of Nankou taking the title. He said nothing of her father. Thira liked him for that.

She had spent a good amount of time researching her plans, focusing on the king whom other kings scoffed at, White Estrid. While learning about



White Estrid's accomplishments and rise to power, Thira had come to respect the other woman as a ruler and as an accomplished leader, but Thira could already see the ugly comparisons that would be drawn between the two of them. And so, Thira had chosen White Estrid as the target of her message to the world of her own power and strength.

Knowing White Estrid's attachment to her crag linnorm and her controversial choice of keeping it as a pet rather than killing it, Thira had spent a great deal of time and effort hunting another of its kind. The crag linnorm Thira had tracked and found months ago was asleep when she arrived at its lair. The temptation to cut its head off in its sleep was strong, but she was well aware she couldn't do that. It would have to be an honest, one-on-one fight. Thira closed her eyes, going through the magic she had at hand and keeping her plan in mind. With a deep breath, she jumped down, sword at the ready, the runes on her face glowing bright. The linnorm's orange eyes opened and quickly focused on her.

"Do you have a name?" Thira shouted, her voice echoing in the cavern.

The linnorm rose, its head reaching up high and looking down at Thira. "Zahasha," it said with a hiss, letting the sound drag on.

"I am Thira Ash-Eyes, and I will kill you for my right to rule."

The linnorm seemed amused as it lunged for her. Thira dodged aside and let a bright green ray of light fly off her sword to strike the linnorm. Panic quickly set in behind Zahasha's eyes as smoke rose from the horrific wound left by the spell. The linnorm's stance changed, from a hunter toying with its food to prey fighting for survival. It rushed her again, and this time Thira let her guard down, letting the claws rake across her body. She could feel the bright burn as it ripped open wounds upon her arm, yet the creature was weaker than she had expected. Thira conjured another spell and then faltered for a moment; she couldn't risk destroying the linnorm's head. In that moment of hesitation, the linnorm rounded on her, its tail wrapping around her and pulling her toward its venomous teeth.

Thira took the risk, channeling powerful life-draining magic through her sword. As soon as the sword hit the linnorm's neck, the spell took effect, nearly jerking the blade from her grasp as it sank deeper. The horrified linnorm clawed at her, to no avail, as Thira pushed on. The tail let go just as the creature's head fell to the ground.

RETURN

When she walked through the gates of Kalsgard several days later, her arms numb from the linnorm's claws and from dragging the beast's heavy head behind her, she was surrounded by whispers of doubt and disbelief. The shock and confusion that started at the gate turned to shouts of cheating and witchcraft by the time she had reached the keep. She heard her siblings' voices, Birgun Whale-Eater and Yngvilda the Bold, those who had squabbled for power when their father departed. By the time she arrived at the castle doors, one voice was loudest above all. Uldren Orcsbane, her eldest brother and the most ambitious of her siblings, who had always been among the first to discredit her. She slowly turned to face him, and the crowd quieted down.

"If you don't believe me, bring a priest to the throne room, and I will recount the whole fight before the judgment of the gods.

"After that, however, you will apologize to your king."

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Baba Yaga (page 30), Birgun Whale-Eater (CN human male bard), Nankou (page 88), Sveinn Blood-Eagle (CN male human barbarian), Uldren Orcsbane (CN human male barbarian), White Estrid (page 116), Yngvilda the Bold (LN female human fighter)



UNFINISHED BUSINESS

For years Thira's father, Sveinn Blood-Eagle, plotted to strike out against the nation of Irrisen and reclaim the land Baba Yaga had taken from the linnorm kings. Knowing his years were growing short, Sveinn had recently been increasing his preparations, spurred on by news of the fall of the winter queen and the change in rulership. Yet Sveinn abandoned his plan and sailed across the sea to the land of Valenhal, leaving his grand mission unfulfilled. His actions sent a ripple of confusion through the Thanelands, with many wondering aloud what reasons could have caused Sveinn to so depart. Some blame underhanded tactics from Baba Yaga and her daughters or treachery from Sveinn's heirs; others quietly suggest an unromantic villain such as a stroke or heart attack finally laid the old warrior low. Thira Ash-Eyes might know, but that would require her peers to ask her opinion, and to thereby accept that Sveinn considered her worthy of keeping his counsel where others were not.

MISSING IN ACTION

Lictor Vidoc has pressed his agents to determine whether there are any survivors of the Order of the Coil in Vidrian who might be debriefed about that Order's fate.

The Order of the Scourge suspects that the Coil may have overstepped its bounds, and thus their interest is not to visit retribution on Vidrian's revolutionaries.

However, because of the Coil's past abuses, Hellknights are unwelcome in Vidrian.

Accordingly, Lictor Vidoc has been forced to work through intermediaries.

TOULON VIDOC

LEADER OF THE ORDER OF THE SCOURGE

LN MALE HUMAN HELLKNIGHT

The charming, capable Lictor Toulon Vidoc is the leader of the Hellknight Order of the Scourge, the oldest Hellknight order and the one perhaps most often at odds with Cheliox's ruling houses. The Order of the Scourge is dedicated to apprehending criminals of every stripe, from street toughs and isolated serial killers to corrupt merchants and casually murderous aristocrats who use their positions to cover their crimes. In Cheliox, investigating the misdeeds of the powerful often ends poorly for the investigator, but Lictor Vidoc's deft political maneuvering and the long list of nobles who owe him personal favors have given the Scourge Hellknights a relatively free hand to pursue their duties. Without the lictor's influence, it is likely that the Order of the Scourge would have run afoul of House Thrune long ago.

Toulon Vidoc was born to a prosperous merchant family in Egorian. He joined the dottari as a youth, but as he was not of the nobility, his prospects for advancement were slim. Nevertheless, he applied himself energetically to the work, learning investigative techniques and developing the beginnings of an informant network that would serve him throughout his career. Whenever the young dottari encountered someone who took policing seriously, he applied himself to learning whatever he could from such masters, irrespective of their rank or background. This made him an anomaly in Egorian's status-obsessed society, where one's family name was often more important than one's deeds.

Vidoc left the dottari after two of his cases ended in frustration. In the first, he uncovered a nest of Skinsaw cultists who had been murdering slum dwellers in Egorian. He believed—and believes to this day—that Asmodean aristocrats used the cult killings to cover their own murders, which were attributed to the Skinsaw cult and the cases officially closed despite Vidoc's protests. He still wonders who those Asmodeans were, and why his superiors were so adamant that the case be closed.

The second case struck closer to home. Vidoc's parents were ruined when a ship in which they'd been heavily invested was seized by pirates in the Shackles. The cargo was lost along with all hands—an unusual level of savagery that tipped Vidoc off to the probability that the massacre was meant to cover something. Vidoc began investigating and soon determined that a competitor had deliberately betrayed the ship's route and defenses to ensure that his own ship's cargo would be the only one to arrive safely, thereby tripling his profits. However, the conspirators in the Shackles were no ordinary pirates but something far worse, and not remotely human.

Before Vidoc could finish his investigation, it was shut down unceremoniously. Egorian's dottari had no authority to investigate anything in the Shackles. His personal interest, given the loss of his parents' fortune, made his involvement suspect. And the Egorian merchant who had orchestrated the scheme died suddenly, under mysterious circumstances, leaving no culprit left to bring to justice in Cheliox.

THE ROAD TO HELL

Frustrated, Vidoc left the dottari and joined the Order of the Scourge. Here, his lack of noble ancestry posed no obstacle, and he rose quickly through the ranks. Toulon Vidoc rapidly developed a reputation for precise thinking, dogged determination, and tremendous personal courage. His years navigating Egorian's politics also left him far more adept at manipulating the levers of power than most Hellknights could ever be.

Within less than a decade, Vidoc rose from a rank-and-file Hellknight to lictor. He shaped the Hellknights under his command in his own image, constantly exhorting them to develop new policing strategies, build up informant

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networks, earn the trust of the populace, and never flinch from bringing wrongdoers to justice. At the same time, he cultivated grateful nobles throughout Chelaxian society, ensuring a certain level of autonomy and protection for his investigators.

His career has been burnished by his Order's successes. Five years ago, Vidoc secretly captured the Bellflower Network's previous leader, Farmer **Hannelore Fallows** (NG female halfling abolitionist). The hellspawn Hellknight **Jheraal** (LN female tiefling^{APG} human hellknight) solved a series of unsettling murders in Westcrown, ultimately tracing them to agents of the graveknight Order of the Crux. Master of Blades **Uldrannas Haelcant** (LG male human hellknight) continues to pursue a 40-year-old ring of necromantically influenced organ harvesters and kidnappers. Though he has not succeeded in apprehending its ringleaders, he has greatly diminished its activity.

The Order of the Scourge, under Lictor Vidoc's guidance, has also taken a passing interest in the disappearance of Absalom's primarch, Lord **Gyr of Gixx** (N male human rogue), and the appointment of Wynsal Starborn as acting primarch in Gyr's place. The Hellknights' interest is to ensure that Absalom continues to run smoothly, as the city-state is too important a trading power to be allowed to slip into chaos.

Vidoc's accomplishments unsurprisingly drew the attention of Queen Abrogail II of Cheliah. While Vidoc had so far managed to maneuver around Abrogail's interest in him—an interest he believes may have bordered on the romantic more so than the political—he recently earned her scrutiny due to Order of the Scourge's investigation into the queen herself. The Order posits that Abrogail may have had a hand in Cheliah's recent turmoil for political or financial gain. News of Abrogail's attempts to hire Blood Mistress Jakalyn to dispatch the queen's enemies, potentially including members of the Order of the Scourge, have only pushed this investigation to the Order's highest priority. Vidoc has halted the investigation for the moment as he considers his strategy, but stirrings throughout the Order of the Scourge suggest that the Hellknights will not be daunted by Abrogail and the investigation will be moving forward. A conflict between these powers seems near inevitable.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Avarneus (page 22), Jakalyn (page 56), Magdalena and Martum Fallows (page 84), Wynsal Starborn (page 118)

OLD FAVORS

A peculiarity of Toulon Vidoc's early career was his lack of interest in claiming credit for his successes. It was the work itself that absorbed him, not the acclaim that followed. While Vidoc was quick to volunteer for the hardest cases, he was also happy to let other dottari claim credit for the apprehensions. These traits made him invaluable to many of Egorian's ambitious young officers, who lacked his skills but had the right names for promotion. To this day, many senior officers in Egorian's dottari owe their positions to Toulon Vidoc, who earned the laurels that they've been resting on ever since. While Vidoc has never actually threatened to expose such frauds, these senior dottari are acutely aware that he could, and as such, they have a strong interest in accommodating Vidoc's requests.

ENTERTAINING THE MASSES

Watcher-Lord Ulthun personally vouched for all of his goblin retainers upon arriving in Absalom, resulting in a minor scandal among Absalom high society. Yet the scandal was so minor and amusing it has caused many residents of Absalom to view goblins as curiosities—which, while not ideal, is still better than as threats. It also gained Ulthun a cadre of curious and loyal Absalom goblin volunteers, though how helpful many of them are is debatable.

ULTHUN II

WATCHER-LORD IN EXILE

LG MALE HUMAN PALADIN

The destruction of Lastwall sometimes reminds Ulthun of his family's origins. His grandparents fled from the horrific violence of the priests of Zon-Kuthon in Nidal, arriving in Lastwall as refugees. They laid down roots in Vigil, and Ulthun was born there in 4690 AR. From an early age, Ulthun nurtured a passion for literature and history. But after forming a habit of defending other children from bullies, Ulthun grew certain that it was the duty of the powerful to protect the vulnerable. He then dedicated himself to becoming one of Lastwall's crusaders and a paladin of Iomedae, the goddess of righteous valor, justice, and honor.

In 4709 AR, however, his plans were eclipsed. Though Ulthun was only 19, the Precentors Martial of Vigil's War College elected him as the watcher-lord of Lastwall. Despite his youth, his tours of service in Belkzen proved Ulthun's unparalleled commitment to the crusaders' virtues. For the subsequent decade, Ulthun led his people with the backing of his advisors in the Precentors Martial.

The people of Lastwall celebrated Ulthun as a measured ruler dedicated to social advancement and vigilant defense of Lastwall's borders. Though still a romantic at heart, Ulthun refrained from mingling with the suitors that flocked in Castle Overwatch's courtyard to vie for his attention.

During the tenth year of Ulthun's rule, Lastwall faced a calamity. In 4719 AR, Tar-Baphon, the Whispering Tyrant, broke free from his prison in Gallowspire. Craving vengeance against the nation that oversaw his imprisonment, Tar-Baphon detonated a shard of the *Shield of Aroden* in Vigil, vaporizing the capital city in an instant, then set his hordes of undead across the entirety of Lastwall.

Ulthun fought valiantly alongside the crusaders that had once trained him, intending to die with his old comrades in accordance with the vows of self-sacrifice he had made to Iomedae over a decade past. But a group of humble goblins convinced Ulthun to stand down, begging for his help to save their tribe from the undead. Recognizing the goblins would die without someone to help them flee to safety and knowing that many knights would be too clouded by prejudice to offer assistance, the encounter reminded Ulthun that his greater duty was to his suffering people—no matter what form they took. Ulthun fled his collapsing nation with the goblins and his remaining knights at his side, vowing to one day return, bring an end to Tar-Baphon, and rebuild his home.

Almost a year has passed since the fall of Lastwall. After months of journeying, the last watcher-lord arrived in Absalom empty-handed, just as his grandparents had once arrived in Lastwall. The government of Absalom welcomed Ulthun with open arms, allowing Ulthun to establish a makeshift embassy in the Precipice Quarter, a neighborhood that had been nearly annihilated by an earthquake. Ulthun now works to revitalize the Precipice Quarter, building a community for refugees grieving the loss of their home. With each passing week, more newcomers arrive, all seeking to assist the survivors of Lastwall.

The displaced ruler now gathers his strength in preparation for the reclamation of his nation. Ulthun provides shelter to other refugees, spins stories to win over new allies, and



negotiates to secure the materials and transportation they'll need for the coming war. Yet, a surfeit of doubts and guilt lies underneath his efforts. Even as Ulthun wonders if the fall of Lastwall grew out of his own shortcomings, he questions whether he still holds enough faith in Iomedae's pure ideals to see him through. But, with each dawn, Ulthun pushes past his inner turmoil, as the return of Tar-Baphon presents a threat far beyond such petty matters.

LORD IN EXILE

Though Ulthun has done his best to remain a steady pillar in these trying times, his pain, frustration, and regret are not demons that can be banished by a sword. It is clear to most of his entourage that the watcher-lord has sublimated much of his frustration into reclaiming the Precipice Quarter, using what small victories he can claim as a balm for the defeats he's suffered. Those knights closest to him worry about his psyche and health, especially after Ulthun uncovered and killed a manipulative undead creature known as a lovelorn that seemed to be drawn to him. While Ulthun tries to seek out help when the burden becomes too much, his status as a public figure in the eye of the world has left him sorely without confidants.

The current acting primarch of Absalom, Wynsal Starborn, has proven a steadfast friend in these trying times. Both men have committed their lives to military service, and more importantly, Wynsal Starborn gave Ulthun and his people a home when they came to Absalom utterly destitute. Though Ulthun genuinely cares for his brother-in-arms, he also hopes that his relationship with Wynsal will pave the way for a long-term relationship with Absalom's Grand Council. To this end, Ulthun actively wants Wynsal to remain the acting primarch or seek a full appointment as primarch of Absalom, even though he knows that Wynsal hopes to replace himself with a legitimate successor. Ironically, Wynsal seems to consider Ulthun II the ideal candidate for that replacement.

THE LONG PATH FORWARD

Ulthun devotes most of his time to mustering the strength needed to defeat Tar-Baphon. His efforts take a great number of forms, but three projects currently demand his attention in particular. Ulthun has heard of a group of survivors who have fled to the woods near Three Pines Ford. If the rumors are true, they are under the protection of the three dryad sisters that the town was named for. Ulthun is desperate to send agents to smuggle the survivors out of Three Pines Ford, and to secure the dryad sisters as allies against Tar-Baphon's forces.

Ulthun also hopes to send a contingent of soldiers to the port city Vellumis, where priestess **Aylunna Varvatos** (LG female human cleric of Iomedae) is still orchestrating evacuations to Absalom alongside volunteers from the Magaambya. While she has done well to maintain Vellumis's defensive perimeter, Ulthun hopes that, by bolstering her forces, Aylunna will be able to reclaim some of the surrounding territory from Tar-Baphon's army. This would allow Lastwall's forces to take the first steps toward establishing the forward bases and supply lines that they would need in the upcoming war.

In addition to rescuing his people, Ulthun is searching for powerful weapons to challenge Tar-Baphon's arcane might. With that in mind, he has turned his gaze to the half-sunken ruins of Beldrin's Bluff, which lie just off the coast of the Precipice Quarter. He plans to send a team of intrepid adventurers into the ruins to seek out an artifact of the legendary arcanist Beldrin, despite rumors of sea devils plundering Beldrin's fallen tower.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Iomedae (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 28), Kalabrynn and Clarethe Iomedar (page 66), Tar-Baphon (page 104), Wynsal Starborn (page 118), Zon-Kuthon (*Lost Omens Gods and Magic* 50)



ULTHUN'S PROPAGANDA

Ulthun II currently serves as the locus of Lastwall's recruitment campaign. While Ulthun remains in Absalom, telling what tales he can and glad-handing who he must to continue the flow of gold and supplies to the remains of Lastwall, the knights Kalabrynn and Clarethe Iomedar serve on the front lines of the battle against the Whispering Tyrant. Kalabrynn oversees the training of recruits at Vellumis, one of the few remaining cities in the nation that still stands. She works closely with her child, Clarethe, whose boldness inspires recruits and veterans alike to decisive action. As a knight-reclaimant, Clarethe is eager to take the offensive in the war against Tar-Baphon and reclaim the ruins of Vigil, a brash move that perhaps fails to perceive how dire a threat Tar-Baphon poses to the soldiers of Lastwall. Yet Ulthun is beginning to sympathize with Clarethe's position, as his forced role as a public fundraising figure has taught him the value of a prominent victory for the rest of the world to rally around.

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Say one more thing about my head
and I'll bite yours off.

—Boiltongue, to a stubbornly
traditionalist Ulfen visitor

WHITE ESTRID

LINNORM KING OF THE IRONBOUND ISLANDS

CN FEMALE HUMAN BARBARIAN

Four fierce eyes survey the throne room of Halgrim, two belonging to a great crag linnorm and two belonging to an imposing woman seated in the center of a group of columns. Each column represents an island in her domain, the Ironbound Islands. Her royal regalia is cropped at the arms, revealing pale white skin and toned muscle. A powerful woman with white hair and pale blue eyes from her albinism, Estrid wears ornately decorated armor that covers her body thoroughly to protect her from the sunlight. Even her royal trappings are fashioned from thick leather, as she is perpetually ready to do battle. Her battle axe is always at her side, the hilt hewn from the dark rock of the Ironbound Islands. Banners around her hall depict sea creatures locked in combat with armored women. Claw motifs adorn her throne, as if when she presides over the hall, she does so from the fallen body of a great beast. This is the Linnorm King White Estrid, scoffed at by other Ulfen in her land, yet so far unchallenged in her rule.

As a young girl, Estrid joined a hearth with the intention of training as a warrior. During her time at the hearth, Estrid refined her skills with the sword as well as in sailing. After leading the fleet of longboats she sailed with on a great raid on the port of Nisroch in 4704 AR, Estrid broke through a blockade at the Arch of Aroden and ferried the raided treasure directly into the harbor at Absalom, the City at the Center of the World. Due to this and other exploits, Estrid gained a reputation as daring in the face of danger.

When tales of a crag linnorm taking up residence on one of the islands struck the ears of her crew, Estrid was the first to call for the anchor to be lifted, and the first to set off for the glory of the ultimate prize: the head of a linnorm. After tracking the creature to the mysterious Island of Ancestors, White Estrid battled fiercely with the linnorm **Boiltongue** (CE male crag linnorm). Yet in the final moments, instead of killing the monster, Estrid accepted the beast's plea to parlay and bound him to her service, agreeing to take Boiltongue alive as her thrall. Estrid returned to Halgrim to claim the title of linnorm king as her own, where Boiltongue stands behind her throne, a living trophy and avatar of her power. King Estrid also returned from the isle with a powerful weapon, though she will not share anything of its origin beyond that it was a gift from earth spirits that inhabit the island, making the elders of Halgrim uneasy about who or what Estrid is beholden to.

Despite her detractors, White Estrid is currently one of the longest-established linnorm kings. She rules with ferocity, and continually engages in military moves as well as diplomatic ones. She encourages agrarian pursuits, and due to the presence of Boiltongue, her farmlands are often the most secure—to her critics' chagrin. Estrid also encourages groups outside of the Ulfen to settle in her lands. Her subjects include orcs, half-orcs, and dwarves.

A nervous alliance between the western kingdoms of the linnorm kings has so far held, but the recent defeat of King **Opir Eightfingers** (CN male human barbarian) by the Runelord Belimarius and new rulers



in the Thanelands and Icemark have added a sense of tension to the lands. White Estrid is eager to use that tension to her advantage in building her armies, security, and wealth in the face of a changing world.

FRIEND TO THE PECULIAR

Though in many ways she's an ideal Ulfen warrior in her ambition and daring, White Estrid seems to enjoy finding others who upend expectations like herself. She has heard of Nankou and has attempted to contact him directly through diplomatic channels, but her attempts have revealed that he is often away from his throne—Estrid has had the most luck in reaching Nankou's mother's household, as the new linnorm king is most often found in the tundra of his kingdom rather than his throne room. She is impressed with his tenacity and is glad to see another king breaking with traditional Ulfen assumptions. Ever an astute ruler, White Estrid also sees a potential ally in Nankou and the kingdom of Icemark, especially if there is to be a fight with Belimarius to rally together for.

Thira Ash-Eyes, who recently rose to power in the Thanelands, is a curiosity to White Estrid. King Estrid is intrigued by the fact that Thira was the one who claimed the throne of the most powerful linnorm king in the land, especially as she was not the expected successor to her father, **Sveinn Blood-Eagle** (CN male human barbarian). Estrid has not met with Thira Ash-Eyes yet, though she plans to contact the new linnorm king of Kalsgard with intentions of renewing the treaty between their kingdoms. Estrid is no fool, however—she is well aware of Thira's unstated challenge toward her in deliberately seeking the same type of linnorm that Estrid vanquished, and then in emphasizing how Thira killed it with her own strength instead of taming it with a gift from the earth. Estrid is also unsure of how Thira came to be so powerful without attracting attention before, and she's using diplomatic relations to dig further into Thira's background.

Estrid and Boiltongue's relationship remains enigmatic, though in public the linnorm always shows silent deference. Estrid is never cruel to Boiltongue, admiring the strength of the linnorm, but his subservience and his nickname of "Estrid's pet" are not kind to his pride. Boiltongue remains bitter at times about the trade of his self-determination for his life, but he also acknowledges that Estrid gained a potent strategic advantage in choosing to not strike him down. The linnorm exists in a balancing act of resentment and respect that can easily swing in either direction depending on the situation and Boiltongue's mood, but as the years have gone on and he has accepted his fate, the pendulum tends toward respect. He is a great ally to the city of Halgrim, as well as the Ironbound Islands, and roams it as a protector, a duty he even seems to enjoy providing. He speaks little, unless the validity of Estrid's claim is challenged—then he is quick to affirm that she did best him in one-on-one combat.

Estrid considers the biggest threat to her kingdom to be Runelord Belimarius; the runelord's defeat of Opir Eightfingers means that her hungry gaze can now turn to the Ironbound Islands. Estrid is wary of Belimarius' ambition and has doubled the security around her person, as well as increased the number of longboat crews that venture into the Steaming Sea on patrol. Recognizing that the runelord is attempting to goad Estrid into brash action, the linnorm king has outmaneuvered these political traps, though she knows this may not remain effective for long.

King Estrid is also keen on recruiting heroes to further explore the mysterious Island of the Ancestors. To this end, she has reached out to the Pathfinders in Iceferry Lodge, though she has proven enigmatic toward her goals or the potential contents of the island.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Belimarius (page 34), Nankou (page 88), Thira Ash-Eyes (page 110), Torrig Banestone of Ullerskad (CN male dwarf warmage), Uldren Orcsbane (CN male human barbarian)

BOILTONGUE'S TRAVELS

As you know, Boiltongue leaves Halgrim once every year, typically after the harvest, only to return some days later. I finally was able to convince some trackers to accept enough coin to follow the linnorm on his journey. Weeks later, only one scout returned, gravely injured. Unexpectedly, she reported that Boiltongue had sired children and was retuning to a hidden lair deep in the Stormspear Mountains to visit them and his mate. This information could prove invaluable. If we could slay these children and convince Boiltongue or Estrid that it was the work of one of the newer kings, we can expect a very bloody and distracting war. This would allow us a great opportunity to unite our armies and march on the Ironbound Islands as we've discussed. This is an exciting prospect and we will discuss this more next time we meet.

—A letter from Torrig Banestone of Ullerskad to Uldren of Kalsgard

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CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Legends assumes that Absalom's army narrowly routed Tar-Baphon's forces in the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path. Though the captain of the First Guard, Lord **Rothos of House Vastille** (LN male human fighter), fared better than countless other heroes, he was struck with so many wounds and curses that he was forced to retire. His successor is First Siege Gear **Chun Hye Seung** (CG female human engineer), the master engineer formerly in charge of the city's defenses.



WYNSAL STARBORN

ACTING PRIMARCH OF ABSALOM

LG MALE HUMAN FIGHTER

To Chun Hye Seung, Captain of the First Guard and Commander Militant of Absalom:

Greetings, my friend. Seeing your title written out in full at the top of a missive from the primarch must seem strange. I should know; it was the case when I served as captain, too. Congratulations on your promotion. It is well earned, and my only regret is that Rothos suffered so terribly at the hands of the Whispering Tyrant to create the vacancy you now occupy. He was a good soldier and an even better commander. His reports are certainly much better organized and insightful than mine ever were, so your time reading them will be time well spent.

These are strange days, and this was brought most recently to my attention when I visited a new orphanage opening in Eastgate. It was the Hodley Manor! Over on the Stag Road, where I used to explore as a child. Someone bought the manor, it seems, and renovated it. I didn't have the heart to tell them how all the neighborhood children considered it haunted back in our day.

I can already see your eyebrows coming together in suspicion and concern. Wynsal Starborn, known for blunt forthrightness in decades of service to the First Watch, meandering into an anecdote? Have the years he spent on the Grand Council after his retirement instilled the tendency to circumlocution inherent in all politicians? Has his appointment as Acting Primarch of Absalom, Acting Siege Lord, Acting Protector of Kortos, and Acting Everything-Else-Lord-Gyr-Left-Behind-When-He-Vanished eroded his sanity in the last four years? Not at all. I just feel like I have few true confidants these days. The weight of managing a chaotic and ancient and marvelous city such as ours is crushing, but I can't publicly show it. Some say I've seized power, or engineered a military coup, and that I crave to drop the "Acting" from my title of "Acting Primarch." But you know better, that I'm driven by duty and not desire. If Lord Gyr came back today, I'd be toasting his health in the Little Roofs with my old comrades tonight.

I'm not giving up hope of finding him, or of finding another worthy successor to be primarch. Have you met Watcher-Lord Ulthun II from Lastwall? Seeing a beloved nation destroyed is the greatest burden I can imagine, and he's held up through it all. He's a paragon of resolve. If the Whispering Tyrant is to be the burden of our age, I sometimes think Ulthun should be the primarch to face him. Yet Ulthun has already lost so much to the Whispering Tyrant that perhaps that would be another cruelty heaped upon the pile. I can only hope that Ulthun has confidants in his troubles, and is right this moment penning a letter to a friend, like this one I'm writing to you, sharing his worries and weariness.

I'm far too old now to be naive, but I remain an idealist. Leaders with nobility and a sense of purpose bring out the best in those they lead. My enemies are many, from invaders jealous of Absalom's wealth to career politicians who crave more power (and, frankly, the latter are far more dangerous than the former). These enemies all have one thing in common: they believe rule by force is superior to rule by example. They are wrong.

In your new leadership role, that is probably my most critical advice. Oh, and stay away from Hodley Manor. Just in case.

—Wynsal Starborn

To Chun Hye Seung, Captain of the First Guard and Commander Militant of Absalom:

Greetings, my friend, though I fear I write to you in the spirit of business rather than companionship. Beside me sits an urgent missive from Pactbroker Hashim ibn Sayyid, warning me of a gnoll slaver and fugitive named Shimon-Je who is running one step ahead of the law. He believes she is traveling to Absalom and has asked us to capture Shimon-Je and return her to Katapesh to face judgment. It's well within his rights to ask, and a task I am eager to perform. You know my

opinions on slavery well by this point, and I am certain you will assign this to your most trustworthy agents.

There are rumors that slavery may soon fall out of favor in Katapesh. Perhaps they are just rumors, but they give me hope. The fires of abolition seem to be catching. I'm proud of my part in that, and what I've done for Absalom. Manumitting all the slaves was the only way this city repelled the Fiendflesh Siege three years ago. There is already a lot of ink spilled about the heroics of the Pathfinder Society, the power of the city's mages leaping to its defense, and the siege weapons you designed and built (and, frankly, cosseted!) in your former role as First Siege Gear. All these helped break the siege, but all of them would have failed if we didn't have the former slaves doing the backbreaking work of defense. They were doing it for themselves, for their own city, and not out of fear of a master's lash. That made all the difference, I believe. The proudest I have ever been of the Grand Council was when they declared slavery and the slave trade illegal throughout Absalom only a few weeks after my order of manumission. It goes to show that sometimes the best in anyone—or any group—comes not by ham-handed force, but by the independence to reach for great things.

In that same vein, I am pleased to say Avarneus from Vidrian has reached out to me again, with questions of diplomatic support. I am happy to give it. Although I consider revolutionaries dangerous, I understand that Vidrian is building something empowering from the ruins of something tyrannical. I support that. Perhaps I ought to introduce Avarneus to Andira Marusek on Andoran's People's Council. Certainly, the two have a common enemy in Abrogail Thrune, and keeping Cheliox in check benefits Absalom. Ah, but that's mercenary of me. These days it seems I can't help but think like that.

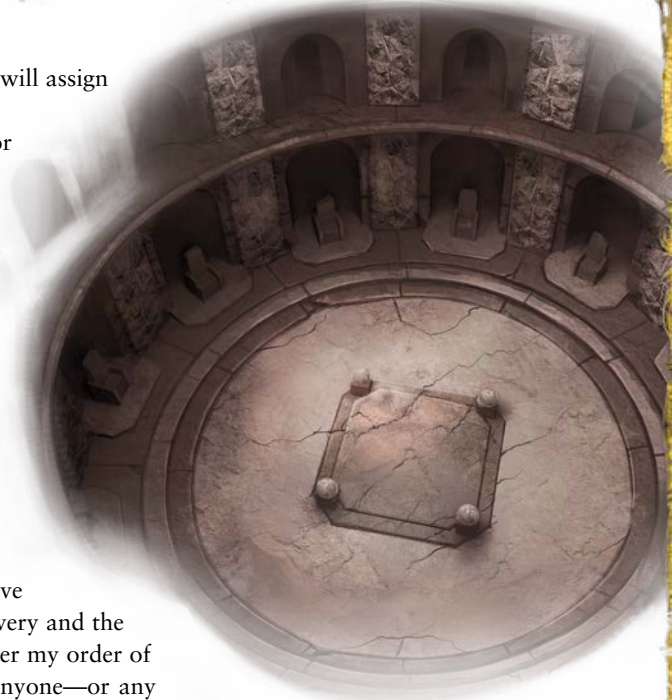
With regard to your report on the Spire of Nex, I've received confirmation from Venture-Captain Shevala Iorae that she and the Pathfinder Society are willing to fully cooperate with your efforts. Shevala especially should be a boon, as I doubt there are any who know more about that tower than Nex himself. Though I know better than to tell you how to do your duties for you, permit me to caution all of you to be careful, for my own peace of mind. You and I have stared down a number of sieges in recent years, but seeing the Spire so close in everyday life seems to have a pronounced effect on my worries.

Finally, to your vindication, I must at last concede to your concerns over Lictor Toulon Vidoc. I felt I had nothing to fear from his investigations—I have no political skeletons for him to ferret out from beneath my bed. But you were correct that someone has been feeding him bad evidence, even insisting that I might have had involvement in Lord Gyr's disappearance! Yet though I understand your personal stake in the matter, I reiterate that the First Guard fights Absalom's external enemies, not its internal ones. It is a heavy chain to wear, and one I knew well in my many years of service, but you must wear it. We both have our own battlefields, and you have foes enough on yours to deal with. I will handle mine.

—Wynsal Starborn

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Abrogail Thrune II (page 8), Andira Murasek (page 12), Avarneus (page 18), Deena al-Parishat (page 120), Lord Gyr of Gixx (N male human rogue), Hashim ibn Sayyid (page 50), Nex (page 90), Venture-Captain Shevala Iorae (N female human sorcerer), Shimon-Je (NG female gnomish abolitionist), Tar-Baphon (page 104), Toulon Vidoc (page 112), Ulthun II (page 114)



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EVERYTHING IS POLITICS

Wynsal's political situation is a complex one, fitting for a city as complex as Absalom. His initial appointment was to the emergency position of siege lord, when the true primarch of Absalom was found to be missing during an assault on the city known as the Fiendflesh Siege. Wynsal was then declared acting primarch until an official replacement for the position could be found. While Wynsal is happy to cede his position to a legitimately chosen successor, his impeccable character and effective governance have led many to voice their support for Wynsal being appointed to the primarchy in truth. This popularity, especially among Wynsal's former underlings in Absalom's military forces, has caused other political hopefuls to see Wynsal as a threat to their ambitions, and rumors have been spread by the nobility that Wynsal is intending a military coup. That Wynsal has been retired from the military and serving as a politician for over a decade hardly matters, as matters of truth rarely do in politics.

I did not hear what the genie-binder said to the shahiyan, and certainly could not describe the look of wrath that fell over her face. You would not believe the insults the woman could craft, nor the speed at which she could conjure them! The merchant looked to her husband for help, but the satrap only laughed at the display. It seems the throne of Kelesh sent the one woman as disagreeable as him for a bride, may Sarenrae save us all.
—overheard at a sandship caravan at the Katheer marketplace

XERBYSTES II, HEBIZID VRAJ, AND DEENA AL-PARISHAT

A Note Attached to a Heavy Purse

Steadfast One,

Please convey this gift to our bellicose friends in Canal Row. They will be concerned to learn of the Satrapian Guard exercises near Delenah, no doubt. A show of force would prove that Taldor's recent internal troubles have not weakened the empire's resolve. Once knowledge of the provocations in Golsifar becomes widespread, the Senate will have no choice but to take military action. Qadira will react in kind.

By My Own Hand,

X

XERBYSTES II

SATRAP OF QADIRA

N MALE HUMAN ARISTOCRAT

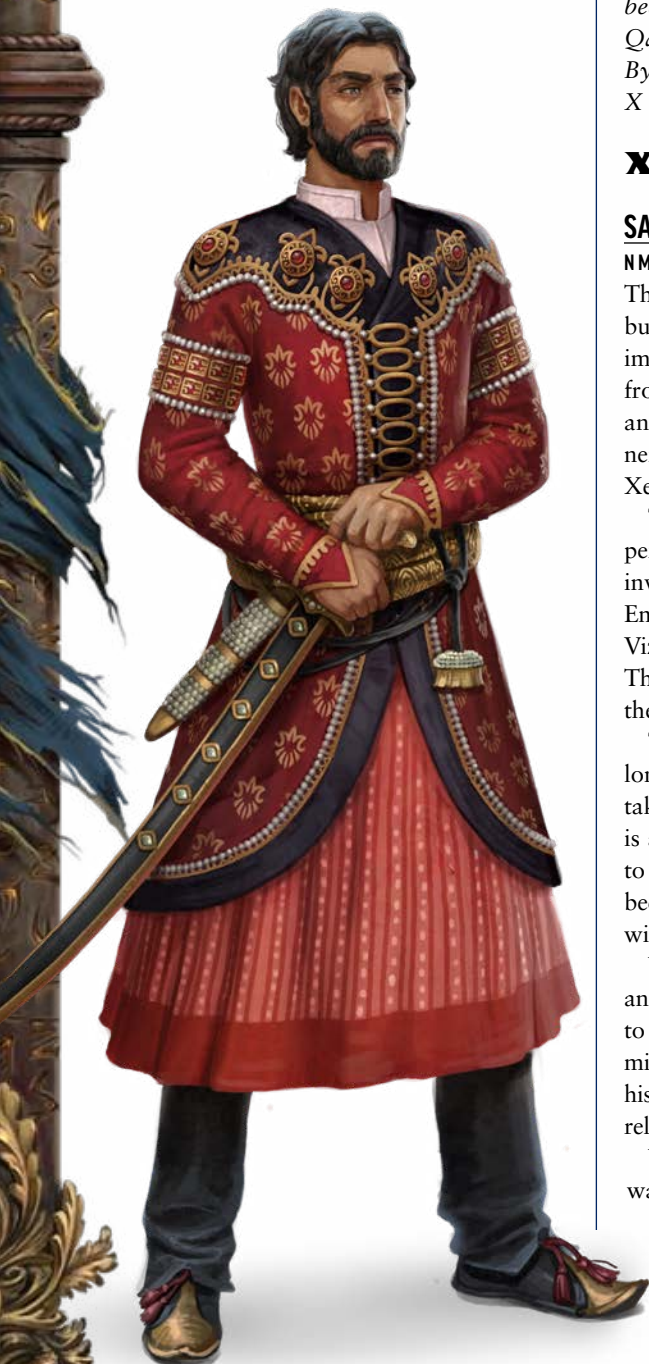
The province of Qadira is the frontier of perhaps the largest empire in the world, but early in his training to become satrap, a young Xerbystes realized that the imperial bureaucrats of the Padishah Empire of Kelesh had forgotten what a frontier is. Qadira is forever surrounded by threats, forever far from imperial aid, and forever waiting for Taldor to resume its millennia-long habit of conquering its neighbors. Despite the comfort of his upbringing in the Qahir Palace of Katheer, Xerbystes never lost sight of the fact that life on the frontier meant danger.

Today, the tall, bronze-skinned satrap believes that he could end that danger permanently, and earn a place for himself in history, by executing a decisive invasion of Taldor. Unfortunately for Xerbystes's plans of conquest, the Padishah Emperor has expressly forbidden military intervention in Taldor, instead directing Vizier Hebizid Vraj to strengthen ties with Grand Princess Eutropia's new regime. Though he does have a grudging respect for Eutropia's resourcefulness in claiming the throne, Xerbystes deeply resents the meddling from the distant capital.

This interference is not the only example in Xerbystes's life on the emperor's long leash. Under threat of removal from his position, the long-time bachelor has taken a distant member of the imperial family, Deena al-Parishat, for a wife. Deena is a shahiyan, or a member of the royal family too far removed from the throne to have a more specific title. Though initially suspicious of Deena, the satrap has become intrigued by his passionate spouse, and many wonder if the new shahiyan will soon sway her husband into banning the practice of keeping mortal slaves.

While publicly Xerbystes can do little more than review the Satrapian Guard and complain about Taldan aggression, he continues to fund covert operations to heighten tensions along Qadira's northern border, hoping to goad Taldor into military action that might spiral into all-out war. Not daring to send the Peerless, his personal entourage of heroes who are all closely watched by his vizier, Xerbystes relies on dupes within Taldor or independent operators to accomplish his goals.

With much of the country's military force tied up in preparation for eventual war, Xerbystes prefers to contract with mercenaries or adventurers to address domestic troubles. Recent reports of qliphoth in the Maharev Jungle, sinister cultists off the Emerald Coast, and a fiendish infestation in the Meraz Desert have caused him to put out a call for adventurers willing to hazard danger in exchange for Keleshite gold.



A Diplomatic Communiqué

To Her Imperial Majesty, Grand Princess Eutropia of Taldor,

I would like to extend a personal apology on behalf of Emperor Kalish XXII for the recent unpleasantness involving Trestarin Vain of Daggermark. The Qadiran coins found on his person are a transparent attempt by outsiders to reignite conflict that would weaken both of our empires. Still, we will redouble the efforts to remind citizens of our western-most satrapy that peace is mutually beneficial and mutually profitable.

Speaking of which, I have enclosed draft proposals for a number of trade agreements. I trust you to guide them through the labyrinth of your Senate. Exchange of lumber and spice will do more to bind the wounds of our nations than any peace treaties or imperial edicts.

Light of Dawn to You,

Hebizid Vraj

I think I sympathize with Hebizid Vraj more than is strictly healthy, and I am fortunate to have many well-spoken advisors to help me keep an acceptable level of displeasure.

—Grand Princess Eutropia

HEBIZID VRAJ

VIZIER OF QADIRA

NG MALE HUMAN INVESTIGATOR

Many Kelesh diplomats would find assignment to Katheer to be a hardship post, but Hebizid Vraj relishes his position as vizier of the empire's most isolated satrapy. Far from the imperial court, the canny Vraj enjoys almost complete autonomy. While dealing with the constant resentment of Satrap Xerbystes II is unpleasant in the extreme, the energetic vizier focuses his efforts on making the best of his situation. To Vraj, Qadira is the bridge between the Inner Sea region and the Kelesh Empire, and the best of both regions should be brought together in Katheer.

Much to the chagrin of Qadira's satrap, the Padishah Empire long ago traded military domination for economic, and much of Vraj's time is concerned with tending to the empire's extensive web of trade agreements. Whether dealing with Hashim ibn Sayyid as the chosen agent of Katapesh's Pactmasters or coaxing Taldan merchants to set aside ancient prejudices, the vizier is a shrewd bargainer. Employing a vast network of intelligence agents, Vraj ensures that he knows his partners' positions as well as his own and leverages that information to accomplish what he sees as best for the empire.

Though international relations are Vraj's primary focus, the vizier pursues opportunities to improve life for the average Qadiran. Vraj is a patron of the arts and sciences in Katheer and, in his small amount of free time, he enjoys attending lectures at the Planar Institute and the Venicaan College of Medicaments and Chirurgery. Though his efforts are currently secret, the vizier is zealously attempting to entice the great Rahadoumi healer, Kassi Aziril, to tone down her outspoken atheism enough to join the teaching staff at the Venicaan College, promising not only a substantial salary but also protection from any complications that immigration to Qadira might bring.

Many other projects within the country attract portions of Vraj's attention: he frequently seeks experienced explorers to accompany military patrols to ruins in the Meraz Desert and Zho Mountains; he gathers reports of missing persons and property for investigation by the military or independent contractors; and he recruits skilled engineers and craftspeople to complete complex public works.

Vraj's work in Qadira is the center of his life, and he is worried that any upcoming struggle over imperial succession will see him

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Andira Marusek (page 12), Eutropia Stavian (page 42), Hashim ibn Sayyid (page 50), Kassi Aziril (page 70), Magdalena and Martum Fallows (page 84)

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THE PEERLESS

Hand-selected by Xerbystes II, this group of heroes undertakes missions into dangerous and wild places. While many of their deeds are known only to the satrap, the following heroes and their accomplishments are popular topics of gossip.

Kendesh al-Maren

(LN male sylph⁶² elf infiltrator)
Called “The Shadow of al-Bashir,” this warrior has retrieved many relics from that cursed city, using his congenital deafness as a defense against the harpies that rule there.

Misayyah

(NG nonbinary human tracker)
While many speculate on the age, ancestry, and gender of this scarf-shrouded tracker, no one questions their kindness; they are well-known for returning children lost in sandstorms to their families.

Paldira, the Mirage

(LN male half-orc illusionist)
This illusionist singlehandedly ended the gnoll siege of a town in Pashman by conjuring visions that sent the creatures screaming into the desert.

Tinari al-Yathin

(N female half-elf corsair)
From her ship, the *Perilous*, this young Peerless hunts the shores of the Minatory Isles, clearing the waters of cultists, monsters, and pirates.

recalled to the Kelesh capital. Not only would his departure mean many projects left unfinished, it would also likely mean war between Taldor and Qadira, as imperial oversight is the only thing standing in the way of Xerbystes’s plans for invasion.

A Perfumed Letter, Sent to the Imperial Capital

Dearest Cousin,

I must tell you, Layilah, that while Katheer is a bit of a backwater, it is not without its pleasures. The Qahir Palace would seem cramped by your standards, but it is well furnished, and the mosaic work would not be out of place at home. The satrap keeps one of the finest stables in the province, and he is an accomplished rider himself. As you know, our marriage was no love match, but I am pleased to share that interest with him.

You would not believe the horses, Layilah! Gray as mist and swift-footed as the wind, or shimmering gold and able to keep a rider warm through the coldest night on the sands. Some say the horses were a gift from genies long ago, and I believe it.

The genie-touched horses here are my chief joy, but they also remind me of my chief sorrow. I know only vague rumors of the practice have reached the capital, but I cannot walk through the Grand Souk without seeing an efreeti bound in iron chains or some conjurer with his “pet” marid. Many of the nobles and merchants here keep human or halfling slaves, and slave markets operate openly in the city! It makes my blood boil. I have freed all of the palace slaves and established salaries for them, but there is much more to do. In fact, I must cut this letter short to meet with an advisor and one of the palace wizards. All of my best to you and your mother.

Write me soon,

Deena

DEENA AL-GHARLA ANTIM ZHAR AL-PARISHAT

SHAHIYAN OF QADIRA

N FEMALE HUMAN ARISTOCRAT

Most people’s first impression of Shahiyan Deena al-Parishat is the snap of a cloak and the thunder of hooves as she rushes through the pre-dawn streets of Katheer on the way to her morning ride through the city’s outskirts. Those lucky enough to earn an audience with her speak of her frank nature and calm self-assurance. An athletic woman with warm bronze skin and copper highlights in her dark hair, al-Parishat’s appearance marks her origins in central Kelesh, and, indeed, she is a recent immigrant to Qadira, having traveled from the capital of the Padishah Empire for an arranged marriage with Satrap Xerbystes II. The people of Qadira have generally welcomed the newcomer, hoping that the long-awaited end to Xerbystes’s bachelorhood will settle questions of succession in the satrapy.

Despite the warm reception offered her, Shahiyan Deena is a polarizing figure. Her outspoken abolitionist stances have impressed the country’s slaves and Sarenites as much as they have discomfited Qadiran traditionalists. At least for the moment, Xerbystes seems unconcerned by her habit of upbraiding genie binders in the streets, a fact that has endeared her new husband to her. The two also share a mutual fondness for her distant cousin **Layilah** (NG female human priestess of Sarenrae), who both believe would be an excellent candidate for heir to the Kelesh imperial throne. While she is still far from trusting her husband with her heart, or the extent of her plans about reforming Qadira, the shahiyan has found Xerbystes to be more than the warmonger she had resigned herself to marrying.

Al-Parishat has discussed some of her plans with Vizier Hebizid Vraj, who shares many of her imperial Keleshite sensibilities. On his advice, the shahiyan is cultivating allies at the Planar Institute in Katheer and recruiting agents to investigate rumors of geniekin communities in the Zho Mountains. What the vizier does not know is that she is actively seeking to make contact with the Bellflower Network, and hopes to fund clandestine efforts to undermine the Qadiran slave trade, particularly in Sedeq.

GENIE-TOUCHED COMPANIONS (RARE)

Xerbystes II has had his palace spellcasters work to develop ways to replicate the great powers of the genie-touched horses of Qadira. These spellcasters have a rudimentary method in place that can grant such power to any animal companion, infusing them with elemental power and granting them otherworldly insight. Xerbystes will sometimes gift these companions as a favor to others or have his spellcasters infuse the companions of trusted allies.

If you take a feat that would normally allow you to choose to have a savage or nimble animal companion, you can instead choose to for it to become a genie-touched companion. When you choose the feat, select the type of genie whose power infuses your companion. The genies and their elemental traits are as follows: djinni (air), efreeti (fire), marid (water), or shaitan (earth). A genie-touched companion increases its Wisdom modifier by 2 and its Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution modifiers by 1. It deals 3 additional damage with its unarmed attacks; this damage is fire damage for an efreeti-touched companion or of the same type as the unarmed attack for the others. It gains resistance 5 to damage of a type depending on the genie: acid for djinni, fire for efreeti or marid, and electricity for shaitan. If the companion is djinni-touched or efreeti-touched, increase its proficiency rank in Acrobatics to expert; if it is marid-touched or shaitan-touched, increase its proficiency rank in Athletics to expert. It also learns the advanced maneuver for its type. Its attacks count as magical for the purpose of ignoring resistances and gain the genie's elemental trait.

Genie-touched companions can choose from the following options when they become specialized animal companions.

DEEP DIVER

Your companion gains a swim Speed of 30 feet or a +10-foot status bonus to its existing swim Speed and can breathe underwater if it couldn't already. Its Constitution modifier increases by 1. Its proficiency rank for Athletics increases to master and for barding increases to expert. This specialization can only be selected by marid-touched companions.

STEADFAST STRIDER

Your companion ignores natural difficult terrain and greater difficult terrain from sediment or stone and can move across quicksand, mud, and similar surfaces as if they were solid. It gains a +2 status bonus to saving throws and DCs to prevent being Shoved or Tripped. Its Strength modifier increases by 1 and its proficiency for barding increases to expert. This specialization can only be selected by shaitan-touched companions.

WILDFIRE SCORCHER

Your companion gains resistance to fire equal to your level. Any creature that attempts to Grapple or Grab your companion, hits your companion with a melee unarmed attack, or hits your companion with a melee weapon Strike while adjacent to your companion takes 2d6 fire damage. Its Dexterity modifier increases by 1 and its proficiency rank increases to legendary for Reflex saves and to expert for unarmored defense. This specialization can only be selected by efreeti-touched companions.

WIND CHASER

Your companion gains a +20-foot status bonus to its Speed or fly Speed (your choice if it has both). Its proficiency in Acrobatics increases to master and its Dexterity modifier increases by 1. Its proficiency rank increases to legendary for Reflex saves and to expert for unarmored defense. This specialization can only be selected by djinni-touched companions.

GENIE BINDING

Qadira has always had a close relationship with the Elemental Planes, resulting in its notable populations of geniekin and its famous and highly sought genie-touched horses. It also has a long history of genie-binding, the practice of conjuring the elemental beings known as genies and pressing them into service. Much like mortal slavery, the practice is controversial; yet while abolitionist efforts might succeed at seeing the practice of mortal slavery being banned, genie-binding will likely be harder to uproot.

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The NPCs presented in this book are mired in a number of plot threads, some of which are described here.



THE ALLIANCE AGAINST TAR-BAPHON

The rise of the Whispering Tyrant has forced old enemies and unlikely friends to unite under one banner, though the Living God **Razmir** is secretly feeding **Tar-Baphon**'s armies with Razmiran's dead.

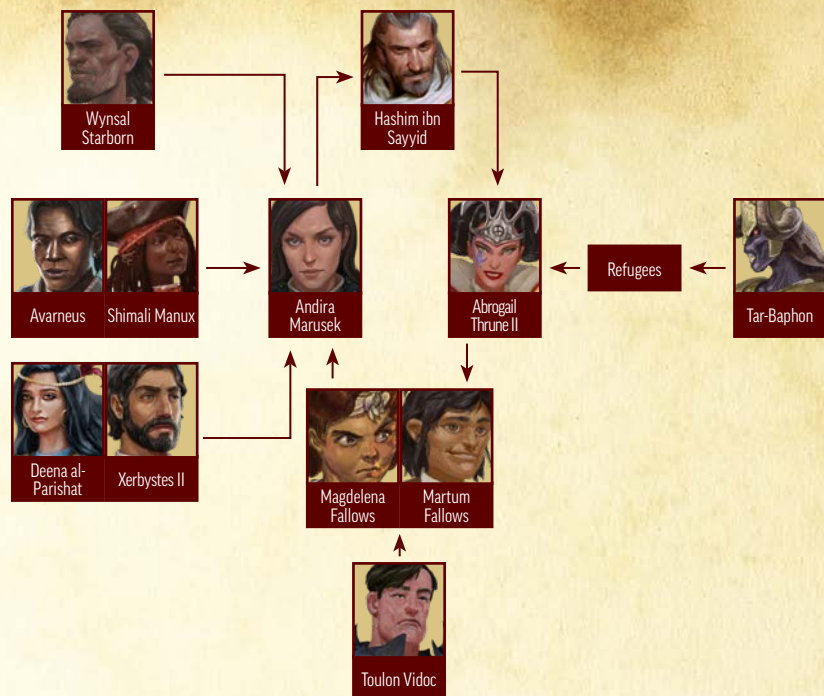
AN ANCIENT WRONG

During the Quest for the Sky, King **Taargick** and countless other dwarven clans cut through orc territory, provoking a brutal war that eventually drove the orcs onto the surface of Golarion. High King **Anong Arunak** of Dongun Hold has discovered a letter from Taargick regretting these actions and seeking an orc king to apologize to, but she is already under heavy political pressure due to a trade offer from **Hashim ibn Sayyid**. Admitting to a wrong of this scope and apologizing to the orc leader Overlord **Ardax the White-Hair** in Taargick's name could cause enough outrage to provoke a political uprising among the dwarves.



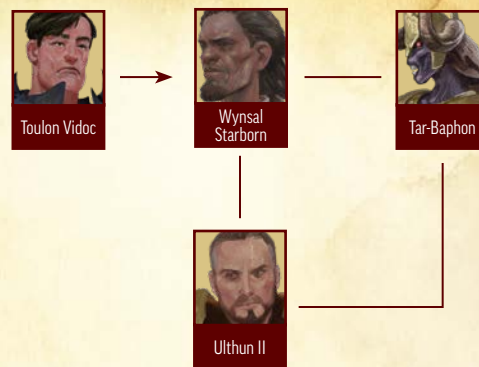
THE FIGHT FOR ABOLITION

Recent victories like **Wynsal Starborn**'s ban on slavery and the revolution spearheaded by rebels such as **Avarneus** and **Shimali Manux** have emboldened abolitionists around the Inner Sea region, such as Shahiyan **Deena al-Parishat**, who might be backed by her husband Satrap **Xerbystes II**. **Andira Marusek** has been preying on slaver ships from ports overseen by **Hashim ibn Sayyid**. In return, Hashim has been sending aid to Queen **Abrogail Thruene II**. The queen has also been enslaving refugees from **Tar-Baphon** and has ordered the deaths of Farmers **Magdalena** and **Martum Fallows**, who work with Andira to help slaves escape. The two Farmers are unwittingly compromised, as a previous Farmer was captured by Lictor **Toulon Vidoc**.



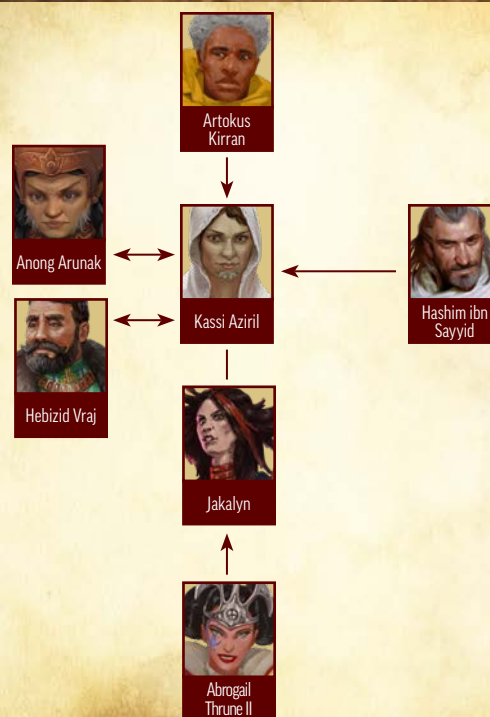
HUNT FOR THE PRIMARCH

The primarch of Absalom mysteriously vanished several years ago, forcing the ruling councils to appoint **Wynsal Starborn** as acting primarch until a new primarch can be elected. Wynsal would like to see the exiled Watcher-Lord **Ulthun II** elected to the role to help Absalom fight against **Tar-Baphon**, who sieged Absalom once before, and to ensure Absalom remains independent—as other candidates for the primarchy, such as those loyal to Grand Princess **Eutropia Stavian**, would prefer to see Absalom annexed into another nation. To add to Absalom's problems, Lictor **Toulon Vidoc** of the Hellknights has been fed bad evidence that Wynsal was the one who disposed of the rightful primarch, and the Order of the Scourge is now determined to investigate.



MOTHER OF MEDICINE

Kassi Aziril, a Rahadoumi student of the legendary alchemist **Artokus Kirran**, has been making many breakthroughs in the field of non-magical healing, with the help of a few favors from Katapesh's pactbroker **Hashim ibn Sayyid**. Kassi's work has attracted attention from High King **Anong Arunak**, whose homeland lies in a magic-dead zone, and Grand Vizier **Hebizid Vraj**, who wishes Qadira's medical schools to provide the best training possible. Kassi's outspoken atheist beliefs have alienated many, however, and Queen **Abrogail Thrune II** even hired the Red Mantis assassins to murder the doctor, only to be shocked when Blood Mistress **Jakalyn** voided the contract.



WAR IN THE NORTH

Chancellor **Irahai**, the new leader of Mendev, aims to retake the land of the Sarkoris Scar, aided by legendary heroes such as **Irabeth Tirabade** and volunteers sent from the Magaambya by **Janatimo**. She recently received a sword from the Numerian warlord **Kevoth-Kul** but is uncertain whether it is a sign of alliance or a declaration of war. If Irahai investigates further, she might discover that one of Kevoth-Kul's supposed allies, **Khismar Crookchar**, is illicitly sending agents to plunder the treasure of **Choral the Conqueror** that has been mysteriously washing up on Mendev's shores.



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This appendix contains brief explanations and page references for the content presented in this book, including new rules, locations, deities, organizations, and so on. New rules content is marked with an asterisk (*).

Absalom The largest city in the Inner Sea region, Absalom was founded by Aroden and is located on Starstone Isle. *Absalom, City of Lost Omens*

Achaek Lawful evil god of assassins, divine punishment, and the Red Mantis. Known as He Who Walks in Blood. *Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 52

Alijæ One of the three subgroups that make up the Mualijæ elves, Alijæ live in the northern Mwangi Expanse. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 25

Alkenstar A city-state located in the central Mana Wastes. The city is known for unique technologies, including firearms. *Lost Omens World Guide* 74-76

Almas Almas is the capital of the nation of Andoran.

Andoran A younger nation in southern Avistan known for its adherence to democracy and personal freedom. *Lost Omens World Guide* 122-124

Asmodeus Lawful evil god of contracts, pride, slavery, and tyranny. Known as the Prince of Darkness. *Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 14-15

Aspenthar One of the city-states of Thuvia.

Aspodell Mountains A mountain range between Andoran and Cheliah.

Astral Plane A transitive plane through which all souls pass on their way to their final judgment. *Gamemastery Guide* 140

Augustana A large port city in southwestern Andoran.

Avistan One of Golarion's continents. It makes up the northern half of the Inner Sea region. *Lost Omens World Guide* 7

Axis A massive planar city that strongly adheres to law, home to the monitors known as aeons. The plane is lawful neutral. *Gamemastery Guide* 142

Belkzen A region in northwestern Avistan. Known as the home of several orc holds. *Lost Omens World Guide* 38-40

Bellflower Network This secretive organization is dedicated to the liberation of halfling slaves, especially in Cheliah. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 65

Brevoy A nation in northeastern Avistan. Known for its political uncertainty. *Lost Omens World Guide* 26-28

Bright Lion* (archetype) 101

Casandalee Neutral goddess of artificial life, free thinking, and intellectual apotheosis. Known as the Iron Goddess. *Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 57

Cheliah A nation in southwest Avistan. Known for its ties to diabolic rule. *Lost Omens World Guide* 98-100

companion adjustments* 123

contract (trait) A contract is a type of item that magically establishes an agreement between multiple parties and typically grants magical benefits.

Crown's End A port city in northwestern Vidrian.

Darklands The immense area of caverns, vaults, and passages beneath the surface of Golarion. *Lost Omens World Guide* 7-8

deities* 100

Dottari The name for city guards in Cheliah.

Drezen A city in the Sarkoris Scar once overrun by demons.

Eagle Knights A state-funded military sworn to defend Andoran. Some branches work to end slavery. *Lost Omens World Guide* 112-123

Earthfall A cataclysmic event in -5293 AR, in which a rain of meteorites fell upon Golarion and caused massive destruction.

Eldest A group of deities that keep their attention on the First World.

Eleder The capital of former Sargava. The city is now known as Anthusis.

equipment* 24-25, 71-72, 76-77, 80-81, 86

Eye of Dread The region in central Avistan consisting of the Gravelands, Lake Encarthan, Molthune, Nirmathas, Oprak, and Ustalav. *Lost Omens World Guide* 36-47

feats* 20, 58, 68-69, 72

Firebrands A rebellious organization known for its members' daredevil acts and their work in fighting oppression. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 66-75

Five Kings Mountains A region in southeast Avistan considered the center of dwarven civilization in the Inner Sea region. *Lost Omens World Guide* 125-126

Freehold A small town in central Vidrian.

Galt A nation in eastern Avistan. Known as a land of constant political upheaval and revolution. *Lost Omens World Guide* 126

Garund One of Golarion's continents. Its northern portion makes up the southern half of the Inner Sea region. *Lost Omens World Guide* 8

Goka A large city-state in western Tian Xia.

Gravelands The region in central Avistan formerly known as Lastwall. A land where undead and other horrors roam. *Lost Omens World Guide* 40-41

Great Beyond The collective name for all of the planes of existence of the known multiverse. *Lost Omens World Guide* 9-10

Hellknights A set of knightly orders with a strict focus on maintaining order and upholding the law. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 76-85

Icemark A territory in the northern region of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings.

infernal contracts* 10

Inner Sea This sea cradled between Avistan and Garund was created by the reshaping of the region during Earthfall.

Iomedae Lawful good goddess of honor, justice, rulership, and valor. Known as the Inheritor. *Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 28-29

Irrisen This nation in northwestern Avistan is known for its constant winter and its rule by winter witches. *Lost Omens World Guide* 110-112

Isarn Isarn is the capital of the nation of Galt.

Isle of Terror A small island in the center of Lake Encarthan that serves as the Whispering Tyrant's center of operations. *Lost Omens World Guide* 41

Jalmeray An island nation off the eastern coast of Garund, Jalmeray is home to immigrants from the region of Vudra. *Lost Omens World Guide* 77-79

Kalabuto The largest city in Vidrian.

Katapesh This nation on the northeastern coast of Garund is known for its markets. *Lost Omens World Guide* 51-52

Kintargo Kintargo is the capital of the nation of Ravounel.

Knights of Lastwall The remaining knights of fallen Lastwall, who seek to destroy the Whispering Tyrant. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 86-95

Knights of Lastwall feats* 68-69

Kortos The island that Aroden raised along with the Starstone and on which Absalom was built. Also called Starstone Isle. *Lost Omens World Guide* 14

Kraggodan A dwarven Sky Citadel located in the southern Mindspin Mountains in Nirmathas.

Kyonin A nation in central Avistan. Known as the center of elven culture in Avistan. *Lost Omens World Guide* 127-128

Lacunafex A network of spies that operates throughout Cheliah and is based out of Kintargo.

Lake of Mists and Veils A large lake in northeastern Avistan. *Lost Omens World Guide* 28

Lands of the Linnorm Kings This region in northwestern Avistan is known for its harsh environs and fierce leaders. *Lost Omens World Guide* 112-113

Lastwall A destroyed nation that was founded to watch over Gallowspire, the former prison of the lich Tar-Baphon. *Lost Omens World Guide* 40-41

Magaambya The oldest academy of arcane learning in the Inner Sea Region is located in the city of Nantambu. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 96-105

magic items* 28, 48

Magnimar A major city-state in Varisia. Known as the City of Monuments.

Mana Wastes This region located in eastern Garund is known for its areas of dead and wild magic. *Lost Omens World Guide* 79-80

Material Plane The plane that encompasses the known universe, including Golarion. Located within the Inner Sphere. *Gamemastery Guide* 138-139

Mediogalti Island This large island off the northwestern coast of Garund is home to the Red Mantis assassins. *Lost Omens World Guide* 65-66

Mendev This nation in northeastern Avistan is a launching point for crusades against the demons of the Sarkoris Scar. *Lost Omens World Guide* 28-29

Molthune This nation in central Avistan is dominated by its military and is at war with Nirmathas. *Lost Omens World Guide* 42

Mwangi Expanse This area in northern central Garund consists of most of the regions in and around the Mwangi Jungle, including the nation of Vidrian. *Lost Omens World Guide* 84-95

New Thassilon This young nation in northwest Avistan is home to time-displaced Thassilonians. *Lost Omens World Guide* 113-115

Nidal This nation along the southwest coast of Avistan is watched over by Zon-Kuthon. *Lost Omens World Guide* 102-103

Nirmathas A nation located in central Avistan, Nirmathas is known for its vast wilderness and war with Molthune. *Lost Omens World Guide* 43

Numeria This nation in northeast Avistan is known for unique technology salvaged from a fallen starship. *Lost Omens World Guide* 29-30

Oprak A nation in central Avistan, Oprak is home to hobgoblins who won the land by force. *Lost Omens World Guide* 44

Pathfinder Society This globe-trotting organization is dedicated to exploration and the reclamation of lost relics. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 106-115

Qadira A nation located in southeast Avistan, Qadira is the westernmost satrapy of the Padishah Empire of Kelesh. *Lost Omens World Guide* 54-55

Quantium Quantium is the capital of the nation of Nex.

Rahadom A nation located in northwest Garund, Rahadom famously prohibits religious practice of any kind. *Lost Omens World Guide* 55-56

Razmiran A nation located in central Avistan. Known as the home of Razmir and his church. *Lost Omens World Guide* 30-31

Red Mantis assassin feats* 58

River Kingdoms This region in northeast Avistan is made up of dozens of small kingdoms struggling for dominance. *Lost Omens World Guide* 31-32

Runelord A powerful wizard that ruled in ancient Thassilon. Each runelord is tied to an aspect of sin magic.

Sarenrae Neutral good goddess of healing, honesty, redemption, and the sun. Known as the Dawnflower. *Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 42-43

Sargava This nation was originally part of the empire of Cheliah before breaking off into an independent state. A recent revolution has led Sargava to become the new nation of Vidrian.

Sarkoris Scar A region located in northern Avistan. The previous site of the demonic Worldwound. *Lost Omens World Guide* 32–33

Shackles A collection of islands off the western coast of Garund, the Shackles are known for rampant piracy. *Lost Omens World Guide* 67–68

Silver Ravens This rebel group helped liberate the city of Kintargo and establish the nation of Ravounel.

Sivanah Neutral goddess of illusions, mysteries, reflections, and secrets. Known as the Seventh Veil. *Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 69

spells* 32, 37, 64–65

Starstone A unique gemstone that crashed to Golarion during Earthfall. It was eventually raised by Aroden and placed within the Starstone Cathedral in Absalom. Mortals can attempt to ascend to godhood by reaching the stone and taking the Test of the Starstone.

Taldor A nation located in southeast Avistan. This empire in decline seeks to reclaim former glory. *Lost Omens World Guide* 128–129

Tanglebriar This large swamp in southern Kyonin is the domain of the demon lord Treerazer. *Lost Omens World Guide* 128

Thuvia A nation located in north-central Garund, Thuvia is known for its production of the sun orchid elixir. *Lost Omens World Guide* 56–57

Tian Xia One of Golarion's continents. Located far to the east of the Inner Sea region, past Casmaron. *Lost Omens World Guide* 9

Treerazer A powerful demon lord banished to Tanglebriar, a swamp in Southern Kyonin. Known as the Lord of the Blasted Tarn.

Triaxus Seventh planet from the sun known as the Wanderer. *Lost Omens World Guide* 9

Ulfen This human ethnicity is common in the northern reaches of Avistan. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 9

Urgir Urgir is the unofficial capital of the Hold of Belken.

Varisia A region in northwestern Avistan. Known as a frontier land and home to ancient Thassilonian ruins. *Lost Omens World Guide* 116–117

Varki This human ethnicity is related to the Erutaki, and they live along the mountains of northern Avistan. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 10

Vidrian This young nation along the western coast of Garund only recently broke free of oppressive colonial rule. *Lost Omens World Guide* 91–92

Worldwound An enormous rift that opened in the nation of Sarkoris, allowing the demonic hordes of the Abyss to spill forth and destroy the region. It has since been closed, and the demon-blighted land is now known as the Sarkoris Scar. *Lost Omens World Guide* 26, 32

Zon-Kuthon Lawful evil god of darkness, envy, loss, and pain. Known as the Midnight Lord. *Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 50–51

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