

PATHFINDER

ADVENTURE PATH PART 5 OF 6



Kingmaker

WAR OF THE
RIVER KINGS

by Jason Nelson

EATER OF KINGS



Source: Local legends.

Task: The legend of Minegnas-Ushad, the "Eater of Kings", has figured prominently in local barbarian lore for ages. If someone were to slay this ancient wyvern matriarch, the legend would do much for that ruler's kingdom.

Completion: Slay Minegnas-Ushad and display her head in the capital city.

Reward: Pride in the slayer's legend causes the kingdom's Loyalty to increase by +2.

WANTED: KOB MOLEG

Source: Wanted Poster.

Task: Chieftain Kob Meleg has ruled the hill giant tribe known as the Tuskers for many years.

Strangely handsome for a hill giant, Kob is indirectly responsible for the majority of his tribe's destructive acts in the Stolen Lands. Killing him or defeating his tribe will make the region safer.

Completion: Kill Kob Meleg or defeat his tribe in war.

Reward: The removal of a strong leader among the region's hill giants increases the kingdom's Stability by +2.

DRUNKEN JOUST

Source: Bixen Libixyten.

Task: Mr. Libixyten is a talented brewer, and he hopes to make it big with his latest brew of blackberry mead. If the PCs will agree to take part in the Midnight Joust at the Ruslight Tournament while drunk on this mead, the sponsorship could do great things for the economy.

Completion: Win the Midnight Joust while drunk.

Reward: A win gives Bixen what he needs to secure a large order of mead. Increase the kingdom's Economy by +2.

THE MAMMOTH'S SHAME

Source: Hillstemper the awakened mammoth.

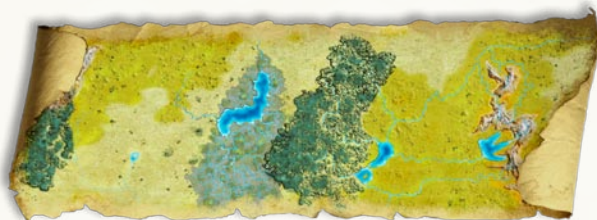
Task: Hillstemper has a shameful problem: he has been forced to flee from the mammoth graveyard he was entrusted to guard by a young but violent crag linnorm. He needs help reclaiming his honor.

Completion: Kill the young crag linnorm that has moved into Hillstemper's graveyard.

Reward: Hillstemper allows the PCs to salvage 15 Build Points worth of ivory from elder skeletons in the graveyard.

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ADVENTURE PATH PART 5 of 6



Kingmaker

WAR OF THE
RIVER KINGS

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An Onslaught of Options

Whenever it's busy around here—like “We’re trying to get a truck load of projects out the door for convention season” busy, not just normal every day busy—and we find ourselves with an outlet, be it the messageboards, the editorial blog, or the spread of pages you’re looking at right now, the reactionary topic trends toward boo-hooing about how hectic things are. Well, it’s that time of year and it’s crazy around here, but I’ll leave you to imagine the storm of clacking keyboards, fluttering paper, torn hair, and all the other lovely extras that come with an office full of stressed gamers putting in long hours.

There’s a side effect to this mess, though, one that’s been going on for a few months already. In the rush of releases, deadlines, and what products come out when, we start tripping over ourselves a bit. It’s not really a bad thing or even unintentional, but with the flurry of activity and some really cool ideas from so many different projects whipping by at triple the normal speed, it’s often difficult not to snag a few and try them out. For example, just like James explained in last month’s foreword, we’ve adopted a new

format for city stat blocks, reflecting new details for urban settings elaborated on in the recently released *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*. It’s something extra we think is pretty neat, and if you have the GMG and want to put these elements to work, fantastic—I think you’ll get a big kick out of them—and if you don’t, all the details you’re already familiar with are there and what you don’t recognize can be sidelined without slowing down your game.

But a few stat blocks aren’t the only places you get a peak at what’s on the horizon. Every year we’ve been publishing the *Pathfinder RPG* (all one of them) and every year we dare to look forward to, we plan to put out a big new *Bestiary* volume. After all, what GM doesn’t love more monsters? The trick with such books is that they tend to be huge draws on our pool of artists, not to mention being really expensive what with having cool monster illustrations on every page. So to track that out a bit, several of the books you’ve been seeing from us for the past few months likely have a few extra creepy crawlies or at least some additional beastly illustrations, which we’ll be picking up down

the line for *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary II*. I've got the page breakdown for that book sitting right here as I write this, actually, and like the *Bestiary* before it, mark II is going to be a giant. So never fear that you're going to be spoiled on the art for your next favorite tome of terrors, or even a significant minority of it. There's a ton of old favorites and new discoveries in there and if we can throw a few quickwoods and stray daemons into the mix sooner rather than later to whet your taste for October, well then so be it. And rest assured that the best beasties are yet to come.

While we've got the *GameMastery Guide* rolling out right now and the *Bestiary II* on deck, the big book I haven't mentioned and that we're not showing off too much yet is the big excitement of our year, the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*. Now, it'd be real easy to start slipping alchemists and oracles into these last few volumes of *Kingmaker*, but really, you can get all the previews you want of these new classes on paizo.com. That's not to say that we don't have some really cool tidbits we're just itching to show you, but it's one thing to show off an expanded format or tease you with a few new illustrations and totally another to only give you half the rules you need to run your game. The APG includes a lot of big new rules systems and options, and while we could totally drop an oracle into an adventure, we don't want to assume you're running out and buying up every word that rolls off our printer. So for any element we might draw on from the *Advanced Player's Guide*, we're going to make sure you can use it in your adventures just as seamlessly as content from the *Core Rulebook*. While we can assume we're all on the same page talking about clerics and sorcerers, the Dodge feat and *fireball*, we're not going to start bandying around details of the summoner, antipaladin, or master chymist without filling you in on everything you need to use these options.

So is that to say that you won't be seeing much of the *Advanced Player's Guide's* new options in upcoming Pathfinder Adventure Paths? Well, yes and no. Like I said, we don't want to force you to drag around yet another giant rulebook to every game session, and don't plan on assuming you've memorized or even own the *Advanced Player's Guide*, so we never plan on referencing rules from it like everyone in the world keeps a copy on his or her nightstand. That being said, if we do an adventure about witches down the road, and the witch class from the APG is the perfect fit for characters in it, you can expect to see witches, but always accompanied by details explaining how to use the powers and options included. It's pretty much the same deal as with monsters we use from books like *Necromancer Games' Tome of Horrors Revised*: there's a lot of awesome in there that we like to use quite frequently, but every time such things are vital to an adventure, we present all the relevant stats for the monster, not just a page number.

That doesn't mean those classes and options in the *Advanced Player's Guide* are instantly put into a weird

Author's Dedication

Dedicated to Brian Nelson, my big brother, the first person I ever played RPGs with. Near the end, one of the things he most wanted to do was play some RPGs again with his little brother and with my kids, and to think back on happier times... and we did.

—Jason Nelson

separate tier, though. The "P" in APG stands for "player," after all. Just because we expect you'll always see way more fighters and sorcerers in our adventures than cavaliers and summoners, that doesn't mean we don't expect players to be making lots of use of these new classes. As a case in point, I just got in the first draft of the *Serpent Skull Adventure Path Player's Guide* today, and there among the details on how you might tackle a rogue character or what early choices you might consider for your ranger were sections on good options for oracles and which familiars a witch might find most advantageous. Details on these six new classes work there perfectly, and fit like they'd been around for the past half-dozen APs. That's exactly how we want to be handling new content like this going forward: unless we're giving it away for free, we'll always give you the details you need to use such optional rules rather than forcing you to buy more, more, more just to keep up. Of course, if you happen to like what you see in those options, no one can really hold a love of cool new Pathfinder RPG options against you.

I'm not going on this tirade as a thinly veiled suggestion that you go on an RPG shopping spree. I don't feel like this is the place for that, and honestly, I feel like our books speak for themselves and our readers have the ability to choose what they do and don't want in their games. Rather, I know someone can look at our schedule and even within this very volume, see we have a lot of new stuff coming out—a daunting amount even—and be rightly concerned that keeping up could turn into a pricey proposition. That's why I wanted to get our philosophy on new books out there, not so you know what you need to get, but so you know that the foremost goal of Pathfinder Adventure Paths is to give you all the tools you need to run the games you want to play.

And if you didn't feel that way already, now you've got that commitment in writing.



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War of the River Kings

Greetings from His Supreme and Inimitable Magnificence, Castruccio Trovetti, by the grace of the gods the rightful King of Pitax, Marvel of Aumeria, Master of Mormouth, and Prince-Regent of the Sellen.

It is with great delectation and delight that I greet you, my fellow River Kings. I would be honored if you would accept my invitation to attend the fifth annual Rushlight Tournament as my guests. I know you to be discerning rulers, and trust you would not dare miss such an extravagance, for I plan for this to be the finest Rushlight yet! And to sweeten the pot, as it were, I have secured a mighty magical item, a gold and gemstone rod of lordly might, which I am willing to bestow upon the Kingdom that proves itself by fielding the true Rushlight Champion! Could this champion be one of your own?

Please confirm your attendance via this invitation's courier. I look forward to your attendance!

—King Castruccio Trovetti of Pitax

Advancement Track

“War of the River Kings” assumes four player characters using the medium advancement track for XP. Characters should be 13th level when they begin this adventure—if they’re still a bit shy of 13th level, consider giving them a few more years of kingdom expansion and exploration before you begin this adventure. By the time the PCs are ready to invade Irovetti’s Palace, they should be well into 14th level, and they should end the adventure at 15th level.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The River Kingdoms are fluid by nature, mirroring the flow of the waterways from which their name is taken. Kings and queens rise and fall like the changing of seasons in this tumultuous region, but some of the kingdoms found here have endured and prospered for generations, cementing their place in the pecking order of this confederacy of outlaws. Every new upstart dreams not just of conquest but of legacy, and the wise know full well that the greatest threat to security and legacy typically comes not from established kingdoms but from upstarts fighting for the last seat at the table.

Pitax is a River Kingdom of some pedigree, able to trace its history back over three centuries. During those centuries, it has been overrun on more than one occasion, first by the Steel Phalanx of Numeria, then a generation later by invaders from Mivon, and it was even split for half a century by civil war between its leading families. Yet through this all, Pitax has remained a hub for trade and a haven for smugglers. But now it faces its most dangerous enemy yet, an enemy from within—its own leader, Castruccio Irovetti, who may be able to do through corruption and pride what 3 centuries of war and upheaval could not—who could well bring Pitax to an end.

The man known today as Castruccio Irovetti was not born unto that name. The bastard son of a crusading Taldan knight and a Numerian noblewoman named Cimany Bellander, Castruccio’s birth name was the even more flamboyant Mandalarucio. His father sent regular deliveries of gold from the field of battle, so he and his mother never wanted for wealth. Mandalarucio’s mother doted on him, paying for dance, music, and language lessons and parading him among the other nobles of Hajoth Hakados as often as possible. Mother and son knew little of hardship until the payments from Mandalarucio’s father (a man he never met) ceased with his death at the hands of the Worldwound’s demonic host.

His mother did her best to make ends meet, but they had both grown used to extravagances, and within 2 months their funds had given out. The cutthroat aristocracy of Hajoth Hakados swiftly took action to reclaim the family estate, and just like that the Bellanders were out on the street. After suffering another 2 months of indignities, Mandalarucio turned to crime, using magic to gain the confidence of rich visitors and then robbing them, leaving behind victims too

embarrassed or shamed at being duped to pursue justice. Eventually, though, Mandalarucio made a critical error by attempting to con and rob a visiting member of the Technic League. When the con went sour and the Technic League sorcerer lost his hand to Mandalarucio’s blade, the young man went into hiding to escape punishment. But the Technic League didn’t need him to repay the blood debt. Operating under the aegis of the Black Sovereign and the slanderous whispers of local aristocrats, they quickly found that the missing Bellander had a mother—they arrested Cimany, and by the time Irovetti heard of her arrest, she’d already been executed.

When he learned of this development, Mandalarucio wasted no time. He stole into the inn the Technic League agents were staying at and extracted his revenge in a single night of red ruin. When the sun rose, the five Technic League agents were dead and the delivery of rare Numerian artifacts they had been entrusted with delivering to Starfall had vanished. Hajoth Hakados’s government had its suspicions, but the case was never solved, for Mandalarucio had fled Numeria entirely, never to return.

The next 2 years of his life were spent lying low in the River Kingdoms. He changed his name to Castruccio Irovetti, combining the first and last names of his mother’s favorite artists, and periodically sold off some of the Numerian artifacts he’d stolen for funds, but overall kept a low profile. It wasn’t until his wanderings took him to Pitax that his fortunes finally changed. After hearing rumors of strange treasures hidden in the forest called Thousand Voices, Irovetti entered the mysterious woodland in search of riches. It may have been his good looks and strong singing voice that attracted the attention of the cruel mistress of Thousand Voices, but more likely it was the intrusive stink of the technological items he carried that caused the nymph Nyrrissa to take special note of this latest intruder. She sent several of her minions against Irovetti to test him, but he defeated them all with a combination of his magic, his wits, and his Numerian devices.

Intrigued, Nyrrissa realized that here was a perfect tool to use to increase her influence over the encroaching tide of civilization. She appeared before Irovetti, who in the face of such power had little choice but to fall to his knees in adoration. Nyrrissa took Irovetti away for a month to her strange and wondrous realm in the First World. There she showed him great marvels and fearsome sights, and on the eve she returned him to Pitax, she granted him her

Kingdom in the Background

If you aren't using the kingdom-building rules and letting the PCs develop the Stolen Lands on their own, you can assume that the nation of Narland has stabilized in growth, and now reaches from Varnhold to the east all the way to Fort Drelev in the west. Loyalty checks are a large part of this adventure and of the mass combat rules—if you're not using the kingdom-building rules, though, your players won't have a Loyalty check to make. In this case, you can substitute DC 22 Will saves in place of Loyalty checks—just have whatever PC is most closely associated with the effect that calls for a Loyalty check (such as the PC commanding an army in mass combat) make a Will save instead.

favor and became his muse, giving him a lock of her hair. In return, she asked only that he perform one favor for her in the world of mortals—recovering a sword called *Briar*, lost long ago somewhere in the region. (For more information on how Nyrrisa lost *Briar*, what the sword actually means to her, and why she can't simply retrieve it on her own, see “Sound of a Thousand Screams” in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #36.)

With Nyrrisa's favor granting Irovetti even greater skill, he made his way to the city of Pitax. He reasoned that with a kingdom at his command, the search for the missing sword would be a trivial thing. Armed with his two remaining Numerian artifacts, he had an idea how to become Pitax's newest ruler. One of these artifacts is a strange device called a *mindrender baton*—a device that functions like a *rod of rulership*. Irovetti began building his reputation in the city by using the *mindrender baton* to aid in purchasing several warehouses for scandalously low prices and securing relationships and deals with several important merchants and smugglers. Eventually, he invited two of Pitax's leaders, the brothers Lothaire and Berengar, to a card game at one of his warehouses. Through the use of his *mindrender baton* and magic (particularly *modify memory*), Irovetti swindled the brothers out of their rule—the next morning, neither had any memories of being duped, but Irovetti owned a signed document legally handing over all the possessions of the ruling family to him, including the crown of Pitax.

At first, Irovetti used many of his new resources as king of Pitax to search for *Briar*. But as the years wore on, his memories of his time with Nyrrisa began to pale against the reality of the decadence and power that ruling a River Kingdom brought. While her influence continued to subtly influence Irovetti's personality (and is in large part responsible for his founding of Pitax's Academy of Grand Arts), her hold over his heart and lusts faded. So when

several of Irovetti's agents came to him 6 years later with the good news that *Briar* had been found, Irovetti did something his fey patron could have never foreseen. He had his agents murdered before they could spread the news, then hid *Briar* away in a chamber deep under his palace. Irovetti feared that upon returning the sword to Nyrrisa, she would cast him aside—he was not yet ready to lose the power her favor granted him, and reasoned that he could simply rule Pitax for another decade or so and keep *Briar*'s recovery secret. Then, when he grew tired of life as a king, he could announce to Nyrrisa his “recent recovery” of *Briar* and enjoy the reward for his service to the fey queen.

Yet Nyrrisa has had little time to wonder why it has taken Irovetti so long to find the sword, for as “War of the River Kings” begins, the time for her to gather up the Stolen Lands as a gift for her strange patrons in the First World draws near. Through her manipulation of Irovetti, she hopes to spur the headstrong King into attacking the PCs' kingdom. If the PCs don't react in kind, she's prepared to send one of her agents to provoke them, but she hopes that Irovetti's unprovoked attack does the trick. She then has but to wait for the human kingdoms that control the lands she wishes to take to weaken each other—she hopes that after the war is over, there'll be little resistance remaining when she begins her eldritch assault on the land.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Eager to appear friendly, King Irovetti invites the PCs to take part in a grand tournament as a way to make the first steps toward an alliance. Yet as the PCs enjoy the tournament, Irovetti sends his troops around to strike at the PCs' kingdom from behind. When the treachery becomes apparent, the PCs must escape back home and organize their own army. Pitax attacks again and again—war has come to the Stolen Lands, and the PCs must go on the offensive if they hope to protect what they've built. How the PCs attempt to win the war is up to them. They can march their armies directly against Pitax, or they might attempt to scout out the Glenebon Uplands to try to find weaknesses they can exploit. In the end, Irovetti retreats into his palace and the war develops into a siege—one the PCs need to break by infiltrating the palace and tracking down the dangerous overlord in his own home.

QUESTS

The PCs will have numerous quest opportunities as this adventure unfolds. Eight of these appear on the inside covers of this book, and several more are seeded throughout the rest of the adventure.

Each of the Glenebon Upland Quests presented in this book is worth 51,200 XP when completed—this amount is in addition to any experience points the PCs might earn while attempting to complete the quest.

A NOTE ABOUT TIMING

All of the adventures in the Kingmaker Adventure Path are sandbox-style adventures—the PCs are free to accomplish the goals in each adventure in any order they wish. But in “War of the River Kings,” things are a bit more open than that. Just because this adventure starts with the assumption that the PCs accept the invitation to take part in the Crimson Celebration doesn’t mean that the PCs have to follow this route. It’s quite likely that some parties will simply not trust Irovetti’s invitation and won’t accept his invitation—likewise, PCs who use divination magic could well learn of Irovetti’s nefarious plans and refuse his invitation for that reason. That’s fine!

Use the material presented in this adventure to react to the PCs’ choices—not to anticipate their choices. If the PCs decide not to go to the Crimson Celebration but instead decide to start exploring the Glenebon Uplands, Irovetti could simply attack their kingdom while the PCs are up in the Branthlend Mountains looking for giant wyverns or something. If the PCs are more interested in staying at home and managing their kingdom, they may be home when Irovetti attacks and can take part in the defense of Fort Drelev or whatever location is attacked. In such a case, they may well completely skip the content presented in Part One—this doesn’t mean you can’t use it, though. Once the PCs defeat Lord Irovetti, you can have the PCs’ advisors suggest they hold their own celebration to help build up morale. In this event, Part One actually takes place at the end of the adventure, and gives the PCs a chance to relax and take part in some fun diversions and contests.

PART ONE: THE RUSHLIGHT TREACHERY

“War of the River Kings” can begin whenever you want, although you should start the adventure before the PCs begin to seriously explore into the Glenebon Uplands. King Irovetti can watch and wait for months or even years if the PCs seem content to leave him alone, but eventually he’ll grow impatient and set his plans in motion.

When you’re ready to begin, the PCs receive a beautiful invitation from none other than King Irovetti to something called the “Rushlight Tournament.” The text of this invitation is presented on page 6 of this adventure. The invitation arrives via messenger—a fleet-footed man named Velemandr (use the stats for a Pitax herald if necessary) who is willing to wait up to a day for the PCs to make their decision before returning to Pitax to report their response to Irovetti.

A DC 20 Knowledge (local) check is enough to know that the Rushlight Tournament is one of King Irovetti’s most

APCs Gain Levels Too!

Readers of *Guide to the River Kingdoms* have doubtlessly noticed that King Irovetti is listed as a 9th-level bard in that book, but a quick check of his stats in this adventure reveals that he’s quite a bit higher level. Obviously, since this adventure is for 13th and higher level characters and we wanted Irovetti to be a significant challenge, we had to increase his level. If you’re looking for an in-game reason to account for the discrepancy, you need look no further than the fact that *Guide to the River Kingdoms* gives a snapshot of the region at the start of the Kingmaker Adventure Path. If enough time has passed for your PCs to grow from 1st-level characters to 13th-level characters, certainly Irovetti’s had time to gain a few levels as well! In addition, his continued pride and greed and the influence of his advisors have had an inexorable result—the man is no longer neutral, but evil.



popular traditions. A Rushlight Tournament has been held every year since King Irovetti claimed the crown; it’s a popular event that draws the majority of its contestants from Pitax but also sees participants from throughout the River Kingdoms. The tournament traditionally takes place on a small area of cleared land on the southern shore of the Rushlight near the northern border of Pitax.

If the PCs don’t seem interested in attending the Rushlight Tournament, advice from one of their fellow NPC government leaders, or perhaps the result of a DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check, could give some good reasons for taking part in the competition. Even if the PCs don’t compete in the numerous events, attending the Tournament is a great opportunity to meet other notables of the River Kingdoms and to present themselves as the rulers of the newest River Kingdom—failure to appear at this well-known and much anticipated event could be misinterpreted by other River Kings as a sign of weakness or even a deliberate insult or veiled act of aggression. Actually competing in the tournament and winning (or even placing) in the events would bring fame and prestige not only to the PCs, but to their entire kingdom. And finally, there’s the lure of the promised *rod of lordly might*—this year’s grand prize for the kingdom that scores the most points during the Tournament.

THE RUSHLIGHT TOURNAMENT

The Rushlight Tournament is held at a massive festival ground erected by King Irovetti a dozen miles northeast of the city of Pitax, about a half-mile from the southern shore of the Rushlight River itself on the banks of a minor waterway called Cutter’s Creek. Once the tournament gets



underway, the festival grounds become thronged with people, essentially transforming the area into a town overnight. Merchants from numerous River Kingdoms come to hawk their wares at this event—traditionally, even Brevoy sends some representatives, although this year marks the first with no official Brevic presence as internal tensions in that nation are nearing a breaking point. Wandering merchants jockey for space, crying their wares, whether hot from a basket or cool from a cask. Stages with jugglers, minstrels, mummers' troupes, and trained animals dancing and leaping all vie for the attention (and the coin) of the throngs reveling in King Irovetti's bounty.

The festival begins on the first Fireday of Sarenith (although you should feel free to adjust this date to anything that you wish to fit the realities of your Kingmaker campaign). The first day of the tournament is given over to trading, feasting, a preview of the beasts of the traveling menagerie, entertainment (of varying quality), and (after sunset) a grand display of fireworks. The next 3 days are highlighted by contests at the Coliseum, then followed by a day of rest. Finally, on the 6th day, the tournament culminates in a nightlong celebration of wine in honor of Pitax's many vintners—all culminating in the traditional

Midnight Joust, after which the final winner of the Tournament is announced.

THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS

The festival grounds are laid out along Cutter's Creek, a minor tributary of the Rushlight River. The major features of the festival grounds are described below—all of these locations can be visited at any time by curious PCs.

Coliseum: All of the official tournament events take place in this large field of hard-packed dirt. The northern side of this large open field has rows of bench seats for spectators. A noble's box stands at the east end of the field—but seating there is limited.

Menagerie: This enormous purple pavilion is a showplace of tamed horrors and monstrosities from across Golarion. The mysterious **Madame Duclarion** (N female human sorcerer 10) and her hulking handlers, the **Brothers Ohka** (CE male ogres), keep a charmed menagerie of dinosaurs, exotic animals, and magical beasts culled from every land for the viewing pleasure of festival-goers. Madame Duclarion keeps her creatures (and her handlers) calm and controlled through judicious use of *charm person*, *charm monster*, and other enchantment effects.

Rotunda: The Rotunda is where passes to tourney events can be purchased; each day's events cost as little as 1 gp for a single ticket to as much as 1,000 gp for a noble "box" suitable for seating up to 10.

The Royal Blue: The buildings that surround this small lake are grand silken pavilions facing the water. These are reserved for the private use of visiting dignitaries from the other River Kingdoms, the flags flying above them marking the lands of their inhabitants. If the PCs accept their invitation to the event from Lord Irovetti, they are granted the use of the easternmost bathhouse for the duration of the event.

Royal Pavilion: This pavilion is used by the king, his bodyguards and minions. The pavilion is protected by a permanent *mage's private sanctum* so that anyone who peers into the tent sees only a dark, foggy mass.

Staging Pavilion: This pavilion is used for competitors preparing for games in the Coliseum. The pavilion consists of several smaller areas formed by canvas walls surrounding a larger central area for competitors to gather in before they emerge when they are announced for a competition.

SECURITY

Many of Pitax's most capable guards serve long hours as security. The standard Pitax soldier is merely a 2nd-level warrior, but they are overseen by the much more dangerous Pitax wardens and Pitax heralds. These guards are encountered often throughout this adventure—their stats are presented below and referenced as needed in the text.

PITAX HERALD CR 5

XP 1,600

Human bard 6

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15

(+5 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 45 (6d8+18)

Fort +3, Ref +7, Will

+5; +4 vs. bardic

performance,

language-

dependent, and sonic

Pitax Warden



OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +7 (1d6/18–20)

Ranged +1 shortbow +7 (1d6+1/x3)

Special Attacks bardic performance (7 rounds/day, standard action, countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +2, inspire courage +2, suggestion)

Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +9)

2nd (4/day)—*animal messenger*, *detect thoughts* (DC 15), *enthrall* (DC 15), *sound burst* (DC 15)

1st (5/day)—*charm person* (DC 14), *cure light wounds*, *silent image* (DC 14), *ventriloquism*

0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 13), *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *summon instrument*

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10,

Cha 16

Base Atk +4; CMB +4; CMD 16

Feats Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +10, Bluff +12, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (local) +13, Perception +9, Perform (Oratory) +12, Perform (Wind) +12, Stealth +10

Languages Common, Halit

SQ bardic knowledge +3, lore master 1/day, versatile performance (oratory, wind), well-versed

Combat Gear *potion of invisibility*, *potion of fly*; Other Gear +1 chain shirt, +1 shortbow with 20 arrows, masterwork rapier

PITAX WARDEN CR 5

XP 1,600

Human fighter 6

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20 (+10 armor)

hp 51 (6d10+18)

Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +3;

+2 vs. fear

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1

greatsword +13/+8

(2d6+8/19–20)

Quest: The Rushlight Tournament

The PCs must enter and win the Rushlight Tournament.

Source: King Irovetti.

Task: The PCs must compete in the Rushlight Tournament against several other River Kingdoms, either on their own or by selecting champions to represent their kingdom in the various games.

Completion: Earn the most points overall and win the tournament (see page 19).

Reward: A rod of lordly might.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 20

Feats Cleave, Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Ride), Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)

Skills Intimidate +10, Perception +7, Ride +8

Languages Common

SQ armor training +1, bravery +2, weapon training (heavy blades +1),

Combat Gear *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2); **Other Gear** +1 full plate, +1 greatsword

AN AUDIENCE WITH THE KING

When the PCs arrive, King Irovetti expects them to pay a visit to his Royal Pavilion—if the PCs don't visit the king within a few hours of arriving at the festival grounds, a Pitax herald arrives to request their presence and escort them to the Royal Pavilion to greet the king.

The interior of the royal pavilion stands in sharp contrast to its relatively plain exterior. Lush red carpets cover the ground and a dais supporting a carved and gilded chair evoke the feel of a throne room, while a haphazard collection of pedestals bearing sculptures and mounted paintings of wildly varying quality and realism suggests a strange sort of art gallery. A small raised stage supporting numerous large musical instruments sits to one side of the pavilion.

King Irovetti is a handsome, muscular, dark-haired man in deep red velvets. A crown sits comfortably on his brow and an elegant cloak drapes his shoulders. His belt is thick with tools, weapons, and pouches, bespeaking an adventuring lifestyle not completely left behind. He also carries two strange pieces of equipment. The first and most impressive is a long staff of unusual metal, one end of which is fitted with thin blades and a spike that periodically shift and move with a soft whirring noise. The second is a thin, short rod of strange metal with a single spike at the end. Small, circular lights periodically flash along the length of this rod. Both of these curious items are in fact Numerian devices—see page 46 for details.

If he's expecting the PCs, King Irovetti waits for them on his throne, attended by a pair of beautiful women—otherwise, he'll be tinkering with the various instruments with the same pair of women tutoring him on how to play the instruments. In either case, he greets the PCs enthusiastically.

“My most illustrious guests! I am so eternally and unendingly happy to see that you have safely arrived. Come, my pretties, bring refreshment for these weary travelers—whether by magic or by mare's shank, traveling is thirsty work! Drink with me to our continued success and the bonds of brotherhood and friendship that shall be ours.”

Irovetti may seem friendly and calm, but in fact he's already sizing up the PCs for what he believes is an inevitable conflict—whether in person or on the battlefield remains to be seen. For now, though, he wants the PCs to feel as comfortable as possible, and has no intention of treachery. The food and wine he offers are safe and delicious, and the idle questions about how they and their kingdom fare are relatively meaningless. If the PCs ask him point blank about Drelev, he seems to be somewhat embarrassed and admits that “Lord Drelev was, shall we say, a bit too eager for his own good. He got what he deserved, and I'm only thankful that you put him down before he caused both of our kingdoms more damage. I trust his attack on your town of Tatzlford left no lasting problems?” Irovetti does his best to steer talk away from politics, though, reminding the PCs that they are here for a festival, not a summit.

This chat should be relatively short—before long, Irovetti indicates he has much to do to prepare for the games, and invites the PCs to retire to their assigned bathhouse on the Royal Blue. He wishes them well in the games to come, and with that the PCs are expected to leave the tent and return to the festival grounds. Until the games begin, how they entertain themselves is left to them.

MEET THE COMPETITION

This year, the participants consist of six kingdoms in all, including the PCs. You can feel free to develop the competitors as you wish in your game if the PCs are curious about them.

Daggermark: Daggermark, as one of the most successful River Kingdoms, attends the competition out of a sense of duty, although their competitors are generally more interested in the entertainment than they are at actually competing for the prize.

Gralton: The kingdom of Gralton has suffered long and hard to survive, and their reasons for competing this year are the same as every year—if they can win, the fame and glory and monetary awards will help their nation greatly.

Mivon: Although Mivon's relations with Pitax are shaky, with skirmishes common along their borders, the two nations are currently in something of a peace.

Pitax: Although Pitax hosts the competition, its champions feel no shame or awkwardness over competing themselves.

Tymon: The kingdom of Tymon is famous for its own competitions and gladiatorial battles. King Ungin sends representatives to all of the competitions and tournaments that occur in the River Kingdoms if he can, large or small.

A TASTE OF GLORY

The Rushlight Tournament has all manner of common entertainments, minstrels, mummery, singers, jugglers, tumblers, trained animals, and on and on, but much of its allure lies in the glory of competition. All competitive events take place in the Coliseum and, with the exception of the Midnight Joust, begin an hour before noon. Typically, the competitions last for a few hours, with the day's winners announced at the rotunda in the Commons in the early evening.

The schedule of games is posted throughout the festival grounds. Each competition has its own rules, but there are three rules that govern all of the events: harm no spectators, kill no competitors, and don't get caught cheating. Breaking any of these rules is grounds for disqualification from that event.

Each contest has a first-place winner and a second-place winner—those who don't place first or second win no accolades at all and in fact are often mocked by the crowd during the competition. Contestants can always yield in a contest if they wish. Most of the contests are timed—time is tracked by the use of a large and extravagant water clock kept in the noble's palisade to the east of the coliseum.

If the PCs win a contest, award them 25,600 XP. If they place second, award them 6,400 XP. (Note: These awards are tailored for the PCs—NPCs who win don't gain XP and thus shouldn't suddenly rocket up in level during the tournament.)

Although King Irovetti serves as the arbiter and final judge for all of the events, his master of ceremonies, **Nunzio Arpaia** (N male human bard 6; use stats for a Pitax herald if necessary), handles all of the announcements, introductions, and commentary during the games. At some point on the first day of the ceremony, Nunzio approaches the PCs and briefly outlines the nature of the four events for them, describing them as “an archery contest using longbows, a test of strength using handaxes or greataxes, a boasting contest, and a drunken jousting

competition.” He assumes the PCs' kingdom will be participating in the tournament and needs to know who their competitors will be for each event, along with how each competitor wants to be announced at the start of each game.



Nunzio Arpaia

EVENT 1: AIMING AT THE TARGET

The first tournament event is an archery competition, and occurs on the second day of the Rushlight Tournament. Since this competition is meant to test skill and not magic, each contestant must use one of the masterwork longbows provided by Irovetti.

Contestants stand at the eastern end of the Coliseum and fire at one of three targets set up at varying distances to the west (particularly foolish or daring observers enjoy

sitting on the benches on the west side of the shooting range).

Contest Rules: In this stage, each contestant is given six arrows to fire at three different targets—a blue target at a range of 30 feet, a green target at a range of 220 feet (–4 penalty due to range), and a red target at a range of 550 feet (–10 penalty due to range). To score points, the contestant's arrow must not only hit the target but must stick into it as well (a shot that fails to do enough damage to overcome the target's hardness bounces off and does not stick). A successful critical hit on a target counts as a bull's-eye. All shots must be taken in 6 rounds or the shooter is disqualified. Likewise, if no shots hit, the shooter is disqualified. If the shooter fires all six arrows in fewer than 6 rounds, he earns 2 bonus points for each remaining round.

Blue Target (range 30 ft.; AC 5; hardness 0): This Tiny target has a picture of a kobold painted on it. The target itself is made of canvas stretched over straw. A solid hit earns 1 point, and a critical hit 3 points.

Green Target (range 220 ft.; AC 7; hardness 2): This Diminutive target has a picture of an owlbear painted on it. The target itself is made of several layers of thick hide. A solid hit earns 3 points, and a critical hit 9 points.

Red Target (range 550 ft.; AC 11; hardness 4): This Fine target has a picture of a dragon painted on it. The target is made of soft wood. A solid hit earns 5 points, and a critical hit 15 points.

Contestants: The five other contestants are listed below, along with their strategies for accumulating as many points as possible. As more contestants shoot, the target number of points becomes a quantifiable goal, which might spur

a contestant to abandon his or her strategy to take riskier shots or easier shots, depending on what the established point total to beat is.

Determine the order in which the contestants shoot randomly.

ARCHERS

DAGGERMARK

Ilraith Valadhkani

Male human rogue 12

Ranged mwk longbow +16/+11 (1d8/×3)

Strategy Ilraith takes his shots at the red target for most of his shots, switching to the green target when he attacks with his second attack in a round. He has Far Shot (so his range penalties are halved). He also uses his major magic rogue talent to cast *true strike* just before the contest begins, and then again on the 2nd round of the contest so that he can enjoy the bonus to hit on his 3rd round. He then takes full-attack actions to fire his remaining arrows as quickly as possible in his remaining rounds. Although these strategies are pushing the boundary, only the fact that he's stealthily using adamantine arrows counts as cheating. When he picks up his arrows at the start of the competition, he uses Sleight of Hand +22 to substitute the six adamantine arrows (the arrowheads of which have been painted the color of steel to help with the deception) from his *handy haversack*. It's a DC 20 check for him to pull this stunt off, so he can do so automatically. No one else notices, but a PC who exceeds the result of his Sleight of Hand check with a Perception check notices the swap. If the PC calls Ilraith on this and accuses him of cheating, she must make a DC 15 Diplomacy check in order to convince Irovetti to call for an inspection of the arrows. If Ilraith is exposed as a cheat, he's disqualified, much to the shame of Daggermark. If no one notices him swap out the arrows, someone eventually realizes that a contestant was cheating after the contest ends and the arrows are gathered up, but by that point it's too late to call Ilraith on it.

GRALTON

Florante Mayank

Female half-elf fighter 9

Ranged mwk longbow +18 (1d8+8/19–20/×3)

Strategy Florante makes all of her shots as full-round actions, using careful aim to line up her shot. She makes her first three attacks against the green target, hoping to score at least one critical hit. If she does, she makes her second three attacks against the red target. She uses Deadly Aim on all attacks.

MIVON

Navarathna

Female elf ranger 9

Ranged mwk longbow +16/+16/+11 (1d8+1/×3)

Strategy Navarathna is something of a show-off, and she takes full-attack actions with Rapid Shot to score as many hits as

she can as quickly as she can on the green target, hoping to pick up the extra 8 points for finishing off all six of her arrows in 2 rounds. She wears a set of *greater bracers of archery*.

PITAX

Villamor Koth

Male human barbarian 15

Ranged mwk longbow +17 (2d8/×3)

Strategy Villamor uses his Vital Strike feat to increase the amount of damage his arrows do and takes all of his first shots at the red target. If he misses the first five shots entirely, he chickens out and takes his last shot at the blue target, abandoning Vital Strike to make a single full-round attack after lining up his shot to gain a +5 bonus on the attack.

TYMON

Damanjot

Male half-orc ranger 11

Ranged mwk longbow +17 (1d8+6/×3)

Strategy Damanjot takes the time to line up his shots and attacks the red target using full-round actions. He has the Far Shot feat, and thus takes only half the range penalty, but also uses Deadly Aim to increase the damage inflicted by each shot.

Winning: The contestant with the high score wins first place, and the contestant with the second highest score wins second place. In the unlikely event of a tie, the contest moves on to as many tiebreaker stages as are necessary, with each contestant in a tiebreaker stage only using 1 arrow per stage.

EVENT 2: TEST OF THE AXE

The second tournament event is a test of strength, and occurs on the third day of the Rushlight Tournament. In the test of the axe, six logs are brought into the Coliseum and lined up in a row. The contest is to determine how many logs each contestant can hew through in 1 minute.

Contest Rules: At the start of the contest, each contestant is supplied with a masterwork greataxe or a pair of masterwork handaxes (contestant's choice), and each contestant has 1 minute (10 rounds) to chop through as many logs as she can. Each log is placed 10 feet apart, so upon destroying one log, the contestant must move this distance before beginning on the next log. Attack rolls are, of course, necessary, since even though the logs have an AC of 3, a natural 1 is considered a miss. If the contestant damages a log with something other than one of the provided axes, she is disqualified from this event. Spellcasting is allowed, but only once the timer starts.

1-Foot-Thick Log (AC 3; hardness 5; hp 120): Each log that is fully destroyed grants the contestant 5 points. Each log that is merely damaged grants only 2 points.

Contestants: The order in which the contestants make their attempts to chop through the logs doesn't matter—determine the order randomly. If you don't want to roll

out each contestant's attacks and damage, you can simply assume every 20th attack misses and that they deal average damage on each hit—after each contestant's damage value, the number of logs they finish off (and the number of points they receive) is listed if you wish to use this expedient method to resolve NPC results.

LUMBERJACKS

DAGGERMARK

Yegina Varudu

Female human sorcerer 12

Melee +1 greataxe +17/+17/+12/+7 (3d6+7); average result: 2 destroyed and 1 damaged for 12 points

Strategy Yegina looks rather small and frail, and she receives a fair amount of mockery before this contest—mockery she heroically ignores with a smile on her face. She then spends the first round of the contest casting a quickened *enlarge person* followed by *transformation*. She also activates her *boots of speed* to gain *haste* for the duration of the event. Her melee stats above with the greataxe include these spell effects—she spends the remaining 9 rounds powering through as many logs as she can.

GRALTON

Kilbaskian Ord

Male human ranger 10

Melee mwk handaxes +11/+11/+6/+6 (1d6+10); average result: 2 destroyed and 3 damaged for 16 points

Strategy Kilbaskian uses two handaxes in this competition, relying on his strength and feats like Double Slice and Power Attack to inflict greater damage than normal. On the last round, he throws his hatchets at two undamaged logs to weasel out an extra 4 points if he can by damaging additional logs further down the line. This causes something of an uproar, but unless PCs can convince Irovetti to rule that the thrown axes don't count by making a DC 30 Diplomacy check, he bemusedly lets the result stand.

MIVON

Dizon Marmada

Female dwarf fighter 12

Melee mwk greataxe +18/+13/+8 (1d12+21); average result: 4 destroyed for 20 points

Strategy Dizon uses Power Attack on every strike, and Vital Strike in every round she has to move to attack a new log.

PITAX

Villamor Koth

Male human barbarian 15

Melee mwk greataxe +20/+20/+15/+10 (1d12+18); average result: 4 destroyed and 1 damaged for 22 points

Strategy Villamor drinks a *potion of haste* from a large drinking horn on the first round of the competition. On the second round, he rages; he then uses Power Attack on every strike and uses Vital Strike in every round he has to move to attack a new log.

TYMON

Timsina Siraj

Female human cleric of Gorum 12

Melee +1 greataxe +17/+17/+12 (3d6+23); average result: 4 destroyed for 20 points

Strategy Timsina takes the first round of combat to cast *divine power* and quickened *magic weapon*. On the second round, she casts *righteous might* and quickened *bull's strength*. She begins chopping logs on the third round, using Power Attack on every blow. Since she has the domains of Destruction, she activates her destructive aura for the entire 10 rounds.

Winning: The winner is the competitor who earns the most points after 1 minute. In the case of a tie, the competitors are each given their own log and race to see who can destroy their's faster.

EVENT 3: BOASTING

The third tournament event is a test of boasting and storytelling, and occurs on the third day of the Rushlight Tournament. This is the event that the audience is anticipating the most, as well as being one of the most traditional events—it has occurred in every Rushlight Tournament from the start, beating out the Midnight Joust by 1 year for that honor.

Contest Rules: For this event, a wooden platform is built in the center of the Coliseum. In turn, each contestant is to take this stage and boast to the audience of one of his greatest accomplishments. The boast must last for 5 minutes and must consist of a beginning, a middle, and an end. Each of these stages requires a specific skill check to determine how well received that portion of the boast is by the audience.

Beginning: The boaster must introduce himself as someone to respect and perhaps even fear by making a DC 25 Intimidate check.

Middle: The bulk of the boast must be done believably and convincingly by making a DC 25 Bluff check.

End: The boaster must end his tale by graciously thanking the audience for their time by making a DC 25 Diplomacy check.

Overall Performance: Each boaster must select one style of Performance to augment his boast. Once the three stages are complete, he makes a single Perform check of the appropriate type to determine how loudly the crowd cheers for his tale. The result of this check counts as points toward winning the contest.

Contestants: Determine the order in which each contestant boasts randomly. Each contestant's boast is presented in abbreviated form; you can use this summary as presented in game, or you can expound upon the tales as you see fit.

BOASTERS

DAGGERMARK

Memon Esponde

Male human rogue 12

Skills Bluff +17, Intimidate +17, Diplomacy +17, Perform (dance) +9

Strategy Memon spins an implausible tale about how he stole into a temple of Calistria and seduced all seven of its priestesses, including the high priestess, in a single night. When the clergy realized he loved none of them, he escaped on the back of the temple's sacred giant wasp with the high priestess's corset as a trophy. A DC 20 Sense Motive made during this boast gives the distinct impression that the high priestess in question that Memon is talking about is none other than Tymon's contestant, Mialolessa—although she seems nonplussed by Memon's story.

GRALTON

Ankus Depergode

Male dwarf rogue 10

Skills Bluff +13, Intimidate +8, Diplomacy +13, Perform (oratory) +7

Strategy Ankus is a relatively rotund dwarf, but he makes up for his apparent awkwardness with a bombastic voice. He boasts of how he stowed away on the *Seawraith*, the ship of the goddess of pirates, Besmara, and of his adventures in the outer sphere. In particular, he boasts of how he won a deva's wings and a devil's beard in a single gambling game. Despite the audacity of Ankus's claims, the crowd seems to be particularly excited and delighted by his tale. This is because Ankus has a ringer in the crowd—a bard friend who's using his various talents and spells to subtly manipulate key members of the audience to make it appear that Ankus is far more popular than he really is. This manipulation effectively grants the dwarf a +5 bonus on all of his skill checks. If the PCs observe the situation closely, they can spot the cheating with a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check, or simply by studying the crowd while using *detect magic* and making a DC 15 Spellcraft check. If the PC calls out the ruse, Ankus panics and King Irovetti bemusedly disqualifies the dwarf for cheating.

MIVON

Ceala Ravenbrow

Female human fighter 8/bard 3

Skills Bluff +11, Intimidate +16, Diplomacy +8, Perform (sing) +11

Strategy Ceala's boast is a tale of blood and danger—she tells of how she single-handedly saved a small village in northern Galt from the ravages of a demonic chimera who had wings of fire and a scorpion's tail. If her tale is to be believed, Ceala lopped off the chimera's dragon head with her sword, crushed the goat head under a falling rock, and tore the chimera's tail from its body and strangled its remaining lion head in order to kill it—all without spilling the glass of elven absinthe she'd started to drink when the chimera spotted and attacked her.

PITAX

Annamede Belavarah

Female human bard 13

Skills Bluff +21, Intimidate +21, Diplomacy +21, Perform (comedy) +21

Strategy Annamede is one of Pitax's best-known comedians and social commentators. King Irovetti has a strong dislike of the woman, who has rebuffed his advances numerous times and seems to have no fear speaking out against his rule in Pitax, yet the fact that she's so well loved by the populace and has won the boasting competition every year ensures her role—Irovetti would rather Pitax keep its crown in this contest than silence the bard. This year, Annamede's boast should interest the PCs in particular, for she claims to have spent the past several months (or years, as appropriate for your campaign) spying upon the PCs' kingdom and using her influence to cause misfortune to the PCs. Whether or not her boasts are true, her knowledge of various embarrassing failures and problems the PCs have had with their kingdom should feel eerily accurate.

TYMON

Mialolessa

Female elf cleric 11 (Calistria)

Skills Bluff +14, Intimidate +7, Diplomacy +17, Perform (oratory) +11

Strategy Mialolessa is a beautiful elven woman, well known and well loved in her home kingdom of Tymon. She boasts of her days spent in Kyonin, and of how she seduced a succubus who had been sent from Tanglebriar to enslave her and drag her back to Treerazer to serve as the demon's consort. After she seduced the succubus, Mialolessa sent her back into Tanglebriar and, to this day, receives gifts of strange fungal potions and wines with which the succubus attempts to win her back. If her tale follows Memon's, she adds a stinger to her story, mentioning that it took her weeks to recover from a particularly embarrassing condition she "caught" from her succubus lover, and how she hopes none of her other lovers since then have been suffering from a painful rash of late. She casts a sly glance at Memon, who seems to look a bit worried.

Winning: For each skill check the boaster successfully makes during the three stages, award 1 point. Multiply the result of the boaster's Perform check by the number of points he earned during the three stages—this final total is the boaster's final score. Whoever's total score is the highest wins; in the event of a tie, the tied boasters must face off in subsequent boasts, replaying the entire competition with different boasts each time until there's a winner.

EVENT 4: THE MIDNIGHT JOUST

The final tournament event is one that many look forward to, since it is the Midnight Joust that promises the best chance at seeing competitors really hurt each other. It's something

of an unspoken tradition that those who participate in the Midnight Joust are drunk; certainly the majority of the audience is. The Midnight Joust, as implied by its name, takes place at midnight on the last day of the Tournament. The Coliseum is well lit by dozens of everburning torches, many of which are held by drunken observers in the stands. Those who elect to participate in the jousting while drunk are effectively sickened—jousting while drunk amuses the crowd but doesn't grant any additional points.

Contest Rules: Each joust is equipped with a masterwork lance and a heavy wooden shield. Riders may provide their own armor and gear, but they must use the weapon and shield provided. A heavy horse and a military saddle are provided for anyone who doesn't have her own mount. The joust takes place in three stages, as detailed below.

Stage One: The goal of the first stage is to weed out contestants until only two remain. In this stage, each contestant jousts against a Pitax warden (the champion of the previous year's Midnight Joust—Villamor Koth in this case—does not take part in this aspect of the competition). The order in which the contestants joust is determined randomly. If a contestant is unseated by a Pitax warden, the crowd jeers and that contestant is disqualified. Once all five contestants have gone, the jousting continues, but in reverse order, so that the last jouster gets to joust again immediately. Once only two contestants remain, Stage Two begins (this system does give those contestants who go later a slight advantage).

Stage Two: In this stage, the two jousters who made it through Stage One joust each other until one of them is unseated. The winner advances to stage three.

Stage Three: In the final stage, the remaining challenger jousts against the reigning champion, Villamor Koth. Unlike the previous stages, though, Koth spends some time toying with his opponent if that opponent is a PC, as detailed under Koth's tactics in his stat block below.

Jousting Rules: A joust consists of both competitors beginning at opposite ends of the jousting arena (called the lists), then riding toward each other, lances lowered, in an attempt to unhorse the other. Both jousters make Ride checks to determine the order in which they attempt to unseat the other—the jouster with the higher Ride check goes first. In the result of a tie, both strike simultaneously, possibly unseating each other in a dramatic clash. When attempting to unseat a foe during a joust, resolve the attempt as a bull rush. These bull rushes never provoke attacks of opportunity from the opposing jouster. If the first jouster fails to unseat her foe, then the second jouster gets a bull rush attempt against the first. If neither jouster is unseated, they replace their lances and shields (both are designed to shatter dramatically when they are used) and line up for another go. An attack against a foe's horse is grounds for immediate disqualification.

Contestants: The competitors in the Midnight Joust are all drunk, save for Villamor Koth. The –2 penalty on their rolls from being sickened is included in their stats.

JOUSTERS

Pitax Warden

Human fighter 6

Ride +6; CMB +8; CMD 18

DAGGERMARK

Chantal Urena

Female human ranger 10/barbarian 2

Ride +14; CMB +19; CMD 30

GRALTON

Sir Briannel Paulson

Male human ranger 5/fighter 5

Ride +14; CMB +12; CMD 25

MIVON

Khristel Cotoio

Male human fighter 11

Ride +16; CMB +15; CMD 28

PITAX

Villamor Koth

Male human barbarian 15

Ride +15; CMB +22; CMD 34

TYMON

Damanjot

Male half-orc ranger 11

Ride +17; CMB +14; CMD 27

VILLAMOR KOTH

CR 14

XP 38,400

Male human barbarian 15

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+9 armor, +2 deflection, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, –2 rage)

hp 217 (15d12+120)

Fort +15, Ref +6, Will +11

Defensive Abilities indomitable will, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +5, DR 5/—

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 vicious greataxe +24/+19/+14 (1d12+11/19–20/x3 plus 2d6) or

mwk lance +24/+19/+14 (1d8+10/x3)

Ranged mwk longbow +17/+12/+7 (1d8/x3)

Special Attacks greater rage (35 rounds/day), rage powers (guarded stance [+3 + Con bonus], knockback, no escape, rolling dodge +3, unexpected strike)

TACTICS

Before Combat Before any fight, Villamor drinks a *potion of barkskin*.

During Combat Villamor takes his time jousting and is eager to toy with the PCs in an attempt to humiliate and hurt them—especially if they’re doing well in the competition and look like they have a good chance at winning. He figures that if he can egg their jousting contestant into attacking him, he can kill that PC in self-defense without getting in too much trouble. He does not attempt to unseat a PC contestant, but instead makes actual attacks against his opponent with his lance on each pass. Note that each time a character takes damage while riding, she must make a DC 5 Ride check to remain in the saddle—it’s certainly possible this tactic could unseat a particularly inept rider. To observers, of course, Villamor’s tactics are easily mistaken for overly aggressive attempts to unseat a rider—the crowd certainly loves the violence. If he’s properly unseated by a PC, Villamor swallows his pride for now and nurtures the

thought of revenge—he’s one of Irovetti’s closest allies, after all, and knows that the king plans to go to war.

Morale Villamor does not fight to the death at this time; if the PCs respond to his goading by attacking, he’ll “defend” himself (and attempt to kill the attacking PC), but if all the PCs start to gang up on him, or if he’s reduced to fewer than 150 hit points, he breaks off his attack and Irovetti steps in to try to calm things down. If the PCs continue to attack, Irovetti uses *dimension door* to escape back to the Royal Pavilion with Villamor and announces that the Rushlight Festival is cancelled due to unwarranted aggression on a visitor’s behalf. He gives the PCs an hour to leave Pitax before he attempts to have them arrested as criminals; in any event, this development gives him a handy, if flimsy, excuse to go to war with the PCs. Certainly the PCs aren’t thought of kindly by the other competitors and attendants at the festival, for they see the PCs as the ones responsible for the tournament’s cancellation in this case. See Part Two for more information on how the war develops.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 13, **Con** 22, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 34

Feats Critical Focus, Dodge, Improved Critical (greataxe), Iron Will, Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (greataxe)

Skills Intimidate +18, Knowledge (nature) +13, Linguistics +0, Perception +14, Ride +15, Survival +14

Languages Common, Halit

SQ fast movement

Combat Gear *potions of barkskin*

+5 (3); **Other Gear** +5 *hide armor*, +1 *vicious greataxe*, *ring of protection* +2

Winning: The last jouster seated on her mount at the end of Stage Three wins the Midnight Joust.

SPOILS OF VICTORY

With the end of the Midnight Joust, King Irovetti and his master of ceremonies take the field, inviting all of the contestants to join them as they award the winning River Kingdom the grand prize—a *rod of lordly might*. To determine which kingdom wins this prize simply total the amount of first and second place wins for each kingdom across the five events. Each first place earns the kingdom 3 points, while each second place earns it 1 point. Total all the points—the kingdom with the most points wins the Rushlight Tournament and takes the grand prize, which is given to that kingdom’s ruler by King Irovetti himself



Villamor Koth

during a final grand ceremony at the Coliseum. Once this ceremony is over, the crowd breaks up quickly, eager either to attend one of the many post-tournament celebrations or to get some much-needed rest. Traditionally, visitors to Pitax spend several days unwinding in the city, but the PCs are likely to receive urgent news from home before the dawn (see Part Two).

PART TWO: BEHIND ENEMY LINES

As entertaining as the Rushlight Tournament is, and as friendly as King Irovetti might seem, the entire tournament is little more than a devious distraction. Irovetti has entrusted the general of his armies, an ogre mage named Avinash Jurr, to lead some of Pitax's army (including a flight of wyverns) in an initial attack against the PCs' heartland. When word of this attack reaches the PCs' ears, they'll doubtless react in kind, and war will come to the Stolen Lands—just as the nymph Nyrixa had planned.

THE WAR BEGINS

How the War of the River Kings begins will vary, depending on the situation in your game, but the assumption is that the PCs learn about an attack on one of their towns (such as Fort Drelev, Tatzlford, Varnhold, or even their capital city) by a sizable group of Pitaxian soldiers and a flight of wyverns. The war could also begin as a result of Irovetti being insulted by the PCs refusing to attend the Rushlight Tournament, or the PCs themselves could be the initial aggressors if they march into the Glenebon Uplands and start claiming hexes there to add to their kingdom.

However the war begins, its course should be determined by your players. The most likely chain of events, however, should run something like the following. Irovetti doesn't have a huge army, but he does have many groups of allied mercenaries and monsters ready to serve Pitax. Many of these mercenary companies or monstrous groups have camped throughout the Glenebon Uplands, and Irovetti plans on using them in numerous strikes against the PCs. Yet after his first defeat, he starts to worry that the PCs might be a tougher foe than he anticipated—once the PCs start to push into the Glenebon Uplands, Irovetti goes on the defensive. Eventually, with his armies scattered and the PCs occupying the town of Pitax, Irovetti and his closest allies retreat to his palace in the city of Pitax, and the PCs must invade the palace to finish the mad king off.

DEFENDING THE HEARTLAND

If Irovetti makes the first move in the war, which city he attacks depends on where your players have placed their settlements. How the PCs hear about the attack

depends upon their capabilities and how their kingdom has developed. This initial attack on the PCs' kingdom is intended to spur the PCs into action, not to introduce them to the mass combat rules.

BUILDING AN ARMY

Appendix 2 provides all the rules for mass combat, but how do the PCs gather armies to fight battles for them in the first place? For "War of the River Kings," the PCs have several choices for army types—the standard choices are listed in this section, but you can use the rules in Appendix 2 to adjust the size or even the makeup of these armies as you or your players wish.

Maintaining armies is expensive—the PCs must be able to pay their armies in Build Points, as detailed in Appendix 2. In addition, you should limit the number of armies the PCs have under their control. A single army is probably the best choice, but it can also be rewarding to let each PC serve as the leader of his own army once they start pushing into the Glenebon Uplands.

WAR OF THE RIVER KINGS

King Irovetti's attack on the PCs' kingdom while they are distracted by the Rushlight Tournament is but his opening gambit. As the days and weeks wear on, he moves additional armies into the PCs' territory, while leaving several armies in reserve. His reserve armies are located at areas **I**, **J**, **K**, **O**, and **P**, but if he meets with great success in his war, he'll begin mobilizing these reserves to attack as well. Hopefully, the PCs are able to fight back before that happens!

Irovetti's field army consists of a flight of wyverns, a band of marauding trolls, and a colossal army of soldiers. Statistics for these three individual armies are presented below—you can have the PCs' army encounter the field army at any time you wish—perhaps the field army is invading their kingdom and they must move to intercept it, or maybe the PCs face it the first time they lead their own army into the Glenebon Uplands. Certainly, the PCs will need to confront this army before they take the majority of their forces and begin their own invasion of Pitax, since the field army continues to ravage through their kingdom until it is defeated.

If the Pitax regiment is defeated, Avinash Jurr abandons the field and flees back to the city of Pitax to report to King Irovetti—the ogre mage can be finally defeated in Part 4 of this adventure.

PITAX REGIMENT

CR 10

XP 9,600

CN Colossal army of humans (warrior 4)

COMBAT

hp 55

DV 20; OM +11, ranged

Tactics Dirty Fighters, Relentless Brutality, Sniper Support;

Resources improved weapons, ranged weapons

LOGISTICS

Speed 2; **Morale** +1

Leader Avinash Jurrq, male ogre mage bard 10 (Cha +6)

TROLL MARAUDERS CR 5

XP 2,400

CE Medium army of trolls

COMBAT

hp 22

DV 15; OM +5

Tactics Relentless Brutality

Special Abilities regeneration 5

LOGISTICS

Speed 2; **Morale** +0

Leader advanced troll (Cha +0)

FIRST WYVERN FLIGHT CR 6

XP 2,400

N Medium army of wyverns

COMBAT

hp 39

DV 16; OM +6

Tactics Relentless Brutality

Special Abilities mobility advantage (flight), poison

LOGISTICS

Speed 4; **Morale** +0

Leader advanced wyvern (Cha +1)

EXPLORING THE GLENEBON UPLANDS

The Glenebon Uplands, while technically still part of the Stolen Lands, are currently controlled by Pitax. As a result of the presence of troops in the region, the Glenebon Uplands have far fewer encounter areas to be discovered than the other three regions of the Stolen Lands. The majority of these locations are relatively out of the way, and the PCs should be able to explore most of them without being confronted by one of Pitax's armies as long as they keep a relatively low profile. Indeed, the PCs might not even get around to exploring them until the bulk of this adventure is over and the war has been won (or perhaps lost). But, as with every adventure, the route the PCs take toward dealing with their foes is left to them.

Moving through a hex with an army does not count as exploring a hex. If the PCs wish to explore a hex, their army remains stationary in its previous hex for that duration. Normal encounters generally have little trouble avoiding the march of an army and want little to do with such a dangerous foe.

All of the fixed encounter locations in "War of the River Kings" fall into one of three categories: landmark, standard, and hidden.

Landmark Site: The site is automatically discovered as soon as the PCs enter the hex containing the site.

Standard Site: Unless the PCs are traveling specifically to that site, they do not encounter the site until they explore the hex, in which case they encounter the site automatically.

Hidden Site: If the PCs don't already know about the site's location, they need to make a skill check (the skill and DC required varies with the type of site) to locate it during exploration.

WANDERING MONSTERS

As the PCs explore the Glenebon Uplands, you can liven things up with wandering monsters generated from the tables on page 81 of this book. There's a 5% chance of an encounter occurring each time the PCs enter an unclaimed hex, and a 15% chance per day or night spent exploring or camping in an unclaimed hex. These chances decrease to 1% per hex or 5% per day spent exploring or camping in a claimed hex. Take care not to overwhelm the PCs with random encounters, though; it's usually good to limit wandering monster encounters to only once per day.

A. MAMMOTH GRAVEYARD (STANDARD; CR 13)

Along the northern slopes of the Branthlend Mountains, the grassy hills of Glenebon stretch out to the north and west into Numeria, becoming progressively drier and more rugged and desolate as one travels. All manner of strange creatures dwell in these regions, but here along the northern and northeastern edge of the Glenebon Uplands, the primary denizens are vast, roaming herds of woolly mammoths.

Creature: At this specific point along the northern Branthlend foothills is a legendary location—a mammoth graveyard. An immense box canyon nestled between two bald foothills creates a strange gathering place for wandering woolly mammoths, which feel a strange pull to this cleft when their time grows near. Several such sites are known throughout Numeria, and all are often sought after for the rich troves of ivory promised by the bones that lie within.

This particular graveyard, though, is watched over by an incredibly old mammoth that was awakened many decades ago by a now-dead druid—the same druid, in fact, who awakened the horse Windchaser (see "Blood for Blood"). The awakened mammoth calls himself Hillstomper. It bears several partially healed wounds and burns; one of his eyes is completely sightless from the scarring. As the PCs approach the graveyard, the elderly and unusually intelligent elephant approaches them with a pronounced limp, for the creature has been driven out of its guardianship of the graveyard

by a young (but still quite dangerous) crag linnorm that claimed the graveyard as its den. Hillstomper desperately wants to destroy the linnorm (or at least drive it out of the graveyard it has been entrusted to guard), but its two previous attempts have left it gravely wounded. If the PCs are interested in helping the awakened mammoth, it agrees to aid them in the fight to reclaim the graveyard. See the inside front cover for the details of the “Mammoth’s Shame” quest.

HILLSTOMPER

CR 10

XP 9,600

Awakened woolly mammoth

hp 152 (currently 75, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 128)

YOUNG CRAG LINNORM

CR 13

XP 25,600

hp 172 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 190, 294)

Treasure: Although the crag linnorm is relatively young, it has amassed a relatively impressive stash of treasure, consisting of 2,600 gp, 320 pp, a suit of masterwork studded leather armor, a dragonhide breastplate, a masterwork cold iron greatsword, a silver coffer worth 250 gp that contains seven silver rings worth 200 gp each, an onyx and jade necklace worth 800 gp, a gold crown decorated with topazes worth a total of 1,800 gp, a divine *scroll of summon monster VI*, a *wand of mnemonic enhancer* (33 charges), a leather pouch containing 3 doses of *dust of disappearance*, a *potion of rage*, and a *staff of frost*.

B. STEAMGROTTO (LANDMARK)

Several dozen sulphurous-smelling ponds and unwholesome springs dot the hills in this hex, most containing active geysers that spray boiling water and steam. Every hour spent in this hex, there’s a 5% chance a random PC triggers an eruption of steam and boiling water from a hidden vent. If this occurs, that PC must make a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid taking 10d6 points of fire damage from the sudden geyser.

C. MOUNT BRANTHLEND (LANDMARK)

This mountain, which at 5,400 feet tall is the highest peak in the Branthlend range and in all the Stolen Lands, is a knob-like pinnacle of stark white stone. Many of the surrounding barbarian tribes tell tales of this mountain’s history, claiming the peak was scoured of life and vegetation when a scorned warlord’s queen transformed into a powerful Numerian spine dragon atop its crown.

D. WHITEROSE (LANDMARK)

This area is detailed in Part Three. If this hex is claimed, the abbey can be rebuilt as a temple.

E. ILTHULIAK’S LAIR (LANDMARK)

Here, where the normally placid Whisper River plummets over a 900-foot cliff side into a 150-foot-deep tarn, Thousand Voices is even more tangled and swampy than anywhere else in the woodlands’ reach. The transition from deep, algae-choked tarn to solid land is gradual, resulting in a 2-mile-wide swath of densely vegetated swamp. Many of the surrounding rocks and trees appear half melted or burnt, and bones of countless creatures both large and small litter the swampland. Yet most impressive of all these features is the glittering skull of a dragon that has been impaled atop the jagged trunk of a dead oak.

A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check is enough to recognize this all as telltale marks surrounding a black dragon’s lair—with a DC 36 Knowledge (arcana) check, the signs can be correctly interpreted as indicating a black dragon wyrm. Alternatively, a DC 25 Knowledge (history) check recalls tales of the black dragon Ilthuliak, who reputedly dwells deep in these woods. With a DC 24 Knowledge (arcana) check, the dragon skull in the tree can be identified as that of an adult silver dragon.

While this region did serve the black dragon Ilthuliak as a lair for many centuries, she has recently allied with the nymph Nyrissa and has relocated her lair to the First World. She (and her treasure) can be found therein, as detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #36. Apart from the skull of the silver dragon Amvarean (which Nyrissa ordered Ilthuliak to leave behind), no trace of the dragon’s treasure remains, although a search of the tarn’s bed reveals an underwater nest sized for an ancient black dragon.

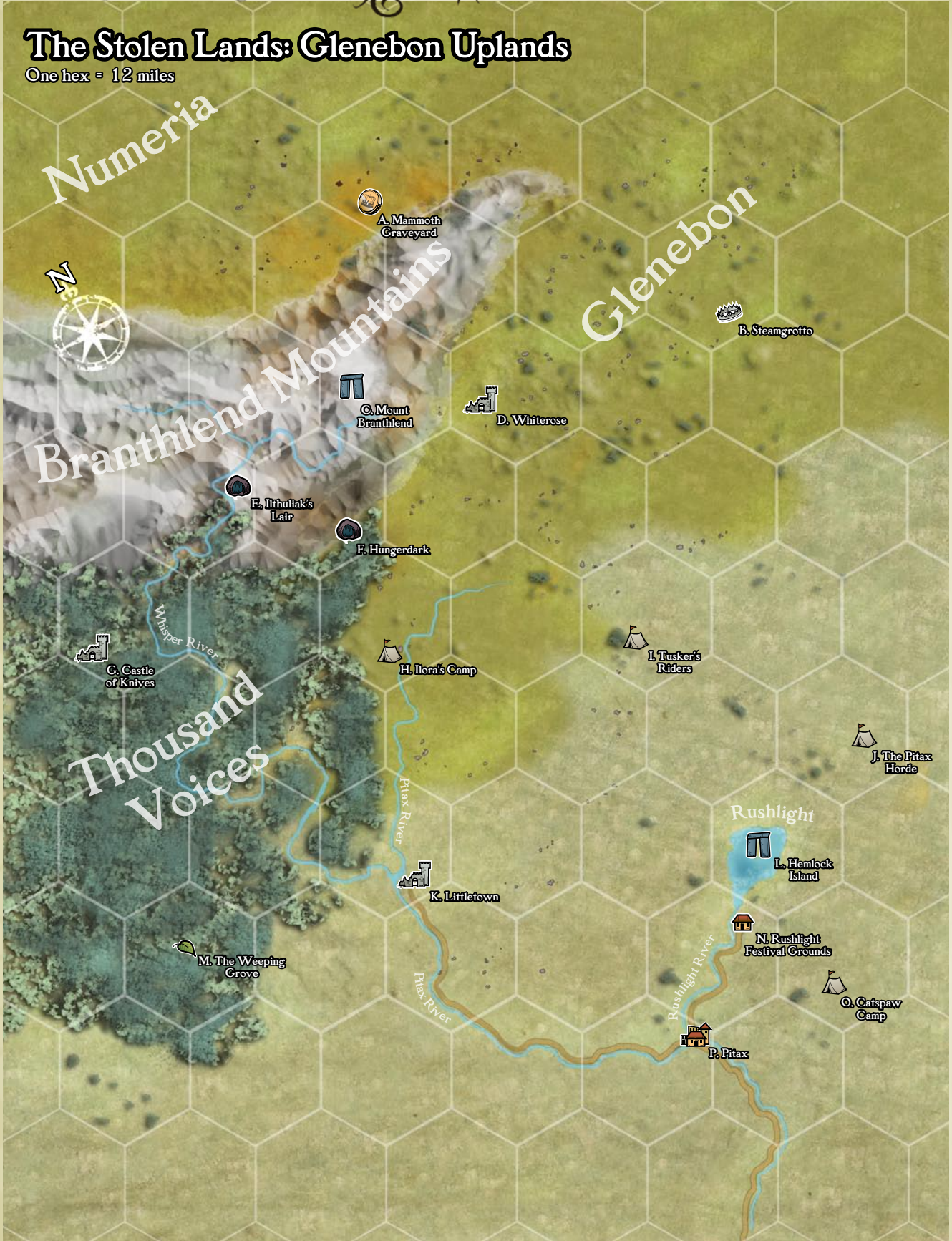
F. HUNGERDARK (STANDARD; CR 14)

At the edge of the tangled reach of Thousand Voices, a dark cleft cuts up the face of the mountains, almost as if a titanic axe struck the 500-foot-tall cliff here. The cleft leads 1,500 feet into the mountains, into a deep cavern known locally as Hungerdark. A brackish pool of water collects in the deepest recesses of this cavern, but few animals approach within a mile of this location, for Hungerdark is far from abandoned.

Creature: An immense wyvern, a matriarch of her kind, has laired in Hungerdark for nearly 2 centuries. Known by the regional barbarians as Minognos-Ushad (“Eater of Kings”), the wyvern has survived countless attempts to slay her and has more than earned her name from the countless warlords she’s consumed. Although quite old, Minognos-Ushad is still very dangerous. She spends an increasing amount of time slumbering in her den, emerging once every few months to seek out prey in Glenebon’s hills. She is certainly present when the PCs arrive, but unfortunately for them, she is an extremely light sleeper (no penalty on Perception checks while she sleeps), and is quick to attack any intruders she notices.

The Stolen Lands: Glenebon Uplands

One hex = 12 miles



Map Icons



Bridge



Camp



Dead Body



Hut



Lair



Landmark



Monster



Plant



Resource



Ruin



Structure



Trap



Town

MINOGNOS-USHAD

CR 14

XP 38,400

Female old wyvern (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 282)

NE Huge dragon

Init -2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent;

Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 6, flat-footed 22 (-2 Dex, +16 natural, -2 size)

hp 225 (18d12+108)

Fort +16, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13

Immune paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

Melee sting +24 (2d6+8 plus poison), bite +24 (4d6+8/19-20),
2 wings +19 (2d6+4)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks poison (*save* DC 24; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Con; *cure* 2 consecutive saves), rake (2 talons +24, 1d8+8)

TACTICS

During Combat Minognos-Ushad swoops into an attack using a Vital Strike sting on the first round of combat, then makes full attacks at the strongest-looking foe in following rounds.

Morale Minognos-Ushad flees combat if brought below 50 hit points, abandoning her lair and flying up into the mountains to nurse her wounds upon the peak of Mount Branthlend. Once she heals, she returns to seek out those who drove her from her lair for revenge.

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 7, **Con** 20, **Int** 9, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +28; **CMD** 36

Feats Critical Focus, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Natural Attack (bite, sting, wing), Staggering Critical, Toughness, Vital Strike

Skills Fly +11, Intimidate +21, Perception +27, Sense Motive +23, Stealth +11

Languages Draconic

Treasure: Although Minognos-Ushad has no real interest in treasure, a fair amount of it has accumulated in the depths of her lair amid the mountains of bones discarded after her meals. Most of the gear worn by the hapless explorers, barbarians, bandits, and adventurers she's slaughtered over the years is rusted and rotted to

ruin, but a few hour's work sifting through the grisly remains reveals 2,900 sp, 3,400 gp, 155 pp, a dozen gems worth 100 gp each, 17 +2 icy burst crossbow bolts, and a winged shield.

G. CASTLE OF KNIVES (HIDDEN)

One of the most notorious ruins in Thousand Voices looms amid the tangled underbrush and twisted trees here—the infamous Castle of Knives. This strange structure phases in and out of reality; since it's detailed in the next adventure, if the PCs arrive at this location before you have access to *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #36, simply assume the castle is out of phase at that time.

H. ILORA'S CAMP (HIDDEN; CR 12)

The Pitax River grows relatively narrow here as it nears its source. Both river banks are thick with brambles, and the predominance of unusually noisy crows, rattlesnakes, and various ticks and mosquitoes makes the region a relatively remote one. This isolation precisely serves the needs of its current inhabitant, a Pitaxian exile named Ilora Nuski. A DC 30 Perception check made while exploring this hex allows a character to stumble upon Ilora's campsite.

The brambles in the area count as difficult terrain, and grant soft cover (+4 AC) to creatures within. The brambles grant concealment after 10 feet—this increases to total concealment after 30 feet.

Creature: Ilora's campsite, hidden deep in the brambles, consists of little more than a pair of well-used tents 30 feet from the river's edge; there's not even a real clearing around the tents, since Ilora uses woodland stride to move through the brambles. These same brambles block the view from the river, but allow Ilora to keep an eye on anyone who might be using the river to reach her hideout.

Ilora has seen better days, but even those days were fraught with peril. In her previous life, she was the leader of a group of bandits called the River Razors, but after King Irovetti took the crown and banditry became increasingly organized by the Pitax thieves' guild, Ilora saw her beloved homeland transform into something she hated. Gone were the days when "honest" smugglers and bandits could use Pitax as a safe haven for their work. The rise of drug abuse in the city, the influx of deluded

“jesters and fools” eager to please a false ruler, and the overwhelming presence of the Pitax wardens turned the city into something she loathed, and her days of banditry turned to rebellion.

King Irovetti and his agents were quick to squash the River Razors, and today, Ilora is the only surviving member of the band. Forced to live on the outskirts of Pitax and move to new campsites every few months to keep off pursuit, Ilora continues to build her plans for freeing Pitax from King Irovetti and returning its rule to the proper families. She’s learned much of the city and knows quite a bit about its defenses, and her reputation as a wanted criminal is likely to come to the PCs’ attention sooner or later. If the PCs don’t stumble across her camp or seek her out before they start plans for invading Irovetti’s palace, she’ll find out about the war and contact the PCs herself to offer her aid. One thing she can certainly do is inform the PCs that, several days ago, she saw a small group of Pitaxian soldiers led by a weasly looking man make their way upriver—she followed them along the banks for a while and overheard them mentioning the PCs’ kingdom and that they were heading up to Whitrose Abbey, but not what they were planning on doing there. She wisely abandoned the pursuit when she recognized the weasly looking man as Gaetane, one of Irovetti’s most dangerous assassins—she had no interest in tangling with the notorious wererat.

The exact aid Ilora can offer is presented in Part Four. Although filthy and ragged after years of living in the wilds, she still carries herself with pride, and her beauty is quite apparent even under her self-cut hair, dirt, and coarse language. She knows she’s not a great leader—she commanded the River Razors via intimidation more than anything else—and hopes to find a new leader to follow and help liberate her beloved hometown.

ILORA NUSKI CR 12

XP 19,200

Female human ranger 13
CN Medium humanoid
(human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 22 (+5 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural, +1 shield)

hp 123 (13d10+52)

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 short sword +16/+11/+6 (1d6+4/17–20), +1 short sword +16/+11/+6 (1d6+4/17–20)

Ranged dagger +15 (1d4+3/19–20)

Special Attacks favored enemy (human +6, giant +4, fey +2), quarry

Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +12)

3rd—*summon nature’s ally III*

2nd—*barkskin*, *cure light wounds*, *summon nature’s ally II*

1st—*alarm*, *endure elements*, *entangle* (DC 13), *summon nature’s ally I*

TACTICS

Before Combat Ilora casts *alarm* every evening to protect her campsite and *endure elements* every morning to make her life more bearable. She casts *barkskin* as soon as she fears combat is imminent.

During Combat Ilora takes advantage of woodland stride and uses the thorns to her advantage, gaining soft cover against foes farther than 5 feet away from her. She fights with both swords, using Vital Strike when she has to move up to attack a foe. She relies on her spells to protect her from foes who use ranged attacks against her.

Morale If faced with a foe she’s obviously outnumbered or outmatched by, Ilora flees; throwing her life away on a pointless battle won’t get Pitax out from under Irovetti’s rule, after all.

STATISTICS

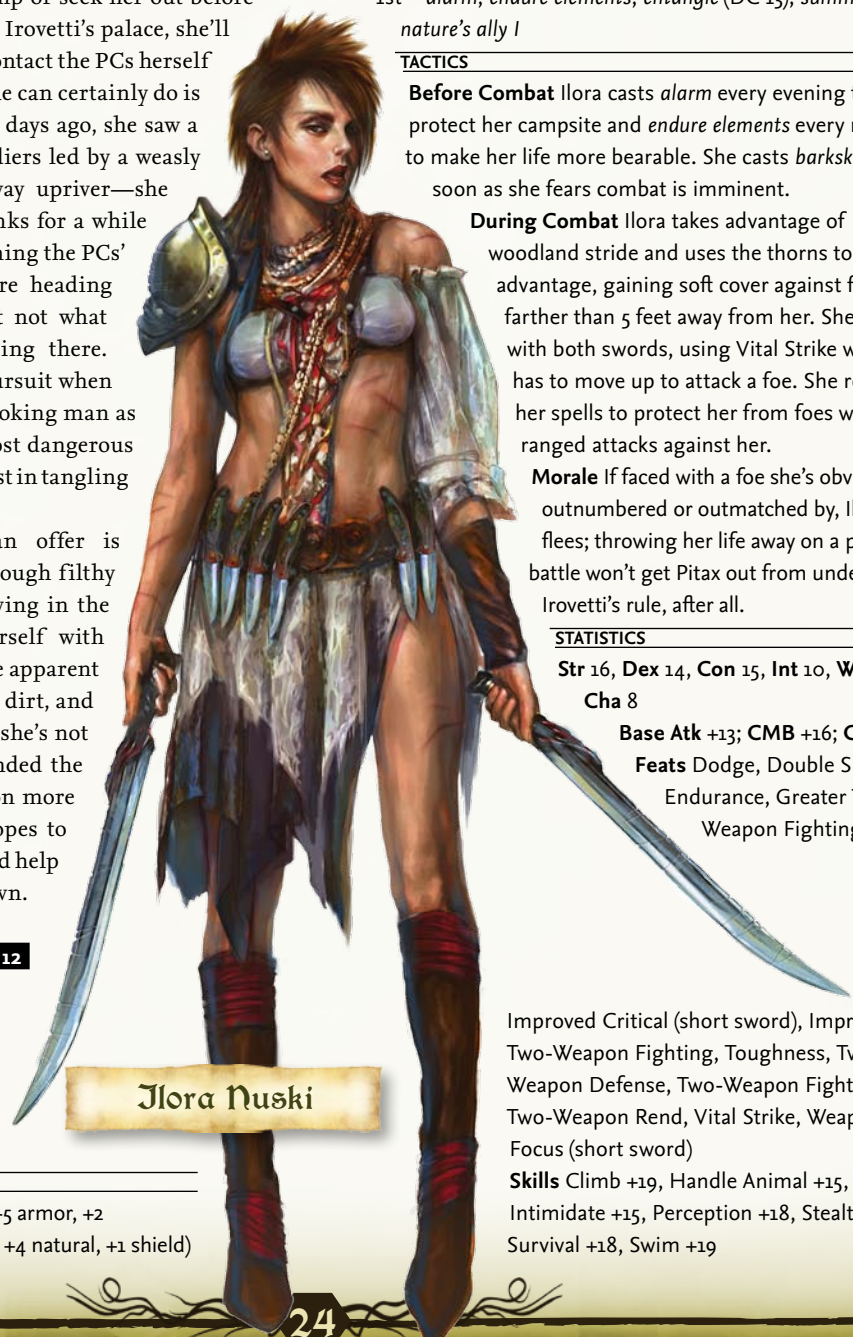
Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 31

Feats Dodge, Double Slice, Endurance, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting,

Improved Critical (short sword), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Rend, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Climb +19, Handle Animal +15, Intimidate +15, Perception +18, Stealth +18, Survival +18, Swim +19



Ilora Nuski

Languages Common

SQ camouflage, favored terrain (urban +6, mountains +4, forest +2), hunter's bond (companions), swift tracker, track +13, wild empathy +12, woodland stride

Combat Gear *wand of cure moderate wounds* (30 charges);

Other Gear +2 studded leather, 2 +1 short swords (2), amulet of natural armor +1, boots of striding and springing, ring of protection +2, 5 gp

I. TUSKER RIDERS (STANDARD; CR 7 MASS COMBAT)

A large tribe of 50 hill giants known as the Tuskers has dwelt in the southern Glenebon Hills for decades. A constant thorn in both Pitax's and the regional barbarians' sides, these giants are notable for their bond with a large herd of mastodons they've trained as mounts. They are currently led by a slope-browed cretin named Kob Moleg from whom King Irovetti recently managed to secure the Tuskers' allegiance with a combination of gold, silver-tongued promises, and magic. He's ordered the giant cavalry to wait here for his orders to ride southeast into the PCs' kingdom—but the giants are growing impatient and unruly with the wait, and their morale is deteriorating. While the PCs can certainly attack the Tuskers with their own army, they might be able to convince Kob to take his giants back north into the hills if they can adjust his attitude from Hostile to Friendly. If he can be made Helpful, Kob might even deign to join the PCs' side, although he'll demand a tribute of at least 10,000 gp before he agrees to ride against Pitax.

Battlefield: The battlefield is relatively plain, with low hills and sporadic copses of trees. The Tuskers know the region well and gain battlefield advantage (+2 to OM and DV) in any mass combats they participate in while in this hex.

TUSKER RIDERS	CR 7
XP 3,200	
CE Small army of hill giants mounted on mastodons	
COMBAT	
hp 31	
DV 20; OM +9, ranged	
Tactics Cavalry Experts; Resources mounts, improved armor (masterwork)	
Special Abilities rock throwing	
LOGISTICS	
Speed 2; Morale -1; Consumption 15	
Leader Kob Moleg, advanced hill giant (Cha +0)	

J. THE PITAX HORDE (STANDARD; CR 9 MASS COMBAT)

King Irovetti's alliance with the barbarian tribes of the Glenebon Uplands has served him well over the years, and now the seven tribes remaining after Armag's defeat serve as one of his most powerful reserve armies. Placed

here, on the easternmost edge of what Irovetti likes to think of as Pitax's border (although in truth it's a no-man's land), the seven tribes known as the Pitax Horde wait impatiently for the order to attack. Unfortunately, Irovetti's recent alliance with the Tuskers, a traditional enemy of the barbarian tribes, has put a strain on the morale of the Pitax horde. They'll still fight if presented with an invading army, but more out of a lust for battle than loyalty to Pitax.

The Pitax horde was originally led by Armag, and if the PCs didn't defeat him in the previous adventure, the barbarian leads the horde still. In this case, his reclamation of the magical sword from his ancestor's tomb has bolstered the horde's morale, increasing it to +2. More likely, Armag is dead and the horde is led either by Villamor Koth (if the PCs haven't already slain him) or by Koth's cousin Tolg (a less savory version of the barbarian).

If the PCs manage to establish diplomatic contact with the horde and can shift its leader's attitude from Hostile to Helpful, he agrees to let the PCs' army pass. If the PCs agree to destroy the Tuskers at area I, the Pitax horde will even join the PCs in the march against Irovetti.

Battlefield: The Pitax horde knows the open plains of this area well and have battlefield advantage in any mass conflicts that take place here.

PITAX HORDE	CR 9
XP 6,400	
CN Gargantuan army of humans (barbarian 4)	
COMBAT	
hp 58	
DV 20; OM +10, ranged	
Tactics Dirty Fighters; Resources improved armor (masterwork), improved weapons (masterwork), ranged weapons	
LOGISTICS	
Speed 2	
Morale -2; Consumption 14	
Leader Armag (Cha +1), Villamor Koth (Cha +0), or Tolg Koth (Cha -1)	

K. LITTLETOWN (LANDMARK; CR 6 MASS COMBAT)

King Irovetti recently used this small village of farmers and vintners as currency to "hire" another army. His agents worked to contact the various wyverns of the Glenebon Uplands and southern Pitax, promising them an entire town of cattle and humans if they would band together to form a pair of flights to aid King Irovetti in the coming war. Rumors of massing wyverns have been rife of late, but the citizens of Pitax are only now starting to suspect their king had something to do with the loss of contact with Littletown. Once word of the atrocities that

King Irovetti allowed to happen here come to full light, the citizens of Pitax will be even more receptive to new rule (see Part Four for details).

The ruined village of Littletown can be incorporated into a new city if the PCs claim this hex. There's no need to prepare the site for a city grid, and three buildings are in good enough shape to halve costs if they're repaired: a brewery, a town hall, and a noble villa.

Battlefield: The ruins of Littletown are not only advantageous to the wyverns, but also grant them battlefield advantage due to their familiarity with the site. In all, this grants +2 OM and +4 DV to the wyverns in any battles that take place here.

RESERVE WYVERN FLIGHT CR 6

XP 2,400
hp 39 (see page 20)

L. HEMLOCK ISLAND (LANDMARK)

Like the island in Candlemere to the southeast, this island has a reputation for being haunted by "lights." Yet unlike Candlemere's island, Hemlock Island bears no strange ruins or notable infestation of monsters such as will-o'-wisps. The only denizens of this scenic, beautiful island are brightly colored rainbow egrets that scream like human women when slain. A large pool of water sits at the center of Hemlock Island—a deep spring from which a swift-moving river flows down to fill the surrounding lake of Rushlight and its own river that flows southwest to Pitax.

M. THE WEEPING GROVE (STANDARD; CR 14)

Creature: Although very few of them remain today in Thousand Voices, the legendary Trees That Weep are one of the more frequently whispered rumors about this dense woodland. Said to possess twisted human faces and a proclivity to weep tears of pure fear, these rumors were inspired by ancient, towering quickwoods—carnivorous and intelligent plants—which once grew throughout the region. Today, only a few particularly ancient specimens still live, like this 55-foot-tall creature that slowly wanders throughout the woods searching for prey. This habit of wandering also helps to explain why thrillseekers and adventures have a difficult time finding a so-called "weeping grove," as the quickwoods do not stay in one place for long.

TREE THAT WEEPS CR 14

XP 38,400
Advanced quickwood (*Tome of Horrors Revised* 302)
N Huge plant
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., oaksight; Perception +35

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 7, flat-footed 29 (–1 Dex, +22 natural, –2 size)

hp 210 (20d8+120)

Fort +18, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities spell absorption; **Immune** electricity, fire, plant traits; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee bite +23 (2d6+10/19–20), 6 roots +21 (1d6+5/19–20 plus pull)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (60 ft. with root)

Special Attacks pull (30 feet)

TACTICS

During Combat The Tree That Weeps already has a 5th-level spell stored in its body from a previous fight, and unleashes its energy on the first round of combat to create a fear aura once foes come within 40 feet of it. It then uses its roots to attack foes and pull them close so it can bite them.

Morale The Tree That Weeps fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 31, **Dex** 8, **Con** 23, **Int** 12, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +27; **CMD** 36

Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Critical Focus, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Staggering Critical

Skills Knowledge (nature) +21, Perception +35, Sense Motive +4, Stealth +14 (+16 in forests)

Languages Common, Sylvan

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fear Aura (Su) As long as the quickwood retains energy it has absorbed from a spell (see spell absorption), it can release that energy as a swift action to create a fear aura with a radius of 10 feet per level of the spell it absorbed and released. All creatures in this aura must make a DC 24 Will save or become panicked. The fear aura lasts until the end of the quickwood's next turn. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Oaksight (Su) A quickwood may observe the area surrounding any oak tree within 360 feet as if using *clairaudience*/*clairvoyance*. It can use this ability on any number of oak trees in the area. Although the quickwood does not need line of sight to establish this link, if it does have line of sight to even a single oak tree, it cannot be flanked.

Roots (Ex) A quickwood has dozens of long roots, but can only attack with up to six of them in any given round. If the quickwood uses its pull ability to pull a target within reach of its bite attack, it can immediately make a free bite attack with a +4 bonus on its attack roll against that target.

Spell Absorption (Su) If a quickwood's spell resistance protects it from being affected by a spell, the quickwood absorbs that spell's energy into its body. It can then release this energy to create a fear aura (see above). The quickwood cannot absorb another spell's

energy while it contains a previously absorbed spell's energy. As long as a quickwood is storing spell energy, attempts to overcome its spell resistance receive a +5 bonus on the roll.

N. RUSHLIGHT FESTIVAL GROUNDS (LANDMARK)

This area is detailed in Part One.

O. CATSPA W CAMP (STANDARD; CR 9 MASS COMBAT)

The Catspaw Marauders consist of a displaced thieves' guild, forced out of the city of Hajo th Hakados in Numeria a year ago after a failed coup against the city's leaders. Many of the Catspaws were slain, but enough survived to remain a significant threat. They became a mercenary company for hire in the River Kingdoms, rebuilding their numbers until they came to Irovetti's attention. Impressed by their loyalty to each other, he paid them a not-insignificant amount of money from Pitax's treasury to join his army. Today, the Catspaw Marauders have a semi-permanent camp amid a small copse of trees on the plain here.

The Catspaw Marauders are uninterested in betraying Pitax as long as their leader, Alasen, lives. This adventure assumes that the PCs won't confront Alasen until the invasion of Irovetti's castle, but if the PCs manage to confront her here, they may be able to break the morale of these mercenaries with one stealthy assassination mission.

Battlefield: The Catspaw Marauders have battlefield advantage in this area. They also post numerous wary guardsmen, and if they notice the approach of an enemy, they take to the trees and the tall grass to attempt to ambush the invaders.

CATSPA W MARAUDERS

CR 9

XP 6,400

NE Huge army of humans (rogue 4/fighter 2)

COMBAT

hp 40

DV 21; OM +10, ranged

Tactics Sniper Support; **Resources** improved weapons (masterwork), improved armor (magic), ranged weapons

LOGISTICS

Speed 2; Morale +0; Consumption 26

Leader Lady Alasen (Cha +1)

P. PITAX (LANDMARK)

This area is described in Part Four and in the Pitax gazetteer, which begins on page 60.

PART THREE: THE GHOST OF WHITEROSE

Armies aren't the only weapons that King Irovetti has ready to use against the PCs. Having lived the adventurer's life for several years himself, he has a good idea what kinds of folks are attracted to the dangerous lifestyle. And as such, he's prepared a dangerous trap for overly curious PCs—a trap set atop a distant hill in the Branthlend Mountain foothills at an abandoned abbey and winery, now cursed and haunted by a dangerous ghost.

The way in which you introduce this part of the adventure is left to you. The PCs could simply stumble upon the site as they're exploring the Glenebon Uplands,



Tree That Weeps

Quest: The Poison Plot

The PCs learn of a plot to generate a devastating poisonous weapon, and must investigate the remote location where the weapon is supposedly being developed.

Source: Variable; this quest could come from a spy whom Irovetti has fed false information, from rumors that some of Irovetti's agents are developing a "super weapon" in a remote ruin in the Branthlend Mountain foothills, or from an officer or commander who's been ordered to allow himself to be captured so he can "reveal" the information about the site under interrogation. The PCs could even hear about Irovetti's apparent interest in the area from Ilora Nuski, although in this case the PCs might end up exploring Whiterose Abbey, not to find a secret weapon that doesn't exist, but to investigate why several of Irovetti's agents have traveled there.

Task: The PCs must travel to Whiterose Abbey without the support of an army. First, a stealth operation has a much greater chance of catching the agents who are on site unprepared, and thus offers a greater chance to secure intelligence. Second (and perhaps more important), if the rumors are true and Irovetti's men have developed a mass *cloudkill* device, an army would have little chance against its devastating effects. Their goal at Whiterose is to determine whether such a device exists, and if it does, to capture or destroy it.

Completion: Discover that no such device exists and survive the assassination attempt by Irovetti's agents.

Reward: Apart from the experience points earned for completing this quest, traveling to Whiterose Abbey gives the PCs the chance to gather some information about Irovetti's past and his link with the nymph Nyrrisa and the sword *Briar*.

but that's not really a satisfactory setup for an encounter that could be a lot more interesting. As the war begins, King Irovetti knows that the PCs are the heart and soul of their kingdom, and if they can be removed, their kingdom will fall all the easier to his armies.

Yet Irovetti knows that having deceived the PCs once already, he'll need to be far more subtle this second time if he hopes to get them to investigate Whiterose and expose themselves to the dangers that wait there. His plan is to use one of several spies that his agents have uncovered to serve as an unknowing double agent, hoping that a report brought to the PCs from someone who honestly believes that he's bringing word of a new threat will suffice to lure the PCs into the trap. See the Quest sidebar for details on the false threat.

If the PCs attempt to send spies into Pitax, their spies provide a perfect way for them to learn this misinformation. Alternatively, the spy could be someone working for Mivon

or another River Kingdom who hopes to get in the good graces of the PCs' kingdom and risks his life to bring word of the supposed poison plot to their ears. The PCs might learn this same information from an officer they capture and interrogate—Irovetti has informed several of his key commanders of the ambush for the PCs he's set up at Whiterose, and by giving his commanders this convenient bit of information to give up under the duress of an interrogation, they might gain mercy from the PCs even as they're sending them into a trap. Of course, the true beauty of Irovetti's plan is that even if the PCs learn that there's some sort of deception going on, their adventurers' curiosity might well be enough to lure the heroes out to the remote location to investigate it. Even if the PCs come to Whiterose expecting trouble, Irovetti's agents have a good chance at ending the war if the PCs don't watch their step!

The nature of the lure is simple: Irovetti wants the PCs to believe that he's developed a way to create a mass *cloudkill* effect, using a modified *horn of fog*, the talents of a master poisoner from Daggermark, and a magical font said to lie within the abandoned abbey that the monks used to enhance and magnify the effects of the wine they created there. The truly devious part of Irovetti's plan is, of course, the fact that even if the PCs learn that there is no actual "horn of cloudkilling," the rumors of his interest in Whiterose, or perhaps merely the rumors of a font that can enhance poisons, drugs, and potions exists in the abbey, will likely be enough to reel the PCs into the trap.

Whiterose Abbey is located atop a foothill on the southern slopes of the Branthlend Mountains in the shadow of the great Mount Branthlend itself, about 80 miles north of Fort Drelev at area **D** in the Glenebon Uplands. The PCs can learn a bit more about the abbey by making a Diplomacy check to gather information in any settlement or by making a Knowledge (geography, local, or religion) check. Alternatively, divination magic can reveal the following information, or much more if the PCs ask the right questions!

THE SECRET HISTORY OF WHITEROSE ABBEY

The sword known today as *Briar* is more than a sword to the nymph Nyrrisa—it is a fundamental part of her being, and without the sword she is not whole. Yet the nature in which it was taken from her makes it impossible for her to find as long as it remains quiescent in the Material Plane. King Irovetti is but the latest in a long line of champions she has chosen to seek the sword, though he is the first to have found it. Yet Nyrrisa chose her champion poorly, for Irovetti now hides the sword from her. The full story of *Briar* and its fundamental connection to the nymph is not a part of this part of Kingmaker (see the last adventure, "Sound of a Thousand Screams"), but its discovery certainly is.

The mysterious agents of Nyrissa's enemies from the First World chose a low, nameless mound in the foothills of the Branthlend Mountains as *Briar's* hidden vault, hiding the sword in a subterranean pool under what would come to be known as Whiterose Hill and entrusting its protection to a fey spirit of water named Evindra. For unknown years she did just that, but eventually, civilization came to call in the form of a group of priests of Cayden Cailean. Taken by the beauty of the white roses that grew upon the hill, they chose the hill as the site to build a remote abbey and winery. Over the decades that followed, the need for companionship eventually drove Evindra to contact the priests, and they welcomed her presence, seeing her as a benevolent spirit once she began to teach them the secret of how to enhance the quality of their wine by using purer forms of water and more efficient methods of filtration.

It all came to an end when the church sent an awkward and embarrassing member to the abbey—a lecherous and somewhat deformed halfling sorcerer whose skill at gardening and cultivating vineyards only just kept him in the good graces of the church. They did not excommunicate him for his borderline acts of heresy, but rather entrusted him to the priests of Whiterose, hoping that the remote location would soften his eccentricities. Yet when the gardener first encountered Evindra, he became obsessed with her, and one night he stole her shawl and in so doing gained a considerable bargaining chip, for Evindra was a nereid, and her shawl contained a portion of her soul. The gardener forced Evindra into a watery form and imprisoned her in a beautiful water clock so he could keep her to himself.

In imprisoning Evindra, the gardener discovered the treasure she had been guarding—an exquisite bastard sword. And with Evindra imprisoned and no longer able to keep the sword's emotions in check, the potent weapon began to stir. It began to drive the gardener even more insane with Aklo whispers from the First World, amplifying his jealousy and paranoia, driving him to believe that the other priests at the abbey coveted his bottled bride. Driven beyond reason, he used *Briar* to slay everyone else in the Abbey, then retreated into hiding in the subterranean pool below. The abbey's remote location and the half-hearted investigation by the church (who ruled that the priests had been slain by brigands) ensured the gardener's isolation for many years.

It wasn't until relatively recently that Irovetti's agents discovered Whiterose was the site of *Briar's* hidden vault. They found the subterranean chamber and the mad gardener therein. A battle ensued, but they prevailed—after slaying the gardener, they returned to Pitax with *Briar*, leaving Evindra trapped in her water clock simply because they didn't find where the gardener had stashed the elegant device away.

Whiterose Abbey Lore

Skill

Check Information

- DC 10 Whiterose Abbey is abandoned, and has been for decades. It was built by the church of Cayden Cailean, and for many years the priests who dwelt there were renowned for their rich and potent wine. It's located about a dozen miles southeast of Mount Branthlend.
- DC 20 The monks of Whiterose Abbey were master brewers and vintners, blessed by Cayden Cailean for their vow of silence, and any liquid brewed in their blessed vats gained unusual potency and marvelous flavor.
- DC 25 Abbot Ildeben was murdered and the brethren poisoned by the abbey's gardener, who went mad with jealousy after being repeatedly passed over for advancement.
- DC 30 A beautiful water spirit named Evindra dwelt in a subterranean pool somewhere below the abbey, and it was through her grace and advice that the priests were able to brew such potent alcohol.
- DC 35 The murderous gardener practiced dark magics in the vineyards and sometimes was overheard raving about the "voices of the stars." He was a lunatic whom the church assigned to the remote abbey in an attempt to hide him away from the public.

Yet the ill times at Whiterose did not end. The gardener's spirit, now deprived of *Briar* and crazier than ever, rose as a ghost and now haunts the place, finally bringing a bit of truth to the old stories that the place is haunted.

This latest development is unknown to Irovetti—he chose Whiterose as a place to spring his trap on the PCs partially because of its remote location and partially because if the PCs succumbed at a supposedly haunted abbey, suspicion would be levied against the supposed ghosts and not himself. To ensure such a fate meets the PCs when they arrive, the King of Pitax sent one of his most dangerous minions—a wererat murderer named Gaetane and a small group of soldiers. Yet the murderers have found, much to their discomfort, that the rumors of Whiterose being haunted and infested by dangerous vermin are disturbingly accurate, and as a result they've had some difficulty in preparing their deadly reception for the PCs.

WHITEROSE HILL

Patches of white roses still grow on parts of Whiterose Hill, but in the absence of *Briar's* influence and the presence of the gardener's ghostly powers, the hill has grown wild in recent years. Thick swaths of kudzu-like

vegetation grow on the hill, and the wide path that once led up the hill to the abbey itself is now little more than an overgrown trail. A low stone wall encircles the hilltop, built decades ago by the priests to delineate the land granted them by the church. This same stone wall now marks the extent of the gardener's undead influence—inside the wall, the air feels strangely thick and humid, almost as if the hill were under an immense greenhouse rather than on the slopes of a temperate mountain range. The gardener's influence manifests in other ways as well, causing vegetation to shift and writhe at times without an apparent breeze and causing weeds and vermin to grow to excessive size and strength. At night, the susurrus of the fields and vegetation rustling is unnerving in the still air, and tiny motes of sickly green and pale yellow light generated by languid fireflies the size of apples bob and dip in the air. A DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check confirms that the wilds seem unnaturally verdant here and suggests that a magical influence is behind the hearty growth. A DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check suggests that the boundaries between this world and the First World may be thin in this region. Yet for all this eerie atmosphere, the gardener himself does not manifest directly except in a few specific locations detailed in the encounter text.

Few signs remain of the expansive vineyards that once surrounded the hill, although here and there, overgrown posts and tangles of wild grapes hint at the region's past. Three partially collapsed buildings slump near the wall to the southeast of the hill's peak, once guest lodgings, a stable, and a wagonhouse, respectively. To the west of the hill against a steep, vine-covered slope stands the ruins of the winery itself, while at the hill's peak looms the stone abbey.

D1. PLAZA

Atop Whiterose Hill, at the end of the overgrown track, lies a weed-choked cobblestone plaza. To one side stands a vine-draped bell tower. Facing the plaza, the weathered doors of the abandoned abbey hang askew.

The plaza is clear, surrounded by light undergrowth within 20 feet and heavy undergrowth elsewhere. A DC 20 Survival or DC 25 Perception check reveals numerous recent footprints in the area—these prints were left by the ambushers to give the impression that troops recently massed in the plaza before entering the abbey, in hope of luring the PCs within.

D2. BELLTOWER (CR 5)

A trio of fallen iron bells lies amid a pile of broken beams on the floor within this partially collapsed stone tower.

The first time the PCs enter this tower, a DC 15 Perception check reveals a disturbing sound—the soft pealing of what sound like bells ringing from a vast distance. The ringing continues until the fallen bells are touched, at which point the sound ceases—an unnerving but harmless effect of the gardener's influence over the area.

Creature: A Pitax herald stands guard atop this tower; if he spots the PCs approaching, he descends and warns his companions in area **D6**, who ready their ambush. If he's caught here by surprise, he uses *sound burst* to attack the PCs and alert his companions inside the Abby, who prepare their ambush without him; he fights to the death in this case.

PITAX HERALD

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 45 (see page 11)

D3. NARTHEX

Spiral stairways curve down to the west and up to the east in this entry room. The walls and ceiling are tiled in branching vine patterns, but beyond the entryway corridors branch to either side, while a heavy curtain shrouds the sanctuary.

The doors can be opened easily, but the creaking noise that results alerts the ambushers who wait in area **D6**. The stairs to the east lead up to area **D11**, while those to the west lead down to **D16**.

D4. VESTRY

A number of hooks sit on the wall of this abandoned vestry; heaps of ancient cloth are piled on the floor below.

The mounds of cloth are nothing more than rotted cloaks and old robes bearing the symbol of Cayden Cailean.

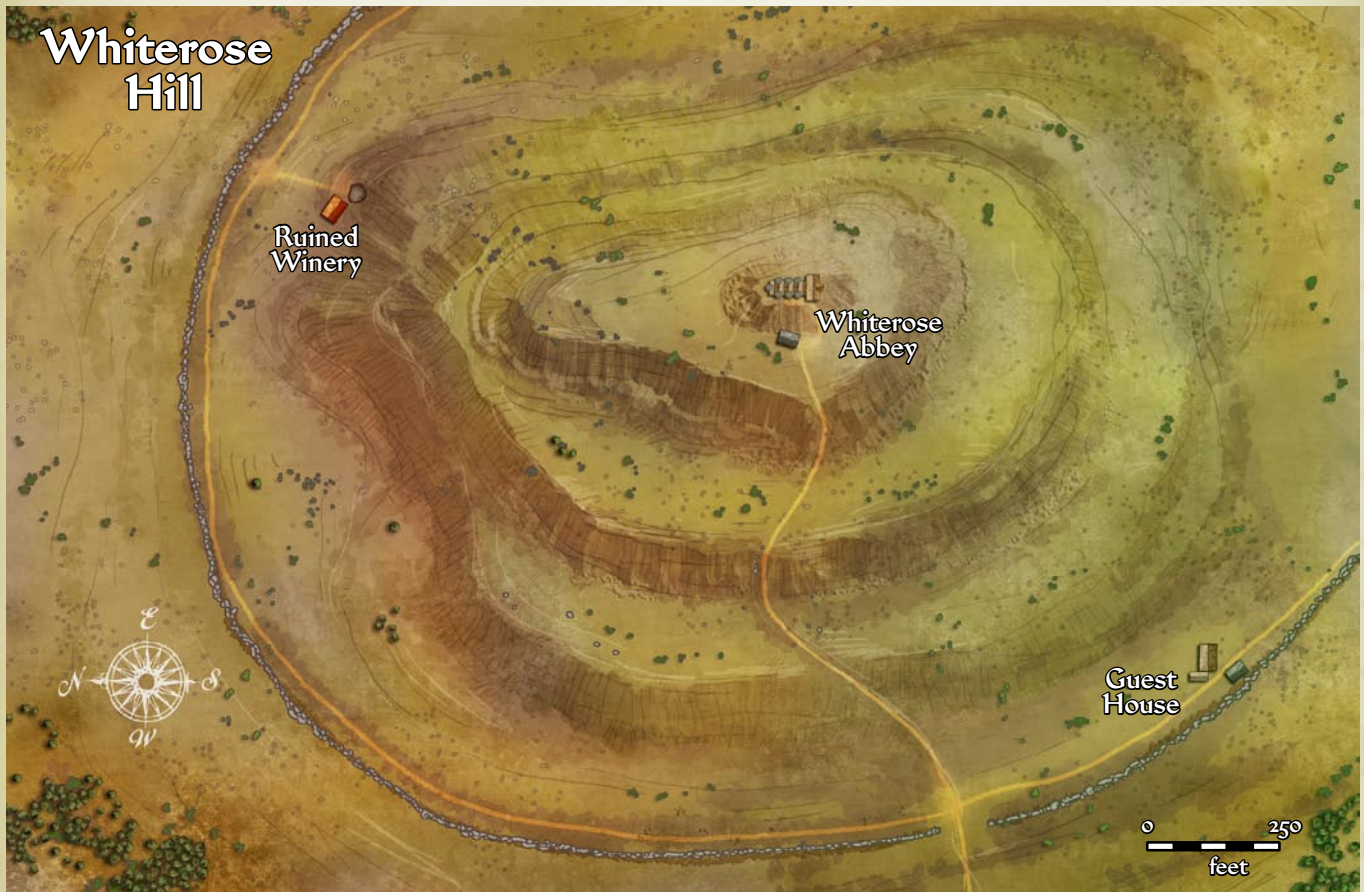
D5. WASHROOM

Judging by the broken basins, this must have once been a washroom and lavatory.

The first PC to look into one of the basins sees that it is filled with crystal-clear water, but upon blinking, the water vanishes (this is another harmless but eerie effect of the building's strange condition).

D6. SANCTUARY (CR 14)

This long, colonnaded hall is marked by rounded bays that run along either side, each containing dusty old barrels. Piles of wood mark where kneeling benches have long since fallen to ruin. Above, wooden rafters form a complex network of supports



for the roof, while below, numerous bedrolls and alchemical supplies of obviously recent manufacture sit on the floor.

The bedrolls are used by the soldiers, but they've arranged them along with several alchemical supplies so that it looks like a group of "poisoners" has set up shop in here to keep the ruse going a few precious moments longer once the PCs arrive.

Creatures: Gaetane and his soldiers lie in wait in this room if they're aware of the PCs' approach, ready to spring their ambush. If caught unaware, the PCs find the soldiers at rest, sparring, talking in hushed tones, or playing cards while they wait—they scramble for weapons and attack as soon as they recover from the surprise of being ambushed themselves. If they have time to prepare, the heralds hide amid the barrels while the wardens each drink a *potion of invisibility* once they believe the PCs are about to enter the room. Gaetane himself hides in the rafters above.

All of the heralds and wardens, but not Gaetane, have become quite unnerved by the strange aura of the place and are shaken for the duration of the battle—a DC 20 Sense Motive check can reveal that the soldiers are visibly uncomfortable about being in the area for some reason.

GAETANE

CR 12

XP 19,200

Male human wererat ranger 12 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 197)

LE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +17

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 15, flat-footed 23 (+5 armor, +5 Dex, +6 natural, +2 shield)

hp 150 (12d10+84)

Fort +16, **Ref** +15, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities evasion; **DR** 10/silver

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +16 (1d6+5 plus curse of lycanthropy and disease),

Ranged +1 *humanbane composite longbow* +19/+14/+9 (1d8+1/19–20/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (human +6, dwarf +4, animal +2), quarry

Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +8)

3rd—*greater magic fang*

2nd—*barkskin*, *bear's endurance*, *hold animal* (DC 14)

1st—*jump*, *longstrider*, *resist energy*

TACTICS

Before Combat Gaetane casts *greater magic fang* every day,

and casts *barkskin*, *bear's endurance*, *jump*, and *longstrider* before entering combat.

During Combat Gaetane remains in the rafters, where he grants favored enemy bonuses to his soldiers and fires arrows at the PCs, preferably at human targets. If confronted in melee, he uses *Vital Strike* and bites foes, using *Acrobatics* to jump from one end of the chamber to the other to prevent foes from making full attacks on him.

Morale Gaetane fights until reduced to 20 hit points or less, at which point he cowardly surrenders and attempts to bargain with the PCs, offering to exchange information for his life. If any other soldiers remain alive at this time, they drop their weapons and surrender as well. You can use Gaetane to fill the PCs in on the truth about the “poison plot” and even to give them additional information they can use against Irovetti when they attack his palace (see Part Four).



Gaetane

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 20, **Con** 22, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 29

Feats Deadly Aim, Endurance, Improved Critical (composite longbow), Improved Precise Shot, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Pinpoint Targeting, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Vital Strike

Skills *Acrobatics* +16 (+50 jumping), *Climb* +16, *Handle Animal* +8, *Knowledge (geography)* +8, *Perception* +17, *Stealth* +19, *Survival* +17

Languages Common

SQ camouflage, favored terrain (urban +4, mountain +2), hunter's bond (companions), swift tracker, track +6, wild empathy +11, woodland stride

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*; **Other Gear** +1 chain shirt, +1 buckler, +1 humanbane composite longbow, bracers of archery, cloak of resistance +2

PITAX HERALDS (4)

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 45 (see page 11)

PITAX WARDENS (8)

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 45 (see pages 11–12)

D7. SHAMBLING GRAVEYARD (CR 13)

Rough stone markers with weathered inscriptions of names and years overlaying an engraved winecup and rose mark this as a place where the faithful lie in repose.

The graveyard is covered in heavy undergrowth. An examination of the gravestones reveals that the majority of them contain bodies whose burial dates are on the same day, including the grave of Abbot Ildeben. Although none of their spirits haunt the place, the gardener's influence causes the weeds in the place to rustle and writhe constantly.

Creatures: The real danger in this area isn't the spirits of the dead, but rather two enormous advanced shambling mounds that lie in heaps amid the undergrowth. Influenced by the presence of the gardener's spirit, these carnivorous plants have grown large and powerful. When they rise up to attack, the impression is, if only temporarily, of the entire graveyard uprooting to attack. Headstones and even tangles of buried bones are churned up into the masses of the two shambling mounds as they attack, presenting a horrific sight to their foes. Note that the overgrown conditions allow the shambling mounds to gain the benefit of their *Stealth* bonus, normally reserved for forests or swamps.



ADVANCED SHAMBLING MOUNDS (2) CR 11

XP 12,800 each

N Huge plant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 246)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +4

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 7, flat-footed 20 (–1 Dex, +13 natural, –2 size)

hp 161 each (14d8+98)

Fort +16, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

Immune electricity, plant traits; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee 2 slams +17 (4d6+9/19–20 plus grab)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (4d6+13)

TACTICS

During Combat The shambling mounds pursue foes throughout the area but not beyond the encircling wall at the hill's base below.

Morale These plants fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 8, **Con** 25, **Int** 7, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 30

Feats Cleave, Improved Critical (slams), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Stealth +12 (+20 in forests or swamps)

Languages Common, Sylvan (cannot speak)

SQ electric fortitude

D8. CONTEMPLATION QUARTERS

This long hall is flanked by a row of doors on either side. Every door is ajar, and the rooms are virtually identical in their sparse furnishings.

These rooms were the study and meditation chambers for the most devoted priests who had completed their training and taken their vows before the abbot and the assembled brethren.

An overgrown well behind the empty building drops a full 80 feet into the cold water of area **D16** below. If the PCs make an excessive amount of noise at this area, the gardener's ghost may rise up from the well to attack at your option (see area **D16** for details).

D9. LIBRARY

Many moldering books and scrolls sit on the sagging wooden shelves that line the walls of this chamber. Another stairwell curves up to the floor above, while a wooden double-door hangs open to the south to reveal a small bedroom.



The few surviving books are mundane tomes on religion, viticulture, and old tales of bravery by religious figures from a variety of faiths. The room to the south (area **D9a**) was the librarian's bedroom.

Treasure: A drawer in a narrow desk against the west wall contains the librarian's personal journal, a small leather affair with elaborate knotted designs, as well as a thick tome with soggy leather covers. The journal indicates that the librarian had a growing worry about the gardener's interest in unnatural topics, including a book the librarian obtained for the gardener but did not give him (lying that the bookseller had cheated him). This book is in fact the tome with the sodden covers; it has no title and is written in Aklo. It is difficult to read, but if consulted for 10 minutes, it grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks and on Knowledge (arcana) or (nature) checks dealing with astrology, astronomy, or the stars. The book is worth 100 gp, but it can also be used to momentarily distract the gardener's ghost when it is encountered.

D10. ABBOT'S CHAMBERS

This room holds a desk engraved with the icon of a wine cup, perhaps indicating the study of a leader of the order. A large and quite old bloodstain mars the floor to the south.

This was the room in which the gardener murdered the abbot—the first time the PCs enter this area, they feel a sudden sharp pain in their necks and must make DC 20 Fortitude saves to avoid being stunned by the sudden conviction that some unseen force has just cut through their necks with an incredibly sharp blade. The sensation passes quickly after a single round, leaving those who were stunned with an eerie white scar around their necks. This scar is harmless and can be removed with any healing magic, but it should disconcert those who suffer it.

Area **D10a** to the east was the abbot's personal shrine, while area **D10b** was his bedroom—neither room contains anything of interest.

D11. KITCHENS

Large clay and stone ovens fill the far wall, and the open hall has long tables for preparing food and basins for washing. Crocks once filled with knives, long spoons, and other kitchen supplies have spilled their contents onto the countertops, which are covered with a film of dust and debris.

The stairs here lead up to area **D3**. This room and the one to the west are where the priests once cooked and prepared meals.

D12. PRIESTS' CELLS (CR 12)

This long hallway contains nearly two dozen narrow cells, each furnished with an equally narrow bed. Old bloodstains mar the walls and floor in many places here.

Creatures: While this location is where the gardener slew the majority of the abbey's priests so long ago, it is not their unquiet spirits that lurk here now. Instead, a string of eight will-o'-wisps lurk in the area. Normally content to bask in the echoes of the terror that still infuse the walls here and feed off of the gardener's hatred, the monsters move quickly to attack any intruders, fighting to the death and pursuing foes as needed to feed.

Will-o'-Wisps (8) **CR 6**
XP 2,400 each
hp 40 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 277*)

D13. WINE CELLARS

This wine cellar is filled with enormous wooden racks containing hundreds of wine bottles, their corks sealed with white wax stamped with the rose goblet sigil of the abbey.

Treasure: Although most of the wine has soured, a dozen bottles of incredibly fine Whiterose chardonnay remain; these bottles have aged quite well and are worth 1,000 gp each.

D14. RUINED WINERY (CR 12)

Whiterose Abbey built its crushing, filtering, fermenting, and cooperage facility on the northern side of the hill, next to a tunnel entrance in the side of the hill leading to the mystic subterranean pool that long served as the lair of the abbey's "guardian spirit," Evindra. Today, the buildings that once sat against the cliffs along the northern face of Whiterose Hill have fallen into ruins, but the entrance to the tunnel, while somewhat overgrown with hanging vines, is still quite obvious to anyone who approaches.

D15. CISTERN TUNNEL

This long tunnel bores straight into the hillside. For the first hundred feet or so, the tunnel contains long side tunnels opposite narrow alcoves. These side tunnels are dead ends that were once used as cool storage. Some still contain barrels of supplies, lumber, and tools or large barrels of wine long since soured.

After the storage tunnels, the main tunnel proceeds south a further 900 or so feet to the south.

D16. THE CISTERN (CR 14)

The tunnel ends at a large, vaulted cavern filled with a crescent-shaped pool of softly rippling, crystal-clear water. The northern arc of the pool cuts across the end of the passage, separating the tunnel from an island covered with softly writhing green mold and pale fungus, although a rickety-looking wooden bridge spans the fifteen-foot gap. On the island itself, numerous large wine casks lie around a large central pool of glowing blue water, while along the cave ceiling thirty feet above, what appear to be a half-dozen pinpoints of light slowly wriggle and move, almost as if forming and reforming strange constellations in a false night sky.

For many years, the nereid Evindra watched over the sword *Briar*, which was kept in the cistern of glowing water in the center of this room. Created by ancient First World minions of Nyrrisa's enemies to keep *Briar* immersed in purifying waters that would dull its emotions and help hide it from its mistress, the liquid in the cistern is a potent magical fluid that enhances any liquid it is mixed with. Evindra showed the monks of Cayden Cailean how to enhance their wine using waters from this pool, but they have additional effects on poison, alchemical liquids, potions, and elixirs as well. The casks around the central pool contain spoiled wine—since the gardener slew the remaining monks, no new wine has been made here.

A hole in the ceiling near the western wall extends up to the well near area **D8**. During daytime, the hole allows faint sunlight into the cavern, but at other times it's a DC 20 Perception check to notice the hole from land.

Creatures: The ghost of the now-nameless gardener who went mad and slew the priests of Whiterose Abbey haunts this chamber, though his presence can be felt throughout the entirety of Whiterose Hill. The ghost spends his time either manipulating the fungus that grows on the central island here or "stargazing" upon the constantly shifting constellations above—at the same time, his spirit suffuses all of Whiterose Hill. He remains infused into the walls, water, and floor of this chamber for 1d6+2 rounds after the first PC enters the place, after which the malevolent ghost makes his presence known with a slowly building howl of

raw anguish. As the ghost takes form, he rises like blue mist from the waters of the cistern—and when he does, the six “stars” near the ceiling above begin to spin and spiral quickly, as if caught in a vortex above the ghost.

The “stars” are in fact six advanced will-o’-wisps that have grown powerful feeding upon the ghost’s anger and jealousy; they have allied with the ghost by forming strange patterns of stars for him to gaze upon. When the ghost rises up to attack the PCs, the will-o’-wisps join the undead in the battle, as they do not wish to see their banquet of fear destroyed.

The gardener’s ghost can be laid to rest by releasing the nereid trapped in the hidden water clock (see treasure and “Briar’s Guardian,” below). Until the nereid is released and allowed to leave this place (or, alternatively, until she is killed), the gardener’s ghost continues to rejuvenate after it is destroyed.

THE GARDENER CR 13
XP 25,600



The Gardener

Male halfling ghost monk 4/sorcerer 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 144)

LE Small undead (augmented, halfling, incorporeal)
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +23

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 28, flat-footed 26 (+4 armor, +6 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 monk Wisdom, +1 size)

hp 138 (12 HD; 4d8+8d6+92)

Fort +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +15

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, rejuvenation; evasion, incorporeal, **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee corrupting touch +8/+3 (13d6/x3)

Special Attacks acidic ray (1d6+4 acid, 9/day), corrupting gaze (DC 22), horrific appearance (DC 22), telekinesis

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +14)

4th (4/day)—*black tentacles*

3rd (6/day)—*haste*, *tongues*, *vampiric touch*

2nd (8/day)—*cat's grace*, *owl's wisdom*, *see invisibility*, *touch of idiocy*

1st (8/day)—*chill touch* (DC 17), *enlarge person*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *silent image* (DC 17), *true strike*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Bloodline aberrant

TACTICS

Before Combat In the rounds before it appears, the gardener casts *cat's grace*, *owl's wisdom*, and *mage armor* on himself.

During Combat The gardener uses his corrupting gaze throughout any combat. On the first round, he attacks with his horrific appearance and a quickened *haste* spell. On the second round, he casts *black tentacles* and a quickened *magic missile*. On the third round, he uses telekinesis to attempt to bull rush a heavily armored foe into the surrounding pool, then moves to the most wounded target and casts a quickened *vampiric touch*. Once he's used all three charges of his *rod of lesser quicken metamagic*, he begins attacking with his corrupting touch, using telekinesis and his spells against foes who maintain ranged superiority.

Morale The gardener fights to the death; once he appears, he pursues his victims anywhere they flee on Whiterose Hill, but not beyond the stone wall that surrounds the place.

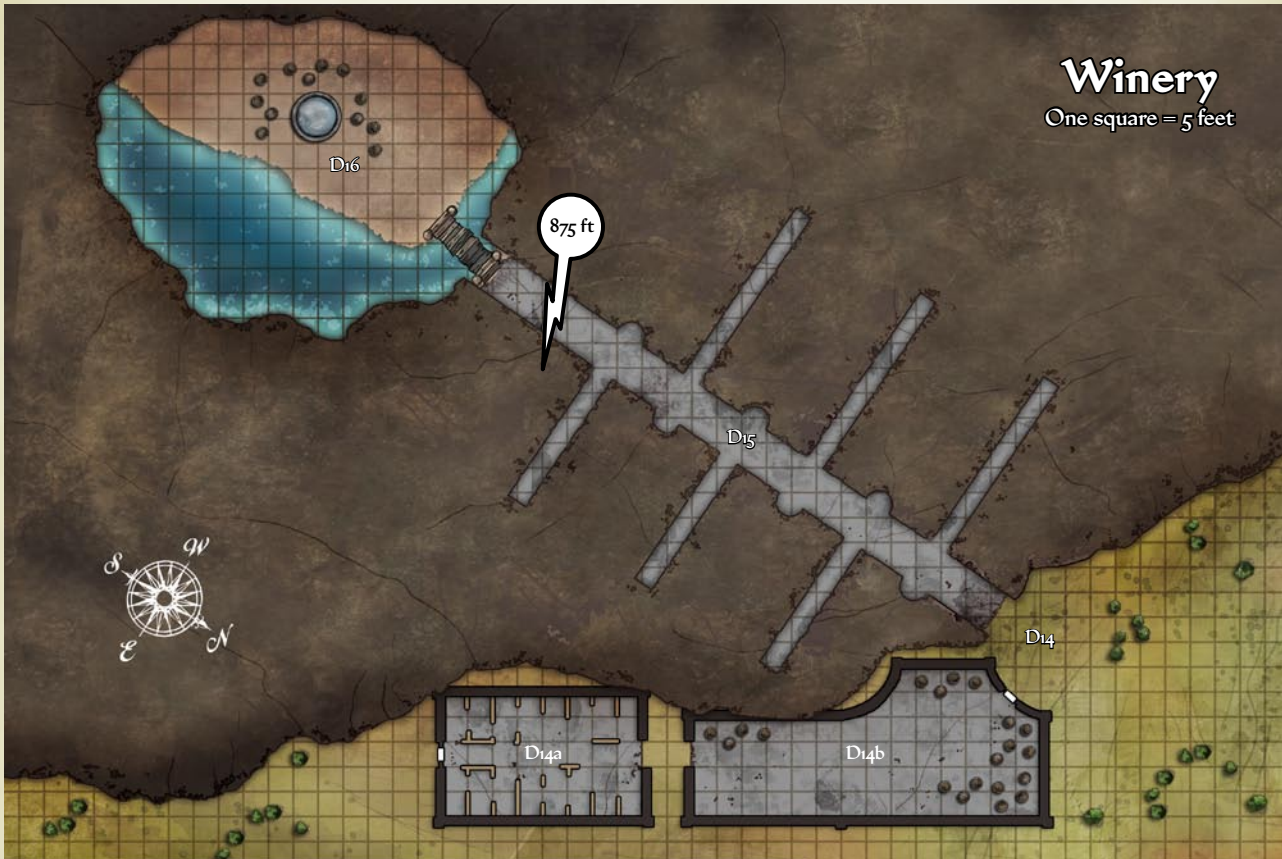
STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 21, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 33

Feats Ability Focus (corrupting gaze), Arcane Strike, Combat Reflexes, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lunge, Mobility, Silent Spell, Stunning Fist, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +7 (+5 jump), Bluff +21, Climb +2, Fly +24, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (nature) +7, Perception



Winery

One square = 5 feet

+23, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +24

Languages Common, Gnome, Halfling

SQ bloodline arcana, fast movement, *ki* pool (6 points, magic), long limbs (+5 ft.), maneuver training, slow fall 20 ft., still mind

Combat Gear *rod of lesser quicken metamagic*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Horrific Appearance (Su) As a standard action at will, the gardener can cause his appearance to burst into a riot of mold and decay, turning his ghostly body into a hideous garden of fungus and ruin. All living creatures within a 30-foot radius that view this shift must make a DC 22 Will save or be panicked for 1d4 rounds. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. A creature that saves against this ability is immune to its effects for 24 hours.

ADVANCED WILL-O'-WISPS (6)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 58 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 277, 294)

Treasure: Although *Briar* and the majority of the gardener's gear was taken by the Pitaxian agents who murdered him years ago, they neglected to remain long enough to search this chamber further, as they were eager to return to Irovetti with *Briar*. A DC 30 Perception

check reveals a secret door in the side of the cask closest to the cistern. Opening it reveals the cask to be, in fact, a cozy, halfling-sized hideaway—it was here that the gardener spent much of his time. The cask contains a small bed laden with dusty furs, on which sits the gardener's *rod of lesser quicken metamagic*, while nearby sits an incredibly beautiful and intricate water clock of colored glass, bronze, silver, and darkwood. This water clock is worth 2,500 gp alone for its workmanship, but it also serves as Evindra's prison—see the *Briar's Guardian* section on page 38 for details.

The waters of the cistern itself, if used as an additional component in the construction of any alchemical fluid, poison, or magical liquid (such as a potion or elixir) have a wondrous effect, although using the waters doubles the time required to create the item. Consult the list below for the exact effects, depending on the fluid—you can use these effects to generate additional mixtures if you wish. A single dose of the glowing waters is worth 200 gp—the pool itself contains enough water for 50 uses, but with *Briar* taken from the area, the cistern lacks the ability to generate more doses.

Alcohol: The alcohol becomes much more delicious and increases in value (typically resulting in alcohol worth twice as much as normal).

Antitoxin: The antitoxin now grants a +7 alchemical bonus on Fortitude saves against poison.

Poison: The poison's save DC increases by +2.

Potion or Elixir: The potion or elixir's effects last for twice as long. In the case of potions that heal wounds or ability scores, the potion instead gains the effects of Empower Spell.

Splash Weapon: The splash weapon gains a +2 alchemical bonus on damage done on a direct hit and a +1 alchemical bonus on damage done by a splash.

BRIAR'S GUARDIAN (CR 10)

The water clock hidden in area **D16** is not magical, but it does function as a prison for the nereid Evindra simply by containing her in her water elemental form, mixed with a healthy dose of water from the magical cistern. In this state, Evindra cannot communicate and is effectively unconscious (although neither does she have a need to eat or drink in this state). The gardener hoped some day to be able to force the nereid to be his wife, but never found a way before Briar's influence drove him mad.

If the water clock is destroyed or drained, Evindra can reform into her humanoid shape, that of a breathtakingly beautiful nude woman with pale skin, pointed ears, dark hair, deep blue eyes, and webbed fingers and toes. She thanks the PCs profusely for rescuing her and just as quickly begs them for her shawl. If the PCs attack her, she fights back as best she can, but she hopes to befriend them in an attempt to gain their aid in reclaiming her shawl, using her beguiling aura and *suggestion* ability if necessary. See the "Quest: Evindra's Shawl" sidebar for details.



Evindra

EVINDRA CR 10
XP 9,600

Female nereid (*Tome of Horrors Revised* 276–278)
CN Medium fey (aquatic, water)

Init +9; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +21

Aura beguiling aura

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 25, flat-footed 15 (+5 deflection, +9 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 126 (12d6+84)

Fort +11, **Ref** +17, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities transparency; **DR** 10/cold iron; **Immune** cold, poison; **SR** 21

Weaknesses shawl

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

Melee poison touch +10 (poison)

Ranged poison spray +15 (poison)

Special Attacks drowning kiss

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +15)

At will—*control water*, *suggestion* (only against creatures fascinated by her beguiling aura)

1/day—*summon monster VI* (water elemental only)

TACTICS

During Combat Evindra casts *summon monster VI* to conjure a water elemental on the first round of combat, then retreats into the water and uses poison against the PCs. If this tactic proves unworkable, she assumes the form of a water elemental to attack physically.

Morale If reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, Evindra attempts to flee into the nearby pool to hide.

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 29, **Con** 24, **Int** 14, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 31

Feats Ability Focus (poison), Agile Maneuvers, Defensive Combat Training, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +20, Escape Artist +24, Knowledge (nature) +17, Perception +21, Perform (sing) +20, Sense Motive +21, Stealth +24, Swim +23

Languages Aquan, Common, Sylvan

SQ amphibious, change shape (medium water elemental, elemental body II), unearthly grace

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Beguiling Aura (Su) Any creature who is sexually attracted to women runs the risk of being beguiled by a nereid if he or she looks upon her beauty from a distance

of 30 feet or less. Creatures who fail a DC 21 Will save are immediately fascinated. The nereid may use her *suggestion* spell-like ability at will against creatures that are fascinated by her beguiling aura. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Drowning Kiss (Su) A nereid can flood the lungs of a willing, helpless, or fascinated creature by touching him (traditionally by kissing him on the lips). The target immediately begins to drown if he cannot breathe water. On his turn, the kissed creature can attempt to cough up this supernatural water by succeeding on a DC 23 Fortitude save; otherwise he begins to drown (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 445). Each round the drowning continues, the victim may attempt a new DC 23 Fortitude save to cough up the water. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Poison (Ex) Touch or spray (range 30 ft.)—contact; *save* Fort DC 23; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Con plus blindness; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Shawl (Ex) A nereid's shawl (hardness 2, hp 6), contains a portion of her life force. If the shawl is ever destroyed, the nereid takes 1d6 points of Constitution drain per hour until she dies. The nereid can craft a new shawl from water by making a DC 25 Will save, but each attempt takes 1d4 hours to complete. Attempts to destroy or steal the shawl should be treated as *sunder* or *disarm* attempts.

Transparency (Su) When underwater, a nereid's body becomes transparent, effectively rendering her invisible. She can become visible or transparent at will as a free action.

Unearthly Grace (Su) A nereid adds her Charisma modifier as a racial bonus on all her saving throws, and as a deflection bonus to her Armor Class as long as she wears no armor.

PART FOUR: THE KING'S PALACE

As the War of the River Kings progresses, King Irovetti becomes almost a shut-in at his palace in Pitax. Either he fears the coming retribution from the PCs (in the event that his armies do poorly in the war) or he fears to make many public appearances when victory is so close at hand (in the event that his armies are doing well). Of course, if King Irovetti wins the war, the end of this adventure will play out quite differently than anticipated—but this development doesn't necessarily mean the end of the Kingmaker campaign (see *Concluding the Adventure* for details).

This part of the adventure assumes, however, that once roused to anger, the PCs' army does quite well on the field of battle. Once Irovetti's field army is defeated and its commander, the ogre mage Avinash Jurr, flees the field of battle and returns to report his failure to Irovetti, the king grows concerned. As the PCs begin to defeat his reserve armies, he grows worried. Irovetti calls upon

Quest: Evindra's Shawl

The PCs agree to seek out the nereid's missing shawl.

Source: Evindra the nereid.

Task: The gardener stole Evindra's shawl many years ago and used this leverage to force her into the waterclock. She's not sure where the shawl went, but suspects that whoever killed the gardener and took the magic sword she had been entrusted to guard has it now.

Completion: The PCs must recover the shawl from area T3 and return it to Evindra.

Reward: Evindra agrees to tell the PCs all she knows about *Briar*, Nyryssa, and the danger the nymph poses to the Stolen Lands; she may even remain with the PCs as an ally if they wish. Evindra's revelations about *Briar* and Nyryssa are detailed in the next adventure in the Kingmaker Adventure Path, "Sound of a Thousand Screams."

his remaining reserves once he learns at least two of the reserve armies have been defeated (it generally takes a day for word to reach the king of an army's defeat). He then issues orders for the final reserve to fortify the city of Pitax and prepare to defend it from attack. He recalls any remaining reserve armies (located at areas I, J, K, and O) back to the city of Pitax to aid in the defense and hopes that his last troops can defeat the angry giant his attack on the PCs has awakened.

THE BATTLE OF PITAX

Once King Irovetti realizes that the PCs are coming for him, he institutes martial law in the city of Pitax, but there aren't enough Pitax wardens and soldiers to properly patrol the city and man the defenses at the same time. Civil unrest grows quickly, as factions and groups within Pitax that have long loathed being under Irovetti's rule grow restless and, in some cases, openly resistant. When the PCs come to Pitax, they find the city bristling with soldiers and ready for a battle or a siege.

Siege: If the PCs lay siege to Pitax, they need only camp their armies in view of the castle walls. They can prevent supplies from entering the city via river or land, and the constant presence of the PCs' army slowly erodes the city's morale. This battle is more psychological than physical, and the PCs need simply outlast the resolve and endurance of those trapped within the city. Each week that passes, the PCs must pay the consumption for each of their armies plus an additional 5 BP to cover additional supplies and resources needed to maintain the lock on the city. At the end of each week, each commander for each army must make a DC 15 Morale check; the DC of this check increases by +1 each week. If a check succeeds by 5 or more, the commander can spend 5 BP to raise that army's morale modifier by +1 by granting

it additional supplies and resources. Each time a check is failed, the army's morale modifier drops by 1 point—if this occurs when an army's morale is at -4 already, that army deserts. The goal here is to force the morale modifier for Irovetti's armies to drop below -4 before the PCs' own armies desert. For the purposes of this siege, assume that Irovetti has 300 BP to spend before he runs out of resources. Reduce this amount by 20 for each of his armies that the PCs have defeated up to this point.

Battle: An open assault on Pitax can resolve the war much more quickly than a protracted siege, but doing so runs the risk of much more bloodshed. In addition to any armies that Irovetti may have been able to recall from his reserves, Pitax is protected by a Pitax Regiment led by Avinash Jurr and two bands of troll marauders led by an advanced troll. In this battle, these armies gain a +10 bonus to DV due to the city's walls and other defenses.

PITAX REGIMENT CR 10
XP 9,600
 hp 55 (see page 20)

TROLL MARAUDERS (2) CR 5
XP 2,400 each
 hp 22 each (see page 20)

INFILTRATION

As mentioned above, Irovetti and his closest guards and allies remain barricaded in his palace for the duration of this part of the adventure—this doesn't change once the PCs manage to enter the city, even if they decide to sneak into the city while their siege is still underway. Any allies the PCs may have made during the adventure, such as Ilora Nuski or perhaps a reserve army they may have wooed away from loyalty to Pitax, advises the PCs that the king has dug in to his palace—an invasion of the large edifice may be an excellent way to break the Pitaxian army's will. Certainly, rumors from within the city consistently claim that love for their king, already in short supply before these events, has run out.

Even if the PCs defeat Pitax's armies, the generals of those armies retreat to Irovetti's Palace and the king remains stubbornly within the walls of his home. While this might seem foolish to the PCs, Irovetti has a last-ditch hope. As soon as the PCs are about to invade his palace, be this before or after his army has been defeated, the king sends word to Nyriisa that he has found *Briar* and he needs her help in defending his city if he is going to be able to give the sword to her. The king then hopes to outlast the PCs and simply survive long enough for Nyriisa to come to his rescue. Unfortunately for him, that isn't going to happen—the nymph has bigger issues to handle. At this point in the adventure, it all comes down to the PCs versus King Irovetti—whoever is standing at the end of this adventure is the final winner.

IROVETTI'S PALACE

Irovetti's palace is located at area 12 in Pitax (see the chapter on Pitax after this adventure). The building is one of the oldest in the city, built by an eccentric wizard who had a strange fascination with doors, twisting mazes, and strange architectural whimsies. The baffling structure fits Irovetti's needs well, and the tangle of halls and doors makes it an easy place to get lost in and an even easier place for its denizens to defend. The palace certainly earns its nickname—the “House of a Hundred Doors.” In fact, the palace has well over a hundred doors, many of them secret doors.

Yet for all of these doors and the expansive size of the house, the palace is only one floor high. Its roofline is a crazy tangle of slopes, domes, and pitches that barely seems to match the underlying layout of rooms and halls. The external walls and roof are comprised of two 1-foot-thick stone walls sandwiching two 3-inch-thick iron walls, which themselves sandwich a thin layer of lead sheeting to foil detection spells and spells that affect stone walls. At several points throughout the palace, spiral stairs lead up to small watchtowers on the roof above—currently, these watchtowers are each manned by a single Pitax herald ready to raise the alarm if she sees anyone attempting to enter the palace from above. Each of these watchtowers is accessed via a trap door that can be locked and bolted (Disable Device DC 30 to pick, Break DC 28).

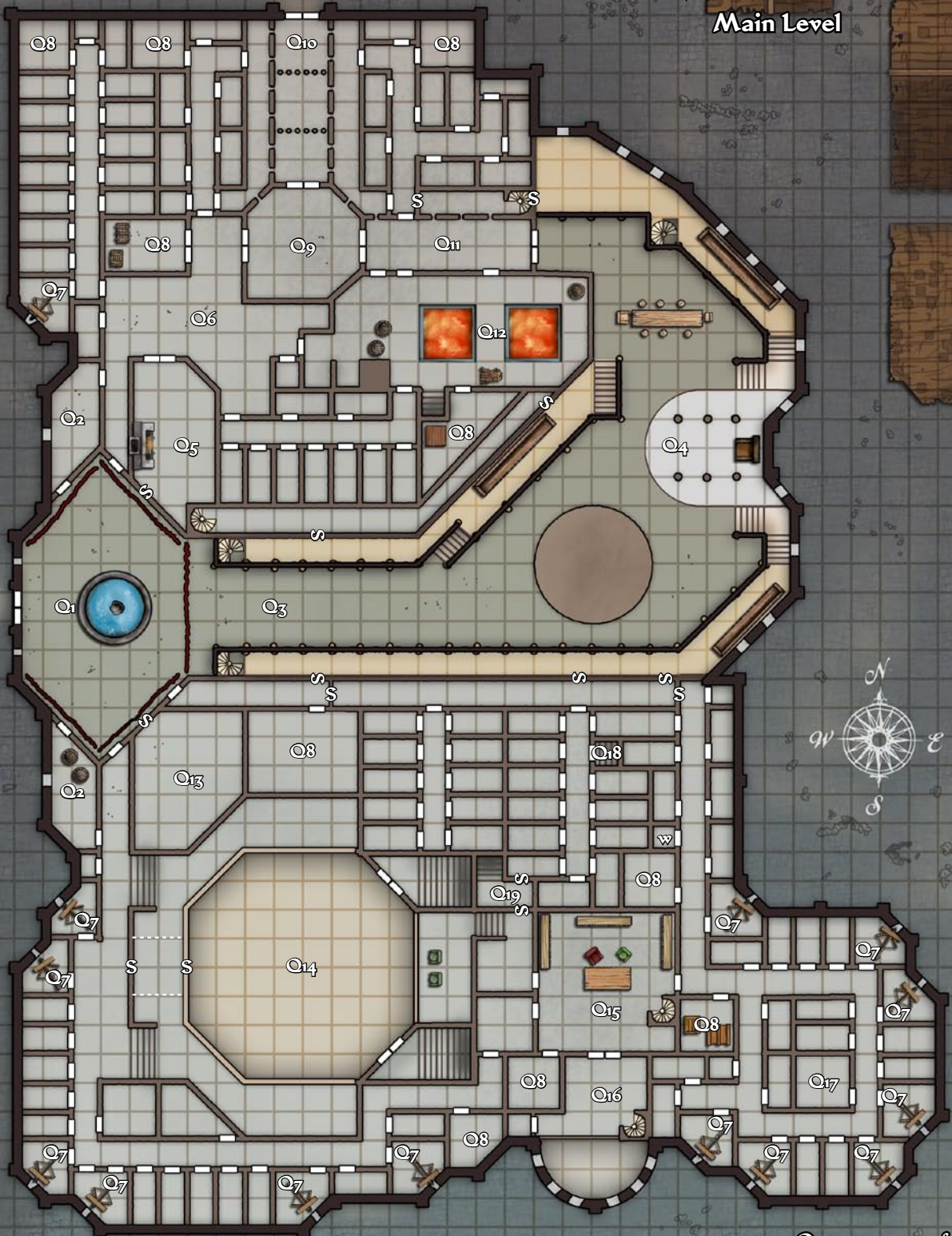
Most hallways and chambers are in the palace have 18-foot ceilings, but several areas have even higher ceilings (these variations are mentioned in the text). Light inside the palace is provided by everburning torches in the grand hall and by common oil lamps elsewhere. In addition, most rooms possess slit windows or slitted skylights. These windows, rarely more than 1 foot wide, are of leaded crystal (blocking detection spells) in narrow diamond-shaped panes between 1-inch-thick leaded steel bars (hardness 10, hit points 20, break DC 24). The chimneys for fireplaces in the Great Hall and kitchens are blocked by similar grates without the glass.

Those infiltrating Irovetti's palace must be very careful if they wish to avoid a general alarm. Once the alarm is raised, word spreads throughout the palace rapidly. In addition to the various guards listed at key locations, there are six roving bands of guards, each consisting of five Pitax wardens led by a Pitax herald. If the alarm is raised, all of these groups mobilize and move to investigate the source of the alarm, arriving at the rate of one group every 2d6 rounds. A group of these soldiers is a CR 10 encounter.

PITAX HERALD CR 5
XP 1,600
 hp 45 (see page 11)

Irovetti's Palace

Main Level



One square = 5 feet

PITAX WARDENS (5)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 51 each (see pages 11–12)

UNKEYED ROOMS

The majority of the rooms in Irovetti's palace are unkeyed. These unkeyed rooms consist of two types. The 5-foot-square rooms are privies containing a single toilet. The 5-by-10 foot rooms are bedrooms, either for guards, servants, or guests (although Irovetti has currently dismissed all of his servants, and has only one actual guest—the weretiger Alisen). Each of these unremarkable rooms contains a single bed, a nightstand, and a footlocker. The doors of these rooms can be latched from within but not locked (Disable Device DC 15 to open).

Q1. GRAND ATRIUM (CR 12)

This hexagonal chamber is dominated by a huge fountain containing a surreally idealized gold statue of King Irovetti, glowing richly in the light of torches along the walls and chandeliers dangling from the domed ceiling. The walls on every side are draped with enormous tapestries showing Irovetti triumphant in every field, from battle to art and from music to learning and erudition.

The front doors to this chamber are 6-inch-thick slabs of leaded steel (hardness 10, hp 180, break DC 37). King Irovetti has also cast a silent, mental *alarm* spell on them. While the fountain and statue are real, the appearance that they're made of gold is in fact provided by a *permanent image* (DC 21).

Creatures: Irovetti has a fondness for trolls, and maintains their loyalty through payments of gold and regular castings of *charm person* by his heralds or himself as necessary. While many of the trolls that work for him are typical specimens of their kind, those he retains as guards for his palace are well-trained fighters capable of and eager for great violence.

TROLL GUARDS (2)

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male troll fighter 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 268)

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 13, flat-footed 23 (+9 armor, +4 Dex, +5 natural, –1 size)

hp 146 (11 HD; 6d8+5d10+92); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

Fort +16, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk battleaxe +15/+10 (2d6+11/19–20/x3), mwk battleaxe +15 (2d6+11/19–20/x3), bite +11 (1d8+4)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d6+7)

TACTICS

During Combat In battle, the guards focus attacks on foes who use fire or acid, working together to destroy these threats first, and then turn their attacks on the most heavily armored foes.

Morale The troll guards fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 18, **Con** 25, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 32

Feats Combat Reflexes, Double Slice, Improved Critical (battleaxe), Quick Draw, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Unseat, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe)

Skills Perception +11

Languages Giant

SQ armor training 1

Gear full plate, masterwork battleaxes (2), 200 gp

Q2. GUARDROOMS (CR 7)

This chamber has a number of chairs around a small table with a small brazier and a water barrel next to it.

Creatures: These chambers are where on-duty guards keep themselves prepared to respond at a moment's notice. They will arrive at Q1 1 round after they hear the trolls in that area raise the alarm.

PITAX WARDENS (2)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 51 each (see page 11–12)

Q3. GREAT HALL (CR 10)

This high-vaulted hall is flanked on either side by a long colonnade supporting an ornately carved balcony. Spiral, curving, and straight staircases span from balcony to floor at irregular intervals around the room.

The lavishly decorated balconies on each side of this hall are patrolled by three Pitax heralds. The sturdily-constructed balustrade gives them cover against any attack that is not from above. The heralds ready their bows if the trolls in Q1 raise the alarm, but they do not abandon their posts.

PITAX HERALDS (6)

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 45 (see page 11)

Q4. THE BURGUNDY THRONE (CR 17 OR 15)

A regal throne carved of burgundy stone sits atop a broad dais of red-veined, white marble in this large throne hall. A large circular stage stands beneath a high dome to the southwest of the throne, and on the north side of the dais lies a banquet hall with a massive oaken table. The far wall beyond the throne features several towering stained-glass windows depicting King Irovetti in various regal or heroic poses.

This entire area is protected by an *unhallow* spell with a *death ward* fixed to it.

Creatures: If the PCs infiltrate the palace during the night, this chamber is guarded solely by a group of troll guards and several Pitax wardens. But if the PCs arrive during the day, they find King Irovetti here, seated on his throne. If the alarm isn't raised, he's going over defense tactics and reports with several of his officers, but if the alarm is raised, he prepares as detailed in his tactics. General Jurrig is also present in this room if the alarm has been raised. Pitax wardens and troll guards stand arrayed around Irovetti's throne, and his bodyguard Villamor Koth stands at his side. His response to the PCs' arrival is a sneer and a challenge.

"So you have come for me at last, have you? I knew you would. Very well. No more games. No more tricks. No more decoys. Skill against skill, strength against strength, and we shall see who deserves to rule, and who deserves to die."

Irovetti is impressed at the party's resilience, furious at his own failures, and unsurprised they have managed to reach his throne room. He's eager to vent his frustrations with a good, old-fashioned fight and orders his various guardians to step up to attack while he rises from his throne to join the battle. Irovetti is uninterested in diplomacy or explanations at this point, yet he isn't ready to throw his life away—his *contingency* effect kicks in if he takes more than 10 points of damage from a single attack, allowing him to flee to his sanctuary at area T1 unless the PCs think to block his escape with an effect like *dimensional anchor*. If he retreats, his guards continue the fight—he's informed them that he doesn't intend to stick around for the whole fight

if things don't immediately go well, and they are not demoralized if he vanishes.

KING CASTRUCCIO IROVETTI

CR 16

XP 76,800

Male human bard 11/fighter 5

CE Medium humanoid

Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 19, flat-footed 27 (+11 armor, +3 deflection, +4 Dex, +2 dodge, +2 natural)

hp 188 (16 HD; 11d8+5d10+107)

Fort +16, Ref +17, Will +13; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic, +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee *rod of razors* +25/+25/+20/+15 (1d10+17/19–20/x3)



Troll Guard

Ranged flechettes +24/+24/+19/+14 (1d8+13/19–20/x3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with *rod of razors*)

Special Attacks bardic performance 36 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +4, inspire courage +3, inspire greatness, suggestion)

Spells Known (CL 11th; concentration +17)

4th (3/day)—*dimension door*, *dominate person* (DC 21), *greater invisibility*

3rd (5/day)—*charm monster* (DC 20), *displacement*, *phantom steed*, *scrying*

2nd (6/day)—*cat's grace*, *cure moderate wounds*, *detect thoughts* (DC 18), *glitterdust* (DC 18), *suggestion* (DC 19)

1st (7/day)—*alarm*, *charm person* (DC 18), *cure light wounds*, *expeditious retreat*, *undetected alignment*, *unseen servant*

o (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat King Irovetti casts three *alarm* spells every morning (one at area **Q1**, one at **Q10**, and one at **T3**), along with *undetected alignment* and *unseen servant* so he never has to take time to open doors on his own. If an alarm is raised, he also casts *cat's grace* on himself.

During Combat King Irovetti activates his *boots of speed* at the start of combat, along with his inspire courage ability—both of these effects are calculated in the stat block above. For the first few rounds of combat, he lets his guards enter melee while he hangs back and casts *displacement* and various ranged attack spells. If he's still around after 3 rounds, his increased courage leads him to enter melee wielding his *rod of razors*. He always uses Arcane Strike when he attacks (this damage bonus is included in his stats above).

Morale King Irovetti flees via his *dimension door* contingency if he ever takes more than 10 points of damage from a single attack. He also flees via *dimension door* to area **T1** if he's reduced to 100 hit points or fewer or is otherwise hurt badly by a magical effect that doesn't do hit point damage. He resorts to *greater invisibility* and physical retreat if he can't teleport.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 18, **Con** 20, **Int** 12, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 35

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Extend Spell, Extra Performance, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perform [sing]), Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness, Weapon Focus (*rod of razors*), Weapon Specialization (*rod of razors*)

Skills Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (nobility) +14, Linguistics +5, Perception +18, Perform (dance) +20, Perform (oratory) +25, Perform (sing) +31, Ride +13, Use Magic Device +25

Languages Common, Hallit, Skald; *tongues*

SQ armor training 1, bardic knowledge +5, contingency, improved resources, jack-of-all-trades (use any skill), lore

master 2/day, permanent spells, versatile performance (oratory, sing, dance)

Combat Gear *potions of lesser restoration* (4), *scroll of heal*, *scroll of restoration*, *scroll of teleport*, *wand of hold monster* (CL 10th, 13 charges); **Other Gear** +5 mithral breastplate, *rod of razors*, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *boots of speed*, *cloak of resistance* +4, *ring of protection* +3, master key (unlocks all locks in the palace), mindrender baton

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Contingency King Irovetti used a scroll to cast *contingency*: if he ever takes more than 10 points of damage from a single attack, a *dimension door* whisks him away (in this case, to his den in area **T1**).

Improved Resources Not only does King Irovetti have the resources of a PC as regards his gear, but his ability scores use a 20-point build.

Permanent Spells King Irovetti has used *scrolls of permanency* to gain the following permanent spell effects: *darkvision*, *see invisibility*, and *tongues*.

GENERAL AVINASH JURRG

CR 14

XP 38,400

Male ogre mage bard 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 221)

LE Large outsider (giant, native, oni, shapechanger)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 13, flat-footed 22 (+8 armor, +4 Dex, +5 natural, –1 size)

hp 243 (18 HD; 8d10+10d8+154); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

Fort +19, **Ref** +15, **Will** +16; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

SR 19

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee +2 *keen greatsword* +25/+20/+15 (3d6+15/17–20)

Ranged +1 *composite longbow* +19/+14/+9 (2d6+1/x3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks bardic performance 28 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, suggestion)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +9)

Constant—*fly*

At will—*darkness*, *invisibility*

1/day—*charm monster* (DC 17), *cone of cold* (DC 18), *gaseous form*, *deep slumber* (DC 16)

Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +16)

4th (2/day)—*dimension door*, *hold monster* (DC 20)

3rd (4/day)—*confusion* (DC 19), *dispel magic*, *good hope*, *haste*
2nd (6/day)—*blur*, *cure moderate wounds*, *mirror image*, *rage*, *suggestion* (DC 18)

1st (7/day)—*charm person* (DC 17), *cure light wounds*, *expeditious retreat*, *grease* (DC 17), *remove fear*

o (at will)—*detect magic, ghost sound (DC 16), know direction, mage hand, message, summon instrument*

TACTICS

During Combat Jurr lets his minions engage foes in melee so he can take the time to bolster their powers, first by casting *good hope* and activating inspire courage, followed by casting *haste, rage, and mirror image* before he enters melee.

Morale As long as any of Jurr's minions still stand, he fights to the death. If he's alone and Irovetti still lives, he fights until reduced to 100 hit points or fewer, at which point he casts *dimension door* to go wherever he believes Irovetti is located to report to his king. When fighting at Irovetti's side or defending the throne room itself, he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 19, **Con** 26, **Int** 14, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +25; **CMD** 39

Feats Arcane Armor Mastery, Arcane Armor Training, Arcane Strike, Armor Proficiency (Medium), Combat Expertise, Greater Disarm, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +22, Fly +17, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (engineering) +19, Knowledge (nobility) +19, Perception +22, Perform (oratory) +27, Perform (percussion) +27, Perform (wind) +27, Spellcraft +14

Languages Common, Giant

SQ change shape (Small, Medium, or Large humanoid, *alter self* or *giant form 1*), bardic knowledge +5, jack-of-all-trades (use any skill), lore master 1/day, versatile performance (oratory, percussion, wind)

Gear +2 mithral breastplate, +2 keen greatsword, +1 composite longbow with 20 arrows, cloak of resistance +2

VILLAMOR KOTH

CR 14

XP 38,400

hp 217 (see page 17–18)

PITAX WARDENS (6)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 51 each (see page 11–12)

TROLL GUARDS (4)

CR 10

XP 9,600 each

hp 146 each (see page 42)

Q5. VILLAMOR KOTH'S BEDROOM (CR 14)

This spacious chamber is well appointed, with furnishings in an exotic style and walls covered with maps and diagrams of fortifications under construction. A massive, wrought-iron bed dominates one corner

of the room, its heavy posts supporting a canopy of chains, surmounted with massive manacles stained with blood.

This is the chamber of Villamor Koth, Captain of the Guard and Irovetti's bodyguard. He can be found here half of the time, sleeping or spending time with a pair of female Pitax heralds. The rest of the time after dark he can be found at area Q14, sparring against a pair of troll guards.

VILLAMOR KOTH

CR 14

XP 38,400

hp 217 (see pages 17–18)

Treasure: A pair of tapestries, heavily woven with gold and mithril thread, hang on the walls here. One depicts a pair of dragons mating in mid-flight, while another shows a silvery tree growing up toward a lacy golden sun—both are worth 1,500 gp. A locked payroll chest



Avinash Jurr

Irovetti's Numerian Technology

Irovetti possesses two items of advanced technology stolen from the Technic League of Numeria. Neither radiates magic and both function normally in antimagic areas. Spellcraft can still be used to identify their uses (at a –5 penalty), but *detect magic* is not necessary to make the attempt. Both are balanced as if they were normal magic items, so if you'd rather not introduce technology into your game, simply treat these two items as magic items.

ROD OF RAZORS

Effective CL 15th; Price 65,000 gp; Weight 10 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This ornate, adamantine rod appears to be a cross between a halberd and a strange scepter of alien design. Despite its rigid appearance, the rod is surprisingly flexible and can extend in combat—the weapon functions as a +3 *keen adamantine halberd* that has reach but can still function normally against adjacent foes. As a full-round action up to five times per day, the rod can be used to fire razors. Treat these as +3 *keen adamantine arrows* fired from a longbow (any feats possessed by the user that function with longbows work with these flechettes).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, *blade barrier*, *keen edge*, *shield*, *spiritual weapon*; **Cost** 33,435 gp

MINDRENDER BATON

This short, green, metal baton uses potent transmissions along brainwave frequencies to control the minds of those nearby. A mindrender baton functions as a *rod of rulership*. Although its effects are nonmagical, resistance to enchantment effects or mind-affecting attacks still apply normally to this item. It can only be used for another 60 minutes before it becomes little more than a club.

(Disable Device DC 40) sits under his bed. It contains 3,338 gp, a dozen *potions of cure serious wounds*, and three *potions of neutralize poison*.

Q6. COMMON MESS HALL

This large chamber is scattered with well-worn but sturdy tables and chairs. Large bins by the walls hold refuse, soiled laundry, and dirty dishes.

There's a 50% chance that one of the six Pitax warden patrols is here eating a meal.

Q7. BALLISTA CHAMBER

Each of these rooms contains a ballista and a barrel of a dozen shots for use in defending the palace. From the outside, the ballista firing slits are carefully hidden (Perception DC 30 to notice). The shutter within is equal to a heavy iron door (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28) and is clad with lead to foil detections. If the PCs are spotted approaching the palace, Pitax wardens quickly man any of these rooms that could be used to fire upon the PCs.

Q8. STORAGE ROOM

Each of these storage rooms contain linens, tools, firewood, and other miscellaneous supplies. They tend to be quite cluttered and could make excellent hiding spots.

Q9. ENFILEADED ENTRY (CR 12)

The broad portals of the outer corridor open into an irregularly shaped room, with spiked iron gates to the west and east.

Creatures: Two troll guards watch over this chamber.

TROLL GUARDS (2)

CR 10

XP 9,600 each

hp 146 each (see page 42)

Q10. SERVICE ENTRANCE (CR 12)

Iron portals open into a wide passage leading within. The walls here angle inward, with arrow slits on either side.

Creatures: This passageway is normally used by servants to bring supplies to the kitchens and cellars. It is guarded by two portcullises that can be dropped on invaders, trapping them while the archers in the hallways to either side attack foes inside. There are six Pitax heralds stationed to either side, all ready to open fire on any intruders.

PITAX HERALDS (12)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 45 (see page 11)

Q11. CROSSFIRE CORRIDOR (CR 8)

As in area Q10, this hallway is watched over by Pitax heralds. In this case, there are three stationed in the secret passageway just north of the hall. If a fight starts here, the trolls in area Q9 and any guards in the eastern hall in area Q10 come to join the battle quickly.

PITAX HERALDS (3)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 45 (see page 11)

Q12. KITCHENS

This large chamber is dominated by a pair of massive fire-pit-like ovens with plenty of work and preparation space all around them.

The kitchens, normally a scene of bustling activity, are currently empty—all of the help staff have been ordered to leave the palace, as Irovetti doesn't want to deal with the blowback from endangering his servants should he come out the winner in the war. The stairs in the south wall lead down to area **R1** after a landing that turns west.

Q13. TROLL BARRACKS

This oversized chamber holds four enormous nests of rags and filthy hay.

The troll guards sleep in these nests in shifts, but at this time, all of the palace trolls are on duty.

Q14. THE OCTAGON

The center of this domed chamber is dominated by a large, octagonal fighting pit. A ten-foot-wide balcony runs around the western half of the pit, while to the east a small royal box with large chairs provides an even better view of the central area. A pair of massive wooden doors down in the pit presumably allows access from a lower level of the palace.

The floor of the eight-sided arena pit is sunken 20 feet below the main level. The double doors in the pit's east wall lead to the prison (area **S2**) and the monster pens (areas **S4–S5**); both of these doors are normally kept locked with massive chains (Disable Device DC 30; Break DC 30). A secret door in the pit's west wall opens into a 10-foot-square chamber under the balcony that leads to a second secret door, which in turn opens into the western hall—this entrance is the one used to access the fighting pit with ease from this floor.

The arena is used for battles between condemned prisoners, charmed monsters, and whatever other entertainments Irovetti and his minions can think up. With things the way they are at this point, there are obviously no bouts scheduled, but 50% of the time after dark, Villamor Koth spars with a pair of troll guards in the pit. If they're here when the PCs arrive, they immediately end their sparring and turn their attention to attacking the PCs, fighting to the death.

Q15. LIBRARY

This magnificent library has books by the thousands lining

its walls, with moving ladders mounted on rails circling the chamber. Plush chairs and reading tables with stand-lamps dot the room.

The library contains much literature of questionable quality, lurid tales of adventure, ribald poetry and melodrama, and the like. Still, enough legitimate reference works can be found to grant a +2 circumstance bonus to any Knowledge (history, local, or nobility) check. The spiral staircase here leads down 20 feet to area **S3**.

Q16. CONSERVATORY (CR 7)

This richly appointed chamber contains an assortment of musical instruments, polished to a shine, highlighted by an elaborate pipe organ. Rich, burgundy velvet chairs are arrayed on a Qadiran carpet worked intricately in gold, orange, and yellow. A flight of spiral stairs to the southeast leads up to what appears to be a solarium to the south.

This chamber is one of Irovetti's favorites in the palace, but he currently has little time to spend here.

Creatures: The solarium to the south is 10 feet above the ground, and features numerous large windows. This makes for an excellent watch post, and is manned by two Pitax heralds as a result. If they see anyone approaching, they quickly move to alert Irovetti in area **Q4**.

PITAX HERALDS (2)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 45 (see page 11)

Treasure: There are eight masterwork musical instruments of various types here, each worth 300 gp. Irovetti's personal favorite is a Mwangi hide drum. A search of the room and a DC 25 Perception check turns up a watercolor painting of a nude nymph tucked into the base of the drum—the painting isn't very good, but it's certainly scandalous. The Qadiran carpet is worth 1,200 gp.

Q17. GUEST ROOM (CR 13)

This cozy room is furnished with a large bed, a writing desk, and a fireplace. Numerous books lie stacked on the desk.

Creature: Unless the PCs already confronted and defeated her at area **O**, the leader of the Catspaw Mercenaries, a weretiger named Alasen, has been given this room to use as her personal quarters for as long as her service to Irovetti continues. If she's here, Alasen is relaxing and reading the stack of violent war books she's borrowed from the library, but if the alarm is raised she

assumes her hybrid form and begins stalking the palace, looking for the PCs and waiting for them to enter combat with another defender before she sneaks in to attack. You can use Alasen as a recurring menace to attack the PCs as you wish.

ALASEN

CR 13

XP 25,600

Female human weretiger rogue 14

NE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 17, flat-footed 23 (+5 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 161 (14d8+98)

Fort +9, **Ref** +14, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities improved evasion, trap sense +4, improved uncanny dodge; **DR** 5/silver

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.

Melee 2 claws +16 (1d8+6 plus grab), bite +16 (2d6+6 plus grab)

Special Attacks sneak attack +7d6, pounce, rake (2 claws +16, 1d8+6)

TACTICS

During Combat Alasen prefers to wait for the PCs to be engaged in a battle with other defenders of the palace, so that she can skulk into place and attack from invisibility with pounce. She retreats to invisibility after attacking, then repositions for another attack; she does her best to avoid ever being caught in melee for more than a few rounds at a time.

Morale Alasen's loyalty to Irovetti collapses if she's reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, at which point she attempts to flee the palace and Pitax altogether.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 17, **Con** 20, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 33

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Fleet, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Toughness, Vital Strike, Wind Stance

Skills Acrobatics +20, Climb +23, Escape Artist +20, Perception +19, Sense Motive +19, Sleight of Hand +20, Stealth +20, Survival +16

Languages Common

SQ change shape (human, hybrid, and tiger; *polymorph*), improved uncanny dodge, rogue talents (bleeding attack +6, combat trick, crippling strike, fast stealth, improved evasion, slippery mind, surprise attack), trapfinding +7

Gear +3 *leather armor*, *ring of invisibility*, *ring of protection* +3

Q18. ARMORY STAIRS

These stairs lead down to area **S1**.

Q19. SECRET STAIRS

These stairs lead down to a hidden passageway that winds past the dungeon level, then winds down another 50 feet underground to a deep cavern below the palace, eventually reaching area **T1**.

R1. PANTRY CELLAR

Rows of crates, boxes, and barrels fill this room.

This chamber stores the palace's food supplies. The stairs lead up to area **Q12** above. The door to the south is locked (Disable Device DC 30 to pick).

R2. WINE CELLAR

Heavy racks of barrels line the outer edges of this room, while high racks of bottles fill the center.

Treasure: This chamber stores the palace's wine, ale, mead, and other spirits, including the collection Irovetti seized from the Liacenza family cellars. A half-hour of sifting through a lot of low-quality or forgettable spirits can turn up 14 bottles of fine wine worth 300 gp each, as well as five bottles of Whiterose chardonnay worth 1,000 gp each.

S1. ARMORY

Empty racks for weapons and armor decorate the walls here. A large, closed cabinet stands to the east, while a pair of barrels filled with bundles of arrows stands to the west.

Treasure: While most of the weapons normally stored here are already in use by the various Pitax wardens and heralds in the palace above, the locker to the east contains two suits of +1 *full plate*, a +1 *chain* shirt, six masterwork rapiers, two +1 *shortbows* (Str 14), and two +1 *greatswords*. The barrels contain 500 arrows, 50 cold iron arrows, and 50 silver arrows.

S2. THE BLACK CELLS (CR 10)

This chamber is lit by large braziers, all shedding light on several immaculate, pain-producing mechanisms. A large table mounted with winching racks sits in the middle of the room, while strapadoes, a manacled wheel, vats of brine and oil, and baskets of knives, saws, pokers, and pins lie along the walls. To the north lies a large cell block, several of whose cells contain the ruined, mutilated corpses of prisoners.

When Irovetti took over the Liacenza villa, he inherited their implements of pain. These devices sat idle for the first years of his reign, but as his paranoia grew, he began turning to them to extract confessions

with increasing regularity. Yet he never quite developed a taste for torture, so he placed this foul duty in the more than capable hands of a singularly vile torturer.

Although most of the prisoners in the cells are dead, you can place any missing individuals the PCs may be looking for (such as the missing diva—see the inside back cover) here as you see fit.

Creature: Several years ago, Pitax endured several months of savagery as a serial killer stalked its streets. Although most folks believe that the “Riverfront Ripper” was killed when he accidentally attacked someone deadlier than himself, in fact, Irovetti and his guards captured the killer and gave him a job. Today, this sadistic gargoyle, a murderous maniac named Gedovius, not only gets to live out his torture fantasies comfortably, but he gets room, board, and pets as well.

There’s a 50% chance that Gedovius is here the first time the PCs enter the dungeon. The gargoyle spends much of his time torturing prisoners, but since Irovetti sealed the palace, there have been no new prisoners and he’s running on short supply. He’s been busying himself by polishing and calibrating his torture implements or and playing with his pets at area S3; he reacts to the arrival of the PCs (whom he recognizes from Irovetti’s descriptions) with sadistic delight.

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 32

Feats Dazzling Display, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (claws), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Shatter Defenses, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Acrobatics +22, Escape Artist +17, Fly +17, Intimidate +15, Perception +18, Sense Motive +18, Stealth +22

Languages Common, Terran

SQ freeze, rogue talents (bleeding attack, combat trick, fast stealth, improved evasion, surprise attack), trapfinding +5

Gear +4 studded leather, amulet of natural armor +1, ring of protection +1

S3. KEEPER’S DEN (CR 11 OR 13)

This chamber is decorated with all manner of preserved hides, horns, heads, and bones of creatures malevolent and benign. An archway to the north opens into a roughly hewn chamber in which stands, of all things, a bed. A set of spiral stairs in the southwest corner leads upward.

The spiral stairs lead up to area Q15.

Creatures: If Gedovius isn’t at area S2, he’s spending time here either sleeping or playing with the two

GEDOVIOUS

CR 12

XP 19,200

Male gargoyle rogue 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 137)

NE Medium monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 16, flat-footed 22 (+7 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 162 (15 HD; 5d10+10d8+90)

Fort +9, **Ref** +15, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities improved evasion, trap sense +3, improved uncanny dodge; **DR** 10/magic

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws +17 (1d6+4/19–20), bite +16 (1d6+4), gore +16 (1d4+4)

Special Attacks sneak attack +5d6 plus 5 bleed

TACTICS

During Combat When fighting with his hounds, Gedovius moves to flank foes. On his own, he uses Dazzling Display to intimidate foes, then uses Shatter Defenses against shaken enemies so that his latter attacks in the same round become sneak attacks.

Morale Gedovius fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 18, **Con** 20, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 5



Alasen

Nessain warhounds Irovetti gave him to keep as pets. Gedovius loves the hell hounds and takes particular glee in letting them burn prisoners.

NESSIAN HELL HOUNDS (2) CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 126 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 173)

S4. TIGER PEN (CR 11)

This chamber is barred from the outside. Within, Irovetti keeps one of his two current monstrous pets, creatures he enjoys watching as they savage prisoners and foolish volunteers in the Octagon.

This foul-smelling room seems to be the den of some filthy monster, judging by the half-eaten cow carcasses and the enormous nest.

Creature: This chamber is the den of Irovetti's less dangerous pets, but these two advanced smilodons are by no means harmless. Foul-tempered, always hungry, and quick to excite, the dire tigers immediately attack anyone that enters whom they don't recognize as Irovetti, Villamor Koth, or Gedovius (the three normally in charge of leading the creatures up to the Octagon for fights).

ADVANCED DIRE TIGERS (2) CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 133 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 265, 294)

S5. FROZEN FURNACE (CR 15)

This chamber widens out to the west into a bowl-shaped cavern, the walls of which are caked with thick sheets of ice.

Irovetti spared no expense having this room magically enhanced to make a more comfortable den for his favorite pet. In this room the temperature remains at a constant extreme cold (−40° F), which could well cause damage to unprotected characters.

Creature: The denizen of this frozen chamber is a particularly deadly remorhaz Irovetti encountered several years ago on an expedition to the Realm of the Mammoth Lords. He managed to charm the monster and got it all the way back to Pitax, leading it through the city amid great fanfare. The creature's name is Rezatha, and the king quite enjoys feeding prisoners and criminals to it in the Octagon. The creature remains charmed to this day—if the PCs dispel the charm, it's smart enough to realize it's been enslaved and immediately wants to help the PCs kill Irovetti. Of course, the immense beast won't fit in most of the palace, but clever player characters should be able to come up with some way to take advantage of the monster's offer of aid. If the creature's charm is not dispelled, it sees the PCs as enemies and attacks at once.



Gedovius

REZATHA CR 15

XP 51,200

Advanced remorhaz (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 233, 294)

N Huge magical beast

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +26

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +13 natural, −2 size)

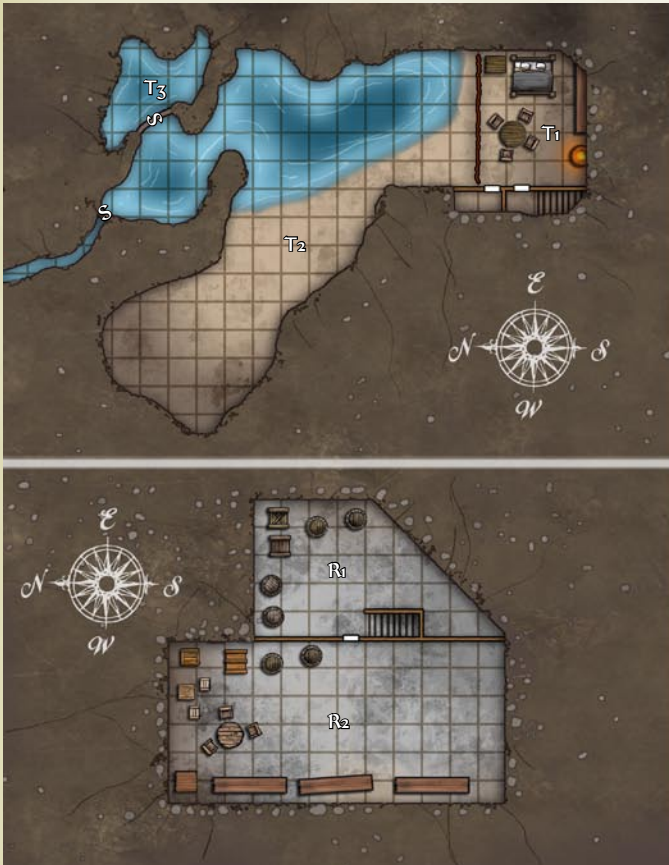
hp 270 (20d10+160)

Fort +19, **Ref** +16, **Will** +9

Immune cold, fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.



Irovetti's Palace Lower Level



One square = 5 feet

Melee bite +21 (8d6+31 plus grab)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks heat, swallow whole (4d6+9 plus 8d6 fire, AC 16, hp 27)

TACTICS

During Combat Rezatha always attacks using Power Attack and Vital Strike—a particularly devastating combination, given the size and strength of its jaws.

Morale Rezatha fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 18, **Con** 25, **Int** 9, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +31; **CMD** 46

Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Bite), Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike

Skills Perception +26

Languages Common, Giant (cannot speak)

T1. IROVETTI'S BEDROOM (CR 16 OR 17)

This is a sumptuously appointed bedchamber with a polished tile floor and walls, a tinkling fountain, and dozens of sculptures, all lit by stained-glass lamps and sconces. A large owlbearskin rug lies before a hexagonal bed in the corner of the room, while to the north, a thick purple curtain hangs

from the ceiling. The sound of rippling water echoes from somewhere beyond the curtain.

This chamber is Irovetti's personal hideaway and bedroom, one of the most secure and secret chambers in the entire palace. Although this bedroom is only separated from the cold, damp cave to the north by a thick purple curtain, the temperature and humidity in this bedroom remain at comfortable levels.

The stairs behind the southwestern door lead to area Q18.

Creatures: Irovetti retires to this room for several hours each night—if he's not found at area Q4, he's doubtless here spending time with his consort (who takes the form of the nymph Nyrrissa using extended *alter self* spells for these trysts) or catching what few hours of sleep he can. If he's retreated to this chamber after confronting the PCs in the throne hall, he and Engeldis do not leave from this chamber until they receive an "all clear" from Villamor Koth, Jregg, or another key NPC from above.

In either case, once Irovetti is confronted here, he does his best to finish the PCs off. Yet he does not wish to die—if reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, he attempts to flee again using all of his remaining magic. If escape is impossible, he'll surrender and beg for mercy. See Concluding the

Adventure and the next adventure for ramifications of the PCs accepting King Irovetti's surrender.

KING CASTRUCCIO IROVETTI CR 16

XP 76,800

hp 188 (see page 43–44)

ENGELIDIS CR 14

XP 38,400

Female spirit naga sorcerer 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 213)

CE Large aberration

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 34, touch 17, flat-footed 30 (+4 armor, +4 deflection, +4 Dex, +9 natural, +4 shield, –1 size)

hp 157 (15 HD; 10d8+5d6+95)

Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +17

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (good), swim 20 ft.

Melee +1 bite +15 (3d6+10/19–20 plus poison [DC 21])

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks charming gaze (DC 21), laughing touch 9/day

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 12th; concentration +18)

6th (4)—*chain lightning* (DC 22)

5th (6)—*breath of life*, *telekinesis* (DC 21)

4th (7)—*dimension door*, *death ward*, *ice storm*

3rd (7)—*dispel magic*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *lightning bolt* (DC 19), *fly*

2nd (8)—*alter self*, *cure moderate wounds*, *hideous laughter* (DC 18), *invisibility*, *misdirection*, *silence* (DC 18)

1st (8)—*entangle* (DC 17), *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 17), *shield*, *shield of faith*, *shocking grasp*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *create water*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, *stabilize*

Bloodline fey

TACTICS

Before Combat Engelidis casts *mage armor*, *death ward*, *fly*, *shield*, and *shield of faith* before entering combat.

During Combat On her own, Engelidis uses her area-affecting spells to damage as many foes as possible as quickly as possible. When fighting alongside King Irovetti, she takes a more supportive role, targeting those foes who seem to be specifically causing her lover the most harm and trouble.

Morale As long as she's charmed by Irovetti, Engelidis fights to the death. If the *charm monster* spell on the spirit naga is removed or dispelled, Engelidis won't see things Irovetti's way. In fact, her rage and hatred in such a situation compels her to do everything in her power to murder Irovetti—as in the case with the remorhaz Rezatha, this gives the PCs a chance to swiftly recruit the king's allies against him in a battle. Of course, in her rage, Engelidis is unwilling to retain her loyalty to the PCs after Irovetti is dead; she tries to escape at once, and if the PCs oppose her flight, she attacks them as well. Engelidis knows about the sword Irovetti keeps hidden in area T3.

She offers up its location as a bargaining chip to the PCs if she thinks that could help to buy her freedom and she's too wounded to carry on a fight against them.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 18, **Con** 23, **Int** 12, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 34

Feats Ability Focus (charming gaze), Arcane Strike, Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Improved Critical (bite), Iron Will, Power Attack, Quicken Spell

Skills Fly +15, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Perception +22, Spellcraft +19,



Engelidis

Stealth +18, Swim +14

Languages Abyssal, Common

SQ bloodline arcana, woodland stride,

Other Gear *spell storing amulet of mighty fists +1* (contains hideous laughter)

Treasure: This room is littered with minor objects d'art—tapestries, brocades, linens, statuary, decanters, goblets, and more. A thorough looting produces 8,500 gp in relatively portable treasure.

T2. ENGELIDIS'S LAGOON (CR 15)

This placid pool glows from the many crystal lamps mounted above and below the water line. A gilded statue with Irovetti's face and an impossibly perfect body rises from the waves with arms extended, as though reaching out toward a lover. To the west, a large dry area seems to have once served as a treasury, but now all of the chests appear to be empty.

The water here averages at 12 feet deep. The pool is quite cold and contains a subtle underwater current noticeable with a DC 20 Survival check—those who note the current gain a +5 bonus to find either of the secret doors to the north. Both of these incredibly well-hidden doors are underwater and can be found with a DC 40 Perception check. The northernmost door leads to a 3-foot-wide submerged tunnel that winds for nearly a thousand feet before ending at a second secret door (also DC 40 to notice) that opens into the Pitax River. The second secret door leads to area T3.

Irovetti's treasury, once overflowing with wealth, has suffered greatly due to his war effort—he hopes that if he wins the war, looting the PCs' kingdom will replenish this wealth.

Creature: King Irovetti has had his share of consorts over his years as ruler, yet he has no interest in sharing the rule of Pitax with a queen. Whenever a consort grew too keenly interested in marriage, he always found a way to end the relationship. With Engelidis, Irovetti feels he's found the perfect partner—a creature content to serve as a guardian and (with the aid of *alter self*) a lover. The fact that Engelidis is a spirit naga, a creature most of Pitax would consider a monster, helps Irovetti to justify keeping her loyalty bound to him via a constant "diet" of *charm monster* spells as not really being immoral or illegal; she's just a monster, after all, not a citizen of Pitax. Were she set free, she'd certainly cause a lot of trouble, while as his loyal companion she's providing valuable services.

ENGELIDIS

CR 14

XP 38,400

hp 157 (see page 52–53)

T3. BRIAR'S GROTTO

The walls of this underwater cave are a wonder to behold—masses of what appear to be white, rose-shaped crystals cover every available inch of space on the walls, floor, and ceiling of this grotto. Something floats in the middle of the room, slowly turning in the water's currents—it appears to be some sort of long object wrapped in a white cloth.

Treasure: This secret cavern is where Irovetti has hidden the magic sword, *Briar*. Wrapped in Evindra's shawl, the sword floats languidly in the water despite the fact that it weighs several pounds. The crystals on the wall are a side effect of the strange weapon's presence in the area for the past several years, and while beautiful, they crumble quickly to the touch.

Briar's long period of absence from the First World has left the sword a mere shadow of its former power, although even as a shadow, the +4 *bastard sword* is still formidable. As Nyrrisa begins to saturate the Stolen Lands with First World power, and as *Briar* is used to slay creatures from the First World, its powers will quickly return and its cunning intelligence will awaken. *Briar*, fully awakened, is a vorpal sword with several other powers and is a key element in defeating the nymph queen Nyrrisa, but those elements are beyond the scope of this adventure—see the final adventure in the Kingmaker Adventure Path, "Sound of a Thousand Screams," for full details on the role this weapon has to play.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

By the end of this adventure, the PCs have waged a war against an enemy and likely have recovered a powerful weapon. While it may seem that they face no further opposition to their claiming of the Stolen Lands, nothing could be further from the truth. They may have learned some disturbing hints about the nymph Nyrrisa's interest in the region, and if they return Evindra's shawl and recover *Briar*, they soon gain a chilling insight into the true peril that faces them. Yet these revelations can wait—for the PCs have won a war, and other concerns are likely more pressing.

Whether the party has exacted its revenge upon Irovetti or he has fled before them, the throne of Pitax stands empty. They can lay a legitimate claim to the throne of Pitax and add it to their lands (and to the long history of failed River Kingdoms); however, their position in Pitax remains precarious as Irovetti's loyalists and rivals alike jeopardize the peace. Pitax's king may have been overthrown, yet the PCs must pacify and mollify the citizenry of Pitax if they are to win their loyalty and

Glenebon Upland Rumors

d10 Roll	Rumor
1	A flight of wyverns has destroyed the village of Littletown, and they say that King Irovetti actually gave the wyverns permission to do so!
2	A lot of folks are unhappy with Irovetti's rule, including a woman named Ilora Nuski, who once led the River Razors. She's said to be hiding out in the wilds still, plotting a way to raise an army against the king.
3	Irovetti caught a huge remorhaz several years ago. He marched it through Pitax and still keeps it in his dungeon as a pet.
4	There's a mammoth graveyard in the Branthlend Mountains—whoever discovers it will surely make a great fortune in ivory!
5	Some say that the black dragon Ilthuliak is dead, but a friend of a friend saw her flying over Glenebon just last month! (False)
6	The old abbey on Whiterose Hill is still haunted by the priests of Cayden Cailean who were murdered there years ago. (Partly false—it's haunted by their murderer.)
7	The mother of all wyverns, Minognos-Ushad, lives in a cave just at the easternmost edge of Thousand Voices.
8	Irovetti's fallen under the spell of a vampire priestess of Urgathoa who lives in a secret cave under his palace. She wants to turn Pitax into a necropolis! (False)
9	The mastodon-riding hill giants known as Tusker's Riders are on the march! They say King Irovetti hired them, but I don't believe that.
10	Somewhere in the tangled forest of Thousand Voices lies the mysterious Castle of Knives, but never in the same place, it seems.

unify their expanding domain. Stabilizing Pitax in the wake of their victory is detailed in the final chapter of the Kingmaker Adventure Path—and whether the PCs claim the city and nation as part of their own country or they step back and allow Pitax's rule to return to its traditional council of merchant families could have major repercussions on how they're able to react to the coming invasion from the First World.

If Irovetti escapes, the PCs may want to track him down to avoid him becoming a king-in-exile, raising insurrection from every shadow. However, without his place of power, Irovetti's allies are quick to turn on him. Even if he flees into Thousand Voices in an attempt to rejoin Nyriisa herself, she will be wroth for his failures. If the PCs take him captive, they can even learn much about what Nyriisa has planned for the region and about the significance of *Briar*, as revealed in the next adventure. In the end, though, Irovetti's fate remains solely in the PCs' hands—what they do with the fallen king is up to them.

APPENDIX 1: GLENEBON RUMORS

You can use the rumors above to encourage exploration or foreshadow coming events in the Kingmaker Adventure Path. The table above presents 10 such rumors and bits of news. A "(False)" following a rumor indicates

that the rumor is a red herring intended to spur further exploration of the Glenebon Uplands but not actually legitimate news.

APPENDIX 2: MASS COMBAT

The following rules present a fast-play method to resolve large-scale combats involving the clashing of armies. They aren't intended to accurately represent complex wars or provide a highly-tactical simulation of the same—but they are intended to be fun! During "War of the River Kings," the PCs will be faced with multiple situations where they'll need an army at their command, but in the end, these rules should not dominate your game—the bulk of the adventure remains focused on traditional, smaller-scale adventuring and interaction with the PCs themselves.

ARMY STATS

You can't fight a war without armies. What follow are notes on how to read army stat blocks.

Name and CR: The army's name is presented first, along with its Challenge Rating (CR). To determine an army's CR, simply adjust the CR of an individual member of that group by the appropriate modifier depending on the army's size, as shown on the Army Sizes table on page 56. If, after modifiers apply, the group's CR is lower than 1, it does not count as an army—add more troops until you



reach a CR of 1. If an army is cavalry, the army's CR is set by the higher of the rider's or mount's CR score.

XP: This lists the XP awarded for defeating the army.

Alignment, Size, and Type: An army's alignment has no effect on its statistics and is essentially just a convenient way to summarize its attitude with two letters. The army's size determines not only how many individual units exist in the army, but also the army's Challenge Rating. The army's type is defined by the nature of its individual soldiers. An army must be made up of identical creatures.

hp: An army's hit points equal its CR \times the average hp from the HD type of the army's units (3.5 for d6 HD, 4.5 for d8, 5.5 for d10, and 6.5 for d12). If an army is composed of units with multiple HD (such as the case of multiclassed characters, monsters with class levels, or cavalry), use the lowest HD type. Drop any fractions from the final total. Note that only damage from other armies can reduce an army's hp—treat individual creatures who attack an army as a fine-sized army.

Defense and Offense: These entries list an army's Defense Value (this is always a static number used to resist

an attack) and its Offense Modifier (this is always a modifier that's applied to a d20 roll during an attack). If the group has ranged capability, it is indicated here. The army's Defense Value (DV) is equal to its CR + 10. The army's Offense Modifier (OM) is equal to its CR.

Tactics and Resources: Armies learn tactics and gain resources as they grow more seasoned from battles.

Special Abilities: Any special abilities the army has.

Speed: This number indicates how many 12-mile hexes the army traverses in a day's march. Marching through difficult terrain halves the army's speed. Use Table 7–6 on page 172 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* to determine the army's speed, based on the speed of its individual members.

Morale: An army's morale is a modifier ranging from -4 (the minimum) to $+4$ (the maximum). Morale can be further modified by the army's leader or other factors. A new army's starting morale is $+0$.

Consumption: Consumption lists how many Build Points an army consumes each week, representing the cost to feed,

Army Sizes

Army Size	Number of Soldiers	Army's CR
Fine	1	CR of individual creature -8
Diminutive	10	CR of individual creature -6
Tiny	25	CR of individual creature -4
Small	50	CR of individual creature -2
Medium	100	CR of individual creature
Large	200	CR of individual creature +2
Huge	500	CR of individual creature +4
Gargantuan	1,000	CR of individual creature +6
Colossal	2,000	CR of individual creature +8

Build Points

Build Points (abbreviated BP) are a universal resource shared by all nations, and are detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #32*—if you're not using these rules for kingdom management, multiply an army's Consumption by 500 to determine its cost in gp.

If your PCs' nation is particularly rich or particularly poor, feel free to adjust the consumption cost and resource cost in BP somewhat. The point of this adventure is to allow the PCs to field an army—they should be able to afford at least a small army, but shouldn't be able to build an army with no regard for cost.

hydrate, arm, train, care for, and pay the soldiers. An army's consumption is equal to its CR divided by 2 (minimum of 1; consumption can be further modified by tactics). You must pay the army's consumption value at the start of each week it is active. Each week you fail to pay an army's consumption, reduce its morale by 2 points. If this penalty results in a morale of -5 or lower, the army disbands.

Leader: This line lists the army's leader and her Charisma modifier.

TACTICS

Each time an army wins a battle, you can attempt a Loyalty check against your nation's Control DC. If you succeed, your army learns a new tactic. An army can know a number of tactics equal to half its CR. When a battle begins, the army must select one tactic to use for that battle.

Cautious Combat: Your army fights cautiously in order to maintain morale. -2 OM, +2 on all Morale checks.

Cavalry Experts: The army must have the mount resource to use this tactic. +2 OM against armies that aren't mounted.

Defensive Wall: The army fights defensively, taking actions to protect their fellow soldiers as needed. -2 OM, +2 DV.

Dirty Fighters: An army that fights dirty uses trickery and unfair tactics to gain an advantage at the start of a battle. +6 OM on first round of the melee phase.

Expert Flankers: The army is skilled at surrounding the foe and distracting them, at the cost of spreading out too much and increasing its vulnerability. +2 OM, -2 DV.

False Retreat: Once per battle, your army can make a false retreat, luring the enemy deeper into your territory. *On the round you make a false retreat, you cannot make an Offense check. On the round after a False Retreat, you gain +6 OM and +6 DV.*

Hold the Line: Your army focuses on total defense of the battlefield. +4 DV, -4 OM.

Relentless Brutality: You throw caution to the wind and attack with savage and gory vigor. +4 OM, -4 DV.

Siegebreaker: You target the enemy's siege engines in an attempt to destroy them. *Each time you damage an enemy army in melee, you may make a second Offense check. If this second check is successful, you destroy one of the enemy army's siege engines. This tactic has no effect on armies without siege engines.*

Sniper Support: An army must have ranged capability to use this tactic. *Each round you successfully damage an army with an Offense check, you inflict an additional 2 points of damage from archers held in reserve.*

Spellbreaker: You adopt tactics to disrupt spellcasting. *Against armies with spellcasting ability, you gain +4 DV.*

Taunt: You are skilled at taunting the enemy, provoking stupid mistakes and overconfidence in battle. *The enemy must make a Morale check (DC = 10 + your army's CR) at the start of each round to avoid taking a -2 penalty to DV and OM for the round. Once the enemy makes two consecutive Morale checks against your taunt, it is immune to this tactic for the remainder of the battle.*

RESOURCES

Resources must be purchased with BP before an army can be outfitted with them.

Mounts (BP = Mount's CR): The army is mounted on horses or other war-trained animals. Increase DV and OM by +2. If your army uses mounts that are more powerful than the soldiers themselves, your army's CR (and all derived scores) might increase (see page 55).

Improved Weapons (5 BP): The army is armed with masterwork weapons (increase OM by +1). For 10 times the BP cost, you can instead outfit the army with magic weapons (increase OM by +2).

Improved Armor (3 BP): The army is armed with masterwork armor (increase DV by +1). For five times the BP cost, you can instead outfit the army with magic armor (increase DV by +2).

Healing Potions (10 BP): Each soldier is equipped with several healing potions. At any point during a battle

(but no more than twice per battle), you can order your soldiers to drink their potions—they cannot make an Offense check this round, but they regain hit points equal to twice their CR.

Ranged Weapons (2 BP): Your soldiers are equipped with ranged weapons (such as crossbows or bows). Your army gains ranged capability.

Siege Engines (15 BP per engine): Your army includes catapults, trebuchets, ballistae, rams, and other siege engines designed to break down fortifications. *Increase OM by +2 (regardless of the total number of siege engines you control); each round of the melee phase, reduce the enemy's bonus to DV from fortifications by 1d4 points per siege engine your army controls.*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Most armies also possess special abilities that they can use during a battle, or that provide constant bonuses. You can use the following special abilities as inspirations to generate additional army abilities of your own.

Breath Weapon: The army gains ranged capability, and inflicts +1d4 points of damage on every successful hit against an enemy army.

Construct/Plant/Undead: These armies always make Morale checks, but can never change their strategy from normal.

Energy Drain: An army that can energy drain reduces its enemy's OV and DV by 1 each time it damages them. This reduction vanishes after 24 hours.

Fast Healing/Regeneration: Fast healing and regeneration allow an army's hit points to recover in the same way that they restore hit points for individual creatures. A regenerating army that is reduced to 0 hit points is still considered defeated, assuming the victors can move among the defeated creatures and finish them off.

Fear: An army that uses a fear attack forces the enemy army to make a Morale check (DC = 10 + attacking army's CR) or be unable to make an Offense check in the next round. If an army fails a Morale check from fear in a round when it can't make an Offense check due to fear, the army flees.

Mobility Advantage: If the creatures in an army have unusual mobility (such as flight, swimming, climbing, burrowing, teleportation, and so on) that actually gives an advantage in the battle, increase that army's DV by +1. If all armies possess the same mobility options, this advantage does not apply.

Paralysis: If an army can paralyze foes, each time it damages an enemy the army's DV is reduced by 1. This reduction vanishes at the end of a battle.

Poison: When a poison-using army damages an enemy army, the army takes an automatic 1d6 points of damage on the round immediately following any round it took

damage from the poison army. This ability can also apply to armies that use bleed or burn attacks.

Rock Throwing: An army that can throw rocks gains ranged capability and inflicts +4 damage during the Ranged phase.

Significant Defense: If an army's component creatures possess a significant defense (such as powerful damage reduction, incorporeality, or numerous immunities and/or resistances), increase its DV by +10, but only when it fights against an army that would have a significantly difficult time overcoming the army's significant defense. In some cases, you might even wish to rule that an army is simply undefeatable by an enemy army because of its defenses—but you should never pit the PCs against such an army.

Spell Resistance: If an army's units have spell resistance, they gain a +6 bonus to their DV against armies that have the Spellcasting ability.

Spellcasting: If an army's units can use magic (either from spell-like abilities or actual spellcasting), it gains a bonus to its DV and OM equal to the level of the highest-level spell its individual units can cast. In addition, if any of its offensive spells have a range of greater than touch, the army gains ranged capability and can attack during the Ranged phase.

RUNNING MASS COMBATS

Since an army's strength is represented by a CR score, you can balance armies against each other using the guidelines for CR in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. For example, two CR 9 armies should make for a relatively even battle, but so would a CR 9 army against three CR 6 armies. For "War of the River Kings," the assumption is that the PCs' army will consist of a CR 11 army overall.

THE BATTLEFIELD

In most mass combats, the battlefield shouldn't impact either army. But sometimes a battlefield can decide the outcome of a war.

Advantageous Terrain: Generally, if one army occupies a position of superiority (such as being atop a hill, wedged in a narrow canyon, or protected by a deep river along one flank), the defending army gains a +2 bonus to its DV.

Ambush: In order to attempt to ambush an army, the entire ambushing army must have concealment. The ambusher makes an Offense check against the army's DV—if successful, the battle begins but the defending army does not get to act during the tactics phase. Otherwise, the battle proceeds normally.

Battlefield Advantage: If an army is particularly familiar with a battlefield, it gains a +2 bonus to both DV and OM.

Fortifications: An army located in a fortification adds the fortification's Defense score to its DV. A city's Defense is determined by the types of buildings it contains, as detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #32. If you aren't using these rules, a typical fortification increases DV by +8.

BATTLE PHASES

Mass combat generally takes place over the course of three battle phases—the Tactics Phase, the Ranged Phase, and the Melee Phase. A phase does not denote a specific passage of time, leaving you as the GM the latitude to determine how long any mass combat takes to resolve.

Tactics Phase: During the Tactics phase, each army selects which of its tactics it will use during the battle.

Ranged Phase: The Ranged phase typically lasts for 1 round, although the battlefield's shape and other conditions can extend this duration. During this phase, any army with Ranged capability makes an attack against an enemy army. Armies without Ranged capability cannot attack during this phase.

Melee Phase: The Melee phase begins as the armies involved finally clash—this phase continues until one army is defeated.

MASS COMBAT QUICK REFERENCE

The following summarizes the key rolls in mass combat.

Offense Check = $d20 + OM$

Damage = Offense check result – defending army's DV

Morale Check = $d20 + \text{leader's Cha mod} + \text{morale score}$

STRATEGY TRACK

Each round during the melee phase, an army's commander must select a strategy from one of five options on the strategy track. Strategies adjust the army's DV, OM, and damage modifier. Adjusting an army's strategy one step in either direction is automatic; if the leader wants to adjust strategy more than that in 1 round, he must make a DC 20 Morale check. If he succeeds, the army's strategy changes to the desired level, but if he fails, the army's current strategy doesn't change at all.

STRATEGY TRACK

Strategy	DV mod.	OM mod.	Damage mod.
Defensive	+4	-4	-6
Cautious	+2	-2	-3
Standard	+0	+0	+0
Aggressive	-2	+2	+3
Reckless	-4	+4	+6

ATTACKING AND TAKING DAMAGE

In mass combat, it doesn't matter who goes first, since in the game it's assumed that all attacks happen simultaneously.

Each army makes an Offense check by rolling 1d20 and adding its total OM. This result is then compared to the target army's DV.

Attacker's Offense check equal to or less than defender's DV: Attacker fails to damage the defending army.

Attacker's Offense check greater than defender's DV: The attacking army inflicts damage on the defending army equal to the result of the attacking army's Offense check minus the defending army's DV.

Natural 20: If you roll a natural 20 on your Offense check, you automatically deal damage to the army, even if the result of the roll is lower than the enemy army's DV.

Natural 1: If you roll a natural 1 on your Offense check, your army cannot make an Offense Check during the following round.

ROUT

If at any point an army's hit points are reduced to a number equal to or less than its CR, it immediately flees unless its commander can make a DC 15 Morale check. If this check fails, the army scatters and retreats from battle. When an army flees thusly, the enemy can make one final Offense check to get a parting shot before the army escapes.

MULTIPLE ARMIES

These rules can also serve in battles where multiple armies clash. In such battles, when you make your Offense check, you choose which enemy armies you're attacking and apply damage appropriately—you can change targets each round as you wish—these rules don't take into account complexities such as movement or location, after all!

VICTORY AND DEFEAT

An army is victorious once all of its enemy armies are destroyed or flee the battlefield.

Victory: A victorious army's hit points remain at the level they were at when the battle ended (minimum value equal to the army's CR). Make a Loyalty check against your kingdom's Control DC—if you are successful, your army gains a new Tactic. Every time an army gains a new Tactic, its morale goes up by 1 (maximum of +4).

Rout: The army's hit points reset to a number equal to the army's CR, and its morale decreases by 1. Before this army can fight again, you must make a successful Loyalty check against your nation's Control DC during your nation's Upkeep phase.

Defeated Army: Although there are certainly a few survivors if an army is reduced to 0 hit points, those few survivors are so demoralized and wounded that the army cannot recover. It must be replaced with a new army. Every time an army is defeated, reduce the kingdom's Stability, Economy, and Loyalty by 2.

RECOVERY

An inactive army heals back to its full hit points after a single month, but often, you'll need to restore your army to full fighting potential much more quickly. Each day that an army spends at rest (no movement and no battle), it heals hit points equal to its CR. Once per day you can also restore an additional amount of hit points to an army by making a successful Loyalty Check against your nation's Command DC. With a successful check, your army heals an additional amount of hit points equal to its CR.

PLAYER CHARACTERS IN BATTLES

As an option, you can have the PCs face battles of their own just before or even during a battle in which one of their armies clashes with the enemy. For example, the PCs might attack an evil necromancer and fight their way through his tower to confront and defeat him while their army battles the undead horde outside. Alternatively, the PCs could use a few potent spells (such as *control water*, *earthquake*, *cloudkill*, and so on) to adjust the battlefield condition to their favor. These possibilities allow the PCs to use their characters to directly affect the outcome of a battle without actually forcing the characters to "sit out" on an adventure opportunity by personally commanding an army.

If the PCs win their battle or dramatically affect the battlefield with magic, increase their army's DV and OM by +4. If the PCs lose their battle, penalize their army's DV and all OM rolls by -4. At your discretion, the PCs' failure or victory can have other effects on their army as well, such as granting temporary bonus tactics or starting the war with adjustments to one side's hit points.

SAMPLE ARMIES

The availability of armies for conscription by the PCs depends upon their acts and successes in the Kingmaker Adventure Path to this point. You can also allow your players to customize their own armies, using the rules above to build whatever type of army they want (subject to GM approval, of course!). None of these armies have a starting morale listed, since that depends on the result of a Loyalty check when the army is first conscripted.

PALTRY MILITIA	CR 1
Medium army of humans (warrior 3)	
COMBAT	
hp 5; DV 11; OM +1	
LOGISTICS	
Speed 2; Consumption 1	
Prerequisite Kingdom size 1 or higher	

REGULAR MILITIA	CR 5
Huge army of humans (warrior 3)	
COMBAT	
hp 27; DV 15; OM +5	
LOGISTICS	
Speed 2; Consumption 2	
Prerequisite Kingdom size 25 or higher	

ENORMOUS MILITIA	CR 9
Colossal army of humans (warrior 3)	
COMBAT	
hp 49; DV 19; OM +9	
LOGISTICS	
Speed 2; Consumption 4	
Prerequisite Kingdom size 150 or higher	

REGULAR ARMY	CR 7
Gargantuan army of humans (fighter 2)	
COMBAT	
hp 38; DV 17; OM +7	
LOGISTICS	
Speed 2; Consumption 3	
Prerequisite Kingdom size of 100 or higher	

KOBOLD SKIRMISHERS	CR 4
Gargantuan army of kobolds (warrior 1)	
COMBAT	
hp 22; DV 14; OM +4	
Tactics Dirty Fighters	
LOGISTICS	
Speed 2; Consumption 2	
Prerequisite Allied with Sootscale kobolds	

CENTAUR OUTRIDERS	CR 7
Huge army of centaurs	
COMBAT	
hp 38; DV 17; OM +7, ranged	
Tactics Cavalry Experts; Resources ranged weapons	
Special Abilities always treated as if they're mounted	
LOGISTICS	
Speed 3; Consumption 5	
Prerequisite Allied with Nomen centaurs	

BOGGARD SWARM	CR 8
Gargantuan army of boggards	
COMBAT	
hp 36; DV 18; OM +8	
Tactics Expert Flankers; Resources healing potions	
Special Abilities mobility advantage (swamps only)	
LOGISTICS	
Speed 1 (unaffected by swamps); Consumption 14	
Prerequisite Must have allied with M'botuu boggards and removed Sepoko from power in "Blood for Blood"	



Pitax

Most folks in Pitax are performers of some kind. Don't have to be on a stage, but they're performers just the same. It's a little odd living in a city where everyone's always "on" and no one seems to be in the crowd. But though it's not a large audience, there's definitely folks watching, and the most important sort of folks—the types who make decisions, not like whether you'll be a star or be trapped in the chorus, but whether or not folks will ever remember you even took the stage in your time. It can be hard keeping it up all the time, but you do, 'cause what other option is there? So the question for any soul who wanders through those gates isn't the size of your part in the grand play, or how sweetly you sing your song—the question is, will you make it to the final act, bowing as the curtains close?

—Meonora Tevorri, player at the Red Crescent Theater

For nearly 400 years, Pitax remained a relatively small and unassuming city of the River Kingdoms. Though marred by strife with neighbors such as Mivon and Numeria, and even suffering some scars from a brief but brutal civil war, Pitax always stood as a sanctuary of sorts at the edge of the Stolen Lands. For rogues who needed to disappear or troubled souls who simply wanted to start their lives anew, Pitax was a tarnished symbol of reckless and often dangerous freedom—but of freedom nonetheless. With the arrival of just one man only 6 years ago, however, this legacy changed. As the bandit king Irovetti took control of Pitax, the city mirrored his dark and brutal personality, becoming a force to be reckoned with in the River Kingdoms and drawing the ire and envy of the lands surrounding it.

By far, the most startling change made to Pitax by the decree of Irovetti has been its focus upon the fine arts, or at least its hamfisted attempt to do so. Determined to make Pitax a center of genteel refinement and culture, Irovetti ordered the construction of the Red Crescent Theater, which became the cornerstone of other revitalized parts of Pitax. The city grew, attracting many actors, musicians, and other artists, which undeniably caused the city's coffers to swell with fresh gold. But by bringing in so many new souls, Pitax suddenly found a sinister, unsavory element becoming a part of its very core. The rugged hopefulness that once flowed through the streets of Pitax disappeared, slowly replaced by fear and dread.

The presence of so many bards and storytellers from so many places has made the city a haven for secrets, rumors, tall tales, and occasionally even the truth. If one seeks information that might be little more than whispers and dust, Pitax might be the place to unearth clues. What sages don't know, Pitax often does. The only trick to finding rare secrets in Pitax—secrets that could possibly lead to treasures or dooms beyond imagination—is knowing where to look.

That, and perhaps living long enough to escape with such secrets.

PITAX

CN small city

Corruption +4; **Crime** +2; **Economy** +4; **Law** +3; **Lore** +4;
Society +0

Qualities academic, notorious, strategic location,
tourist attraction

Danger +15

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 5,781 (5,600 humans; 100 half-elves; 40 dwarves;
41 other)

Notable NPCs

King Irovetti (CN male human bard 11/fighter 5)

Drug Dealer Kharne Vereel (NE male gnome rogue 6)

Headmistress of the Academy of Grand Arts, Atalia

Gitaren (NG female half-elven bard 4)

Owner of the Serpent's Breath Trade House, Xapiri

Yasmina (LE female human sorcerer 3)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 6,864 gp; **Purchase Limit** 38,250 gp; **Spellcasting** 7th

Minor Items 4d4 (*amulet of mighty fists +1, bag of holding type II, candle of truth, dust of illusion, folding boat, harp of charming, headband of alluring charisma +2, horseshoes of speed, marvelous pigments, stone salve*); **Medium Items** 3d4 (*bracelet of friends, cape of the mountebank, cloak of resistance +4, decanter of endless water, headband of alluring charisma +4, rope of entanglement, stone golem manual*); **Major Items** 1d6 (*bracers of armor +6, lantern of revealing, major cloak of displacement*)

(The city stat block presented here utilizes the new format and rules presented in Chapter 7 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*.)

CITY GEOGRAPHY

The people of Pitax divide the city into three regions, each with its own specific quirks and personality. Troutmouth, encompassing the docks of Pitax, holds most of the merchant houses and is where merchants conduct most of their business. The Shattered Ward contains the older buildings of Pitax and its longtime citizenry, including manor houses and temples. The New Ruins, long abandoned in the days following the bloody civil war that nearly consumed Pitax, rose from the ashes and became the realization of Irovetti's strange dreams of grandeur. The New Ruins hold the Academy of Grand Arts as well as the Red Crescent Theater, fitfully shining paragons of the city's supposed rebirth.

GOVERNMENT, POLITICS, & ORDER

On the surface, the bandit king Irovetti and the Trade Houses—more commonly known as the Bandit Houses—rule over the people of Pitax in an uneasy partnership. With each passing year, though, Irovetti gains more control over the city and pushes the Bandit Houses ever closer to irrelevance. A simple reason for this shift exists—Irovetti's close alliance with the Thieves' Guild of Pitax. Though the Thieves' Guild has never "officially" been recognized by the government of Pitax, the secretive organization has always held some influence over what happened in the city during the centuries of its existence. With the ascension of Irovetti, however, the Guild's influence over Pitax grows ever stronger and is becoming overt, rather than subtle.

THE BANDIT HOUSES

Long ago, a group of bandits fleeing reprisal in Brevoy founded the safehold that would become Pitax. Their leader, the bandit lord Cesare Cattanei, became the patriarch of the Cattanei family, esteemed residents who ruled over Pitax during the early centuries of its existence. Descendants of the other original bandits also

PITAX

The Tarnished Jewel
of the River Kingdoms



1. The Riversong Trade House
2. The Dwarf's Cave
3. Serpent's Breath Trade House
4. The Temple of Desna
5. Tower of the Fallen
6. The Rose Tower
7. Square of the Common Man
8. Calistria's Cathedral
9. Darkwind Trade House
10. The Crow's Feather
11. The Turning Wheel
12. The Palace
13. The Falling Star Tavern
14. The Academy of Grand Arts
15. Faces of Stone
16. The Red Crescent Theater



formed three other influential families: the Liacenzas, the Vascaris, and the Strocalle.

While the scions of these four houses have shaped Pitax over the years, time has expanded both their power and their ranks. Although each family's bloodline continues, being counted as part of a particular family no longer necessarily means being related by blood. Today, many who dabble in the city's politics and do favors for one of the trade houses find themselves "adopted," a sometimes dubious honor bringing with it many of the connections afforded to true members of the house, as well as all of the family's rivalries. However, only those able to trace their direct lineage to the original bandits of Pitax may rise to a position of prominence in the families. Whether true scions or adoptees, members of the ruling families display certain colors and markers signifying their allegiances. Dyed feathers in a cap are the most common identifier, though signet rings and embroidered cloaks also serve as means of showing family allegiances.

Three of Pitax's four controlling families own and control Trade Houses, which serve as their means of conducting business. Any merchant seeking to conduct business in Pitax needs to be approved by one of these Houses. Without a Trade House's blessing, a merchant might face either sanctions or expulsion from Pitax. Newcomers to Pitax generally try to gain an audience with the Darkwind Trade House—owned by the Strocalle family—as it has proved most open to giving its blessing to anyone with enough gold to purchase its favor.

The Cattanei Family: Though the Cattanei family had the greatest role in founding Pitax, its influence in the city diminishes with each passing year. The actions of the madman Ludov Cattanei a hundred years ago weakened their Trade House, and the civil war that followed shortly thereafter nearly destroyed them. The Cattaneis, along with their Serpent's Breath Trade House, possess just a fraction of the wealth of the other Houses. Xapiri Yasmina, a mysterious merchant from Cheliox, recently purchased controlling interest in the Serpent's Breath Trade House. The Cattaneis wanted no part of this deal, but they were forced to accept it lest they succumb to complete financial ruin. **Salvarri Cattanei** (NG male human bard 2/aristocrat 2), meanwhile, recently took control of the Red Crescent Theater, more in an effort to curry favor with Irovetti than to make a contribution to the fine arts.

The Liacenza Family: Until recently, the Liacenzas controlled much of Pitax. With their controlling interests in the famed vineyards of Sarain, as well as most of the other orchards in the area, their Iron Fox Trade House proved the city's most prosperous. Though the other families and Trade Houses held influence over what happened in the city, the Liacenzas determined its fate. At least, they did until Castruccio Irovetti arrived. In the span of just a few

weeks, the leaders of the Liacenzas—the brothers Lothaire and Berengar—lost control of the Iron Fox Trade House to the bard in a series of bizarre incidents. Two short weeks after that, the two brothers disappeared without a trace. Young Gasperre Liacenza took the mantle of leadership for the family in their absence, but his youth and inexperience hamper his effort to restore the family's honor. The family mostly operates out of the Fallen Star Tavern, owned by Gasperre, as the warehouses of the Iron Fox remain under Irovetti's control.

The Strocalle Family: The Darkwind Trade House of the Strocalle family currently enjoys the greatest wealth of Pitax's Trade Houses, but it wields disproportionately minor influence. Simply put, no one in Pitax trusts the Strocalle. Their loyalties lie first with profit and second with members of their own house, with all others being a very distant third. Strocalle treachery weaves its way throughout the history of Pitax. Of all the families, the Strocalle maintain the closest ties with the city's criminal element. **Eliste Strocalle** (NE human female rogue 4) controls both the Darkwind Wind Trade House and the Strocalle family. Scheming and ambitious, her plotting proved instrumental in Irovetti's ascent to power. Her family's alliance with the city's ruler is stronger than many suspect, and she eventually plans—with Irovetti's help—to eliminate the other Trade Houses.

The Vascari Family: With their large warehouse at the docks of the Sellen River, the Vascari family controls the ships that make their way to Pitax. Unlike the other Trade Houses, they keep few holdings within the city, but their rule over the river makes them a force to be reckoned with. Every sailor in Pitax owes allegiance to the Vascaris and the Riversong Trade House. The Vascaris follow the rule of **Jhofré Vascari** (LN human male rogue 3/expert 3). At a young age, Jhofré departed the city; he then spent much of his life as an ordinary merchant captain, establishing contacts along the length of the Sellen River. Despite his lineage, the other Trade Houses and most citizens view Jhofré as an outsider, so his influence is diminished.

THE BANDIT KING

The past of the tempestuous ruler of Pitax, King Irovetti, is veiled in mystery, deliberate misinformation, and artistic fictions. As he is known for his moodiness and strange whims, most of Pitax's citizens seek to avoid their lord's attentions, with only the most ambitious and reckless actively seeking his favor. Those who meet with Irovetti's displeasure typically disappear, dragged out into the night by plate-clad Pitax wardens, the king's person guards and obedient thugs. Details on Irovetti's past can be found in the introduction to "War of the River Kings" on pages 7–8, while statistics and specifics of the man himself appear on pages 43–44.

DEALERS OF PITAX

In an ironic development, the main rival to the Trade Houses of Pitax—originally founded by bandits—is a band of despicable merchants who seek to win fortune for themselves, typically at the expense of the Trade Houses. Though small, Pitax's nameless criminal underground wields formidable influence in the city, and with the arrival of Irovetti, its power—and ambition—grows daily. Kharne Vereel, a drug-addicted paranoid from Qadira, has come to lead the rogues of Pitax in recent years. Throughout most of the settlement's history, local ne'er-do-wells have focused primarily on banditry and larceny both within the city and farther abroad. With the influx of artistic souls into Pitax, though, Vereel noticed a golden opportunity and began a lucrative narcotics operation, leading the thieves of the city from the shadows into the open. Selling a variety of drugs, both locally created and imported from nearby Daggermark, first to local artistic circles and later to a growing clientele of the city's most impoverished citizens, the dealers of

Pitax have successfully dulled the city's collective judgment and outrage under a haze of addiction. Irovetti cares little about disrupting the drug trade flourishing in his city, far preferring it to the active banditry of the past; he demands only that the drug peddler provide him with regular shares of the profits.

PITAX AT A GLANCE

The three districts of Pitax can be easily distinguished from one another strictly by appearance. Large wooden warehouses standing amid smaller wooden buildings line the docks of Troutmouth. Of these smaller buildings, most are old and weatherworn, with the newer buildings bearing obvious water scars from the Pitax River's occasional floods. Muddy roads crisscross their way through Troutmouth, but these slowly give way to cobblestone streets as they finally enter the Shattered Ward and the heart of Pitax. Large buildings made of dark limestone, some several stories in height, rise throughout this area, surrounding the Square of the Common Man like stones ringing a campfire. A large wall known as the Inner Fortress, made from limestone of a lighter hue, runs along the western border of the Shattered Ward. Old and new gates alike lead from that wall into the New Ruins, a part of Pitax that was once overrun and destroyed during the city's bloody civil war a century earlier. New stone roads and small stone buildings, built from the remains of the great towers that once stood proudly over the city in earlier days, stand amid the genuine ruins in this partially rebuilt sector of Pitax.

Recent additions to the entire city can be found in the form of statues, particularly gargoyles. Commissioned by Irovetti himself to mimic the historic pomp of aged southern cities, most of these statues are disgusting or crude works of monsters or human figures (sometimes both), but a few, including many of the gargoyles that sit ominously atop many a rooftop in Pitax, are works of genuine quality. The majority of the statues can be found close to the palace, where Irovetti resides, but over the past few years they have spread across Pitax like a disease.

TROUTMOUTH

The wharfside of Troutmouth is a strange mix of hardworking warehouse workers living with their families near the docks and freebooting sailors who drift in and out of the city with their ships. Though this often leads to loud and boisterous conflicts between the two groups in the wee hours of the morning, both the workers and the sailors share a grudging respect for one another. The two groups are unified by a shared loathing for the Trade Houses,



Identifying the Trade Houses

Each of the Trade Houses has unique forms of identification—colors, symbols, certain items of clothing, and even a “watchword” (a common phrase used to more covertly acknowledge a House affiliation, particularly in places outside Pitax). The following are the specific forms of identification used by the Houses and by the families that control them.

Family	Trade House	Color	Symbol	Clothing
Cattanei	Serpent's Breath	Green	A coiled snake	Black vest sewn with green thread
Liacenza	Iron Fox	Red	A fox's head	Left glove always marked red
Strocalle	Darkwind	Purple	A cracked coin	Long sash, attached to the belt
Vascari	Riversong	Light blue	A blue heron	Tall boots, marked with blue

Watchword

Cattanei: “Watch, listen, but always be prepared to strike.”

Liacenza: “Are you hunter or hunted? The hunter doesn't need to answer.”

Strocalle: “Gold is blood, silver is breath.”

Vascari: “Strong hands on the wheel keep the sails at full.”

which they believe to be rich, selfish, and indifferent to their problems. Several noteworthy locales can be found in Troutmouth.

The Devil's Tusks: Pitax makes its home along a tributary of the Sellen River known as the Pitax River, a place known for its treacherous rapids. Here two small peninsulas jut out from the shore, forming a natural gateway and protective harbor. Those unfamiliar with navigating the narrow strait between the peninsulas—the Devil's Tusks, known more informally as the Tusks—quickly find their ships stuck on the jagged rocks lurking just beneath the water's surface. A pair of lighthouses, one on each of the Tusks, serve as beacons to guide ships safely into the harbor, but presently only the southern lighthouse functions as originally intended.

The Dwarf's Cave: A short, squat building sits before the docks of Pitax, keeping close watch over the goods that make their way between the ships and city, just like its stout owner, **Joravin Pyathe** (N male dwarven expert 2/fighter 2), the Shipmaster of the Yards. Appointed to his position by the Liacenza brothers during their rule of Pitax, Pyathe ensures that the merchants coming into the city pay the appropriate tariffs for their goods. Though none of the Trade Houses particularly like Pyathe, he acts as an arbiter for disputes between the various families, and his gruff but fair disposition means that he never shows favorites. Although Irovetti's tendency to implement arbitrary adjustments to shipping codes and taxes often makes Joravin an unwelcome sight on the docks, the dwarf proves adept at deflecting ire from himself to the city's lord.

Moondock: Once past the Tusks, ships sailing into Pitax find four smallish wooden docks along the city's shores, which are prominently flanked by warehouses owned by the major Trade Houses. Only three to four average-sized ships are able to drop anchor at the docks at any given time, which often proves problematic during heavy trading seasons.

Savvy merchants with ships headed to Pitax usually provide their captains with handsome bribes to pay the Trade Houses of the city and so shorten their wait for dock time.

The Rose Tower: Raids by river pirates caused significant damage to the northern lighthouse of Pitax, rendering it inoperable. Seeing no immediate need to repair the lighthouse, the Trade Houses let it lie abandoned for years. In recent times, though, the city's drug dealers have taken over its ruins, using the lower levels as a laboratory to concoct their stupefying tinctures.

The Temple of Desna: Mostly ignored by the sailors coming into port, the Temple of Desna nevertheless has a small but faithful congregation of worshipers. The old but venerable priest **Ghare Leotos** (N male human cleric 3) leads the services for these faithful and is responsible for organizing many of the festivities on Desna's holy days for the city. A few sailors swear that they have noticed the old priest wandering around the docks late at night, clutching a gaff and muttering nonsense about “slatterns” and “fishmen.”

Tower of the Fallen: In recent years, with the rebuilding of the New Ruins, the people of Pitax lost much of the land that they once used as a cemetery. For a brief time previous to this, they had buried most of their dead on a small hill just outside the city, but then learned—much to their dismay—that the burials had begun to attract ghouls. With few other options, apart from inviting more ghoul attacks, the priests of Pitax expanded and converted the basement of one of the northern guard towers into a hallowed sepulcher, and since that time, many of the respected dead of Pitax have been laid to rest in the tower's several new sub-basements.

THE SHATTERED WARD

Long the spiritual heart of Pitax, the Shattered Ward grew from the remnants of the bandit keep built during the city's earliest days. This is where most merchants and

travelers conduct their business. Its streets are the busiest, its buildings the largest, and its shadows the most likely to hide secrets and dangers.

Calistria's Cathedral: The last remnants of the original keep built by the Cattanei family and the other original settlers of Pitax, the cathedral is where most of the citizens of Pitax worship. The walls of the cathedral are worn and battered, but those who live in Pitax like it that way. The cathedral stands as a symbol that no matter what happens, Pitax stands above the fray. Lending credence to this is **Drey Yarnes** (CG male human cleric 5), a middle-aged priest and notorious bachelor who watches over the cathedral. Fit and possessing a sharp tongue, Yarnes knows much about the city and what goes on within its walls, some say far more than a simple clergyman has any right to know.

The Crow's Feather: This once-sleepy inn doubles as the city's library, granting access to a hodgepodge and ever-changing collection of books to anyone with the coin to pay for a meal. The mead is watery and the bread is stale, but such trivialities matter little to most patrons. Though the Crow's Feather remained a little-known oddity to the citizens of Pitax for years, the recent influx of scholars and artists has transformed the small tavern into a bustling meeting place, constantly filled at all hours with would-be academics. A curmudgeonly fellow by the name of **Roald Celinnas** (LN male human wizard 4) owns the inn. Thought to be the great-grandson of a powerful wizard from Brevo, Celinnas publicly shows little interest in magic and claims to have found his vast collection of writings "in a box somewhere." He gladly lets those interested in the collection read through whatever they like, but only so long as they read in the confines of the Crow's Feather and order from the overpriced menu. Although no part of the collection is for sale, Roald does accept trades—though his measure of what marks a book's worth is a mystery only he knows the answer to—and he seems to have an uncanny sense of who might be scheming to rob him.

Square of the Common Man: Most residents of the Shattered Ward congregate in the Square of the Common Man, particular in the early hours of the morning and at high noon when the bells of the Calistria's Cathedral ring loudest. These are the times when the town criers of Pitax appear in the square, announcing the important news of the day and the events of days to come. Merchants and nobles gather in the square to meet and conduct their business, often sitting side by side on the wooden benches circling the giant Fountain of Sorrows, which commemorates those lost in the recent civil war.

The Square of the Common Man also draws crowds to its two other prominent features: the stocks and the yardarm (a mast-like structure from which multiple offenders can be hanged and displayed at once). Criminals in Pitax are typically punished with branding, maiming,

whipping, or hanging. Irovetti's wardens mete out all of these punishments in the square, in full view of all those who choose to bear witness. Many of Pitax's citizens eagerly turn out to watch, enough so that bread and cheese vendors make handsome profits selling food to the crowds on the days of hangings.

The Turning Wheel: On windy days, the sharp smell of cheese fills the air of Pitax. This smell emanates from a small, broken tower known as the Turning Wheel, a cheese and butcher shop famed for its foodstuffs. The Wheel serves all of Pitax, from its lowliest sailors to its richest merchants, and is one of the city's more popular attractions. **Ingras Quill** (CG female human expert 2), its ever-cheerful, middle-aged proprietress, greets all who visit the Wheel, and her ribald jokes attract as many patrons as the food itself. What few ever see, however, is Ingras's loathing for Irovetti, but more directly for his wardens, who callously slaughtered her son for some arbitrary affront several years ago. Ever since then, a secret room in the Turning Wheel's basement has served as a meeting place and safe house for any who would bring harm to the city's ruler or have need to keep watch on the palace nearby.

The Palace: Once the sprawling manse of an eccentric wizard, this estate—known simply as "the palace"—presently serves as home and headquarters to Irovetti and his band of thugs. Like most things accomplished by Irovetti in Pitax, the bandit king's acquisition of the palace was both swift and sudden. Full details of Irovetti's stronghold can be found on pages 40–42.

THE NEW RUINS

Nearly a hundred years ago, Pitax endured a small but bloody civil war, in which the northern part of the kingdom seceded and formed a small realm known as Corvonn. The violence between Pitax and Corvonn culminated in an incident known as the Deafening Flames, when rebels from Corvonn torched the western wall of Pitax and razed the western half of the city. Though Corvonn and Pitax eventually resolved their differences and merged back into a single River Kingdom, the damage was done. The western half of Pitax lay in ruin for decades, just a pile of rubble and lingering ashes.

When Irovetti ascended to power in Pitax, he proceeded to take ownership of the burned section of Pitax, which had long lain fallow, and began rebuilding it according to his own garish tastes. The Red Crescent Theater and the Academy of Grand Arts became the heart of the revitalized west end of Pitax. Though both were built ostensibly for the purpose of making Pitax a haven for fine art, Irovetti had a shrewder purpose in mind: attracting builders, artists, and merchants, and, by extension, more money. The New Ruins now presents a half-realized appearance, with the sculpted stone facades of buildings along the Inner Fortress

turning to carved wood and eventually to plain timber near the edge of town. At its farthest reaches, public funding and interest waned, leaving several blocks of aging rubble and dangerous, burnt-out frames available for whatever squatters or dangerous creatures dare to claim them.

The Academy of the Arts: Led by Headmistress Atalia Gitaren, this institution ostensibly exists to train the finest artists in all of the River Kingdoms and, according to Irovetti, all of Golarion. However, although no expense was spared to construct the buildings for the academy, Irovetti proved notoriously cheap when it came to attracting skilled teachers of the various arts. Unable to tell the difference between good art and bad, and generally preferring bad anyway, Irovetti recruited a faculty of failed artists, has-beens, and never-weres, most deluded into believing themselves unrecognized geniuses rather than mere hacks. Bad teachers begat bad students, and combined with Irovetti's heavy-handed control over the art projects in Pitax, the Academy bears a reputation for producing publicly funded affronts to good taste.

Fortunately, Headmistress Gitaren—who does have genuine talent and a wonderful singing voice—manages to rise above much of this. In the small hours of the morning, the few talented students and teachers attending the Academy put their skills to work, creating marvelous works of art that remain, for the most part, unseen by the rest of Pitax. Atalia works for the day when she can exercise total control over the Academy, but at the moment, her efforts are shackled by the demands of Irovetti.

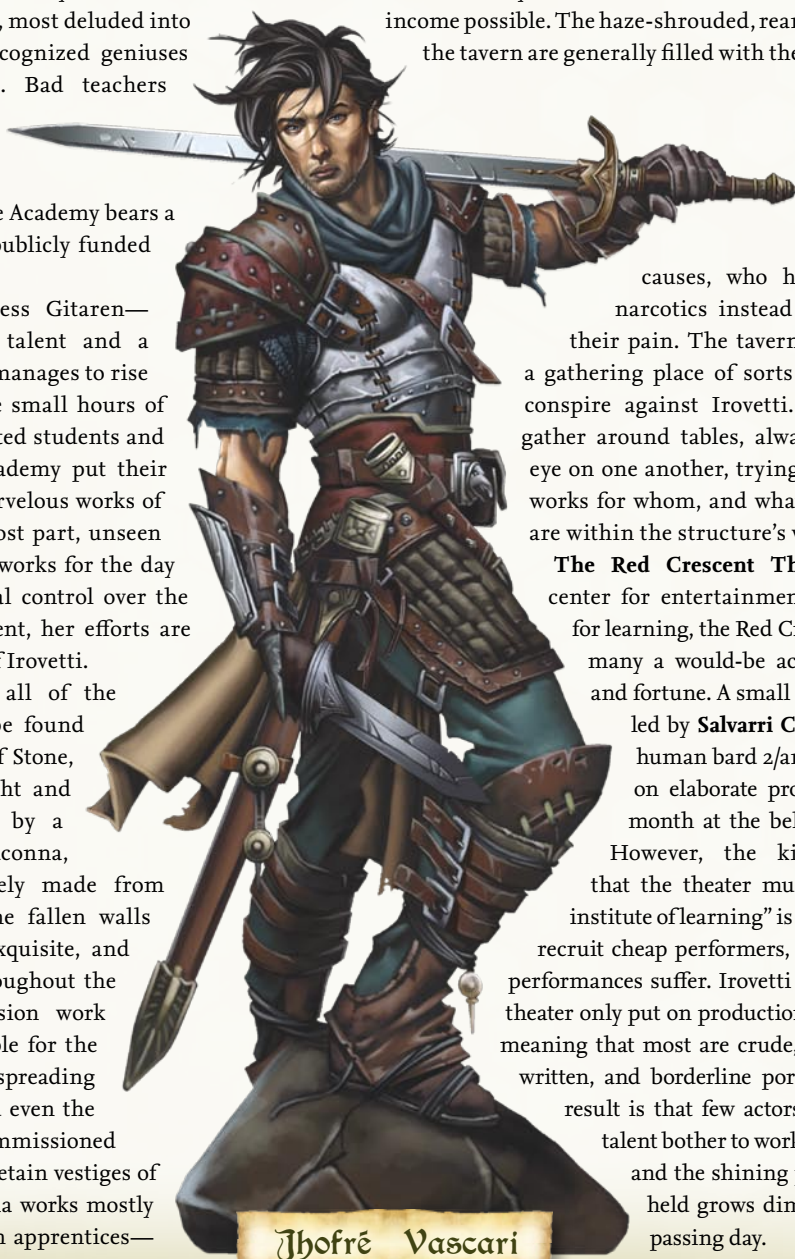
Faces of Stone: Amid all of the artistic abominations to be found in Pitax, one shop, Faces of Stone, stands out as a ray of light and hope. The shop is run by a sculptor called Cayid Caconna, whose stone works—largely made from the limestone ruins of the fallen walls of Pitax—are genuinely exquisite, and nobles and merchants throughout the River Kingdoms commission work from him. He is responsible for the best of the gargoyle statues spreading across Pitax's rooftops, and even the awful, tasteless works commissioned by Irovetti still manage to retain vestiges of beauty and dignity. Caconna works mostly at night and never takes on apprentices—

in fact, few have ever seen him at work. Most believe this is just to guard the secrets of his breathtaking sculpting abilities and his remarkable knack for making stone appear to almost be alive. Local tales tell of Caconna magically turning his artistic rivals into stone. In truth, though, Caconna himself humorously encourages such tales of foul magic and murder, as they flatter what is in actuality pure talent.

The Falling Star Tavern: Owned by **Gasperre Liacenza** (CG male human aristocrat 3), this ramshackle inn bustles with business both day and night. With most of the students and performers from both the Theater and the Academy perpetually out of work, they have little to do but drink and smoke away their sorrows and look for any means of income possible. The haze-shrouded, rear-most booths of the tavern are generally filled with the most hopeless

causes, who have turned to narcotics instead of ale to dull their pain. The tavern also serves as a gathering place of sorts for those who conspire against Irovetti. Such patrons gather around tables, always keeping an eye on one another, trying to decide who works for whom, and what eyes and ears are within the structure's walls.

The Red Crescent Theater: Both a center for entertainment and a haven for learning, the Red Crescent is where many a would-be actor seeks fame and fortune. A small group of actors, led by **Salvarri Cattanei** (N male human bard 2/aristocrat 2), puts on elaborate productions every month at the behest of Irovetti. However, the king's mandate that the theater must “serve as an institute of learning” is partly a cover to recruit cheap performers, and as a result, performances suffer. Irovetti also insists the theater only put on productions that he likes, meaning that most are crude, violent, poorly written, and borderline pornographic. The result is that few actors with any true talent bother to work for the theater, and the shining promise it once held grows dimmer with each passing day.



Jhofré Vascari



Gorum

Gorum rose from an age of violence. When the dwarves drove the orcs upward out of the Darklands and onto the surface world in their legendary Quest for Sky, the savage hordes fought with primitive human tribes that were all that remained of the broken human empires. In an era of conflict and bloodshed, new pains and passions unknown in all the centuries before broke forth in mortal souls and carved themselves in broken flesh. Before this time, the god Gorum was unheard of, but as human clashed with orc, his name spilled from the mouths of warriors on both sides of the battle, the divine personification of horrible, exhilarating war. War has continued throughout the world ever since, and Gorum has been there to inspire mortals to greatness on the battlefield. Under his iron gaze, the worthy find glory—and those who fall are forgotten.

Gorum's priests believe that if the world ever became free of war and combat, his spirit would abandon Golarion in disgust, but he would eagerly return should mortals ever take up arms for glorious battle once more. Despite advances in magic, technology, morality, and the tools of war, Our Lord in Iron is remarkably constant, for his focus is on battle itself, not the reasons for it or the shapes of the weapons used. Whether a battle is between orcs and humans, goblins and dwarves, or elves and creatures from beyond the stars, Gorum is there to glory in the vital energy of conflict.

Gorum's entire focus is on battle and being better at battle—stronger, faster, smarter, better armed, better armored, and more violent. A shortcoming in one area must be compensated for in another—which is why the brutal, hide-wearing berserkers of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings are thick with muscle and bear weapons almost sized for an ogre. He understands the need for archery, siege weapons, and stealth, but nothing satisfies him more than face-to-face melee combat in which the sweat, blood, and fear are heavy in the air like a morning fog. While Torag represents the tactical side of war, and Sarenrae its necessity as a last resort, Gorum is the excitement, battle-lust, and brutality of war. Whether his followers are knights in plate mail, goblins wielding dogslicers, or women and children armed with table knives, he doesn't care—anyone willing to put up a fight, no matter how pathetic or pointless, is worth swinging at. He does not condone the wild slaughter of innocents and the invalid—such acts are the parlance of murderers and butchers, not of warriors. Likewise, he can be merciful, giving quarter to those who surrender, but he is quick to slay any who pretend to submit in the hope of striking while the superior opponent is unaware, and those who refuse to fight at all are barely worth a scornful beheading.

Gorum doesn't care for negotiations and quickly loses interest when tempers cool and blades are sheathed. He does not believe diplomacy is dishonorable and would rather two forces negotiate a truce than have every man fight to a pointless death; it is more pleasing to him that a soldier fight a score of battles in his lifetime than just one, and if a compromise or truce means the warrior has the opportunity to fight again another day, so much the better. Battle is the meat and drink of life, and it is better to eat every day for a lifetime than to gorge oneself and choke or starve shortly thereafter. As good and evil have little meaning for him, he may fight demons one day and noble

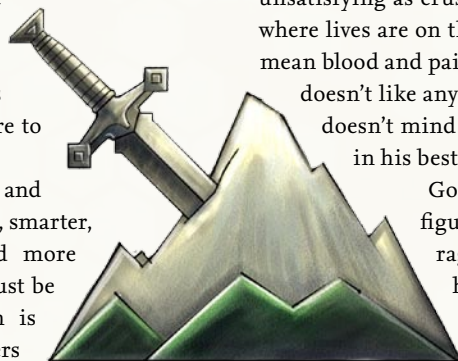
dragons another, just to challenge himself and test his own mettle. In the “family” of Golarion's deities, Gorum is like a boisterous uncle, a veteran of many fights who is good to have around when there is trouble but prone to rage and break things when he becomes bored. Battles of words and wits tire him, not because he lacks the intellect for them, but because he finds them as pointless and unsatisfying as crushing ants—true challenges are those where lives are on the line and a moment's hesitation can mean blood and pain. Our Lord in Iron is bullheaded and doesn't like anyone telling him what to do, though he doesn't mind someone explaining how an action is in his best interest.

Gorum's avatar is a towering, armored figure with blazing red eyes who inspires rage in all who see him; the spikes on his armor break off and fall upon his enemies like an iron rain. He even manifests this way to cultures that use little or no metal in their armor, whether appearing in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings or before primitive orc tribes in Belkzen, or descending deep under the sea to lay waste to gillmen, sahuagin, and the queen of sharks. His avatar is always taller than the largest humanoid or giant in the vicinity, a subtle way for Gorum to establish

himself as the most powerful being present (as a result, his priests respect height, leading a few to thicken the soles of their boots to compensate for vertical shortcomings).

Artistic depictions of Gorum are uncommon, as his followers prefer mighty deeds and boastful words to quieter, more permanent works of art. Of the depictions that are created, however, in many cases his image, shape, or shadow is drawn in blood or hammered together out of scraps of metal. A few temples with forges have molds for casting weapons, and the spillover channels in the molds lead to hand-sized receptacles shaped like spiked, armored men with Gorum's symbol on their chests. These heavy icons of the faith are used both as holy symbols and for focusing group prayers before battle.

Gorum shows his favor through iron armor or weapons that leak blood and filth when touched. Certain legendary warriors are known for leaving a trail of blood and gore behind them even when not in battle, so great is Gorum's love for their skill and carnage (these heroes gain a +4 bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks to influence members of the faith) and sometimes a favored, lone warrior outnumbered by a superior force manages to survive because his enemies slip on the blood-slick bodies of the dead. Gorum's anger most often manifests in sudden patches of



*“The clash of sword on
shield is my song,
I am in your armor,
your blade.
Strike at your foes and I guide
your hand,
For I thirst only for battle.”*

—Gorumskagat IV

rust that appear often enough to completely ruin a valued weapon or piece of armor, and he has been known to punish a cowardly warrior by causing his armor to fall apart into a pile of rusty scraps just as a dozen enemies converge on him.

Formal raiment for priests is spiked armor, preferably full plate, though spiky armor of other types is acceptable in climates or cultures where full plate is unavailable or impractical. Some priests keep a separate set of ceremonial armor (as opposed to their functional battle armor) that is bristling with additional spikes and decorations; sometimes this armor becomes so heavy it is difficult for the priest to walk. Given that his favored weapon is the greatsword, the use of shields is less common than in other martial faiths.

Gorum is chaotic neutral, and his portfolio is strength, battle, and weapons. His favored weapon is the greatsword. His holy symbol is a mountaintop with an enormous sword jutting from it. His domains are Chaos, Destruction, Glory, Strength, and War. Nearly all of Gorum's priests are clerics. A few battle-druids are part of the clergy, however, lending an animalistic perspective and unusual spells to the church's battle-repertoire. War-bards and rangers serve the church in essential roles but are not considered part of the clergy.

A typical worshiper of Gorum is a soldier, mercenary, brigand, bloodthirsty savage, or even a weaponsmith or armorsmith who crafts the tools of war. His followers tend to be impulsive, violent, and prone to grabbing whatever they feel like owning; as a result, there are far more evil followers of Gorum than good. Like Gorum, his followers don't care about the problems and schemes of other deities, but they fight whoever gets in their way. Fights between the faithful are common, though they are usually not fought to the death; they are undertaken to establish dominance or claims over treasure, to impress lovers, or just for entertainment. Among the faithful there is often an "every man for himself" mentality, reflecting not only Gorum's chaotic nature, but also the sense that those fighting on the same side are a band of brothers—brothers willing to shed blood in a ritual of violence predating civilization and even their god himself.

Holy rites include beating large drums, bashing weapons against shields, shouting, and howling. Most church music is based on the *Gorumskagat* (see Holy Text) and is suitable for marching, charging, working, or dancing that favors stomps or other loud footfalls. Gorumite bards use their magic to duplicate the sound of weapons breaking bones and the screams of the injured, giving any performance the semblance of a battlefield; evil bards of the faith may actually own disposable slaves they "play" for this purpose.

Gorum doesn't care about marriage or familial bonds. He knows such things are necessary to produce the next generation of warriors, but he doesn't care whether children come from an exclusive marriage (as is the case

in most human communities) or from polygamous or random couplings. Likewise, the roles of men and women in a culture hold no interest for him; male-dominated orc tribes are just as worthwhile to the Lord in Iron as cultures in which women are the warriors and males the stewards of offspring (which, in the latter case, puts him in Lamashtu's favor). He understands that love can inspire passions that make men and women fight, and that protecting a spouse and children is often why mortals go to war, but he values these reasons no more highly than territorial claims, family honor, greed, or survival. In human communities where his faith is popular, marriage is no more or less common than in other lands, but devout worshipers of Gorum tend to have loud marriages with frequent arguments and much throwing of household items. Some of the church's stories tell of mighty warriors who swore to only take a lover who could defeat them in single combat—and how when they met their matches, the couples became even more powerful in battle together than they were singly.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Gorum's temples are more akin to fortresses than to places of worship—they are built with thick walls, iron gates, and spikes on the parapets, even in the center of an otherwise peaceful city. The priests keep them stockpiled with armor and weapons, typically harvested from dead enemies and kept clean and battle-ready by acolytes; many adventurers laden with salvaged armor head to a Gorumite temple first to get some coin for their heavy loot. The priests don't bother to record what armor came from whom, so it is entirely possible for a young priest's first set of (nonmagical) metal armor to have previously been worn by a wealthy orc or a hero of the faith.

A typical shrine to Our Lord in Iron is a pile of rocks capped with a helm or a sword jammed into a crevice in a boulder. Sometimes the shrines mark the graves of fallen champions, and other times merely a battlefield where much blood was shed.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Priests of Gorum in aggressive warrior cultures earn fame and riches by raiding other tribes or lands. Exiles and those from more "civilized" lands seek employment as mercenaries or bodyguards, or pursue criminal efforts such as brigandry that allow them to crack skulls on a regular basis. Some travel the land as "monster hunters," usually out of a desire to test their mettle against strange beasts rather than an interest in helping threatened communities. Priests try to have at least one battle per day, even if it is only a duel. In especially lawless lands they may find themselves deputized by local guard captains to help keep the peace—which they accept only because it gives them an excuse to fight. Priests usually have ranks

in Intimidate, Heal, and Perception; those with a more tactical bent also study Knowledge (history), and the cannier ones put ranks in Sense Motive to better deal with rogues and other tricky opponents.

Even the poorest priests try to acquire metal armor as soon as possible, taking it still warm from the corpses of their enemies if necessary. Once they have metal armor and weapons, they forever disdain any other kind, preferring to fight naked and barehanded rather than use anything other than metal. Some take spikes from fallen enemies as trophies for their own gear.

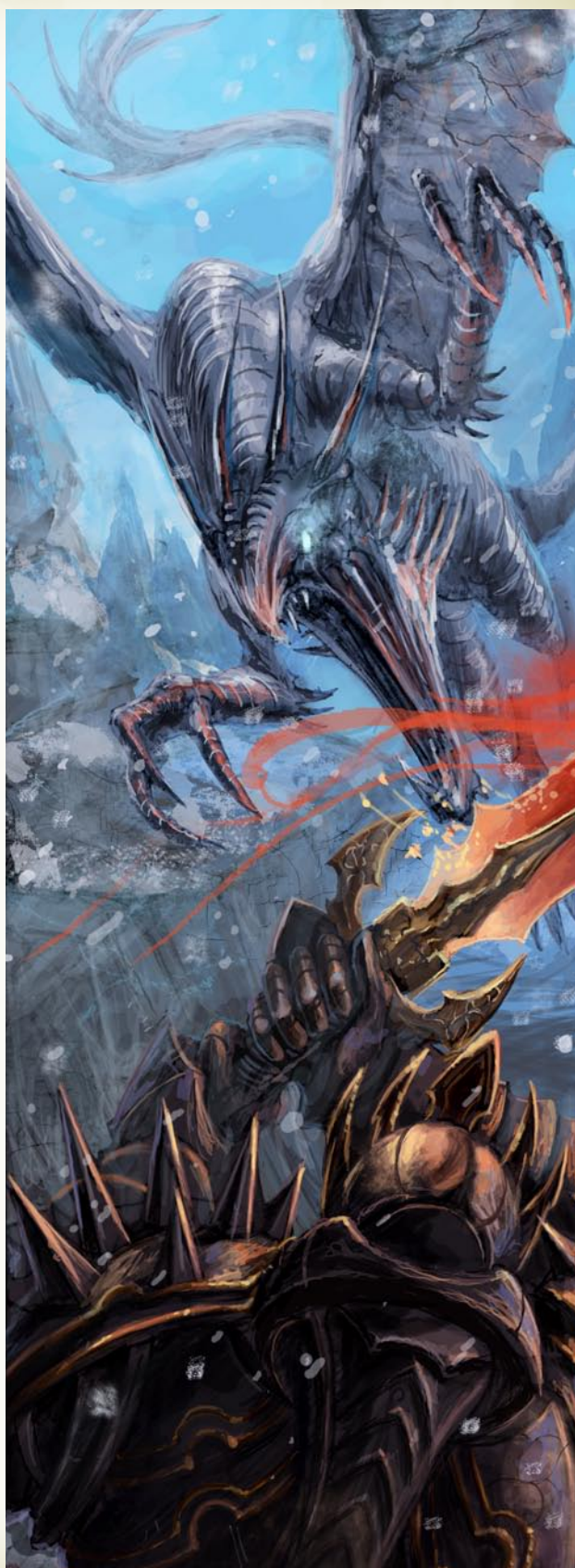
Adventurer priests of Gorum are relatively common, as heroes can always use an ally who is good with a sword and able to heal as well. Villainous groups learn to rely on the might of evil Gorumite priests, especially their ability to channel negative energy, inflicting bloody wounds on all nearby creatures.

The church values strength over age or knowledge, and the senior priest in any tribe or temple typically reaches that position by defeating many enemies and beating down all rivals. When several leaders come together, there is usually some gruff posturing and boasting, during which the weaker ones defer to the stronger, with the strongest dueling or brawling to determine who is leader of the entire group. Underhanded tactics such as poison are considered dishonorable in these bouts, though spells that enhance the priest, his weapons, or armor are considered fair. The head of a particular area may be called lord (or lady, in some lands), sir, or a local military title such as “commander,” “captain,” or even “chief”; this usually has no relation to actual military in the area unless the temple is in charge of the local military forces.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Traditionally, Gorum has little interest in the affairs of other gods. If they oppose him directly, he’ll fight them—otherwise, he considers their affairs and politics a waste of time. This means he has battled with most other deities, with demon lords, and with other beings of power as their interests happen to conflict with his. Currently, most gods lay plans against the day when Gorum might cross their paths again, and the smarter ones find ways to get him on their side of a fight, for he is always willing to enter a battle, regardless of the purpose or whose side he is on. Many times, conflicts between deities are decided based on whom Gorum sides with—and this allegiance may change from encounter to encounter.

In recent years, a conflict between Gorum and Pharamasma has slowly grown. As the Lord in Iron’s mortal champions wage war and become more skilled with their weapons, they grow more effective in battle and more worthy in Gorum’s eyes. Meanwhile, Pharamasma seeks to call mortals to the Boneyard when it is their time, but Gorum’s servants are



difficult to kill, especially when Gorum senses the Lady of Graves' interest and works against her to protect his heroes from "unsportsmanlike" means at the death goddess's disposal. The god walks a fine line between the desire to protect his mortal warlords and the need for them to continue proving themselves in his eyes, and his frustration grows, which eventually will convince him to escalate the tension between himself and the other deity—whether by striking at her directly or encouraging his followers to crush and burn a few Pharasmin temples just to prove a point. Both outcomes would put Pharasma in a difficult position; most other deities keep the peace with her because she can bar their servants from her planar realm (thus preventing them from escorting worshipers' souls to the

other godly realms), but if she did so for Gorum, she'd end up with large numbers of warlike spirits trapped in her realm, disrupting the necessary processing of souls. If the conflict escalates, Pharasma's response must be suitably firm without disrupting her own tasks.

HOLY TEXT

Gorum has no sacred text, but a collection of seven heroic poems called the *Gorumskagat* explains the church's creed. Tribal bards quickly learn to recite these poems perfectly, for a tribal priest beats them every time they make a mistake. The poems may be spoken or sung, and each has a distinct rhythm so a listener who is familiar with them can easily recognize them if they are played on a drum. Though individual translations have slightly different meanings, all translations of a poem use the same rhythm (meaning that in some languages, particularly Elven and Osirian, the phrasing is awkward).

APHORISMS

Gorumites don't have time for fancy speeches, so most of their sayings are short and to the point.

Better to die a warrior than live a coward: While Gorum doesn't believe his followers should recklessly throw away their lives in a battle they cannot win, agreeing to a fight and then fleeing a battle is the act of an unworthy cur. Surrender is honorable, for those who surrender may have a chance to redeem themselves in a later battle, but those who flee with piss on their legs are best cut down before they shame themselves again.

Cowards flee, warriors retreat: The subtle difference between these two ideas is lost on many who do not fully understand the nature of battle. An outnumbered force of warriors that melts into the woods so it can ambush its enemy later is not full of cowards. Warriors retreat from battle because they want to *win* the next battle; cowards flee a battle because they fear death and wish to *avoid* the next battle. The Lord in Iron doesn't expect his followers to be fearless, but he does expect them to swallow their fear long enough to get the job done.

Will you fight?: This simple phrase sums up almost the entirety of Gorum's philosophy. If a spindly youth wants to join an army, the priest of Gorum asks this question. If an injured orc struggles with a wound, his chieftain asks this question. Before a battle in which there will be much slaughter, the army commander asks this question. Those who will fight are the blessed, no matter how feeble their sword arms. Note that the question is not "*Can* you fight?" but "*Will* you fight?"—a crucial distinction.

HOLY DAYS

Unlike other martial faiths, such as Iomedae's church, which records the dates of great victories and celebrates



them as holy days, Gorum's church has little interest in keeping track of old battles—the faithful want to celebrate the battles won today and look forward to victories in the future. Unless a particular battle's anniversary is strongly associated with a particular date, such as the first of the year or a prominent celebration by a nearby city or another religion, they may forget about the specific date within a year or two, only sometimes celebrating it within the right season, and eventually may either forget the season and year entirely or (if it's especially relevant to a senior priest at the temple) may mention it only when it comes to mind. Of course, any number of events may provoke such a memory and a celebration that evening. For example, a twinge in a priestess's knee from a change in the weather may remind her of the battle in which she received a major wound to that knee, causing her to reminisce about that battle in a speech a few days later; likewise, repelling orcs trying to sack the town may remind a priest of his first battle with orcs, which he talks about in a sermon to the town guard while disposing of the orc corpses. Thus, a particular month may have no "holy days" one year and several the next.

NEW DIVINE SPELLS

Clerics and druids may prepare *rage* as a 3rd-level spell and *iron body* as an 8th-level spell. Clerics may prepare *heat metal* as a 3rd-level spell. Druids are forbidden from using the *rusting grasp* spell. Druids are permitted to wear metal armor, though they do not automatically gain proficiency in any other categories of armor. They cannot cast spells while wearing metal armor, nor does it meld with them when they use wild shape; druids interested in metal armor acquire a set for a specific beast form and have allies or slaves put it on them when it is time to fight. In addition to *Gorum's armor* (see *Pathfinder Chronicles: Gods and Magic*), his priests have access to the following spell.

SWALLOW YOUR FEAR

School enchantment; **Level** bard 1, cleric 1

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Targets one creature plus one additional creature per four levels, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration 10 minutes; see text

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance** yes (harmless)

You make the affected subjects ready for battle despite their fear. If a target is suffering from a fear effect of any kind, he gains a +2 morale bonus to Strength and Constitution, a +1 morale bonus on Will saves, and a –2 penalty to AC. If the subject is frightened, he remains in place and gains the confused condition for the remainder of the fear effect,

Customized Summon List

Gorum's priests can use *summon monster* spells to summon the following creatures in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spells.

Summon monster III

Iron cobra (no poison)*

Summon monster VI

Bulette*

Summon monster VII

Behir*

Summon monster VIII

Gorgon*

*The creature has the extraplanar subtype but is otherwise identical to a normal creature of its kind.

except he treats all results of "attack self" as "do nothing" and treats "attack nearest creature" as "act normally." If the subject is panicked, he remains in place and gains the confused condition for the duration of the fear effect.

PLANAR ALLIES

All of Gorum's divine servants are clad in spiked armor or are actually made of metal; even servitors of other gods who come to serve him experience a transformation to match the god's other minions. The Lord in Iron's herald is the First Blade, a swarm of weapons and shields that is gathered into a man-like form the size and shape of an iron golem and that continually sheds pieces of itself (see page 82). The following are well-known supernatural servitors of Gorum, suitable for conjuring with *planar ally* or similar spells.

Bloody Hands: This red-skinned, hezrou-like creature wears intricate scale mail that fits like a second skin. He enjoys the taste of potions and elixirs, especially those that augment his already formidable physical prowess. Though he cannot fly, he enjoys leaping upon opponents from high places, charging through their ranks like a slashing wheel of death.

Saint Fang: This unusual creature resembles a silver dragon covered in spikes, but he is dark gray like iron rather than the bright color of silver. Patches of his scales appear to be rusted, but they are actually old stains from where he paints his hide with the blood of his fallen enemies.

Temperbrand: This large fire elemental is made of molten metal and is in a near-constant battle rage. She enjoys taking her enemy's weapons and melting them within herself, which heals her and temporarily lends the weapon's magic to her attacks.



Prodigal Sons: 5 of 6 Chariots of Terror

It should have been bigger. For a place so exalted in tales, Tymon was disappointingly commonplace, buzzing with activity, but none of any importance. Hardly a place worthy of such nobility as us—or rather, me. Then again, with a little time, perhaps my presence could raise this backwater hovel into a place worthy of gentility. I mentioned as much to Phargas.

The priest cleared his throat and hawked into the river as we crossed the gangplank to the dock. “What did you expect?”

“Stone and marble, for one. Grandeur, banners, and servants, not more dirt, dockhands, and doxies.”

The brute prodding us from behind snorted. “Well, there’ll be more servants with you here. Step lively, and head toward Caras there at dock’s end.” He nodded his

head toward a slimmer man dressed in the same blue garb as all the *Cornflower’s* staff.

Phargas stopped in mid-stride. “How does anyone to expect us here?”

The giant-sized deckhand smiled at him, exposing three missing teeth. “Every night, boats go ahead of us. No good to have a pleasure barge without folk upriver wanting aboard. The captain sent Caras, and now we see if he found someone to buy your debts.”

The blue-garbed person we approached gestured toward us. He spoke with a pair of men cloaked in brown and black, both cleaner and better dressed than the rabble around them. “You know, Phargas,” I said, “I really should have thrashed you for dragging me into this low situation. You’re going to be the death of me.”

The priest coughed and stared at me a moment. Even after all our time together, he was clearly still unused to his betters admitting the common rabble have some effect on their lives. He then rubbed his shaved scalp, yawned, and said, "Milord, this low situation rests entirely on your 'unbeatable noble talents at cards' being disproved, not what I wagered. As for the rest, we have only the paths upon which the gods set us. Where we end is hardly up to us."

I began to think men like Phargas removed some brains along with their hair when they joined the priesthood.

"That's a horrible thing to say, Phargas. A Pathfinder always knows his path and chooses to walk it."

"Well, walk faster then," the fleshy mountain behind us chuckled as he shoved us both forward.

Phargas smiled. "Forgive me. Your choices are as true as your status, milord."

Were it the proper time, I would have rewarded Phargas for admitting the rightness of my stance. As it was, we stepped off the gangplank onto the muddied cobbles of Tymon's portside, just inside the city walls. The stevedore Caras motioned his friends toward us and said, "Here they are, milords—two able servants until such time that they have served out their incurred debts with you, as exchanged in kind with our Professor Grizzlebane."

"You bring them to us armed and unshackled?" The brown-clad man's hood fell back, revealing a face unshaven and unkempt.

"Second Freedom, sir." Caras bowed, as did our juggernaut. "They bet their service and lost, and few're fools enough to break that oaths. We leave you with the Sixth Freedom and bid you good day, unless you wish to travel the Sellen with the *Cornflower*."

"We have what we hold, indeed," said the man in black. "Thank you for delivering these men to us, gentlemen." This genteel man obviously was of good breeding and intentions. Perhaps he was simply in need of quality conversation—a task for which I was eminently suitable.

The brown-garbed man moved behind us as his companion turned on his heel and walked briskly into the town, motioning us all to follow. While I would have preferred a carriage, his pace and our monetary troubles left me no option but to follow and hope Tymon dust washed out easily. Every time I slowed to look up at some odd shop sign or tavern flag, the brown-garbed man jabbed me in the back with a mace he'd drawn from beneath his cloak. I marked him as I did Phargas—useful to his betters but often stepping beyond his place.

"Sir," I sent my voice ahead. "Your servant seems overly brusque. Perhaps a lesson needs be made?"

Our black-garbed host slowed not a whit as he replied over his shoulder, "A lesson is swift in coming, Lord Kaddar, trust me." He led us all toward a farrier's stables, where a carriage with two horses stood at the ready.

Our herald turned to face us and Phargas bowed low. While my situation demanded some courtesy to him, I saw us as being of a kind, above the priest's station as much as he ascended above the dungsweep in the alley behind him. I merely inclined my head slightly in deference to my debts and his troubles, winking at him to signal my understanding that now was not the time for open negotiations or discussions of money.

Phargas muttered, "How might we be of service, milords? I am but a traveler and humble priest of Desna. With me is—"

"Lord Ollix Kaddar, heir of Kadria, yes." The black-garbed man's face withdrew deeper into his midnight hood while his smile became brighter still. "And his faithful companion Phargas."

"Ah," I exhaled in relief. "So glad to hear that our reputations precede us. Would you be so kind as to share your names, fellow lords, and where we might be headed?"

"I would hate to spoil the surprise, Lord Ollix, though you may call me Kerban. I'm sure we're to be great friends who will laugh over your debts soon enough." Kerban shifted his hood to reveal a marvelous diadem on his brow, its filigreed silverwork fascinating, and its red gem even more so. The sun must have broken through clouds, though I in truth felt no warmer, as the man's brown eyes shifted to bronze. "We are friends, are we not?"

It shows the innate superiority of the upper classes to recognize a kindred spirit and accept the munificence that comes of such a connection. Commoners war among themselves because they lack the minds to comprehend and embrace both their stations and those of others. My musings on this fact were interrupted as Phargas suddenly shoved me bodily into our new comrade. Even Kerban's brown-clad companion seemed surprised, dropping his mace into the dirt where I had stood even as Phargas whirled and knocked his legs out from under him.

That man would surely be my death, I knew, even before he started shouting, drawing the crowd around us. I apologized profusely to my new friend Kerban, whose ears, I now saw, had slight points to them. His diadem glimmered brightly and I felt ashamed that my companion so disturbed and belittled my gracious new companion. I helped Kerban up by clambering off of him, and he was as shocked as I to hear Phargas's accusations.

"Violators!" Phargas yelled. I supposed the local rabble expected all disturbances to be their entertainment, as many paused to surround us and listen to Phargas continue. "I demand the Law of Grievance! These two would violate our Fifth Freedom, and I demand recompense! The black one there tried to bewitch us with magic and capture us for some nefarious purpose!"

I would have asked Phargas to explain, but the rabble overwhelmed my questions. The press of the unwashed

closed in on all of us, all yelling, “To the arena!” I felt faint as the odors and bodies of the crowd pressed in, their voices screaming, “No mercy for slavers!” or “Blood must answer!”

“You expect me to believe our new friend Kerban clouded my mind? Preposterous! My wits are inviolate.” Honestly, Phargas generated the most outrageous excuses for his own boorish behavior.

“Not to the mace that just missed you back there, they’re not,” Phargas replied. “Nor to that half-elf and his magic circlet. He’s not our friend, but what he is, we’ll find out.”

A filthy mob herded us through the streets, eager to see us “settle a grievance on the sand” rather than discuss it like the gentlemen we were. The rabble’s shouts drew mounted magistrates who kept the pairs of us flanked by horsemen. The



“Allorth Angin is benevolent—and woe to those who say otherwise.”

senior officer—obvious in his rank by the fact that he alone had a civilized manner and a shaved chin—rode in the center. The mob celebrated as it surged forward toward the largest edifice in sight, its curved walls towering above all other buildings.

The guards directed us and our unclouted companions around the arcing edge of the arena. The two lesser guards, Kerban, and his servant went into one opening, its gates clanging shut behind them. The magistrate commander used his horse and the crowd to move us toward a much farther gate. He leaned down and whispered to us, “We been watching that Kerban for a time. What you two did to anger a Daggermark assassin, I don’t know, but—”

Phargas replied louder than necessary. “You mean word hasn’t spread yet of Ollix’s slaying of the heinous despot Baron Addelworth? It was marvelous to view, his valiant duel to save the virtue of an honest tavern maid from Byrtol’s lascivious clutches. ’Twas his loathsome opponent who destroyed the site of their battle by fire rather than allow it as a monument to his defeat. Ah, pride...”

Phargas spun this tale and the crowd around us ceased its caterwauling to listen. Truly, I had no idea Phargas was such an accomplished liar. Did that make him less of a priest, or more? The tales he wove were flattering, to be sure, but I doubted we’d incurred the wrath of both Daggermark’s poisoners’ guild *and* its assassins’ guild. Still, I admired his skill, and it occurred to me that he’d be perfect to transcribe my report for the *Pathfinder Chronicles*. Before I could mention the idea, however, we arrived at the next gate leading into the arena’s wall.

The crowd now buzzed with my name and various tidbits of our alleged feats, with folk even taking wagers on the street for some unspecified reason.

The magistrate leaned down again and smiled. “Lucky you knew the Law of Grievance, so as to make it a public fight rather than a private assassination. May your luck continue.” He motioned us through the gate, which rattled shut behind us, leaving only a noisome tunnel ahead. Phargas and I moved silently toward the light at its end.

It was then I took my first look at the Arena of Aroden, albeit from its gravel and sand, not the nobler box seats from which I’d hoped to view it. In truth, it looked little better than the dead god himself—shattered weapons, random bones, and pools of blood littered the sands, the only clear area a level track around the arena’s edge and a stone platform in its center.

The stench of drying blood clung to me even over the choking dust as another crowd of filthy, malodorous commoners surrounded us, all jabbering away. Finally a massive, leathery man approached us, his body a tangle of old scars. “My name is Pit Master Makoa,” he said.

“As aggrieved parties, you choose the platform; your opponents choose the stakes to end the grievance; the crowd chooses the weapons. What say you?”

Phargas seemed engaged in staring about the arena so I took to bargaining with the man. “Platform? Are we to perform something? I’ve nothing prepared...”

He shook his head, muttered beneath my hearing, and said, “Platform—how do you want to duel? On foot? Riding? Chariots? No boats—the pools are leaking.”

Phargas asked, “Do we—”

“Oh, yes! Chariots!”

The big man turned on his heel and yelled to the arena. “The aggrieved have chosen chariots!” The crowd, swelling as the mobs from outside flowed into the stepped seats, roared its approval. Phargas hissed at me.

“Tell me you can drive a chariot, Ollix, please?”

“No, I just always wanted to ride in one.”

“So we have to fight—”

From the other end of the arena, a cry came up. “The challenged have chosen death to settle their feud!” The crowd roared louder still.

“—to the death on a vehicle you don’t know how to operate?”

“To the death?” Perhaps the priest’s suspicions about Kerban were not so far off mark after all. “Say, Phargas, why should I drive the chariot?”

Phargas clenched his fists, and whispered, “Because I’ll be busy asking Desna to spare our miserable lives and casting spells to keep us traveling in her name!”

“Magic! Of course. Let Phargas handle the brutality. “Very well. I shall drive, and you shall dispatch these betrayers. How hard can it be if servants can do it constantly?”

Makoa addressed the crowd again. “What weapons settle these matters?” A cacophony of shouts filled the air for a few moments, until an undertone began. Soon, many voices chanted together, “Desna’s Choice! Desna’s Choice!”

As this crowd participation seemed to have little bearing on me, I turned toward the chariot and horses some of the others were leading to us. Before I could step onto the chariot, three men stepped in my way. I turned to Phargas, only to find another three surrounding him. Makoa approached us all, undoing a small purse from his belt. He said, “Leave your weapons, cloaks, and shirts here as collateral. Then draw a coin from my bag.”

“I hardly think I’ll just—” Phargas’s elbow in my stomach prevented both words and breath.

“Fine, I’ll draw for both of us,” Phargas said as he undid his cloak. By the time I drew a steady breath, the priest had stripped off his tunic and left his staff and daggers atop his clothes. He reached into the old man’s bag, drawing two coins. The old man looked at me and said, “Strip, grievant, or my men will bare you more than you might like.”

Phargas said, “Ollix, they might damage your noble attire in the process.”

I submitted to the indignity, though I refused to rush and further ruin the worn fabrics.

The two large coins had marks to exchange them for random items in the armory. Soon, a runner came out and handed me a much-scored longsword and Phargas a round metal shield rather worse for wear. Looking across the arena, our opponents held a long chain and a spear.

From somewhere, a crier called out, “The race continues until the grievance is met! Take to your chariots!”

Phargas shoved me forward. “Run, Ollix!” Why he assumed my grasp of the obvious was less than his vexed me greatly, but I took his advice nonetheless.

Within a breath, we both stood in our chariot. I slid my sword into a scabbard at the vehicle’s front, then took up the reins as we each hooked a foot into the loops on the floor to help us maintain our footing. It seemed no different than driving a small wagon, so I immediately snapped the reins and got the horses moving. Standing up while driving horses felt far different than I expected, and only the chariot’s front kept me from leaping forward with our team.

Phargas muttered something then rested a hand on my shoulder. “The Song of the Spheres smiles on you, Ollix.”

Oddly heartened by this display, I replanted my feet, shifted my grip on the reins, and leaned, pulling the chariot to the left toward the cleared track. It all seemed simpler, easier to gauge, and I understood how to work the reins to increase the horses’ speed. I was thankful for my natural competence as Kerban’s man drove his chariot directly toward us, one hand on the reins and the other brandishing his spear.

“Now to trim the odds a bit,” Phargas said, and he began new prayers. I snapped the reins at the horses, increasing their speed while cutting a sharp turn that took us directly across our foes’ path. Their horses protested and cut to our right to avoid colliding. The driver stabbed at us with his spear as they pulled alongside. Then Phargas pointed at him and ended his prayer, and suddenly the spear slipped from the man’s grasp.

At the same time, Kerban shouted, “Ollix, why must we fight? Slow your horses, and we can be friends.” I noticed now that the glowing bronze in his eyes wasn’t from the sun. He was fighting to get into my mind. I responded by pulling to the right, banging our wheels against theirs and forcing their chariot close to the stone dais at the center of the track. That pushed them behind us as I pulled around the obstacle.

To my left, I saw an opportunity and instructed Phargas to hang on as I pulled the team off the track and toward the arena wall. “Use the decor to our advantage!” I called.

Phargas looked agog a moment, then spotted what I had and smiled. He slid his shield onto his back while I

drew my sword with my left hand and eased the chariot parallel with the wall. Kerban shouted, but by the time they neared us again, I had my target in sight and the chariot mere finger lengths from the wall.

"Ready, Phargas? Grab it when it's free," I warned.

He smiled—a rare enough sight these days—and nodded, both hands at the ready.

I lashed out with my blade, using our speed and direction to help the cutting. My sword parted the bottom of a long banner set onto the wall, and Phargas grabbed the loose edge as we passed. "Got it!" he yelled, and I yanked our horses to the right across Kerban's path. The banner tore free and billowed behind us like a sail. The crowd howled its approval even as Phargas let go of his ragged end, letting the banner fall directly over Kerban's driver. The banner pulled their chariot into the wall, its wheel screeching in protest as Kerban fought to free the driver's face.

Now, with our foes occupied momentarily, I steered our chariot toward a cluster of weapons and body parts abandoned in the sand. Some nearby spectators screamed for Phargas to take up a sword. "You can grab something to help end this, I suppose?" I asked Phargas.

In response, he snatched up a staff missing a spearhead, then began another prayer as I urged the horses back up to speed. From across the arena, Kerban's chariot barreled toward us.

I maneuvered us alongside, shifting my sword into my right hand to allow me to attack. Kerban saw this and began swinging his long chain in response. "Phargas," I said, "I hope your next spell has some bang to it."

I held out my sword as their chariot bumped ours, hoping to hit either opponent. Instead, the chain rattled around the sword and my arm. I looked at the half-elf in surprise, only to see the chain writhe with snakes whose fangs locked onto my arm! Kerban's laugh sounded louder than even the chanting mob around us.

Instead of helping me, Phargas leaned over the front of the chariot and ended his prayer by shouting at Kerban's horses. The horses' screams of terror echoed my own as I threw down my chain-wrapped sword with all my might, hoping to shed the snakes as well. The sword's weighted point dug into the sand as Kerban's chariot veered wildly away from us. His laugh suddenly turned into a scream that lasted only a breath before the crowd's cheer drowned it. I saw only the spray of blood as our weapons stayed behind, lodged in the gravel, along with Kerban's arm.

The panicked horses obeyed no reins or commands, and soon the chariot flipped over, bucking Kerban out onto the sand. The bloody smear beneath the overturned chariot told us his driver's fate. The crowds cheered the blood and won wagers, but everyone's attention snapped toward a loud trumpet.

We pulled the chariot to a halt near the trumpeter, who now waved a blue banner. An ornate carving high up on the wall showed a trio of crossed swords, though the many silks and tapestries shading the box above it suggested a place of wealth and honor. A dwarf clambered up atop the wall and bellowed, "All rise to honor Tymon's Champion, Ullorth Ungin!"

The Champion was a massive, barrel-torsoed half-orc with tusks and long olive hair—hardly a sign of good breeding, even if martial prowess had earned him the rulership here. His wealth was evident in his clothing, companions, and cultured accent.

"What grievance these men wrought outside the walls of Aroden's arena has been settled on the sand," he intoned. Ullorth's eyes briefly darted to Kerban's arm lying in the dust, his chain still wrapped around my former weapon. "As victors, you claim their goods left in collateral, of course. And yet, gossipmongers tell us of more renown here before us. Gentles and bloodieds, I give you our victors—Lord Ollix Kaddar of Kadria and his faithful companion Phargas!" The crowd's applause was polite but ignoble in volume. This reaction seemed expected by the Champion, who turned his focus directly upon us, motioning us closer to the arena wall for a private audience.

"I commend you," Ullorth said in quieter tones. "By removing those assassins, you have done Tymon a service. Word had it Kerban and his associate had plans to assassinate some highly placed citizens here. It would appear we owe the Pathfinder Society a debt—one which can be easily repaid by purchasing your freedom from indenture, I suspect. However, you may want to avoid Daggermark for a while."

Before we had a chance to reply, Tymon's Champion leaned back and shared our conversation with all nearby. "A question, Lord Ollix! Would you say that the Second Freedom is a great thing?"

"But of course. All civilized men do."

Phargas whispered, "Careful, Ollix. We don't—"

I waved him off, eager to show this barbarian what educated nobles knew. Ullorth continued.

"What would you do to an oathbreaker?"

"As the Freedoms demand—oathbreakers die. How is a matter left to the servants or the bloodthirsty."

"Would you be willing to enforce that vow?"

Phargas elbowed me in the back. I shoved him back and then said, "I strive to enforce all the River Freedoms, sir, regardless of situation, circumstance, or poverty."

The hulk's teeth fanned in satisfaction, and he spread his arms wide. Were it not for the odors on the arena's floor, I would have fallen prey to the Champion's effusive musk. The man-mountain addressed the assembled.

"Tymons, I give you Lord Ollix Kaddar, the new commander of the Vermillion. This man of honor shall

lead that company against Razmiran's oathbreakers, who violate our peace and our lands! All who fight for Tymon today and survive become bloodied tomorrow!"

I had no wish to be awash in blood of any kind, but the crowd's reaction suggested it was a good thing. Then again, their entertainment left their morality a bit suspect.

Behind me, Phargas sighed.

As we marched out of the gates of Tymon toward Razmiran, I couldn't help but note how little the motley forces of the Vermillion resembled their dazzling name. All were indentured servants, working off their contracts, or else Tymon citizens looking to improve their lot by fighting in the arena. Alas, all but Phargas, myself, and one other had yet to win such a battle.

Khurris had previously been the group's commander, and one might assume he resented my usurping his command, yet he understood how to address one of my rank and seemed grateful for my noble leadership.

"When it's a choice between dying today and dying tomorrow," he said, "I'll take tomorrow. But make no mistake, that's why we're here—we're expendable, and Ullorth loses nothing by sending us out to fight the Living God's forces. He keeps Razmiran on its toes and keeps the Champion looking good."

"Personally," I responded, "I have little desire to fight a god or any who answer to him, Khurris. Any of the Vermillion who wish to do so have my permission. Otherwise, feel free to follow us until we're out of sight of the city, and then urge the men to do as they see fit."

Khurris and Phargas gasped in unison. "Sir," the Tymon asked. "Surely you don't mean to desert. Aren't you afraid of being branded an oath-traitor?"

"Not to mention incurring the wrath of a very large and powerful enemy?" Phargas added in a whisper.

"Tish-tosh, men," I laughed. "I gave no oath to that malodorous man-mountain, so I can't possibly be breaking one. Surely you see that."

The road on which we marched crested a pair of hills, then met the road leading west toward Razmiran. "Once we're past the crossroads, you men are free to live as you will. It matters not to me, for I'm bound north for Solanas!"

Phargas's face darkened. "Ollix, perhaps you should keep your destination quiet," he whispered.

Khurris asked, "Why Solanas, sir?"

"Simple," I replied. "I must report my deeds to the Pathfinder Society lodge there."

Khurris scurried back and whispers began buzzing among the ragtag column. Alone for the moment, Phargas stated his opinions plainly.

"Do you really want to go toward a nest of assassins that want us dead?" he asked. I waved his concerns aside.

"You worry too much, Phargas. They can't possibly be everywhere. As long as we avoid the city, we'll be fine!"

"As we've been so far, of course," the priest grumbled.

Once we reached the western road and the city was safely out of sight, I raised both my arms. "Vermillion," I cried, "as you will!" Whooping, the column scattered in all directions.

A few did head along the western road, but many jogged toward us,

or north into the woods. A few even headed south, back

toward the city. I smiled broadly at Phargas and

said, "See how happy nobles can make common folk when

they trust our judgments?"

"If only they knew how well your judgment has served you so far, milord," Phargas grumped.

Three evenings later found me, Phargas, and Khurris, along with several dozen others who had refused to give up my guidance, standing on a hill on the Tymon-Daggermark border, looking out

over a sea of lights to the west.

"You must admit," I said to Phargas, "they're quite pretty."

"That they are," he said. "They're also gaining on us." His tone was mild, but I could sense the reproach. Who could have known that one company's desertion would bring out half of Tymon's army? Clearly, Champion Ullorth had no sense of proportion.

One of the men who'd been sent ahead as scouts came puffing up the hill, interrupting our reverie.

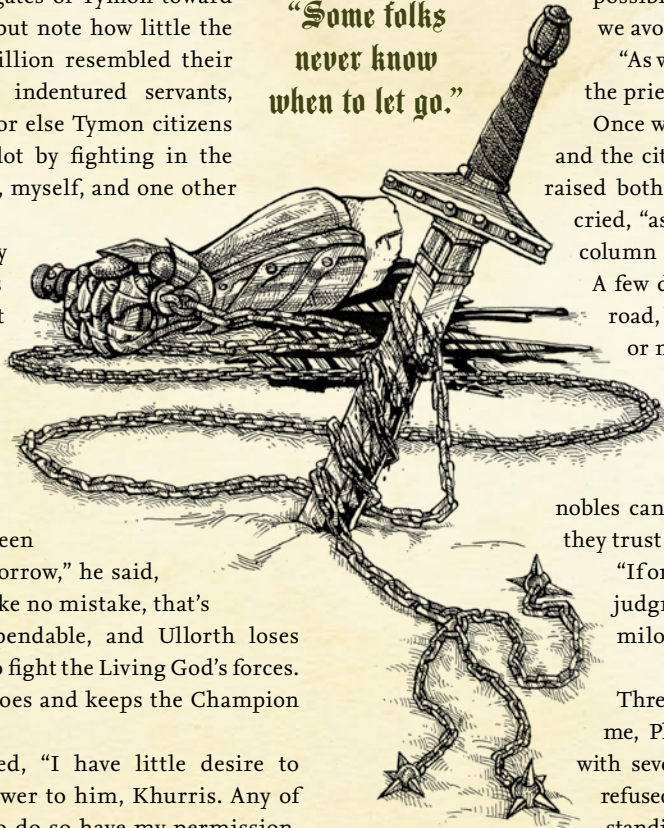
"Sir," he said, "we have a problem."

"That should be obvious," Phargas said.

"No—" the man insisted, but he was interrupted by the blast of a horn. Several miles to the east, the spark of a flaming arrow shot into the air. On cue, the far side of the valley lit up as a hundred torches caught fire.

"It seems," Phargas noted, "that Daggermark is expecting us after all."

"Some folks never know when to let go."





Bestiary

Every third peasant tale relates the same thing: how a local son fell amid clashing armies and how his soul wandered lost between worlds. All too often do such storied spirits return, dragging home shrouds of woe. The people of Kridorn, though, tell a most unusual variation. When their grandsires clashed against the wild men of the Norinor, the sun dawned red and dusk begat a crimson night. Yet neither townspeople nor savages returned from that field of war. When mothers and wives sought for the bodies of their loved ones, the steel-scarred plain of battle lay empty, as though every man slain had hefted blade and baldric and marched into the night to find greater wars to wage. Which is exactly what the folk of Kridorn say happened.

—From *The Record of Cruan Solavai*

Creature Type

-  Aberration
-  Animal
-  Construct
-  Dragon
-  Fey
-  Humanoid
-  Magical Beast
-  Monstrous Humanoid
-  Ooze
-  Outsider
-  Plant
-  Undead
-  Vermin

Climate

-  Cold
-  Extrplanar
-  Temperate
-  Tropical

Environment

-  Desert
-  Forest/Jungle
-  Hill
-  Mountain
-  Plain
-  Ruins
-  Swamp
-  Sky
-  Underground
-  Urban
-  Water

Beasts of battle fill this month's entry into the Pathfinder Bestiary. Just as the Stolen Lands look to the wild brutality of Iobaria to the east, to the west sprawls a realm known as Avistan's most savage and mysterious. Amid the gray hills, blasted mountains, and ruined wastelands of Numeria wander stoic and lordless barbarians, led only by the rule of the sword and a lust for plunder. From this land of countless petty tyrants and savage despots also come relics both wondrous and weird, rare treasures dropped in the fatal flight of a falling star. While these oddities fill both the legends of Numeria and the dreams of those who would raise bloody empires upon its soil, such alien treasures prove rare in the extreme. Yet where the bounty of the stars and star metal have passed, the land and its denizens have changed. In some cases strange radiations have brought the basest of organisms to ravenous life, imbuing moldering things like verdurous oozes with hungers that can never be sated. In other reaches, hordes clash for the smallest scraps of star metal, throwing away their lives for their belief in tales of steel that can make men like unto gods—some of which prove far more than fiction. Upon the cold, crow-guarded graves of their battlefields, the dead refuse to rest easy; their greed and desperation linger on even in death, causing them to rise as monstrous warsworns, collective armies of the dead, to fight anew. And even in the Stolen

Lands' easternmost reaches skulk creatures from distant Iobaria, deadly hunters of the crags and mountain stones eager to pursue prey wherever it might run. Wherever these beasts and abominations might hail from, they now make their homes amid the wild expanses of the Stolen Lands, and while many have long satisfied their hungers upon the beasts and bandits of that territory, the rise of kingdoms and march of armies have turned their attentions to new glories and fresh meals.

EXPANDED ENCOUNTERS

With this volume, each of the four regions of the Stolen Lands now has a sizable random encounter table (two in the case of the Greenbelt). GMs planning encounters in the Stolen Lands and beyond might use these, along with the "Into the Stolen Lands" article in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #33 and the "Spoils of Kings" article in #34, to easily create their own side quests and sub-adventures anywhere in the region. As the Kingmaker Adventure Path is meant to encourage a sandbox style of play, there's no implied time limit on how long its adventures take to play out, or how much time might stretch between them. Thus, PCs interested in exploring every cavern and crevice of the Stolen Lands can do so without impeding the course of the Adventure Path and with little additional effort from the GM's.

Glenebon Random Encounters

Forest	Hills	Lake/River	Mountains	Plains	Encounter	CR	Source
1-3	—	—	—	1-2	1 carbuncle	1	<i>Pathfinder</i> #31
4-6	1-7	1-4	1-10	3-6	1 cockatrice	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 48
7-9	—	5-12	—	—	1d6 nixies	4	<i>Bonus Bestiary</i> *
10-14	8-11	—	11-14	—	1 hodag	5	<i>Pathfinder</i> #32
15-21	12-19	13-21	15-19	7-13	1d4 grizzly bears	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 31
22-31	20-31	22-35	20-30	14-24	1d6 elk	6	<i>Pathfinder</i> #31
32-37	32-33	36-39	31-32	25-27	2d4 faerie dragons	6	<i>Bonus Bestiary</i> *
38-46	34-44	40-46	33-44	28-34	2d6 worgs	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 280
47-51	—	—	—	—	2d4 dryads	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 116
52-53	45-51	47-49	45-53	35-41	1d4 ettins	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 130
54-59	52-56	50-55	—	42-46	1d8 owlbears	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 224
60-67	57-60	56-60	—	47-50	3d4 pixies	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 228
—	—	—	54-60	51-59	1d4 bulettes	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 39
68-73	61-66	61-71	—	60-64	1d6 shambling mounds	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 246
74-79	67-70	72-79	61-69	65-68	1d4 dire bears	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 31
80-83	71-77	80-87	70-80	69-75	1d6 wyverns	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 282
84-87	—	88-91	—	76-77	1d6 nymphs	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 217
88-92	—	—	—	—	1d4 treants	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 266
93-95	78-83	92-93	81-90	78-86	1d8 hill giants	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 150
—	84-89	—	91-92	87-91	1d4 peludas	12	<i>Pathfinder</i> #33
—	90-93	—	93-98	—	1 irlgaunt	13	see page 84
96-98	94-96	94-96	—	92-98	1d4 greater verdurous oozes	13	see page 86
99-100	97-100	97-100	99-100	99-100	1 ancient black dragon	16	<i>Bestiary</i> 93

*See paizo.com for the *Pathfinder RPG Bonus Bestiary*.

FIRST BLADE

The sound of clashing steel upon a battlefield resounds with every step of this ironclad giant. Its armor bears harsh but elaborate flourishes, as though it were the war regalia of some merciless warlord. Each plate looks impossibly thick and heavy, like the hulking titan within is completely hidden by layer upon layer of tightly woven chain and impregnable steel.

FIRST BLADE

CR 15



XP 51,200

CN Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, ironsense; Perception +23

Aura rage 100 ft.

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 10, flat-footed 29 (+20 armor, +1 Dex, -1 size)

hp 261 (18d10+162); regeneration 5 (adamantine)

Fort +20, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8

DR 15/adamantine and law; **Immune** magic, poison; **Resist** cold 10, sonic 10; heavy fortification

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +29 (2d10+16 plus bleed)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks blade slam, bleed (1d10), powerful blows

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +19)

3/day—*chill metal*, *heat metal*, *repel metal or stone*, *wall of iron*

1/day—*blade barrier*

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 13, **Con** 28, **Int** 10, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +30; **CMD** 41

Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Acrobatics +22, Climb +32, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (history) +21, Perception +23, Sense Motive +23, Stealth +0

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal, Protean

SQ breathless, ever armed, lord of battle, swarm form

ECOLOGY

Environment any battle

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blade Slam (Ex) The First Blade's slam attacks deal bludgeoning and slashing damage. Its slams count as natural weapons or manufactured weapons (whichever is most beneficial to it) for the purpose of spells that enhance attacks. Its attacks count as adamantine, chaos, and magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Breathless (Ex) Unlike most outsiders, the First Blade does not need to breathe.

Ever Armed (Su) As a swift action, at will, the First Blade can

cause a mundane melee weapon of any type or size to appear in its hands. Although it typically battles unarmed, it sometimes makes use of weapons as needed. These weapons come from Gorum's divine realm, and this ability cannot be used to claim a specific weapon.

Heavy Fortification (Ex) The First Blade has a 75% chance to treat a critical hit or sneak attack as a normal attack, as if it were wearing *heavy fortification* armor.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) The First Blade is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance. The First Blade can lower this resistance for 1 round as a standard action (similar to a creature with spell resistance lowering its spell resistance) to allow other creatures to cast spells on it; it can use its spell-like abilities on itself without difficulty. Certain spells and effects function differently against it, as noted below.

- A magical attack that deals electricity damage slows the First Blade (as the *slow* spell) for 1 round, with no saving throw.
- A magical attack that deals fire damage breaks any slow effect on the First Blade and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the First Blade to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. The First Blade gets no saving throw against fire effects.
- The First Blade is affected normally by rust attacks, such as those of a rust monster or a *rusting grasp* spell.

Ironsense (Ex) The First Blade automatically detects iron objects (including steel) within 60 feet, just as if it possessed the blindsight ability.

Lord of Battle (Ex) The First Blade is treated as an 18th-level barbarian and fighter for any game rule (such as a feat prerequisite) that requires levels in barbarian or fighter. It is proficient in all weapons.

Powerful Blows (Ex) The First Blade inflicts one and a half times its Strength modifier and threatens a critical hit on a 19–20 with its slam attacks.

Rage Aura (Su) Willing creatures within 100 feet of the First Blade gain the effects of a *rage* spell automatically, whether they are allies or enemies of the Herald. Those who choose not to be affected are immune to the aura until they leave the area and return (at which point they may again accept or refuse the aura's effect).

Swarm Form (Su) The First Blade can shift between its man-like body and a floating swarm of Diminutive and Tiny sharp metal fragments as a standard action. In swarm form it has the swarm subtype; it cannot use its slam attacks but instead can make a swarm attack (4d6 and distraction). Though its individual components may float up to 10 feet above the ground as they move, the Blade's swarm form cannot fly. The First Blade remains in one form until it chooses to assume its other form. A change in form

cannot be dispelled, nor does the First Blade revert to any particular form when killed (both shapes are its true form). A *true seeing* spell reveals both forms simultaneously.

Said to have been formed from an unthinking sliver of steel dashed from Gorum's blade during one of his first clashes with a long-felled god-beast of the Outer Sphere, the First Blade is a living tool of war. Inspired by Gorum's divine bloodlust, this shard of the god of battle's blade continues to obey and do battle in the service of its divine master. Having been reformed through the eons into a manifestation of Gorum's perfect warrior, the First Blade serves as the war god's herald, traveling where its master desires. Yet while the heralds of most deities go forth to bear the word of their divine patrons or answer the most desperate summons of their gods' most pious servants, the First Blade endlessly marches to battle. Never interested in diplomacy or subtlety, Gorum has little need for a messenger other than one capable of communicating in the language of the battlefield. The god of battle answers the calls only of those who please him in battle and request his heralds' aid in epic clashes dedicated to his honor—weakling priests seeking salvation or cowardly revenge never have their entreaties for the herald's presence answered.

The appearance of the First Blade changes to match a style of armor impressive to those against whom it will be doing battle, though typically notched as if it has been employed in numerous battles. Rarely seen in the same form twice, its plate mail form might vary from the elegant mail of angelic hosts to slabs of spiked iron over thick bestial hides more common to orc warlords. Whatever the shape, the interior of the armor is never visible. Those who have come close enough to the First Blade and survived claim that only more layers of armor lie beneath its plates, though the hint of something glowing within sometimes spills forth should the herald suffer a rare but occasional wound.



Regardless of the specifics of its warlike form, the herald of Gorum typically stands about 15 feet tall and weighs nearly 2 tons.

ECOLOGY

Although a living creature, the First Blade is little more than a weapon of Gorum, knowing little beyond its lord's command and going only where he wills. Like a golem in many respects, the herald leaves but scant traces upon the lands it passes through between battles, eating little and having no need even to breathe. In war, however, its presence and passage are obvious, marked by rent bodies and blood-soaked earth.




Although the First Blade can speak a variety of languages, few of those encountering the herald have heard it do so. Like its master, the First Blade prefers actions—especially violent, purposeful ones—to words. Typically its words are brief refutations of those who have summoned it for an unfit purpose, though several legends tell of the divine messenger offering its respect or the pleasure of its master before striking the final blow upon an opponent who has put up a particularly capable fight or proven her prowess on the field of battle.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

While the herald of Gorum answers the call of servants of the lord of battle who seek their lord's intervention in appropriately glorious battle, no accounts exist of the First Blade responding to any summons involving a task other than combat. Most accounts of the herald tell of the gory swaths it cuts through battlefields of heroes, in clashes between titanic armies, or in weeks-long battles between history's greatest warlords. Rumors among Gorum's clergy also suggest that sometimes the herald appears when summoned to a lesser battle, but upon finding a mere skirmish or clash among weaklings, it slaughters all involved. Whether such an end is an honor or a disgrace for those killed remains a subject of some debate among theologians.

IRLGAUNT

An unwholesome abomination scuttles fluidly forth, its shape combining features of both spider and squid under an armor of rugged rock. While stone protuberances gird its upper portions, below it is a thing of angry red flesh and soft pink tendrils. Two gaping orifices full of tiny barbs split its lower body—a mouth-like slit surrounded by numerous narrow red eyes and, above that, an oozing alien aperture.

IRLGAUNT	CR 13	  
XP 25,600		
NE Large aberration		
Init +13; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +21		
DEFENSE		
AC 29, touch 18, flat-footed 20 (+9 Dex, +11 natural, -1 size)		
hp 133 (14d8+70)		
Fort +9, Ref +15, Will +13		
DR 10/bludgeoning; Immune acid, cold		
OFFENSE		
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.		
Melee 2 slams +17 (1d8+8 plus 1d6 acid), bite +17 (1d8+8)		
Ranged 1 gastrolith +18 (2d6+8 plus 2d6 acid)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.		
Special Attacks gastrolith		
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th)		
At will—stone shape		
STATISTICS		
Str 27, Dex 29, Con 20, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 19		
Base Atk +10; CMB +19; CMD 38 (42 vs. trip)		
Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Deadly Aim, Improved Initiative, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Run		
Skills Acrobatics +26 (+30 jump), Climb +33, Disguise +18, Fly +0, Perception +21, Stealth +22 (+30 in rocky terrain), Survival +21, Swim +25; Racial Modifiers +8 Stealth in rocky terrain		
Languages Aklo, Common, Giant, Terran		
SQ stone step		
ECOLOGY		
Environment any mountains or underground		
Organization solitary, pair, swarm (3–12)		
Treasure standard		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Gastrolith (Ex) Once every 1d4 rounds, an irlgaunt can violently regurgitate a clot of brittle stone and digestive acids. This gastrolith is treated as a thrown splash weapon with a range increment of 30 feet. In addition to damaging any creature struck (as noted above), any creature within 10 feet of the point where the gastrolith strikes (whether a creature or a grid intersection) takes 1d6 points of acid damage. A gastrolith that misses its target hits a nearby point, just like a normal miss with a splash weapon, as detailed on page 202 of the <i>Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook</i> .		

An irlgaunt has a separate orifice for ejecting gastroliths. Thus, it can make a ranged attack in addition to all its normal melee attacks.

Stone Step (Ex) An irlgaunt can move through any sort of natural difficult terrain at its normal speed while in rocky or subterranean terrain. Magically altered terrain affects an irlgaunt as normal.

Irlgaunts are large, spider-like aberrations that lurk in mountainous regions and vertical subterranean chasms. While large and imposing, these arachnid-like beings are deceptively agile, their reflexes fast and movements swift, similar to the darting motions of a hunting insect. Irlgaunts are as quick-witted as they are nimble and have a strong grasp of strategy and tactics. In Iobaria, the beasts are recognized for their eerily patient predations, hiding amid jagged rocks to attack prey and ejecting crippling blasts of rock and digestive acids upon their victims. Irlgaunts typically attack travelers scaling mountain paths with steep cliff sides, using the hazardous terrain to knock unstable hikers to their death, then skittering down the sheer cliff faces to lap up the fleshy pulp below.

Most irlgaunts stand between 11 and 13 feet tall and weigh around 3,000 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Irlgaunts are powerful carnivores that eat most things but seem to have a strong preference for the taste of humanoids and mountain rams, taking special enjoyment in the consumption of bone, horn, and marrow. An irlgaunt's gizzard, located near its upper orifice, is powerful enough to grind rock, creating shards of stone which the creature fires from its mouth. The resulting stone shards are combined into gastroliths—sizable, dense spheres of sharp stones veined with jellified digestive acids. These gastroliths not only help the creature grind apart the hard substances it digests, but also can be shot forth as weapons, felling and pre-digesting sizable or even flying prey. Gastroliths are under constant pressure within an irlgaunt's body and, once shot forth, prove quite fragile. Upon impacting a victim or any other surface, they shatter in a rain of rock shards and hissing acid.

Irlgaunts are found on and around mountains, especially near narrow trails used by travelers, mountain dwellers, or herds of sure-footed animals. The rocky environment they inhabit matches the colors of their bodies, and their uncanny ability to blend into the terrain and attack from unexpected angles makes them skilled ambush hunters. The tough limbs of an irlgaunt end in nimble, muscular tendrils. Along with being able to seek out and cling to nearly imperceptible flaws in stone, these tendrils also secrete a potent, stone-digesting acid much like that found within the beasts' gizzards. This acid

allows irlgaunts not only to burn holes into solid stone, but to shape stone into whatever form they desire.

Irlgaunts live for up to 300 years and reproduce asexually every half-century. They take special care to protect their offspring for this reason and watch over them for about a year, at which point the adolescent reaches maturity.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Irlgaunts are not particularly social creatures, but they work together when doing so is mutually beneficial. In smaller numbers, irlgaunts are more likely to live in more remote areas, while larger groups may occupy more commonly traveled mountain passes.

Irlgaunts sometimes share their habitat with giants native to the region, but do so through an unspoken truce that holds little weight. A single giant walking through an area of several irlgaunts, then, is no safer than a solitary irlgaunt prowling a region populated with giants. Yet neither group goes out of its way to provoke a dangerous feud with its powerful, mountain dwelling neighbors—as long as the other group is generally content to stay out of the way.

Treasure means little to irlgaunts, though if they possess a relic or magic item, they use it as bait for sentient wanderers in the region. For this reason, particularly wealthy and well-guarded travelers or merchants may be able to parley with the aberrations, exchanging riches for safe passage.

Irlgaunts are largely indifferent to religion. However, some spiritually inclined irlgaunts choose to follow Rovagug, and some even become priests in his name. In such cases, a group or family of irlgaunts tend to worship the same god.

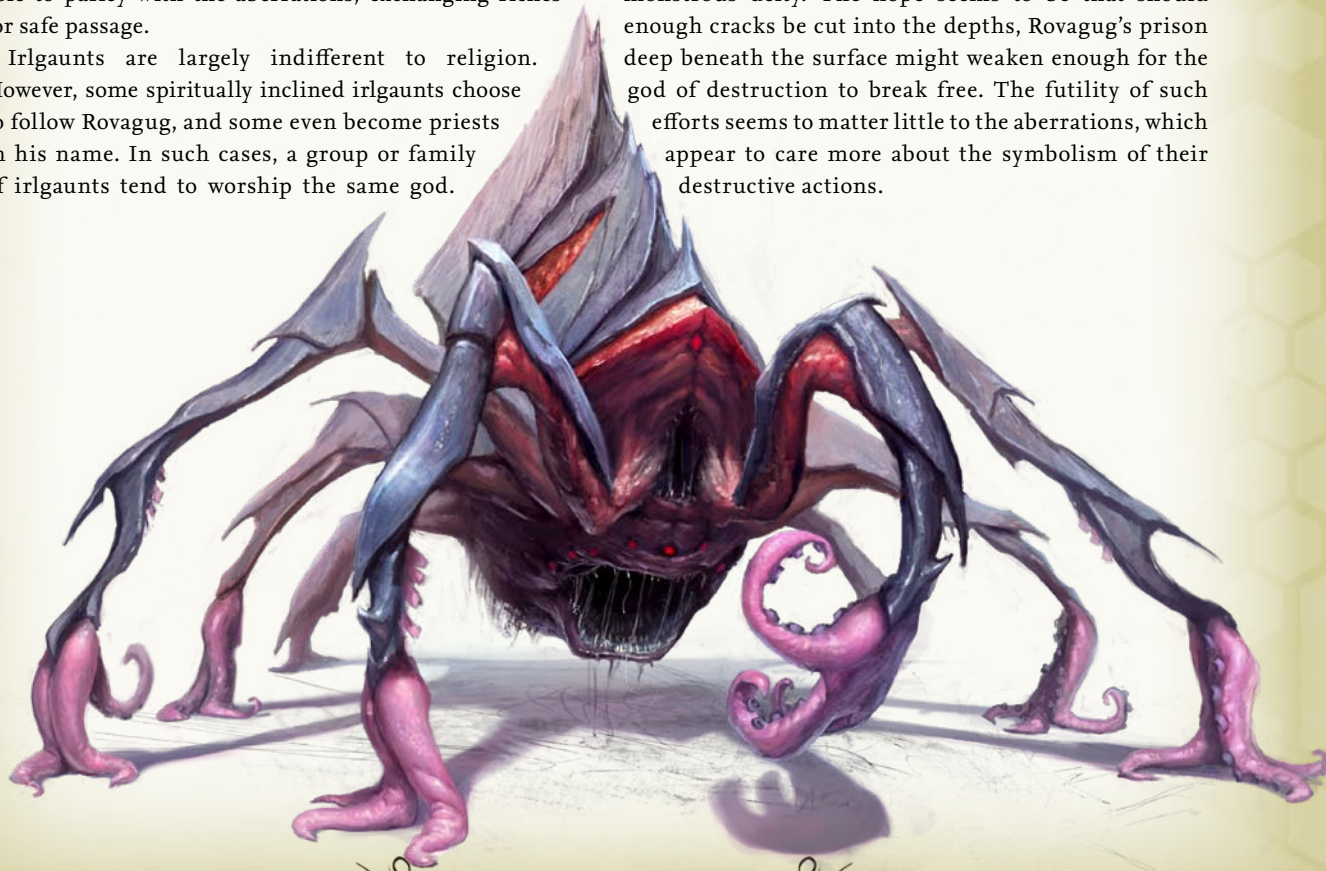
On the Irlgaunt

The starting idea for these beasts was “cunning spiders with artillery,” which provides a monster that can climb and cling, and that can harm PCs with explosions without using any magic. Several irlgaunts, fighting together and unleashing their rock-shard bursts with shrewd timing and location, might make a stiff challenge for any adventuring party. Think a bit on what sort of monster might work with hunting irlgaunts, or might follow them hoping to pounce on irlgaunt-weakened foes or spoils.

Any GM needs an arsenal of critters. Some (dragons, for instance) are big, important opponents that an entire adventure might be built around. Some are at the other end of the scale (mere fodder), and the in-between beasts tend to settle out into deployable “GM favorites” and “seldom used, but interesting” monsters. Irlgaunts are intended to be the latter sort, and like collecting minis, you just can never have too many.

—Ed Greenwood

Those rare irlgaunts that do worship Rovagug often take an almost personal interest in freeing the imprisoned god, delving deep into the earth and creating new abysses covered in profane images and symbols of the monstrous deity. The hope seems to be that should enough cracks be cut into the depths, Rovagug’s prison deep beneath the surface might weaken enough for the god of destruction to break free. The futility of such efforts seems to matter little to the aberrations, which appear to care more about the symbolism of their destructive actions.



VERDUROUS OOZE

A pool of greenish muck, blossoming with weird vegetable-like growths and sap-seeping boils, twitches into unnatural motion as a pseudopod springs outward, dragging the entire grotesque mass forward with an ameboid life.

VERDUROUS OOZE

CR 6



XP 2,400

N Medium ooze

Init -5; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.;

Perception -5

Aura enliven (15 ft., DC 20), sleep aura (30 ft., DC 20)

DEFENSE

AC 5, touch 5, flat-footed 5 (-5 Dex)

hp 85 (9d8+54)

Fort +9, **Ref** -2, **Will** -2

Defensive Abilities split; **Immune** acid, fire, mind-affecting effects, ooze traits, slashing and piercing damage

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee slam +9 (1d6+4 plus 1d6 acid and grab)

Special Attacks acid, constrict (1d6+4 plus 1d6 acid), enliven

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 1, **Con** 22, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9 (+13 grapple); **CMD** 14 (can't be tripped)

Skills Stealth -4 (+16 in forest and plains areas); **Racial**

Modifier +0 Stealth (+20 in forest and plains environs)

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forest or plains

Organization solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Acid (Ex) A verdurous ooze secretes a digestive acid that dissolves flesh and metal quickly. Each time a creature takes damage from a verdurous ooze's acid, the creature's metal equipment and armor take the same amount of damage from the acid. A DC 21 Reflex save prevents damage to such items. A metal or natural weapon that strikes a verdurous ooze takes 1d6 points of acid damage unless the weapon's wielder succeeds on a DC 21 Reflex save. If a verdurous ooze remains in contact with a metal object for 1 full round, it inflicts 20 points of acid damage (no save) on the object. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Enliven (Sp) The chemicals emitted by a verdurous ooze cause nearby plants to twitch into life. While in areas covered in natural growth, all squares within 15 feet of the verdurous ooze are affected as if by the spell *entangle*. The verdurous ooze has no control over this effect, and if dispelled the effect renews after 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Sleep Aura (Su) The chemicals emitted by a verdurous ooze have a stronger and opposite effect on living, non-plant creatures that come within a 30-foot radius. All living

creatures within the area must make a DC 21 Will save or fall asleep for a number of rounds equal to the ooze's HD. Creatures immune to poison are also immune to this effect. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same verdurous ooze's sleep aura for 24 hours. This is a nonmagical sleep effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Split (Ex) Slashing and piercing weapons deal no damage to a verdurous ooze. Instead, if the verdurous ooze would have taken 10 or more points of damage from a single slashing or piercing attack, it splits into two identical oozes, each with half of the original's current hit points (round down). Slashing or piercing attacks that deal less than 10 points of damage do not cause a verdurous ooze to split. Damage from multiple slashing or piercing attacks is not cumulative. A verdurous ooze with 15 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

GREATER VERDUROUS OOZE

CR 11



XP 12,800

N Large ooze

Init -5; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.;

Perception -5

Aura sleep (60 ft., DC 24)

DEFENSE

AC 6, touch 4, flat-footed 6 (-5 Dex, +2 natural armor, -1 size)

hp 175 (15d8+54)

Fort +13, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities split; **Immune** acid, fire, mind-affecting effects, ooze traits, slashing and piercing damage

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee slam +17 (1d8+10 plus 1d8 acid and grab)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks acid, constrict (1d8+10 plus 1d8 acid), enliven

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 1, **Con** 26, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +19 (+23 grapple); **CMD** 24 (can't be tripped)

Skills Stealth -8 (+12 in forest and plains areas); **Racial**

Modifiers +0 Stealth (+20 in forest and plains environs)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Acid (Ex): A verdurous ooze secretes a digestive acid that dissolves flesh and metal quickly. Each time a creature takes damage from the ooze's acid, its metal equipment and armor take the same amount of damage from the acid. A DC 25 Reflex save prevents damage to such items. A metal or natural weapon that strikes a greater verdurous ooze takes 1d8 points of acid damage unless the weapon's wielder succeeds on a DC 25 Reflex save. If a greater verdurous ooze remains in contact with a metal object for 1 full round, it inflicts 25 points of acid damage (no save) on the object. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Verdurous oozes are animate masses of protoplasm of a sickly green hue. At rest, their flat bodies stand roughly 5 inches tall and can stretch out to a wide diameter, their surfaces blossoming into what look like thick tangles of mossy roots and gnarled vegetation as they lie still. Known to emit invisible but dangerous chemicals, these masses of slinking muck cause nearby plants to writhe and coil as if alive, while shocking animals into a temporary but deathly torpor. As such, they rarely must hunt to find food, instead sensing passing creatures and preying upon them after they succumb to the oozes' sleep aura. Always ravenous, the powerful acids that comprise these oozes quickly dissolve the flesh of their meals.

A verdurous ooze typically weighs 300 pounds and can easily spread to fill a 5-foot-square area. While moving, such crawling muck rises only a few inches tall, though its structure might grow and boil up to a height of 2 or 3 feet if let undisturbed for a matter of days. Spontaneously grown structures collapse and melt back into the ooze's body as soon as it begins moving again.

ECOLOGY

Verdurous oozes settle in locations with abundant food, rarely moving far except to feed upon comatose prey that has come too close or to reproduce. Verdurous oozes primarily gain sustenance from the small birds, mammals, and insects that fall prey to their sleep aura, but also prove well suited to devouring larger creatures that fall asleep nearby.

Every 2 or 3 years, verdurous oozes collect deep in forests and swamps, clustering in secluded locales tainted by reeking natural compost or the escape of natural gases from the land. As many as 10 oozes might gather during one of these grotesque moots. To reproduce, four verdurous oozes merge to become a greater verdurous ooze. Greater oozes are far more active and hungry than their lesser kin, constantly wandering, feeding, and growing. After several months, the greater verdurous ooze splits into 10 to 15 new verdurous oozes. These new verdurous oozes grow to full size within 6 months.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Verdurous oozes primarily live in temperate forests and plains among high grasses or cultivated crops, though they might also be found in warm plains and jungle environments. As mindless creatures, they pay little attention to others of their kind, save when drawn to reproduce. A notable fact about verdurous oozes is that they beneficially impact nearby plant

life; their secretions act as a kind of natural fertilizer. Trees, grass, flowers—all flora benefits from the existence of a nearby verdurous ooze. Over time, this can lead to an increase in the fauna in the area, as they seek to enjoy the rich, lush plants that make up their diet and in turn become prey for the stealthy ooze. Thus, another sign that a verdurous ooze is, or has been, in a particular area is the skeletons of animals that it has consumed, which are left behind once the flesh has been absorbed.

Resourceful evil humanoids sometimes take advantage of verdurous oozes' relative lassitude and difficulty escaping from simple pits or other containers, trapping them near the entrances to their lairs. In such instances, the oozes' chemical secretions provide an extra defense for those aware of their presence and the dangers of coming too close.

GREATER VERDUROUS OOZE

Greater verdurous oozes are formed when several green oozes merge together as part of their reproductive process. They are similar in form but much larger, and while still green, exhibit white and red lines that resemble veins running through them. They are even more voracious and dangerous than standard green oozes, as they eat and eat to gain enough mass to reproduce. A greater verdurous ooze typically weighs 2,400 pounds and can easily spread to fill a 10-foot-square area.



WARSWORN

An enormous animate mass comprised of dozens of armed and armored corpses undulates forth, like a living siege tower of steel-girded flesh. Where this mangled army of broken blades and rent flesh passes, the ground is torn and soaked in blood.

WARSWORN

CR 16



XP 76,800

NE Gargantuan undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +27

Aura frightful presence (60 ft., DC 26)

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 9, flat-footed 26 (+3 Dex, +20 natural, -4 size)

hp 243 (18d8+162)

Fort +15, **Ref** +11, **Will** +17

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4

DR 10/bludgeoning and magic; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee 4 slams +21 (2d6+12 + energy drain)

Ranged 1 scrap ball +12 (2d6+12/19-20)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks haunt armor, haunt weapons, trample (2d6+18; DC 31), energy drain (1 level, DC 26)

STATISTICS

Str 34, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 9, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +29; **CMD** 42 (can't be tripped)

SQ absorb

Feats Awesome Blow, Blind-Fight, Greater Overrun, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Step Up, Strike Back

Skills Climb +33, Fly +0, Perception +27, Stealth +0, Swim +30

Languages Common (cannot speak)

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

Treasure double standard (mundane armor and weapons)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Absorb (Su) A warsworn can consume any creature with -1 or fewer hit points that is dying by moving into the same space. Doing so immediately kills the creature and heals the warsworn by an amount equal to the creature's Constitution score. This ability cannot heal a warsworn beyond its maximum number of hit points. Nonliving creatures or completely dead corpses cannot be absorbed. Absorbed corpses cannot be resurrected by any effect short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell until the warsworn that consumed them is destroyed.

Haunt Armor (Sp) Three times per day, a warsworn can violently take control of a suit of heavy armor or its wearer. This limited form of possession manifests much like the violent thrust effect of the spell *telekinesis*. A warsworn can only target a suit of heavy armor with this effect or a

creature wearing a suit of heavy armor. Creatures affected by *protection from evil* are immune to this effect. The effect is CL 18th.

Haunt Weapons (Sp) Three times per day, a warsworn can animate a number of unattended weapons as per the spell *animate objects*. A warsworn can animate a number of Medium-size or smaller weapons equal to its Charisma bonus (typically 7) for up to 10 minutes. (Most weapons sized for Medium creatures are considered Tiny or Small animated objects.) These weapons must be within 50 feet of the warsworn and are all animated at once. This effect only affects weapons and no other type of object. Each weapon animated by this effect appears to be wielded by ghostly hands. Aside from being able to be individually destroyed or dispelled as per normal animated objects, any object animated by this effect can also be damaged by channel energy as if it were an undead creature. Creatures affected by *protection from evil* are immune to this effect. The effect is CL 18th.

Warsworns are massive, undead amalgams, their ever-shifting, chaotic bodies composed of countless deceased soldiers and their armor and weapons. Their shambling, serpentine forms tower over giants, and when warsworns move, the monsters create a grotesque, metallic cacophony as the weapons and armor of countless souls clash as though still in the throes of a never-ending battle.

The history of warsworns is an odd one; the divinely created monstrosities' origins are as disturbing as their image suggests. Deities occasionally turn their attention to the ruined sites of great battles. Some morbid gods, like Urgathoa or Xon-Kuthon, gather the bodies of the slain into horrific, conscious heaps to torment the living, being fickle in their maliciousness and refusing to let the torment and terror of battle die away with the fleetingness of mortal life. Other warmongering deities, like Gorum or Asmodeus, take a more personal hand in the outcome of mortal conflicts, and should their favored armies fall, they might raise them anew to again confront their foes. Yet in still other instances, the passions of battle and tumult of lost lives simply refuse to die away when a conflict ends, and they are reanimated from the bodies of disappointed soldiers, giving terrible new life to their bloodlust and wrath. Regardless of what forces, divine or otherwise, animate these terrors anew, warsworns exist seemingly for the sole purpose of spreading the rage of war, ravaging the land, and spreading the carnage of battle cries and clashing steel.

A single warsworn, composed of innumerable fallen humanoids, pieces of armor, and weapons, typically weighs several tons and can reach a height of up to 25 feet.

ECOLOGY

As undead creatures, warsworns have no bodily needs, such as for food or water, and they exist solely to destroy

and cause chaos. Unknown to many, however, is the fact that warsworns often begin undeath at a much smaller size than is usually seen. Initially only as big as a common wagon, the unimpressive mounds shift across the war-stained field from which they were born, rolling onto the scattered corpses and debris, consuming the sordid scene in a matter of hours, at which point they often reach their formidable, ordinarily seen size. Therefore, it is not uncommon for holy warriors, upon hearing news of a battle-stricken land allegedly infested by a warsworn, to rush to the site in the hope of overcoming the monster before it has time to reach its full potential.

However, warsworns are frighteningly quick to grow, and most come to a kind of monstrous, unliving maturity before being destroyed. Once the battleground has been scraped clean of its dead, warsworns, never satiated, take to the surrounding area, searching hungrily for more dead to consume, and often invading small towns or villages to create the corpses themselves. They take ironic pleasure in destroying military settlements, bringing the wars of yesteryear roaring back to the unsuspecting people—a brutal, animate reminder that the dead never forget.

Although warsworns have little concern for what or whom they destroy, they seem to favor consuming soldiers, victims of war, or at the very least those who die with blade and shield in hand—as if not just seeking new bodies to add to its monstrous girth, but also desirous of some remnant of rage or battle lust. Thus, while a warsworn will roll relentlessly onward and devastate with complete disregard, the unsatisfied monster is constantly searching for war-stricken lands, sites of conflict both ancient and fresh, so that it may satisfy its hunger with the broken steel and festering disease of the battlefield.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Warsworns can be found near areas that have seen great strife or war, especially battlefields, and sometimes make their way toward settlements close to such sites of human destruction. Warsworns, while intelligent, have little need for alliances, as their incredible size and strength provides all the muscle they require to wreak as much havoc as possible.

Despite appearing as little more than a tide of zombies, these undead are driven on by more than mindless rage, retaining some communal memory of a soldier's tactics and a brawler's instincts. Proving to be surprisingly canny in battle, warsworns make use of every element of their necrotic bodies, including the splintered metal

and rusting plates within their forms. The abominations have been known to launch great masses of rusting metal and shattered bone from their innermost hallows, balls of scrap propelled forth as if from a gigantic hellish catapult. Many of the creatures' grasping limbs also bear the remains of weapons, but such armaments rarely survive the undead thing's constant grinding motion, which reduces them to little more than lengths of dull metal amid the warsworn's thrashing, body-sized limbs.

Unsleeping and unrelenting, warsworns are almost always on the move. Thus, warsworns might stop their rampage or even retreat for strategic means, waiting until nightfall to strike the people of a settlement near the site of a battle—the warsworns' most infamous and commonly utilized tactic. Farming communities located near vast stretches of fields that were once the site of a skirmish are often victim to warsworns' sudden, unpredictable attacks.





Amiri

FEMALE HUMAN

DEITY Gorum
HOMELAND Mammoth Lords

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Barbarian 13
ALIGNMENT Chaotic Neutral
INITIATIVE +3
SPEED 40 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 21
DEXTERITY 16
CONSTITUTION 16
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 12
CHARISMA 8

DEFENSE

HP 137
AC 26, touch 16, flat-footed 23 (+7 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, +3 natural)
Fort +14, Ref +11, Will +9
Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +4; DR 3/—

SKILLS

Acrobatics +15, Climb +18, Intimidate +15, Perception +17, Survival +17

FEATS

Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Extra Rage, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bastard sword), Power Attack, Strike Back, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

OFFENSE

Melee +3 *Large frost bastard sword* +20/+15/+10 (2d8+10 plus 1d6 cold/17–20)
Ranged +2 *composite longbow* +18/+13/+8 (1d8+5/x3)
Base Atk +13; CMB +18 (+20 bull rush); CMD 31 (33 vs. bull rush)
Special Abilities damage reduction 3/–, fast movement, greater rage 37 rds/day, rage powers (clear mind, knockback, mighty swing, powerful blow +4, renewed vigor, strength surge)

Combat Gear *potions of cure disease* (2), *potions of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of fly*; **Gear** +3 *hide armor of light fortification*, +3 *Large frost bastard sword*, +2 *composite longbow* (+5 Str) with 20 arrows, javelins (2), spiked gauntlet, throwing axe, *amulet of natural armor* +3, *belt of physical perfection* +2, *cloak of resistance* +4, *ring of protection* +3, 499 gp

Amiri never quite fit into the expected gender roles of her tribe, and when the tribe attempted to send her on a suicide mission, she returned with an enormous trophy—a frost giant's sword. She has since abandoned her people, and has come to value her oversized sword (even though she can only truly wield it properly when her blood rage takes her). She never speaks of the circumstances that forced her to flee her homeland. Some things are better left unsaid.



Harsk

MALE DWARF

DEITY Torag
HOMELAND Druma

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Ranger 13
ALIGNMENT Lawful Neutral
INITIATIVE +5
SPEED 20 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 14
DEXTERITY 21
CONSTITUTION 16
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 14
CHARISMA 6

DEFENSE

HP 119
AC 29, touch 18, flat-footed 24 (+9 armor, +3 deflection, +5 Dex, +2 natural)
Fort +13, Ref +14, Will +10; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities
Senses darkvision 60 ft.
Defensive Abilities evasion

SKILLS

Handle Animal +13, Heal +17, Knowledge (geography) +15, Knowledge (nature) +15, Perception +17, Stealth +19, Survival +17

FEATS

Diehard, Endurance, Far Shot, Improved Critical (heavy crossbow), Improved Precise Shot, Iron Will, Pinpoint Targeting, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload (heavy crossbow), Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow)

OFFENSE

Melee +2 *greataxe* +17/+12/+7 (1d12+5/x3)
Ranged +3 *flaming burst heavy crossbow* +22 (1d10+3 plus 1d6 fire/17–20)
Base Atk +13; CMB +15; CMD 32 (36 vs. bull rush and trip)
Special Abilities camouflage, favored enemy (humanoid [giant] +6, fey +4, humanoid [human] +2), favored terrain (mountains +6, forest +2, cold +2), hunter's bond (companions), quarry, swift tracker, track +5, wild empathy +8, woodland stride
Spells Prepared (CL 10th, concentration +12)
3rd—*neutralize poison*
2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure light wounds*
1st—*entangle* (DC 13), *longstrider*, *resist energy*

Combat Gear *potions of pass without trace* (2), *antitoxin* (2), *smokesticks* (2), *tanglefoot bags* (2), *thunderstones* (2); **Other Gear** +3 *studded leather armor*, +2 *greataxe*, +3 *flaming burst heavy crossbow* with 30 bolts and *bolts of seeking* (20), *masterwork silver dagger*, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of incredible dexterity* +4, *boots of speed*, *bracers of armor* +3, *minor cloak of displacement*, *ring of protection* +3, *backpack*, *rations* (4), *signal whistle*, *teapot*, 627 gp

Harsk is, in many ways, not your standard dwarf. Much of his anger stems from the slaughter of his brother's warband, slain to a man by giants. Harsk's hatred of giants has fueled him and shapes his life. He prefers strong tea over alcohol (to keep his senses sharp), the wildlands of the surface world (where giants can be found), and the crossbow over the axe (which allows him to start fights faster). His companions value his skill at combat even if they're somewhat afraid of him.



Lini

FEMALE GNOME

DEITY Green Faith
HOMELAND Linnorm Kings

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Druid 13
ALIGNMENT Neutral
INITIATIVE +1
SPEED 20 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 6
DEXTERITY 12
CONSTITUTION 16
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 22
CHARISMA 15

DEFENSE

HP 98
AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 20 (+5 armor, +3 deflection, +1 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)
Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +13; +2 vs. illusion; +4 vs. fey and plant-targeted effects
Senses low-light vision
Immune poison

SKILLS

Handle Animal +17, Heal +21, Knowledge (nature) +17, Perception +23, Ride +12, Spellcraft +12

FEATS

Augment Summoning, Combat Casting, Lightning Reflexes, Mounted Combat, Natural Spell, Spell Focus (conjuration), Trample

OFFENSE

Melee +3 sickle +10/+5 (1d4+1)
Ranged +2 sling +12 (1d3)
Base Atk +9; CMB +6; CMD 19
Special Abilities a thousand faces, gnome spell-like abilities, nature bond (small cat named Droogami), nature sense, trackless step, wild empathy +12, wild shape 6/day, woodland stride
Spells Prepared (CL 13th; concentration +19)
7th—wind walk
6th—move earth, mass bull's strength
5th—stoneskin, wall of thorns (2)
4th—air walk, d. magic, flame strike (2, DC 20)
3rd—neutralize poison (2), remove disease (2)
2nd—bull's strength, barkskin, flaming sphere (DC 18), resist energy, spider climb
1st—cure lt. wounds (3), entangle (2; DC 17)
0—detect magic, know direction, light, stabilize

Combat Gear elemental gems (2; water and earth), scrolls of call lightning storm (2), scrolls of tree stride (2), wand of cure serious wounds (31 charges), wand of flame blade (21 charges);
Other Gear +3 wild leather armor, +3 sickle, +2 sling with 20 bullets, druid's vestment, headband of inspired wisdom +4, ring of protection +3, belt pouch, collection of de-barked sticks, mistletoe, spell component pouch, sunrods (2), 730 gp

Lini has always seemed to possess a certain affinity with various creatures of the woodlands. In the years since her departure from her home, Lini has collected more than a dozen sticks—one from each forest or wood she visits. To Lini, these sticks are a roadmap of her experiences, and while they may look indistinguishable to others, each holds a wealth of memories for the gnome druid.



Sajan

MALE HUMAN

DEITY Irori
HOMELAND Vudra

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Monk 13
ALIGNMENT Lawful Neutral
INITIATIVE +3
SPEED 60 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 17
DEXTERITY 16
CONSTITUTION 14
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 12
CHARISMA 8

DEFENSE

HP 97
AC 26, touch 21, flat-footed 22 (+5 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 monk, +1 Wis)
Fort +14, Ref +15, Will +13; +2 vs. enchantment
Defensive Abilities improved evasion;
Immune disease, poison; SR 23

SKILLS

Acrobatics +19 (+41 jump), Climb +19, Perception +17, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +16

FEATS

Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (temple sword), Gorgon's Fist, Greater Grapple, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Scorpion Style, Snatch Arrow, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist, Wind Stance

OFFENSE

Melee unarmed strike +13/+8 (2d6+4 plus 1d6 electricity) or
flurry of blows +15/+15/+10/+10/+5 (2d6+4 plus 1d6 electricity) or
+4 temple sword +16/+11 (1d8+7/19–20)
Base Atk +9; CMB +15 (+19 grapple); CMD 36 (40 vs. grapple)
Special Abilities diamond body, diamond soul, fast movement, high jump, ki pool (7 points, lawful, magic), maneuver training, slow fall 50 ft., stunning fist (13/day, DC 17, fatigued, sickened, staggered), wholeness of body

Combat Gear potion of fly; **Gear** +4 temple sword, bracers of armor +5, cloak of resistance +4, pearly white spindle ioun stone, monk's belt, ring of protection +3, +1 shock amulet of mighty fists, wooden holy symbol, belt pouch, 432 gp

Sajan Gadadvara and his twin sister Sajni were separated when the lord they served was shamed and forced to cede half his army to the victor—among them Sajan's sister. Sajni was taken away from Vudra by her new master, and Sajan abandoned his own responsibilities to follow. He spent years trying in vain to find her, but has not yet given up. Sajan knows he cannot return to Vudra, for the padapranja there would execute him as a deserter. He cares not for his home country, however, and continues to seek out any clue that might point him toward his sister.



SOUND OF A THOUSAND SCREAMS

by Richard Pett

The land itself explodes in deadly rebellion! Across the PCs' kingdom burst devastating blooms of eldritch energy, turning nature violent and wild. Only by venturing into these realms of murderous nature can the PCs calm them before they destroy whole swaths of the realm. But what enemy has the power to turn nature itself against an empire, and does even a monarch wield the power to defeat such a foe? Find out in the nation-shattering climax to the Kingmaker Adventure Path!

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The Kingmaker Adventure Path comes to a close, but that's no reason for the adventure to end! Learn what dangers still lie in wait for the Stolen Lands!

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THE WHITEROSE MYSTERY

Source: Flamaner Melarisan.

Task: When he learns the herces are heading to Whiterose Hill, Flamaner asks them to discover why the hill's vegetation is so... unusual. He also asks them to restore the hill's environment to something more natural than its current strange state, if they can.

Completion: Explore Whiterose Hill and remove the strange aura or curse that infuses it.

Reward: The grateful Flamaner is willing to part with his wand of stonewalk (35 charges) as a reward for the herces' service.



NUMERIAN TRADE

Source: Malchar Tevalkan.

Task: Corpulent Malchar Tevalkan is an ambitious merchant who has a plan to open trade with Numeria. But first, he needs someone to build a road that connects any major city with Numeria.

Completion: Build a road that connects Pitax or the herces' capital city to Numeria by exiting the Stelen Lands' boundary north or northeast of the Brantblend Mountains.

Reward: The new trade route increases the kingdom's Economy by +2.



CATCHING A CHEAT

Source: Bertren Orlen.

Task: After losing the Rushlight Tournament 3 years in a row, failed archer Bertren Orlen suspects there's cheating going on. He's not competing this year, but has promised several magic arrows to the first person who can catch and expose a cheater at this year's Rushlight Tournament.

Completion: Publicly expose cheating at the tournament.

Reward: Bertren rewards whoever catches the first cheater with a dozen +3 flaming burst arrows and five magical beast slaying arrows.



THE MISSING DIVA

Source: The Sapphire Imp actor's troupe.

Task: A group of actors worry that their star, singer Asmeranda Plata, has been kidnapped by none other than King Irevetti, who seems to have become obsessed with her. She's doubtlessly being held somewhere in his palace.

Completion: Rescue Asmeranda from Irevetti's Palace.

Reward: The Sapphire Imps call in a favor owed from a nobleman in Almas, and he rewards the herces with 15,000 gp in the Sapphire Imps' name.



To Kill a King

Can two kings truly trust one another? King Irovetti, ruler of Pitax and potential rival to the leaders of the eastern Stolen Lands, opens his gates and hospitality to the lords of that realm. Within his city of shallow indulgences and crude decadence, he hosts a tournament ostensibly meant to foster friendship and peace, but fraught with dangers all its own. Is the King of Pitax's good will sincere, or does he harbor a more sinister goal? And are the PCs fated to gain an opponent who commands not only a nation, but allies from a deadly other realm?

This volume of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* includes:

- ▶ "War of the River Kings," a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 12th-level characters, by Jason Nelson.
- ▶ A tour of the hollow wonders and grim shadows of the oppressed city of Pitax, by Mike Ferguson.
- ▶ Merciless insights into the iron-shod doctrine of Gorum, god of battle, by Sean K Reynolds.
- ▶ Pathfinder Ollix Kaddar's adventures in the gladiator pits of Tymon in the *Pathfinder's Journal*, by Steven E. Schend.
- ▶ Four new monsters, by Julian Neale and Sean K Reynolds.



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