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CHELIX,
THE INFERNAL EMPIRE

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On the Cover



Valeros faces off against the flaming arrows of a sinister erinyes devil, one of many fiends found in Cheliox, in this exciting cover by Arman Akopian.



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Reference

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at paizo.com/prd.

<i>Advanced Class Guide</i>	ACG	<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i>	ISWG
<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Occult Adventures</i>	OA
<i>Bestiary 3</i>	B3	<i>Ultimate Combat</i>	UC
<i>Bestiary 4</i>	B4	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM



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Life in Cheliaz

The veneration of deities other than Asmodeus and subservient entities (archdevils, infernal dukes, malebranche, et al.) is permitted by the grace of Her Infernal Majestrix, Queen Abrogail II of the Thrice-Damned House of Thrune, and may be revoked at any time at her sole discretion. Those practicing these faiths in opposition to the Church of Asmodeus may be declared heretics and tried for their crimes, the penalty being execution or, in the case of clerics of the Dark Prince's enemies, damnation to Hell. Asmodeus is generous, and those who serve him will be rewarded, even with the ability to follow other gods, as long as none supplant the Archfiend in the hearts of his eternal servants—the people Cheliaz.

—Edict 4671.315A.2v5 §15j (Revision 6)

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Cheliox has been many things in its long history: Taldor's westernmost territory; a strategic but subservient province of a larger empire; an independent nation, inspiring other nations to break from Taldor; an empire in its own right with colonies and provinces as far north as Varisia and as far south as Sargava; the chosen nation of the god of humanity; the prophesied site of Aroden's return to Golarion after millennia of absence; and today, a nation held together by tyranny, infernal pacts, and the sheer will of its ruling family, the Thrice-Damned House of Thrune. Regardless of how one defines greatness, it is hard to deny that Cheliox is a great—if diminished and corrupted—nation, and it stands as one of the most powerful and influential political institutions in the Inner Sea region, as it has for ages.

Government

In its current form, the Chelish government is best described as a bureaucratic autocracy. Her Infernal Majestrix, Queen Abrogail II of the Twice-Damned House of Thrune, rules with unchecked authority—her word is as binding as any devil's contract. That she often changes her mind, using her power to erase any trace of her former decrees, further secures her sovereignty, as even her most trusted servants and advisors are only a whim away from potential treason. Abrogail's will is carried out by an intricate bureaucracy composed largely of titled nobles—holdovers from Cheliox's prior oligarchical form of government—and sycophants hoping to win the queen's favor or afraid of raising her ire.

Cheliox's titles of nobility follow a strict hierarchy, as befits an empire modeled on Hell. The nobility is divided into three broad categories, each with three subcategories, for a total of nine noble ranks (reflecting the nine layers of Hell). The majestrix and members of her immediate family stand outside and above this noble hierarchy.

Cheliox itself is divided into six regions or archduchies: the Heartlands, Hellcoast, Longmarch, Menador, Ravounel, and Sirmium (see the map on page 4). Each archduchy is divided into duchies, which are then subdivided into counties, which are subdivided into baronies. There are numerous duchies, counties, and baronies, and not all of them are subdivided into smaller regions (for example, a small county may not be further subdivided into baronies). In effect, there is no real difference between a county ruled by an archcount or one ruled by a count; administratively, two such counties are effectively the same, but the archcount is higher in rank than the count.

Under Cheliox's current divisions, there can be no more than six archdukes, one for each of Cheliox's archduchies. As archduke is a hereditary title, the ruling family of each archduchy rarely changes, though the Chelish Civil War did shake things up a century ago. Three of the ruling families under the previous regime

Chelish Nobility

The following titles make up Cheliox's complex hierarchy of nobility, in order from highest to lowest rank.

Majestor/Majestrix: The ruler of Cheliox; the prefix "infernal" often comes before this title. This rank exists outside the standard noble hierarchy.

Prince/Princess: A member of the royal family (a direct descendant of the majestor or majestrix); the prefix "infernal" sometimes comes before this title. This rank exists outside the standard noble hierarchy.

Archduke/Archduchess: A hereditary ruler of one of Cheliox's six archduchies.

Duke/Duchess: A hereditary ruler of a duchy.

Paraduke/Paraduchess: A granted (nonhereditary, non-landed) title.

Archcount/Archcountess: A hereditary ruler of a county.

Count/Countess: A hereditary ruler of a county.

Paracount/Paracountess: A granted (nonhereditary, non-landed) title.

Archbaron/Archbaroness: A hereditary ruler of a barony.

Baron/Baroness: A hereditary ruler of a barony.

Demibaron/Demibaroness: A granted (nonhereditary, non-landed) title.

retained their power after the Thrune Ascendancy: House Carthagnian rules Longmarch from the city of Corentyn, House Narikopolus rules Menador from Kantaria, and House Henderthane rules Sirmium from Ostenso. House Thrune usurped not only the throne but also control of the Heartlands from its hereditary rulers during the civil war; that family's name was among the first to be redacted from Chelish history books. The northern region of Ravounel was previously ruled by House Sarini, who now serve as the "Fools of Thrune," sent to other courts as representatives of their lieges, as a mockery of their former selves. Isolated as it is from the rest of the nation, and producing few resources needed elsewhere in the empire, Ravounel has had no archduke for nearly a half century. The current ruler of Hellcoast is Paraduke Marcellus Thurivan, appointed by House Thrune to retake the land from the rebels of Pezzack and the strix of Devil's Perch. Until the Battle of a Hundred Kings, the archduchy had been ruled by House Davian; since then, no family has been granted the land nor the title of archduke, but Paraduke Thurivan hopes he will fare better than his predecessor, who was thrown out of Pezzack and forced to move the region's seat of power to Belde, which is technically a part of the Heartlands.

Other non-noble titles exist in Cheliox, such as visbaron, further complicating the system and confusing those who are not versed in its intricacies. Those with non-noble titles tend to inflate their own importance,



while true nobles look down upon them with the same scorn they reserve for the common folk.

While the Asmodean faith is the official, state-sanctioned religion of Cheliox, there is strong separation between the church and the state. Asmodean inquisitors' motives and methods often overlap with those of Thruane agents—some Thruane agents may even be inquisitors of the Prince of Darkness—but the two institutions operate in parallel rather than as a cohesive unit. In many cases, the relationship between House Thruane and the Church of Asmodeus is thorny at best and just shy of openly antagonistic at worst. Just as House Thruane's pact with Hell comes at a price, so too does its alliance with the church, and a stronger Asmodean presence in the nation threatens Abrogail's rule. Since the reign of her great-grandmother and namesake, however, the two factions have existed in a stalemate, neither truly subservient to the other and neither powerful enough to seize control over the entire nation.

History

Cheliox has a long and complex history, throughout which the nation's power and fortunes have risen and fallen. In every era, however, Cheliox has been defined by the ambition of its people and the firm belief that it is destined for greatness.

A timeline of Chelish history can be found on page 9.

Early History

The first recorded inhabitants of what is now Cheliox were Kellids, who occupied much of Avistan prior to the Age of Darkness. Azlanti explorers are believed to have come to the region from the west and perhaps intermingled with the native population, but as with all things Azlanti, remnants of their presence in Cheliox are scarce today, ground into obscurity by the passing of time.

In the sixteenth century AR, Taldor's Third Army of Exploration ventured through much of Cheliox, extending the empire's western border to the Arcadian Ocean. Led by General Coren (after whom the city of Corentyn takes its name), the army found the Kellid inhabitants welcoming and peaceful, and established a number of settlements in the new land, particularly as ports along the coast of the Inner Sea. Cheliox was first incorporated as a distinct political entity in 3007 AR, nearly a millennium and a half after Corentyn's founding, when it was made a province of Taldor. Ostenso served as the provincial capital until 3991 AR when the capital was moved to Westcrown.

Even-Tongued Conquest and Early Expansion

The first great change in Cheliox came 90 years later, when the provincial governor—a shrewd but intense man named Aspek—declared Cheliox an independent nation. Taldor was unable to put up any true military resistance because of its ongoing conflict with Qadira at the other

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end of the empire. Aspex placed himself upon the throne of the newly established monarchy of Cheliox, a move that was largely met with approval by the establish nobility in the region. These formerly Taldan aristocrats recognized they had much to gain from being the first in a generation of a new gentry, and placed their material and diplomatic support behind their new king.

Over the subsequent decade, Aspex encouraged other Taldan provinces to part from the empire, via either diplomacy or military action. Andoran was the first to give its allegiance to Cheliox, with Galt and Iser following shortly thereafter when Aspex sent armies to their capitals to serve as motivation. Taldor, impotent to respond to Cheliox's rapid acquisition of its long-held lands, entered the first stages of a long decline. Because the conflict was seen as diplomatic and largely bloodless, Aspex gained the honorific "the Even-Tongued" and the entire affair was referred to as the Even-Tongued Conquest. Thus, in a matter of 10 years, Cheliox went from being a Taldan province to the heart of an empire in its own right.

In 4137 AR, Aspex's grandson, Prince Haliad I, seeing his mother, Queen Aspexia I, occupied with internal matters, set his sights on expanding the empire as his father had. Against his advisors' urgings, he sailed an armada of Chelish warships to the Isle of Kortos, where he unsuccessfully laid siege to Absalom. Shamed and defeated, he returned to Cheliox after only 3 months and found he was now referred to as the Mad Prince among both commoners and the aristocracy.

To prove his sanity, he took the remnants of his besieging force across the Hespereth Strait to the region of northern Rahadom known as Khari. Devoid of resources and population save at the immediate base of the Arch of Aroden, Khari put up little resistance, and Haliad declared the conquest a success when he officially annexed the Garundi land as part of Cheliox. In truth, securing both sides of the strait and the entirety of the Arch of Aroden was perhaps the greatest success of Haliad's mad ambitions, as it ensured Chelish control of one of the most strategic trade routes in the Inner Sea.

The following year, drunk on his success in Rahadom, Haliad sent an armada of ships down the western Garundi coast to Desperation Bay, where they were instructed to establish a Chelish colony farther south on the continent. Haliad named this colony "Sargava," after his favorite horse. Despite ongoing conflicts between the Chelish colonists and the Mwangi natives, Sargava would remain a colony of Cheliox for half a millennium, making it the most successful colony of the empire not directly bordering the nation.

The Everwar and Aroden's Return

Chelish ambition once again led to a period of expansion and exploration in 4305 AR, when Emperor Haliad III began what came to be known as the Everwar—a century-

long conflict in which the empire attempted, with varying degrees of success, to further expand its influence. The first target of this expansionist ambition was Molthune, which had followed the Chelish lead in the Even-Tongued Conquest and seceded from Taldor. Unlike Andoran, Galt, and Iser, however, Molthune had remained independent. Haliad wished to change that.

The conquest of Molthune lasted 6 years, and its completion extended Cheliox's northern border to the southern edge of Lastwall. The Molthuni had put up only a disorganized resistance against the Chelish invaders (and having learned their lesson, they established a much more martial society in subsequent years). The seasoned crusaders of the Knights of Ozem, who defended Lastwall, were a different story. In addition to the knights' military prowess, Cheliox recognized the vital responsibility the knights bore—standing watch over the Whispering Tyrant's ghostly prison of Gallowspire and ensure he never returned to power—and somewhere in the empire's conscience knew that it was in the world's best interest to leave Lastwall to its task. Conflicts within Lastwall ceased only a year after they began.

Over the next 90 years, Cheliox pushed to expand into Nidal, Druma, and the Hold of Belkzen, and attempted two sieges on Absalom even less effective than Haliad's failed attempt a century earlier. Efforts in Nidal ended in a "diplomatic conquest" of the shadow-bound nation in 4338 AR, smoothing tensions between the Kuthites of Pangolais and the largely Arodenite nobility of Cheliox; despite Chelish claims of conquest, Nidal remained a sovereign state beholden to the Midnight Lord. An attempt to colonize the frontier region of Varisia from the north via the Lands of the Linnorm Kings was the final great failure of the Everwar, and the naval siege on Halgrim greatly diminished Cheliox's seafaring power for nearly a century. The only success of this long period of continual war was the establishment of Korvosa, a beachhead in southern Varisia that Emperor Halleck IV hoped would allow Cheliox to "civilize" the entire region.

In 4410 AR, a mere 3 years after Korvosa's founding, the Everwar came to a close—Cheliox's war chests were empty and its armies and navy were stretched too thin to mount further conquests. The empire entered a period of peace and stability that lasted for nearly 200 years, during which the ambitions of the people were focused on the *Starfall Doctrine*—a holy Arodenite text that prophesied the god's return to Golarion to rule humanity in the flesh. Because the center of his worship in Avistan had long since transferred from Oppara to Westcrown, the people of Cheliox were certain that Aroden would return to their nation and rule from its capital; the prophesied Age of Glory was coming, and Cheliox was to be at the center of it.

Throughout 4605 AR, the year preceding Aroden's prophesied return, all of Cheliox's vast resources were

focused on welcoming him home. King Gaspodar I prepared to relinquish the throne and the empire to Aroden's control; the Eagle Knights were founded to act as Aroden's mortal honor guard; and Arodenites from all over the world flocked to Westcrown, Deng, Egorian, and other Chelish cities hoping to witness the holy event.

But Aroden did not return. Rather, on the eve of his prophesied arrival, the Inner Sea was wracked with weeks of terrible storms and a tidal wave destroyed the coastal city of Deng. Worst of all, Aroden's clerics were cut off from their god; many worried that Aroden was dead. As time passed, such fears were proven justified. Iomedae took on the mantle of the Last Azlanti's faith, and inquiries by priests of other gods to their deities confirmed the truth. Aroden was not coming back.

Cheliox was thrown into chaos, its citizens and government alike operating out of fear and a sense of survival rather than logic or the empire's best interest. In the face of the tremendous natural disasters, the governmental infrastructure fell apart. Gaspodar had dismantled much of his bureaucracy to make way for Aroden's rule, anticipating the impending obsolescence of the government in the face of a deity ruling on high. The king had already all but formally abdicated the throne when Aroden died. Nobles who once held positions of power found their resources had been spent, and their political connections had withered out of fear for an uncertain future. The Chelish aristocracy did its best to maintain order—to govern in the absence of support from peers, lieges, or vassals—barely preventing outright rioting and anarchy. The empire hobbled along for 2 terrible years.

Chelish Civil War and Thrune Ascendancy

In Arodus 4608 AR, the chaos finally descended into all-out war. A dispute arose between two noble houses, each ruling neighboring counties that were in different archduchies. When the conflict grew into a physical skirmish, it set off a chain reaction of noble allegiances that soon had over half the nation's government in arms. One of the two factions involved was the little-known house of Thrune. All records of the other house's identity have been stricken from history.

The Chelish Civil War raged for over 30 years, pitting neighbors and former allies against one another as each side vied for eventual control of the troubled empire. King Gaspodar's mysterious assassination in 4622 AR brought the conflict to a head. Gaspodar had left no heir prior to his death; the Chelish crown became the ultimate prize to the war's victor. What had been a morass of nobles fighting one another with no clear leaders on either side quickly became a two-sided conflict between House Davian, whose naval power was among the strongest in the nation as a result of its close ties to Sargava, and House Thrune, whose armies were increasingly bolstered by allied devils (the most notable of which was the pit

fiend Gorthoklek, who has served both Abrogail I and II as a general and advisor).

While Cheliox's armies and nobles were engaged in the war, the empire suffered a fate similar to that of Taldor during the Even-Tongued Conquest—one by one its vassal states broke away to form sovereign nations in their own right. The first of these was Sargava, whose governor, Baron Grallus, backed House Davian by sending naval support in 4609 AR. (The armada's arrival in Chelish waters was delayed due to setbacks resulting from the newly formed Eye of Abendego along the previously clear route.) In 4632 AR, Molthune seceded from the empire to little fanfare; a handful of influential Molthuni families continue to back allies in Cheliox, but the newly formed nation remained officially neutral in the affairs of its former empire. The following year, the Varisian colony of Korvosa cut ties with Cheliox as well, after finding the empire no longer interested in maintaining its holdings in that country.

The war's decisive clash was the Battle of a Hundred Kings, which took place in the lands and waters surrounding Corentyn. House Thrune emerged victorious: it held the city against House Davian and its Sargavan allies, crushed the bulk of its rival's fleet and army, and left only straggling enemies to quash elsewhere in Cheliox. The following year, Queen Abrogail Thrune officially ascended the throne of a diminished, war-torn empire, calling herself the Infernal Majestrix.

It took little time for House Thrune to institute drastic and often draconian changes to restore order to the nation. Among Abrogail's most controversial edicts were those that moved the capital from Westcrown to Egorian, established the Church of Asmodeus as the official state religion, and systematically revised the nation's history to play up House Thrune's prior influence and diminish or completely erase the contributions of its wartime rivals.

These efforts were largely effective, and lawfulness once again came to Cheliox, but at a high cost, both for the empire and for the people upon whose backs this new stability was built. In 4667 AR, inspired by the anti-aristocratic philosophies of writers Hosetter and Jubannich, Galt split from the empire and entered an ongoing period of gory revolt known as the Red Revolution. Two years later, Andoran followed suit, but its People's Revolt was a bloodless transfer of power from the province's nobility to the people. The nobility of both new nations had largely supported House Davian in the Chelish Civil War, and House Thrune was already looking for ways to disenfranchise them from the new nation; their secession from the empire was largely seen as saving Cheliox the trouble of excising them.

Even House Thrune has not avoided the price of its rule. All but two of the six monarchs to hold the title of infernal majestor or majestrix have died under mysterious or violent circumstances. Because House Thrune has no established line of inheritance, succession

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of the crown has not followed the general practice of absolute primogeniture. Today, Queen Abrogail's great-granddaughter, Abrogail II, wears the Chelish crown. Cheliaz continues to suffer under House Thrune's Hell-bound rule. Reduced to Cheliaz proper, the empire that once rivaled Taldor at its height is no more. Yet Abrogail and her loyal agents are ever ambitious, working plots to increase the influence of Cheliaz—and by extension that of Hell—throughout the Inner Sea region and beyond.

Relations

Cheliaz has long been a major player in Avistani politics, its influence stretching to the far corners of the Inner Sea region. Other nations see Cheliaz as both a powerful ally, from whom they can gain much through trade and diplomacy, and as a great evil of which to be wary. It is no secret that modern Cheliaz owes much to Asmodeus and the powers of Hell. Its open alliance with Hell has made Cheliaz many enemies over the course of the last century. At the same time, nations who find such ties less offensive have established stronger relations with House Thrune to capitalize on its burgeoning power in the region.

Most notable among Cheliaz's enemies is its former vassal state, Andoran. Built upon the ideals of freedom and democracy, Andoran is anathema to Cheliaz, where complex structures of aristocracy and state-sponsored slavery keep the poorest and weakest among its citizens thoroughly oppressed. Andoran knows the martial might Cheliaz holds, and thus avoids open military conflict with its western neighbor. Instead, the Eagle Knights wage war against Cheliaz through diplomacy in the hearts and minds of other neighboring nations and through subterfuge and sabotage in foreign ports or on the Inner Sea. While not officially sponsored by the Andoren government, the abolitionist Bellflower Network makes Andoran its base of operations, and each year smuggles hundreds of halfling slaves out of Cheliaz to freedom.

Of all its former holdings, only Isgar remains in Cheliaz's thrall. While Isgar is technically a sovereign nation, its leader, Hedvend VI, holds the title of steward and does little to hide the fact that he takes his orders from Egorian, which he visits often. Cheliaz, for its part, sees Isgar as merely a resource to be exploited. Like all of Isgar's neighbors, Cheliaz paid a high price in the Goblinblood Wars, and many of Cheliaz's citizens still hold a grudge against Isgar for its inability

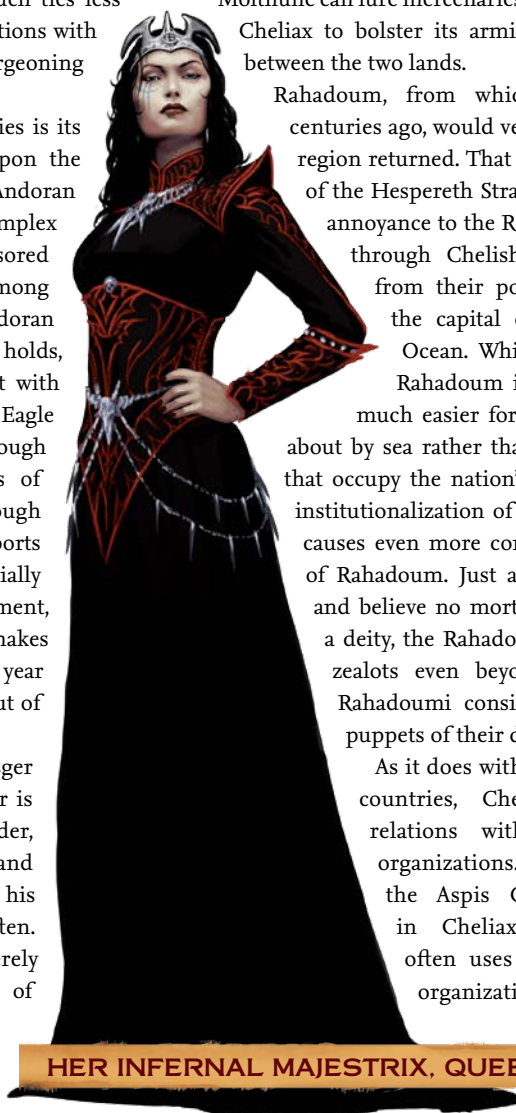
to deal with the goblin threat without the sacrifice of Chelish lives.

Nidal, while not a vassal of Cheliaz, remains a staunch ally, as it has since the Everwar. That both nations are beholden to forces of law and evil means that few moral quandaries arise when the nations are asked to come to one another's aid. Nidal frequently sends its skilled shadowcasters to assist House Thrune in umbral arcane matters, and Cheliaz returns the favor by ensuring that Nidal's southern border offers little in the way of refuge from the predations of Nidal's elite. During the Chelish Civil War, Nidal secretly backed House Thrune, and the shadowy partnership remains strong to this day.

Molthune is primarily occupied with its ongoing conflict with Nirmathas, and thus cares little for what goes on in Cheliaz. While the Molthuni government may not approve of House Thrune's tactics, the General Lords recognize that Cheliaz produces excellent soldiers, of which Molthune is in constant, desperate need. As long as Molthune can lure mercenaries and veterans from within Cheliaz to bolster its armies, there is little conflict between the two lands.

Rahadom, from which Cheliaz stole Khari centuries ago, would very much like the usurped region returned. That Cheliaz holds full control of the Hespereth Strait is a source of continual annoyance to the Rahadomi, who must pass through Chelish patrols to ship goods from their ports on the Inner Sea to the capital of Azir on the Arcadian Ocean. While overland travel within Rahadom is possible, it is generally much easier for the Rahadomi to move about by sea rather than across the arid deserts that occupy the nation's interior. Cheliaz's open institutionalization of the Church of Asmodeus causes even more consternation in the people of Rahadom. Just as they do not trust gods and believe no mortal should be beholden to a deity, the Rahadomi are wary of religious zealots even beyond their borders; most Rahadomi consider all Chelaxians to be puppets of their devil god.

As it does with some of its neighboring countries, Cheliaz maintains strong relations with several international organizations. The headquarters of the Aspis Consortium are located in Cheliaz, and House Thrune often uses the unscrupulous trade organization as its proxy in other



HER INFERNAL MAJESTRIX, QUEEN ABROGAIL II

parts of the world. In exchange for favors performed for the state, the government turns a blind eye to any unlawful activities the Consortium might undertake within its borders. Conversely, House Thrune holds the organization's rival, Absalom's Pathfinder Society, in utter contempt. All known Pathfinders were exiled from Chelias shortly after the Thrune Ascendency, and all Chelish lodges were shut down. Today, the Pathfinder Society still operates here, but at great personal risk to any agents within Chelias's borders.

Another nation with whom Chelias has notable relations is Katapesh, whose infamous slave galleys can be seen traversing the Inner Sea, often connecting to the Chelish slave trade based out of Corentyn. While the two nations have no formal ties, they are the most prominent areas in the Inner Sea region where slavery is both legal and a major part of the economic and social infrastructure. The abolitionists of the Bellflower Network and Andoran's Eagle Knights would like nothing more than to sever their relations and bring both nations' slave trades to an end.

Society

Chelias has always been a country of order and law, of hierarchies and propriety. From its origins as a Taldan province, Chelias inherited a complex system of nobility; from serving as the heart of Aroden's faith, the nation gained a sense of destiny and ambition; from the opposing faiths of Asmodeus and Iomedae (a Chelaxian in life), modern Chelias saw that same sense of order and destiny pushed to the extremes of good and evil. The social structure of the nation is thus deeply stratified, with very little room for upward mobility; movement in the other direction, though, is all too common. From the nation's slaves—the social pyramid's base—to the laborers, artisans, merchants, and advocates who make up the bulk of the population, to the elite aristocracy, everyone in Chelias has a place. The strict laws of the land ensure that those who can't or won't perform their prescribed duties are punished—society can function only when none are allowed to rock the boat.

Even among the common people of Chelias, who neither hope to hold a noble title nor understand the difference between a count and a par duke, the Chelish sense of pride exhibits itself in a strong appreciation of the arts. What better way to celebrate one's greatness and explore the highs and lows of existence than through an exquisite poem, painting, sculpture, or sonata? Chelaxians see indulgence in the arts as a means of engaging in opulence and of escaping the trials and troubles of their lives, and they live vicariously through the works they enjoy.

No single form of art has so enraptured the people of Chelias as opera, and no settlement is considered a major player on the national stage unless it hosts at least one opera house, the more garish the better. Modern Chelish opera is a vulgar form of Chelish High Opera, a

form dating back millennia, written and performed in the language of the Azlanti. While public operas are performed in the Common tongue, Infernal has now replaced Azlanti as the language of opera for House Thrune and members of the aristocracy who hope to maintain the queen's favor.

Many Chelaxians are deeply religious, and their faiths are varied and personal rather than monolithic and prescribed (though most outside Chelias believe the entire nation has been beholden to Asmodeus for over half a century). After the Even-Tongued Conquest, the Church of Aroden moved its center of worship from Oppara to Westcrown, and the central role Chelias played in the Arodenite faith left an indelible impression upon the land's people. In the wake of the Last Azlanti's death, many Arodenites turned their devotion to Iomedae or other lawful gods. It wasn't until the Thrune Ascendency that the Church of Asmodeus became the sanctioned faith of the realm. The worship of other deities is not forbidden in Chelias; as long as members of other faiths obey the laws set forth by Asmodeus and don't oppose the Prince of Darkness or House Thrune, they are permitted to worship as they please. Thus, temples to Abadar, Erastil, Iomedae, Pharasma, and Shelyn can be found throughout the land, but all pale in comparison to the Asmodean cathedrals in whose shadow they are allowed to stand.

All Asmodean holidays are official holidays of Chelias; observing days sacred to other faiths is permitted, but they are treated as ordinary days in the eyes of the law. Commonly observed holidays in Chelias include the Day of the Inheritor (19 Rova) and the Ascendance Day (6 Lamashan), both venerating Iomedae; Armasse (16 Arodus), originally an Arodenite holiday that has now been coopted by the churches of both Asmodeus and Iomedae; and the Days of Wrath (seasonal equinoxes and solstices), festivities of blood sports to celebrate superiority and determine who is most powerful.

In addition to religious holidays, a number of dates celebrate Chelias and Chelish history. Participation in these festivities is mandated by House Thrune and the Church of Asmodeus, and they are as much propaganda as they are celebrations. Loyalty Day (19 Calistril) honors the Treaty of Egorian, which marked the Thrune Ascendency and the end of the Chelish Civil War. The newest of Chelias's nationalist holidays, it is a day of gluttony paid for by the government, and serves as a reminder of the prosperity that the government, and by extension, House Thrune, provides the people of the nation. Even-Tongued Day (14 Neth) is a celebration of Aspek the Even-Tongued and his formation of the empire of Chelias. In centuries past, it was a day of celebration (and still is in nations such as Andoran, Galt, and Isger), but now carries a much more somber tone in Chelias, as Chelaxians mourn the loss of many of the empire's holdings and renew vows to begin its conquest of Avistan anew under the banner of House Thrune.

Cheliax, The Infernal Empire



Cheliax Timeline

The following are major events in Cheliax's history.

1520 AR	Corentyn is established by General Coren of Taldor's Third Army of Exploration. Coren also secures the western tip of Avistan and the neck of the Inner Sea for Taldor.
1975 AR	Ulffen longships raid heavily along the west coast of Avistan and in the region now known as Cheliax.
2555 AR	All clerics are expelled from Rahadoum; many seek refuge in Corentyn. Construction begins on the Arch of Aroden.
2606 AR	The Arch of Aroden is completed.
3007 AR	Cheliax is formally incorporated as a province of Taldor rather than a frontier region.
3991 AR	The provincial capital of Cheliax moves from Ostenso to Westcrown, as its position on the Adivian River provides better access to the region's vast interior.
4081 AR	The Taldan governor in charge of Cheliax, taking advantage of Taldor's focus on its Qadiran border, declares the province independent from the empire and places himself upon the newly created Chelish throne as Aspex the Even-Tongued. Andoran, Galt, and Isger are annexed as part of Cheliax in the following years. This decade-long power grab becomes known as the Even-Tongued Conquest, and greatly undermines Taldan influence throughout western Avistan.
4137 AR	Under the banner of the mad prince Haliad I, Cheliax unsuccessfully besieges Absalom for the first time. Gains in Garund, however, grant Cheliax complete control of the Arch of Aroden, cementing a naval supremacy that remains to this day.
4138 AR	Chelish ships arrive in Desperation Bay on Garund's western coast as part of a colonial effort ordered by Prince Haliad I of Cheliax; they establish the colony of Sargava.
4305 AR	Emperor Haliad III begins a century of expansion eventually known as the Everwar when Chelish forces invade Molthune.
4311 AR	Molthune surrenders to the Chelish army, becoming the first addition to the empire since the founding of Sargava.
4338 AR	Cheliax "conquers" Nidal through diplomacy, establishing a tenuous alliance between the two nations that lasts until the present day.
4402 AR	A Chelish armada attempts to make a landing at Halgrim to annex the Lands of the Linnorm Kings into the empire. The endeavor fails, and only a single Chelish vessel survives the conflict.
4407 AR	Emperor Halleck IV of Cheliax founds Korvosa in the frontier region of Varisia.
4410 AR	The Everwar ends. Efforts to expand into Belkzen and Varisia come to a close.
4576 AR	The first Hellknight order, the Order of the Rack, is founded in Westcrown.

4605 AR	King Gaspodar of Cheliax prepares for the prophesied manifestation of Aroden, foretold to mark the advent of the Age of Glory.
4606 AR	Aroden dies, leaving the empire of Cheliax without a divine mandate and producing several weeks of powerful, destructive storms across Golarion.
4608 AR	The Chelish Civil War begins when House Thrune and a now-redacted rival family feud over land. Centuries-old alliances soon bring the entire nation into the conflict.
4610 AR	The Chelish army leaves Sargava to aid House Davian.
4622 AR	King Gaspodar is mysteriously assassinated.
4632 AR	Molthune secedes from Cheliax.
4633 AR	Korvosa reluctantly cuts ties with Cheliax.
4639 AR	House Thrune wins the Battle of a Hundred Kings, defeating House Davian and its Sargavan backers. This proves to be the decisive battle in the civil war.
4640 AR	House Thrune emerges as the victor in the decades-long infighting over the throne of Cheliax, and institutes diabolism and the worship of Asmodeus as the official state religion.
4643 AR	The Chelish fleet finally arrives to deal with Sargava, but instead meets a pirate fleet and is destroyed in Desperation Bay. Free Captain Molryn Hangtree falsely reports to Baron Grallus that additional Chelish ships are anchored in reserve off Azir; Grallus agrees to pay the Free Captains a continuing stipend to safeguard the bay.
4660 AR	The Chelish navy once again attempts to reclaim Sargava; the Free Captains drive the Chelish ships into the Eye of Abendego. The Chelish fleet turns back after losing 30 ships to hurricane conditions.
4667 AR	Galt rises up against Chelish rule, resulting in the Red Revolution.
4669 AR	The People's Revolt transforms Andoran, which declares independence from Cheliax. In response, Cheliax begins its 20-year embargo of Andoran.
4672 AR	Antoninus, the son of Abrogail I, murders his mother and seizes the throne.
4674 AR	Antoninus is fatally poisoned from eating incorrectly prepared safu'u fish. His cousin Terthule ascends to the throne.
4676 AR	Shadow beasts surface in Westcrown; the mayor declares a curfew that remains in place to the present.
4682 AR	Terthule disappears. Carellia Thrune, his niece, takes his place.
4689 AR	Cheliax's 20-year embargo of Andoran ends when Andoran successfully sinks three Chelish warships outside Westcrown, including the Chelish flagship.
4692 AR	Abrogail II is born in Egorian.
4696 AR	Carellia mysteriously drowns, and her death is never fully investigated. Her cousin Infrexus rises to power.
4709 AR	Infrexus falls through the ice of the Adivian River and drowns. Abrogail II, great-granddaughter of Abrogail I, becomes the new infernal majestrix of Cheliax.
4715 AR	The present year.

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“Today, you bear witness to the fruits of disobeying the unholy decrees of the Lord of Hell, our great master Asmodeus. Blasphemy, sedition, insubordination, shattered contracts, rejection of order: the Archfiend’s laws are Chelixa’s laws, and those who break them pay with their anguish and their lives. And so it is with these pathetic cretins before you. Gaze upon them. Listen to their cries. Watch their writhing agony, and know that once they have paid the blood price for their crimes, they will continue to suffer for eternity. For Asmodeus delights in torturing the souls of the weak, and there is no release from his almighty fury. Heed this warning: if you cross our church or our state, a place on these times is yours. And so is endless torment in Hell.”

—Victorio Frenzett, Asmodean inquisitor in Egorian

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From the Hellmouth Gulf to the Menador Mountains and from the Barrowood to the Fields of Chelam, Cheliox is a vast nation filled with diverse people, rich history, and treacherous politics. Infernal influences churn through the nation's blood, but so too does its heart pound with independence, even as its brain remembers its lost divine mandate. Cheliox is a place where Hell itself struggles to keep an iron grip on a land and populace not easily confined.

Yet even while the darkest infernal influences permeate some of Cheliox's most notorious cities, so too do other settlements eschew diabolism and its trappings altogether, preferring to remember times when fiends did not roam the nation's most hallowed halls—although, of course, these places can't ignore House Thrune's laws or authority completely, as several unfortunate settlements learned in the years following the Thrune Ascendancy. Elsewhere in the country, other towns choose to strike a complex balance between loyalty to the crown and an independent spirit. For other more rural areas, including corners of the sprawling Barrowood and Whisperwood and the many ancient ruins that dot the countryside, the nation's current political climate is simply a pebble thrown into a vast sea. To inhabitants of these locales, the ripples from this pebble will surely disappear, like all the regimes before it and all those to come.

Taken together, despite those among the ruling house who strive to make it seem unequivocally like a place of dark and singular power, Cheliox is a deeply nuanced country made up of myriad inhabitants with countless loyalties, schemes, dreams, and goals. The nation's infernal taint indeed runs deep, but wise adventurers keep this underlying truth in mind as they roam the countryside. Below are details on most places of note in Cheliox.

Acisazi: Carefully hidden in Dismal Nitch, a stretch of coast north of Ravounel Forest, Acisazi is a rare aquatic elven shoreline village. The town serves as a place where its residents can stage missions ashore, craft necessities that cannot be easily fabricated underwater, and shelter air-breathing allies and half-elven children. Acisazi straddles two cultures and two terrains; part of the village is located underwater and part is on land. Its citizens include full-blooded aquatic elves and half-elves of aquaic elven descent—in fact, the majority of residents are half-elves. Although they maintain some ties to other aquatic elven settlements farther out to sea, the residents of Acisazi are largely self-sufficient. Worshipers of Gozreh, they value their privacy and have used their magic and trickery to ensure that unwanted visitors, and imperial meddlers in particular, rarely encroach upon Dismal Nitch.

Anferita Wood: This dense forest north of Corentyn is filled with mysterious inhabitants both native and foreign. Two roving prides of manticores, for instance,

use the foliage as hunting grounds when they are not at the side of Chelish naval Lieutenant **Frazura Antelo** (LE male human ranger 5), whose base of operations is in a district of Corentyn called The Jut. The manticores roam the wood unimpeded, but they are so loyal to Antelo—who is in turn a stalwart servant of Cheliox—that they gladly carry out his orders in this wild locale. On the wood's southern side, several packs of yeth hounds prey on travelers. On moonless nights, they attack the isolated farms and vineyards that dot the lands north of Corentyn.

Not all of the wood's inhabitants are so overtly dangerous, however. Anferita Wood is known as the birthplace and home of **Tregellus Aranega** (N male human druid of the Green Faith 15), the nearly blind Grand Druid of the Green Faith, a naturalistic order and Golarion's oldest religion. Along with other prominent Green Faith druids who call the forest home, Aranega frequently visits the Great Druids of other forest strongholds. These druids also make an annual pilgrimage to Verduran Forest in Taldor, where they attend an important summer solstice gathering called the Moot of Ages. Anferita Wood is additionally the rumored location of an ancient grove of trees that is home to a community of dryads. For more information on this grove, see the Serenity's Copse entry on page 36.

Arch of Aroden: Once a 15-mile-long bridge over the Hespereth Strait, this monolithic ruin rises several hundred feet above the churning sea. It previously connected Avistan and Garund. Although a third of the ancient structure has since collapsed in the center, it still serves as a dominant visual landmark in the Chelish city of Corentyn, and for sailors as they pass from the relatively safe Inner Sea into the dangerous Arcadian Ocean. Despite this, many perils lurk here, some originating from the utmost depths of the Hespereth Strait. For more information on the Arch of Aroden, see page 43.

Barrowood: As the source of rare and lucrative timber, this dense forest in the center of Cheliox is a valuable economic resource, but it is also a place steeped in political significance. Before Aroden's death, the Barrowood was the site of Iomedae's third miraculous act, which involved slaying Segruchen the Iron Gargoyle, the forest's self-styled king. Further, and much more relevant to modern-day Chelaxians, it is rumored that Queen Abrogail I made her pact with Asmodeus in the Barrowood's Winter Grove (see page 41).

Outside of such infamous uses, the Barrowood is home to all manner of fey, including both wicked and decent creatures. The most notable concentration of the latter is in the oasislike settlement of Everpine (see page 21). Diabolic influences also permeate the woods, most notably in the wildlife that has seemingly taken on a fiendish taint. Beyond these darker elements,



the forest is said to host a small elven settlement, a secluded and mysterious druid enclave, and a hidden, under-construction Hellknight redoubt.

Built by the Order of the Scourge, which is based in Citadel Demain near Egorian, this half-built Hellknight keep is said to be the knightly order's planned place of retreat should House Thrune ever turn against the Hellknights.

Belde: Geographic isolation and a measure of political unrest mark this hardy town, which is the administrative capital of the Archduchy of Hellcoast. Situated on the banks of the Maiestas River, between the Barrowood and the Menador Mountains, Belde is the hometown of **Paraduke Marcellus Thurivan** (NE male human fighter 8), an ally of House Thrune who nominally rules Hellcoast. Some of the region's stubborn people don't recognize Thurivan's authority, however, because they see him as simply a weak thrall of House Thrune. In recent years, many have flouted his laws and spurned his tax collectors. In response, Thrune has loaned him a devil to bolster the military response he is openly planning to unleash on the unrest. So far, the region's streets remain free of the paraduke's soldiers, but Thurivan is a cruel man; many say he is actually planning the widespread extermination of dissenters instead of strikes to quell

the largest pockets of unrest. Regardless, if Thurivan doesn't regain tighter control on Belde and Hellcoast in general, most believe that Egorian will soon replace him and punish him—harshly—for his failures.

Blackcove: This quiet village along the shores of the Hellmouth Gulf is home to descendants of the ancient Azlanti survivors of Earthfall. Woven into their blood is an aquatic gift that causes some villagers to develop gill slits and webbed digits. As they mature, these villagers become gillmen who guide great schools of fish into their fellow citizens' welcoming nets; periodically, though, the gillmen heed a mysterious summons and disappear without a trace. A darker secret permeates this special heritage: it traces to the abhorrent skum, who in turn answer to the insidious aboleths. For more information on Blackcove, see *Pathfinder Module: From Shore to Sea*.

Blackridge: This town is located in Devil's Perch, a mountainous region notorious as the home of the dangerous winged humanoids called the strix. When Blackridge was founded in circa 4700 AR, it was little more than a camp for Chelish miners who hoped to exploit mineral deposits in the Menador Mountains. Chelish interest in the region piqued dramatically in 4711 AR, though, when prospectors found a rich silver lode called Sorvus's Strike near Crackspike. Several grim

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battles ensued between the winged folk and the Hellknights of the Order of the Gate.

After much bloodshed, an uneasy truce emerged, and Cheliox's prospectors have since poured resources into Blackridge. Key to the agreement is **Parsellon Alterras** (N male human aristocrat 3), the governor of Devil's Perch, who lives in and leads from Blackridge, and was one of three to approve a treaty between the Chelaxians and the strix. The agreement is explicit that for 100 years and 1 day, the Chelaxians are free to mine the silver strike, but the strix carefully watch while to ensure that the humans do not encroach on strix hunting grounds. Should these terms be violated, fierce strife between the miners and the strix no doubt would arise again.

Bog Rock: The waters around this small islet in Hellmouth Gulf are home to a monster that frightens Chelish children and sailors alike: the cerberus worm. An enormous, three-headed sea creature with snaking tentacles protruding from its belly and wreathed in poisonous mists, the cerberus worm is not spotted often, but sightings tend to coincide with major shipwrecks or vessels that are otherwise mysteriously lost in the gulf.

Some say the cerberus worm is the reason the gulf's waters smell sulfurous, and that the beast is the product of a nefarious deal House Thrune made with an archdevil. These rumors claim that House Thrune strategically uses the creature to take out the ships of merchants and others who run afoul of the throne. For their part, the Thrunes have never denied this story. However, the cerberus worm's presence in the gulf is inexplicable; even Thrune has no idea what spawned it and why, although that hasn't stopped the nobles or their enemies from studying the creature intensely, hunting for its lair in the gulf and even unsuccessfully seeking its spawn in hopes of capturing one.

A particularly ambitious researcher from Corentyn named **Auldi Finlay** (NE female human druid [aquatic druid^{APG}] 6) has even set up an outpost on Bog Rock in hopes of learning more about the creature. Her motivations, however, are not entirely scholarly. Finlay hopes to discover a way to either destroy the creature or repel it once it has engaged a ship—information she hopes that merchants and other sea travelers will pay for handsomely.

For the statistics of the cerberus worm, see page 58.

Brastlewark: Perhaps the largest gnome settlement in the Inner Sea region, Brastlewark, located near the headwaters of the Brastle River, teems with the zest and unmitigated chaos that defines the gnome experience. Its layout is a tangled mess of uncoordinated streets and haphazard, multistory buildings with clashing architectural styles. The gnomes' desire for constant change ensures that the city's look undergoes perpetual

BRASTLEWARK

CN large town

Corruption +2; **Crime** -1; **Economy** +1; **Law** +2; **Lore** +3; **Society** -3

Qualities academic, prosperous, rumormongering citizens

Danger +5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 3,500 (3,450 gnomes, 50 other)

Notable NPCs

King Drum Thornfiddle (CN male gnome wizard 5/ alchemist^{APG} 3)

Master Brewer Trini Spriggle (N female gnome alchemist^{APG} 7)

Zarzu "The Crow" Greenspun (CG male gnome investigator^{ACG} 5)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 2,600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 15,000 gp;

Spellcasting 6th

Minor Items 3d4; **Medium Items** 2d4; **Major Items** 1d4

experimentation and modification. The gnomes of Brastlewark are known throughout the Inner Sea region as consummate architects and engineers. Partly in exchange for free access to the useful services of these professions, the Chelish authorities meddle little with the city, though it's rumored that Thrune spies routinely visit to determine how much influence, if any, foreign enemies have gained here.

The more nuanced reason that House Thrune largely leaves Brastlewark to its own devices involves the city's king, Drum Thornfiddle. In the early days of House Thrune's ascension, Thornfiddle pledged his city's loyalty and resources in exchange for its relative autonomy—and a place as Brastlewark's Thrune-backed ruler, of course. As a result, much of the city's vaunted expertise, particularly that of its prestigious alchemy and arcane academies, is devoted to Her Majestrix's pet projects and those of her agents, and Thornfiddle is a shameless Thrune vassal. It is widely suspected that the king also promised a future favor to the nation's rulers, who could come to collect their sinister dues at any time. The city remains abuzz—in fact, an entire complex wagering system is in play—regarding what Queen Abrogail II might demand, and how the citizens should react when she does. Needless to say, opinions vary widely, and every few months frenetic rumors emerge that the queen has secretly decided Brastlewark's fate from her throne room in Egorian. None of these rumors have ever turned out to be true.

King Thornfiddle's pandering to the throne has earned him the gratitude of some of the city's gnomes,

who see the wisdom in keeping Thrune appeased, and the enmity of others, who think the arrangement dangerous and ill conceived. Falling into the latter category is Master Brewer Trini Spriggle, who oversees the Academe Alcheme, the city's prestigious alchemy school, and is Brastlewark's top-ranking scholar. Calculating and logical, the master brewer looks for ways to undermine King Thornfiddle's authority; her ultimate aim is an independent, self-sufficient Brastlewark, but she understands that such radical political changes take time. For now, Spriggle is content to build a network of secretly loyal architects, engineers, alchemists, sorcerers, and wizards, particularly in Academe Alcheme, as well as in Sorcere Laude and Tinkerer Tech, the city's schools of sorcery and clockwork, respectively. Spriggle knows that she can never have too many allies, for the time to act, she believes, is nigh.

In addition to its superior academies, Brastlewark is known for its creation of alchemical items, material spell components, and clockwork devices. The city trades these lucrative goods throughout the Inner Sea region. King Thornfiddle carefully oversees all exports, ensuring his taxes and Thrune's are paid but also quietly advancing Her Majestrix's trade interests. Despite this, activity in Brastlewark's black markets booms thanks to an individual most citizens know only as the Crow. The man behind the pseudonym is Zarzu Greenspun, who can find or sell nearly any valuable gnome-made oddity—for a price.

Greenspun cultivates his anonymity both because his work is highly illegal, and because he also runs a covert anti-Throne organization. Despite his reputation as an unambitious, though devious, money-grubber, the Crow is truly a freedom fighter who believes that Thrune treachery is imminent and that the city must avoid it at all costs. His underground resistance movement, called the Midnight Flock, offers assistance to any gnome on the run from the Chelish authorities or King Thornfiddle. Knowing that the slightest misstep could bring the Midnight Flock and his entire black-market trade crashing down, Greenspun employs a series of complex tactics to keep his dealings secret, including a system of code words, rotating safe houses, and magical alleys that can whisk individuals to safety with an uttered password.

Recently, Greenspun has caught wind of Master Brewer Spriggle's secession desires, and he has been trying to arrange a discreet meeting. Should these two clandestine dissidents begin collaborating, it could spell major trouble for King Thornfiddle—and if rebellion eventually breaks out in Brastlewark, Cheliox would be cut off from many valuable gnome resources.

Ciricskree: Situated deep in the heart of Devil's Perch, high in the Menador Mountains, Ciricskree is the largest strix settlement in the Inner Sea region—

and perhaps on all of Golarion. Ciricskree roughly translates to "Shrieking Spire" in the strix's native tongue, and it is well named, as the settlement is most densely populated at its highest altitude, and the cacophony of strix voices there truly sounds like screeches. This winged race notoriously hates humans and brooks no Chelish incursion upon the settlement, particularly because the strix are fiercely protective of their few precious offspring.

Daily life in Ciricskree is insular and regimented, but the strix are loving and polite to each other. Despite all the tales otherwise, they truly wish to live in undisturbed peace. Very few humans have ever visited Ciricskree and returned to tell the tale. The settlement is rumored to be governed by a circle of *rokoa*, or women elders, called the Six, who make all major decisions and handle communication with other strix settlements. They are said to strongly support violence in all cases that involve humans who have violated their sovereignty or, far worse, murdered one of their precious kin.

Citadel Darvhage: Once a shining keep of limestone and marble on the northern shore of Lake Sorrow, Citadel Darvhage was blasted to rubble more than 50 years ago. The Hellknight branch that occupied it, the Order of the Vice, was also destroyed in the attack. To this day, despite powerful magical inquiries on the part of House Thrune, it remains unclear who or what was behind the assault. All the authorities know for certain is that the Order of the Vice primarily concerned itself with assessing and combating threats against Cheliox from the Great Beyond.

Most theorize that some such alien entity was behind the attack, and the curious lack of evidence—the citadel's grounds were littered with Hellknight bodies, but not a single enemy corpse or weapon remained—supports this idea. Wise travelers now avoid the citadel, and those who pass close enough to its grounds report bright flashes of green light coming from the site at night. There are even recent reports of grotesquely warped animals that wander near the citadel—bears with lion heads and vestigial wings, for instance. Needless to say, the citizens of nearby Dekarium are growing ever more nervous that a fell force originating from the citadel might soon descend upon them.

Citadel Demain: The modern-day home of the Order of the Scourge is also the keep that housed the original order of Hellknights. Located in the heart of Cheliox near Egorian, Citadel Demain has a bloody history. In 4635 AR, the Order of the Pyre besieged it for nearly 2 weeks, causing the Order of the Thorn to lose more than half its numbers, including its lictor. Hellknights from the Orders of the Chain and Scourge rushed to end the attack. Seeing defeat was imminent, the Order of the Pyre set fire to Citadel Demain, destroying half of

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the fortress and killing most of the remaining members of the Order of the Thorn. For a while, the smoldering ruins became the domain of ash hags (see page 57) and hellfire ignises (see page 62), and Citadel Demain was little more than a scorched wound on Chelish pride.

Four years later, the Order of the Scourge cleared out the monsters, and then reconstructed and expanded Citadel Demain, which it turned into its headquarters. This ushered in the keep's modern use, and its facilities now include huge meeting halls that host Hellknight leaders during the knighthood's rare conclaves. Although the Order of the Scourge has no special influence over the other orders, its keep's features have instilled in its members a sense of stewardship; the Order of the Scourge's lictor, **Toulon Vidoc** (LN male human rogue 2/fighter 4/Hellknight^{ISWG} 7), carefully watches House Throne for signs of treachery against the Hellknights. Further, rumors hold that the Order of the Scourge has long labored in secret to create an underground passage between Citadel Demain and a redoubt in the Barwood as insurance should Cheliox turn on the Hellknight orders.

Citadel Enferac: Home to the reclusive Order of the Gate, Citadel Enferac is where most Hellknight signifers are trained, and is the most mysterious of Hellknight keeps. A portion of the fortress rises upon the slopes of Mount Nyisaid in the Menador Mountains. The majority of the citadel, though, lies within the peak, spread throughout great caverns and claustrophobic halls, protected by impregnable stone walls and potent spells. The smoke of untold forges, laboratories, and strange devices rises from the fortress like eerie pennants, while spiked towers and precarious walkways mar the higher slopes. An iron Hellknight statue stands at the mountain's summit, guarding an entryway for flying visitors.

Many believe that inhuman hands originally constructed Citadel Enferac, and that the Hellknights of this order owe a deep debt to an unforgiving master. Perhaps related, the bowels of the keep are rumored to house a pit to an unknown realm where the order's most hated prisoners are sent, never to return. Vicarius **Giordano Torchia** (LE male human wizard 11/Hellknight^{ISWG} 2) depends on magic and extraplanar allies to prevent great crimes before they are even considered. The order's uncanny effectiveness—and the fact that Torchia is almost never seen without an iron mask that obscures his whole face—has led many to speculate about the foul alliances that the Order of the Gate might have made.

Citadel Gheisteno: One of the most shameful blights on Hellknight history is Citadel Gheisteno. During the Chelish Civil War, several bands of ruthless mercenaries wore the unofficial mantle of Hellknights, including the skull-clad butchers who called themselves the Order of the Crux. When House Throne rose to power and

brought the war to an end, the Order of the Crux refused to disband despite its illegitimacy, and so in 4663 AR, Egorian sent the Order of the Scourge to forcibly remove the pretenders. The Order of the Scourge methodically put Citadel Gheisteno to the torch and the matter was considered handled.

However, 25 years later, three graveknights clad in scarred Hellknight armor rose from the ruins. Still calling themselves the Order of the Crux, and led by the poison-shrouded Lictor **Shokneir** (LE male graveknight^{B3} fighter 5/Hellknight^{ISWG} 10), the graveknights rebuilt Citadel Gheisteno nearly exactly to its former glory, save for the addition of a line of charred skulls sitting atop the keep's black walls. By all reports, the graveknights are gathering an army of deathless soldiers whose numbers far exceed those of the original Order of the Crux. The recent disappearance of travelers along the Nidal-Cheliox border suggests that either Lictor Shokneir is unwilling to suffer witnesses to the order's nefarious deeds, or he is hungry to build his numbers in any way possible.



GIORDANO TORCHIA



What the Order of the Crux might be planning to do with its swelling army is anyone's guess.

Citadel Gheradesca: The home of the Order of the Chain doubles as perhaps the most brutal and secure prison in Avistan. The citadel is perched atop a treacherously rocky spear of land near Corentyn and connected to the mainland only during low tide; its other natural defenses include the jagged underwater rocks that surround it, the sea monsters that supposedly feed on the prison's dead, and the wet, sharp stone stairs that one must climb to reach the keep. Lictor **Uro Adom** (LN male human fighter 5/Hellknight^{SWG} 7) has negotiated for imprisonment rights with House Thrune, Nidal, Taldor, Rahadoum, Lastwall, and others, and the order profits handsomely from holding some of the most notorious criminals in the world. The Hellknights of the Order of the Chain are also known as consummate bounty hunters and slave chasers. Unsurprisingly, people whisper that it is easier to escape some places of Hell than to escape from Citadel Gheradesca.

Details about the prison's layout are sparse and heavily guarded, but most generally agree that its cells

stretch deep into the earth and even under the waves. The upper levels are reserved for prisoners with temporary sentences or whose crimes were relatively minor—of course, the prisoners or their families often must pay for the privilege of living on these floors, and prisoners who cannot make these payments risk less than kind treatment, not to mention loss of even the most minor privileges. The lower levels become progressively more dour, strict, and punitive, with the deepest cells reserved for the most powerful and dangerous criminals. Everything from extradimensional torture chambers to rooms that can be filled with mind-altering alchemical gases are said to keep these malicious offenders compliant, although it is rumored that more than a few individuals find themselves in this barbarous place unfairly. The Order of the Chain doesn't wish to hold prisoners unlawfully, though, and would no doubt consider compelling release arguments should any advocates be willing to brave the citadel.

Citadel Krane: This seaside fortress, home to the Order of the Pyre, is known as the only Hellknight citadel that hosts its own fleet of warships. The site coils around a natural harbor, which serves as a port for its

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nearly three dozen black-sailed vessels. Clad in dark metal and crewed exclusively by lightly armored and specially trained Hellknights, the ships sail throughout the Inner Sea in the order's quest to quash the corrupting influences of fiendish cults and strange philosophies. In these quests, which often take the form of raids, the Hellknights frequently seize items and artifacts that either defy destruction or hold the potential to be turned on their blasphemous creators. To hold them, the order has created a museum called the Godless Gallery, which exists as much to protect its members from the items' corrupting influence as to keep them out of the hands of evildoers.

In addition to its specially trained Hellknight sailors, the order employs the Hellknights with strong esoteric knowledge and research skills. These Hellknights spend the majority of their time pouring over descriptions and data extracted from the artifacts in the Godless Gallery, and writing recommendations for how to handle the most dangerous pieces. Priestly signifiers also guard the collection, granting access only to Lictor **Rouen Stought** (LN female human ranger 6/Hellknight^{ISWG} 4) and her immediate subordinates, who provide the scholars with the information they need.

The order's rigid work has made it many powerful enemies, and some say these villains collude on plans to overtake the citadel and unleash the power of the Godless Gallery on the world. A collection of devotees to Rovagug in faraway Casmaron, for instance, is openly plotting a siege of Citadel Krane—and sacrificing untold numbers of innocents to their chaotic god in exchange for the power they will need to bring the Order of the Pyre to its knees.

Citadel Rivad: Originally an outpost for Taldan traders, Citadel Rivad was converted into a Hellknight keep sometime before 4580 AR. It has since housed the Order of the Scourge, which relocated to Citadel Demain in 4639 AR, and the Order of the Rack, which occupies it today. The citadel is the most esteemed Hellknight keep in existence. On the surface, it is a model for every Hellknight fortress, with pristine granite walls standing as an embodiment of discipline, mercilessness, and law. However, the citadel still sits on the foundations of an ancient Taldan trading post, and many claim that winding passages, elaborate catacombs, and even stranger features are hidden within the keep's secret subbasements. The Order of the Rack is known for housing tomes of dangerous lore and heretical scrolls, and some say an entire spectral library—to which the Hellknights may or may not have access—lies underneath the keep.

The Rack's lictor, **Richemar Alamansor** (LE male human fighter 7/Hellknight^{ISWG} 7) is nearing retirement age and is searching for a successor who can continue the order's success while also keeping its secrets and threats

in check. Most believe he favors Paravicar **Darcyne Wrens** (LN female human sorcerer 8/Hellknight^{ISWG} 1) for the job. Others whisper that the strange forces originating from the citadel's subterranean depths are slowly infiltrating the Hellknights' ranks, subtly pushing for a lictor they could control. These theories involve powerful outsiders who have stolen the identity of several murdered Hellknights and are living among the Order of the Rack's numbers, waiting to enact a coup through this new leader.

Cliffs of Fury: At first glance from the sea, these rocky, jagged cliffs seem devoid of any human life. However, hidden from view in narrow, winding inlets, several tiny fishing villages dot this sparse countryside. This area's most insidious hazards originate from these towns—they are crews of "wrackers," or murderous sailors who lure ships traveling through the night into shallow, treacherous waters, slaughter the shipwrecked survivors, and salvage any valuable cargo. Moving swiftly from village to village, these crews blend in seamlessly with the locals. Most are sons and daughters of the area, and many villagers are more than willing to turn a blind eye to such crimes when they affect foreign entities, or even better, the wealthy Chelish elite.

Of all the wracker crews, perhaps the most notorious is the group that calls itself Ren's Ravagers, led by Wiscrani exile **Ren Berroni** (CN female human brawler^{ACG} 6). Berroni has amassed a massive trove of highly valuable plunder, which she keeps in a cavern accessible only by sea. Further, there are darker rumors about the reason for her band's effectiveness, including that her crew members have fiendish origins and are occasionally aided by an evil progenitor. Thanks to Ren's cautiousness, no one knows for certain, but the few living witnesses to her raids report that her crew members can climb the jagged cliffs unnaturally fast, and that their fingers and toes end in disturbingly sharp, talonlike claws.

Collapsed Halls: More than 400 years ago, this area was the site of the Halls of Zuberi, the extravagant castle home of the mistress of a wealthy Osirian merchant. The complex has long since fallen into ruin, and now the place is an eerie shadow of its former self: the tall sandstone walls have collapsed, the hall's beautiful stonework is weathered and unrecognizable, and the black, greasy vines and fungus that cover the grounds seem to choke the life from the site. Calling the ruined castle home is a blighted huldra named Lenira Re, who seeks to spread corruption far beyond the site's crumbled walls. For more information on the Collapsed Halls, see page 44.

Corentyn: Originally a military outpost, the city of Corentyn is surrounded by 50-foot-high limestone walls that connect to the Arch of Aroden, which forms the city's western border. Corentyn trades with nearly all

nations and major cities in the Inner Sea region, and its control of the Arch of Aroden—and by extension, Chelixa's—allows it to heavily tax movement through the Hespereth Strait. For all its wealth, however, Corentyn is deeply beholden to Egorian's nobles.

Corentyn is the capital of the Archduchy of Longmarch, and its affiliation with Thrune is strong, as mayor Archheathen **Kettermaul Charthagnion** (NE male human aristocrat 5/fighter 2) ensures. Also strong, however, is its criminal element, which halflings dominate. The short folk run the local thieves' guild and are known for their hard work in the city's docks and shipyards, garnering them more respect in Corentyn than elsewhere in the diabolic country, where they are largely enslaved.

Perhaps ironically, Corentyn is a major hub for the international slave trade. The Order of the Chain Hellknights, based in nearby Citadel Gheradesca, ensure that transactions remain orderly and lawful. Overwhelming naval fortifications ensure that the city remains well protected from Andoren warships. With these measures firmly in place, the slave trade is considered safe and secure behind Corentyn's walls. Any challenge of authority is so harshly punished here, where diabolists rule and devils walk the city, that most don't even try.

Corentyn is known as the City of Nine Forts, although the name is inaccurate; the city actually boasts well over a dozen reinforced buildings, and fortifications around and within Corentyn have repelled invaders for millennia. The city is fully detailed on pages 14–23 in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Cities of Golarion*.

Crackspike: Twenty-five years ago, the strix of Devil's Perch sent a bold message to the Chelish mining prospectors who periodically arrived in their domain in the Menador Mountains: travel too close to strix territory, and you will meet a swift death on black wings from above. To punctuate their point—and some say in retaliation for an attack on a strix encampment—the winged folk massacred a small group of miners, picked their bones clean, and weaved them into an elaborate tower. It became a strix summer roost and a stark, gruesome warning for others who might try to encroach on strix territory.

The message worked for a time, but 4 years ago, prospectors discovered the silver lode called Sorvus's Strike about 2 miles northwest of Crackspike. Strix and miners once again entered a state of open warfare, but this time, the Chelaxians and winged folk negotiated a truce. Now, mining happens on a limited basis with the strix's wary approval. That doesn't mean the strix trust the Chelaxians, however; the strix refuse to disassemble the ghoulish Crackspike, even though they no longer use it as a roost. Some say this is because of its proximity to the mining activities, but others say the strix now avoid

the tower because a terrible, incorporeal psychic power has claimed the tower as its own.

Deepmar: A small island about 75 miles off Chelixa's northern coast, Deepmar is the site of a small Chelish penal colony. The island is only 30 miles across at its widest point. Thick forests and wild meadows blanket the land not used for the colony, which sits on the island's southern coast. The prisoners at the colony harvest the island's valuable crystals for use as arcane foci for various diabolic spells.

Although the existence of Deepmar barely registers in the consciousness of Her Infernal Majestrix, it provides invaluable services that would be sorely missed should danger befall the prisoners—or, for that matter, should they find a way to overthrow their jailers. A detailed description of Deepmar can be found in *Pathfinder Module: No Response from Deepmar*.

Dekarium: This hardy town, situated between the Tomarsulk River and the Barrowood, is known for its talented fisherfolk as well as its high frequency of fey bloodline sorcerers. These magic-users give Dekarium a mischievous reputation, and many river travelers who find themselves stopping here for the night walk away baffled that such a seemingly carefree population could thrive in dour Chelixa, particularly so close to Egorian, the very heart of the infernal empire.

For their part, the townspeople seem to brush over the fact that diabolism is the law of the land, as they prefer to tell whimsical stories of their past as free-form revelers. Some of these tales, such as those that say the town was founded by the offspring of nereids, may have a hint of truth to them. The town's mayor, **Lalita Jireen** (CN female human expert 3/sorcerer 2), is skilled at tempering these rumors when around the Chelish elite—and in paying timely tithes to House Thrune, which so far has believed her when she loudly proclaims among loyalists that she is devoted to the crown. Among her own element, she freely encourages such speculation, and like many of townspeople she quietly worships Gozreh. Locals worry, however, that should the fell forces at the ruined Citadel Darvhage descend upon the town, Egorian may yet take the rumors about Dekarium and Jireen to heart and refuse to send help.

Devil's Perch: Most of Chelixa, especially its leaders, was content to ignore this rocky, sparsely populated region for most of the nation's history. After all, the infertile land was most notable as the home of both Citadel Enferac, headquarters of the Order of the Gate, and the brutal, winged strix, and neither group particularly appeals to most Chelaxians. However, interest in Devil's Perch rose dramatically around 4700 AR, when rumors surfaced of rich mineral deposits in the Menador Mountains. Chelish prospectors flocked to the region, the strix battled them, and the Hellknights tried to keep peace. Only 4 years ago did a truce between

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the Chelaxians and the strix emerge. However, the stalemate is tenuous; see the Blackridge entry on page 12 for more details.

Aside from the Hellknight citadel and Blackridge, Devil's Perch contains Whisper Creek, a village halfway between the capital and Crackspike, which is a gruesome bone tower the strix built to scare away prospectors. The region is also home to Ciricskree, the largest strix settlement in the Inner Sea, and the strix village of Windspire. Additionally, although effectively not part of Cheliox because of its current state of open rebellion, the nearby city of Pezzack is considered by some to be part of Devil's Perch. Many of the region's human residents have a measure of sympathy for the Pezzacki cause, particularly those radicals who believe that the mineral-rich province would function better independently, or at least that it should escape Thrune's long reach.

Dismal Nitch: Mists seem to constantly hug this forlorn northwestern coast, and the bay itself is lined with jagged, treacherous reefs. The shoreline consists of rugged hills, leaving few areas for safe harbor and little access to the interior from the shore. This area is the subject of numerous stories about ghost ships, sea serpents, and flesh-eating merfolk. This is all to the advantage of the aquatic elves, who have long used their magic and trickery to give Dismal Nitch its fearsome features, in order to keep a length of land safe and secure for Acisazi, one of their rare coastal villages (see page 11).

East Rikkan: The small port town of East Rikkan along the River Adivian is one of the two settlements known collectively as the Rikkan Ports, named for the Rikkan Falls just west of this town; Westpool is the second (see page 40 for more information). North of mighty Westcrown, both port towns exist because the Adivian River's strong currents and the nearby Rikkan Falls make travel up- and downstream difficult. Both towns boast many taverns, inns, goods, and hirelings to help merchants move products along the river. East Rikkan is the smaller and scrappier of the two towns, with a hardy population of locals who see House Thrune's rule as overly intrusive and generally bad for their business of trade and travel. Boatswain **Mishel Fishersmith** (N male human rogue 4), who helms the most lucrative ferrying business in East Rikkan, is the town's uncontested leader. Despite his executive responsibilities, he stubbornly clings to the title he held as a sailor when he settled here 30 years ago.

Imperial forces largely ignore East Rikkan, preferring to focus on the Westpool, where they believe that dissent and the risk to Thrune are greater. However, discontent with the crown is growing in East Rikkan due to continually rising imperial taxes, which keep merchants from spending money on the town's services and are slowly eroding residents' livelihoods. Further, and perhaps more inexplicably, many more tieflings than

usual have begun arriving in East Rikkan looking to find work. In reality, this has been a coincidence, but many in East Rikkan are convinced that the tieflings are spies for the government. More than a few residents have suggested that Boatswain Fishersmith should bar the devil-spawn from town and push back against Thrune by any means possible.

Egobarius Plain: This wide expanse of rolling, grassy land is bordered by Westcrown to the south, the Barrowood to the north, Lake Sorrow and Egorian to the northeast, and the Adivian River to the east. Since water hazards make travel on the Adivian difficult, the plain is also home to a surprisingly well-worn road that stretches between Westcrown and Egorian. Thanks to the plain's sparse population, banditry is rife along this path. Smart merchants hire protection in the form of adventurers, or if they are particularly wealthy or well connected, small teams of Hellknights from the Order of the Scourge, which relishes stamping out any such lawlessness. Once in a great while, the Order of the Scourge even sweeps the road and its surrounding area, massacring the bandit camps that fester there.

In addition to isolated pockets of roving thieves, Egobarius Plain is home to several small, nomadic bands of centaurs. Organized in ancient and insular tribes, the centaurs barely register Thrune's iron hold on the rest of Cheliox, instead preferring to focus on the complex intertribal politics of the plain. The largest tribe, the Swifthooves, is led by **Menamyn Vox** (CG female centaur fighter 5), who occasionally takes in and protects survivors of the most brutal caravan attacks along the road. Many of the centaurs who have sought to make lives outside of the tribes have become Hellknights; Menamyn's own sister, Maidrayne Vox, has risen through the ranks to become the Mistress of the Blades for the Order of the Nail, based in Varisia's Citadel Vraid.

Egorian: Once just a sleepy fishing village along Lake Sorrow, Egorian became Cheliox's capital when Queen Abrogail I ascended to the Chelish throne in 4640 AR. Styled as the City of Thorns, the capital of the Archduchy of the Heartlands is now a monument to House Thrune's power and influence; it is the center of a new empire with dark new allegiances. Literally and figuratively, it is far from the nobles and divine history of Westcrown, Cheliox's former capital. Ignorant foreigners think of it as the closest place to Hell on Golarion, but Egorian is actually much like any other bustling city, although its infernal influences permeate many of its features and the Church of Asmodeus looms large.

Before the Thrune Ascendancy, Egorian was a typical Chelish city with twisting, organic roads. When Egorian became the empire's new capital, however, the crown embarked on an urban renewal program to remake the city in its own orderly and infernal image. Four

wide boulevards now extend from the central Thrune Square, and severe, red-and-black buildings dominate many of the city's districts, courtesy of the Egorian School of architecture. The city's Midnight Temple to Asmodeus is the seat of the Prince of Darkness's church in the Inner Sea region, and its opera house caters to residents' love for dark and brutal stagecraft. The fragrant jewel known as Blackrose Garden boasts hundreds of black, thorny roses, said to have changed in color from white overnight when Aroden vanished and left the nation in chaos.

Beyond the city's most obvious visual features, the enormous slave market in the district of Whipcrack teems with suffering halflings as well as industries and businesses with constant labor needs. Whipcrack also houses the stadium that holds pageants and blood sports, drawing crowds from across Cheliah. The city's poor sprawl across several districts, including Cheapside and Trick Alley, while the wealthy patriots of the Triumph

district embrace their rulers wholeheartedly. Nowhere is this more evident than Triumph's towering bronze statue of Abrogail I; it depicts the queen climbing a stairway comprising adoring humans and devils on her way to assume her throne.

At the other end of the spectrum, in Cheapside, the criminal gang known as the Goatherds runs amok. Specializing in theft, loan sharking, and other petty crimes, its leader, a strange man named Zandros the Fair, has many physical hallmarks of a hellspawn, but he is instead a human who simply crossed the wrong Varisian witch. Regardless, following his nickname, Zandros is a fair but brutal leader who collects his debts in coins or body parts; he typically favors ears when his debtors cannot otherwise pay. Other unscrupulous groups include beggars who inflict facial mutilations on themselves in hopes of eliciting pity and higher donations. They sometimes work with the city's worshipers of Zon-Kuthon, who encourage their gruesome behavior.

Most members of Egorian's municipal leadership spend a great deal of time placating the Thrunes and balancing the other great houses against each other while simultaneously trying to run the city. Egorian's duxotar, Marcellano Ratarion, enjoys a measure of popularity for his ability to root out corruption in the imperial bureaucracy, though he has the unenviable task of trying to keep the city guard out from under the thumb of the Order of the Scourge Hellknights, whose local commander is Paralictor Ivo Elliendo. The city's lord-mayor, Grachus Alazario, is a master of centrist politics. He manages to move the ongoing urban renewal campaign forward just fast enough to keep the palace happy while bureaucratically sabotaging enough unpopular projects to keep the citizens' anger in check. Vastly more powerful than any of them is Grand High Priestess Aspexia Rugatonn, who leads Cheliah's official religion from Egorian and is one of the most powerful clerics of Asmodeus in the Inner Sea.

Overseeing the entire churning city and nation is the founding monarch's granddaughter, Queen Abrogail II, who rules from the Imperial Palace. Surrounding her are fiend-infused golems (see page 60), who protect her unfailingly, and her hellish advisors, including an erinyes named Lrilantha, and a pit fiend named Gorthoklek who is also an emissary to Asmodeus. Despite the powerful fiend at her side, those close to the queen report that it is truly she who controls Cheliah and its policies. Some even say that Gorthoklek reins in Abrogail's worst impulses, though what those could be in such a brutal land, it's difficult to say.

For more details on Egorian, see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #106: For Queen and Empire*.

Eismonts: The name of this span of mountains just south of the Maiestas River traces to around 3,100 AR,



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when an explorer named Nialla Eismin traveled extensively in the region, making detailed scholarly notes on the local terrain and naming the range after her family. At that time, Eismin noted a scattered population of trolls roaming through the territory's mountaintops in small gangs. The trolls lacked organization, and Eismin concluded that if they were left alone, the gangs would pose no real threat to travelers or settlers.

But Eismin was wrong. In the years since then, the troll population has more than quadrupled. What's worse, scholars who have dared study these trolls say that a fiendish taint descended upon the four largest tribes sometime within the past several generations. These four tribes now dominate the region politically. Of those, the Frostbite Fang tribe is perhaps the strongest, and its leader, a milky-eyed, hunched monstrosity named **Felnug** (CE male fiendish troll oracle^{APG} 4), claims to speak directly with and for Urxehl, demon lord patron of trolls.

Many speculate that the Eismont trolls control a vast hoard of wealth stolen from the explorers and adventurers they have waylaid over the years. Further, reports of missing settlers from the plains south of the mountains have led some to believe that the trolls are amassing sacrificial victims in advance of some heinous plot. Others believe the missing settlers have joined the trolls willingly, though for what purpose, no one seems to know.

Despite their growing boldness, the trolls still avoid nearby Mistshroud Cliff and the surrounding area. The trolls believe the strange ruins there and the eerie magic emanating from them are cursed, though the reality of the situation is far more complex. For more information on Mistshroud Cliff and the creatures that inhabit it, see pages 29 and 46.

Everpine: Like an oasis nestled into the western Barrowood, Everpine is a commune of goodly fey that's largely set apart from the rest of the mysterious forest and Cheliox at large. Surrounding the several-acre commune on all sides is a copse of particularly ancient trees with thick, protective foliage; the trees grow atop steep, rocky hills that provide a natural buffer against intruders. Within this sheltered area lies a large lake, near which resides a population of dryads, huldras, nymphs, pixies, and other kind creatures. Although most such creatures often live alone or in small groups, Everpine is home to nearly four dozen individuals, who each consider the others family despite their physical differences. Like any family, the fey of Everpine have their spats. They often rib each other and can sometimes treat particularly quirky individuals unfairly. Several creatures have left the commune over the years after feeling mistreated or ganged up on when their ideas didn't match those of the group; one is a huldra named Lenira Re, whose unfortunate situation is detailed on page 44.

EGORIAN

LE metropolis

Corruption +9; **Crime** +2; **Economy** +5; **Law** +11;

Lore +4; **Society** +5

Qualities decadent art, infernal laws, prosperous, racially intolerant (halfings), rumormongering citizens, unholy site (Asmodeus)

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 82,100 (71,500 humans, 7,900 halfings, 1,350 tieflings, 1,350 other)

Notable NPCs

Advisor Lrilantha (LE female erinyes inquisitor 13)

Duxotar Marcellano Ratarion (LE male human fighter 8)

Grand High Priestess Aspexia Rugatonn (LE female human cleric of Asmodeus 19)

Lord-Mayor Grachius Alazario (LE male human bard 4/aristocrat 2)

Queen and Empress of Cheliox Abrogail Thruene II (LE female human sorcerer 16/aristocrat 2)

Paralictor Ivo Elliendo of the Order of the Scourge (LE male human fighter 5/Hellknight^{ISWG} 5)

Zandros the Fair (NE male human rogue 5)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 20,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 150,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

SPECIAL QUALITIES

Decadent Art Egorians enjoy decadent art and brutal stagecraft, including the Theater of the Real, which features the gruesome onstage deaths of the principal actors. This lends an ominous yet cosmopolitan air to the city. (*Society* +4)

Infernal Laws Egorian's laws and legal system are based on the byzantine *Asmodean Disciplines*, which are expansive and attempt to regulate all aspects of public and private life. Many laws go unenforced, however, particularly if bribes are involved. The system allows the government to remove undesirables at a whim and gives citizens an incentive to spy on one another. (*Law* +4; *Corruption* +2)

Unholy Site Egorian is the seat of the Church of Asmodeus's power in the Inner Sea region. Many high-level priests of Asmodeus live here, making it difficult for outspoken adherents of other religions to go about their lives undisturbed. (*Lore* -1; *increase spellcasting by 1 level*)

Beyond the occasional dissenter, the fey in this village are so interconnected that many of the oldest creatures

have absorbed abilities from one another. Everpine's effective leader, **Mistress Vanessil** (NG female nymph druid 3) is said to have a huldra's ability to manipulate luck as well as a pixie's ability to become and remain invisible at will. In truth, the strange abilities of the fey of Everpine may not simply be the result of the large number of like-minded creatures living together in harmony. From its sparkling lake to its magnificent trees to its preternaturally wild growth of vines, moss, and enormous flowers, Everpine retains a powerful connection to the First World. Its resident fey tell stories of ancient days they simply call the Time Before, when their ancestors supposedly used a breach to the First World that was located at the bottom of the village's lake. According to the stories, an even more magnificent First World fey village was once connected with Everpine, and whimsical creatures on both sides of the breach stepped between First World and the Material Plane whenever they wished. The breach also provided the fey of Everpine with unfettered access to the Witchmarket, the roving caravan of merchants and hucksters that peddles all manner of strange and wonderful items, albeit at unconventional prices.

The breach, however, has been closed for generations, and the fey in Everpine and its First World sister village have remained cut off from each other, despite the attempts of Mistress Vanessil and her predecessors to use magical means to reopen it. Whispered rumors from the few individuals who have become aware of Everpine's existence indicate that the mistress has actually determined how to reopen the breach via some sort of ritual she's created, but that she simply lacks the material components to complete the task. Regardless, for the first time in Everpine's recent history, fey have wandered from the village and into the forest at large on clandestine missions to locate items their mistress needs to connect the settlement and its creatures with their spiritual home.

Unknown to the fey, however, is that these activities have attracted the attention of Cyth-V'sug, the demon lord who has infested the fey of the Fangwood in Nirmathas with a terrible blight. Now, demonic agents look for ways to blight Everpine, in the hopes that it will spread the disease throughout the Barrowood in Cheliox and into the First World itself.

Fields of Chelam: The fertile, rolling plains between the Barrowood and the Whisperwood are dotted with farms and small trade towns. By far the most prominent feature is Hellfire Fortress, the Chelish military headquarters from which General **Arionus Dexter** (LE male human fighter [tactician^{UC}] 9) commands the nation's armies and handles many high-level spying operations. In recent years, Dexter has discreetly sought scouts who can pass into Andoran without trouble—ardently loyal Chelaxians who don't look or sound

Chelish, and who are gifted in the arts of subterfuge and misdirection. It's no secret that Queen Abrogail II views the Birthplace of Freedom's values and break from Cheliox as a personal slight, and that she would go to great lengths to bring it back under Chelish control. Any Chelaxian who could complete the missions in Andoran for Dexter would likely earn a powerful personal favor from House Thrune.

Among the plains' villages and farms, opinions of House Thrune range from ambivalent to wildly and openly supportive, although many locals believe that those who embrace the Church of Asmodeus so enthusiastically are actually carefully placed spies. This theory invites speculation as to how much of Dexter's espionage actually takes place within Cheliox itself, as opposed to abroad as the crown claims.

Ganderhal's Lair: This mysterious stone edifice carved into the side of a mountain is the abode of Ganderhal, a powerful yet disturbed wizard whose murder at the hands of his bitter rival halted his road to lichdom. Ironically, after his death Ganderhal rose anyway, although not nearly in the form he had hoped—he instead became a shadow. His ultimate prize stolen, Ganderhal nonetheless builds alliances and waits for the day when he can enact vengeance on the creature who bested him and thwarted his schemes. For more information on Ganderhal's Lair, see page 45.

Halikarnassos Hills: These undulating hills between the Adivian River and the Cliffs of Fury are rocky, infertile, and sparsely inhabited. Still, a few villages have cropped up in its northern reaches, particularly near the trade road that runs from Egorian to Halmyris. These villages are little more than supply depots for the merchants who trek the road, though recently their leaders have begun petitioning House Thrune for imperial funds to improve the road and the towns' infrastructure. They argue that such renovations would lead to more traffic, increased trade in Halmyris and Remesiana, and therefore more money for the crown all around. They also appeal for more patrols on the road, particularly to protect travelers from the roaming bands of hellfire ignises (see page 62) that terrorize the area.

Particularly vocal in these requests—almost as vocal as he is in his declarations of support for House Thrune—is Councilman Dharven Leese from the hamlet of Nyshire, located directly between Egorian and Halmyris. Some believe he is playing a long game in hopes of ultimately convincing the crown to name him leader of the area; this would place him above the other local politicians with whom the charismatic man often clashes. Others say that his petitioning is true sycophancy borne from his well-documented—and some say unhealthy—obsession with Queen Abrogail II. For more information on Dharven Leese, see the Nyshire entry on page 30.

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Halmyris: During the Chelish Civil War, Halmyris was known as the home to many low-ranking nobles who backed various dissenting political sides, none of them House Thrune's. Once the Thrune Ascendancy took place, in light of Halmyris's rebellious tendencies, Queen Abrogail I gave the settlement an ultimatum: accept a warden from Egorian, who would serve as the town's chief executive and advocate on its behalf in the capital when necessary, or face annihilation. The people chose the former option, and thus began the tradition of the crown installing Chelish military officers as Halmyris's lord-mayor and chief executive. This practice is not without its opposition—many resent the imperial babysitting it implies, and some say the dissenters gain allies daily—but it has led to remarkable peace and prosperity in Halmyris.

Halmyris's current warden and lord-mayor is Admiral **Enfaria Weltrax** (LE female human swashbuckler^{ACG 7}), a retired naval officer whose valiant deeds at sea, particularly against Chelish enemies, have earned her much favor with House Thrune. Cold, efficient, and capable, Weltrax has become bored with her position as warden, as it involves more paperwork than she ever thought possible. She is discreetly lobbying Egorian for a new assignment, or to be released from official duty altogether. Meanwhile, rumors persist that dissident elements in Halmyris are looking for ways to end the wardenship, including, but not limited to, assassinating the admiral. For her part, Weltrax has waved off hearsay of such violent discontent, though if word of substantiated threats ever made it to the queen's ear, the city would likely find itself facing a harsh crackdown indeed.

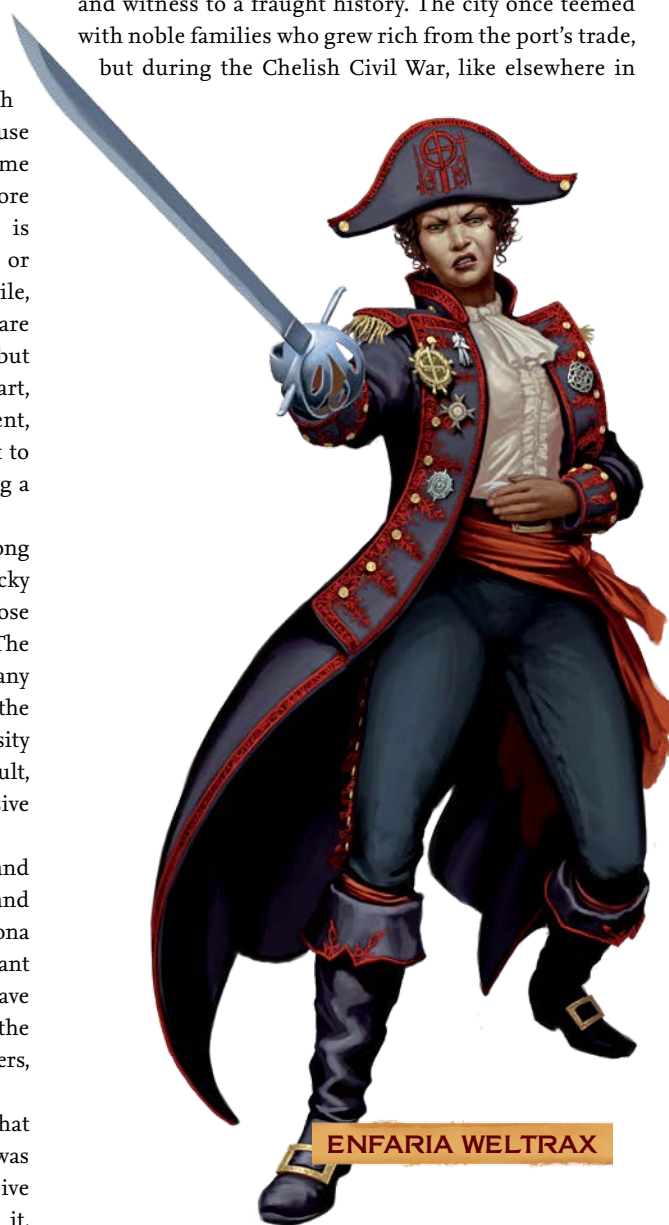
Hellmouth Gulf: This broad body of water along Cheliax's western coast is notorious for its rocky underwater terrain, some of which is dangerously close to the surface and therefore threatening to ships. The gulf is also the home of several large monsters. Many are simple sea serpents, but among their number is the cerberus worm (see page 58), a three-headed monstrosity known to harass sea craft near Bog Rock. As a result, passage through the gulf is difficult and wildly expensive to secure.

Yet vessels must regularly move from Blackcove and other small villages into the wider Arcadian Ocean, and adventurers often seek passage from the Ruins of Narona and other sites from which they have extracted significant treasure. There is much fortune to be had for those brave enough to sail through the gulf. The sulfurous smell of the waters suggests fell influences on the native sea monsters, but that doesn't seem to discourage these endeavors.

Hespereth Strait: A relatively narrow channel that separates Avistan from Garund, the Hespereth Strait was once known as the Straits of Aroden, and the massive bridge known as the Arch of Aroden once spanned it,

although the arch has long since fell into ruin. The business of sailing between Khari and Corentyn is grossly profitable, even after the taxes Thrune imposes. Ships of all types and affiliations traverse the strait, and on any given day, a dozen flags of various nations and organizations might be seen on the water. The cities' harbors, too, are usually crowded, and larceny and sabotaging business rivals are quite common. The Chelish navy patrols the strait heavily, and thieves and troublemakers are mercilessly and often violently punished. Recently, ships have begun disappearing from the strait, but the Chelaxians have so far kept this development relatively quiet while they scramble to figure out who, or what, is behind these incidents.

Hinji: Pristine and orderly at first glance, the coastal city of Hinji is a complex place rife with terrible secrets and witness to a fraught history. The city once teemed with noble families who grew rich from the port's trade, but during the Chelish Civil War, like elsewhere in



ENFARIA WELTRAX



the nation, the nobles turned on each other viciously. After the Thrune Ascendancy, House Thrune allowed loyal nobles to keep their titles and demoted the rest to peasants—or worse.

However, shortly after Abrogail II took the throne, Tareth Ivici, the scion of a dishonored noble family, saw his chance. Proclaiming his praise of Hinji's might and loyalty to the new queen, Ivici worked behind the scenes to build cultish political support and discreetly had his remaining family murdered or exiled. When he was the only living Ivici in Hinji, Tareth petitioned the queen for a noble title and official power in the city. Pleased with his commitment and ruthlessness, she responded twofold and made him lord-mayor of Hinji.

Now, Lord-Mayor Ivici considers himself the queen's right hand, though she would scoff if he made such a claim at court. Nevertheless, the pompous man even claims to keep a devil named Ivirno as an advisor—a gift, he says, from the queen—though some residents of the city say the creature is simply a tiefling in disguise. Ivici frequently clashes with the city's other power players, including Admiral Anabeth Grinceen, who is in charge of Fort Gorthoklek, Hinji's large naval base. One of the admiral's chief complaints about the lord-mayor is that he is oblivious as he rests upon his laurels and is little concerned about the criminal elements that pervade the

city, particularly those that lure the fort's naval officers into acts that compromise their commissions.

In truth, Grinceen has a better point than even she realizes. A powerful hallucinogenic called ice tears has recently become popular in the city; once the purview of bored or distraught nobles, the drug has moved into the city's slums. Now, Ivici Square, the beautiful park north of Fort Gorthoklek, is teeming with homeless addicts. The Sons of the Tear cartel, headed by Zeran Graytooth, grows so wealthy and powerful that it flirts with operating openly, and Hinji's guards have their hands full chasing down dealers while also keeping the homeless population in check. Needless to say, no resources have gone into combating the root of the problem, and most believe the lord-mayor remains blithely unaware of it altogether.

The truth, however, is more sinister. Lord-Mayor Ivici merely feigns ignorance of the ice tears problem as a result of his clandestine arrangement with a group called the Ladies in Gray. Stationed west of the mayor's palace, the ladies purport to operate a charity out of a burned-out section of the city, feeding and clothing the hungry, and weaning addicts off ice tears. In truth, this operation is an elaborate front for a coven of ash hags, who feed off the weakest of their charges; no one, of course, ever notices these quiet disappearances. Whenever the homeless population threatens to overwhelm Ivici

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Square or other prominent areas, the lord-mayor has the offenders rounded up and delivered to the hags, whose true identity only he knows. Of course, should Admiral Grinceen find out about this arrangement and prove its existence to House Thrune, it could spell disaster for Ivici's popularity, and possibly for his relationship with the crown, which would not be pleased at his lack of discretion. For her part, the admiral would be willing to hold an audience with anyone who has concrete proof of the situation and the lord-mayor's involvement.

Jeni River: This small, peaceful waterway is best known for the subversive activity that takes place in the hills surrounding its headwaters. The area is a haven for runaway slaves, mostly halflings, who have escaped their Chelish masters. These refugees live in a tight-knit, nomadic camp that never spends more than 2 weeks in one spot. Over the years, House Thrune has tried numerous methods of finding and punishing the runaways, including soliciting the help of the famed archers of House Narikopolus, the noble and loyal rulers of Kantaria. Not even these renowned archers have found success, however. It's said that the runaways' slipperiness has much to do with their leader, a noblewoman whose entire family supposedly died at the hands of House Thrune in a recent political scuffle. No one is certain to which house she belongs, as she is known only as Alessa—which may or may not be her actual name.

Kantaria: This small town, nestled between the Barrowood and the Menador Mountains, is the capital of the Archduchy of Menador. Its economy relies upon merchant caravans, Nidalese shadow-masters traveling to Egorian, and the trading of minerals and slaves. Its rulers are the Chelish noble family House Narikopolus, which sided with House Thrune during the civil war instead of pursuing its own interests. Some say this was quite fortuitous for the crown, as House Narikopolus produces Cheliox's best archers. Now, the queen regularly calls upon them to fulfill secretive missions that advance her agendas.

Stretching as far back as the 3800s AR, Kantaria has occupied an important place in Chelish history. As her Tenth Act, the mortal Iomedae ruled it—and protected it—for a year and a day while it was under siege. Kantaria is detailed in full in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #104: Wrath of Thrune*.

Khari: The only Chelish city on the continent of Garund, Khari was once a Rahadoumi city, and it still bears many features marking it as such. Its buildings are mostly made from sandstone, and the city's markets are largely open-air, punctuated with colorful stalls and boisterous haggling. At its core, however, Khari is distinctly Chelish, as House Thrune keeps a tight fist on the merchants who sail into its busy harbor. Most citizens consider themselves more Chelish than

HINJI

LN large city

Corruption +5; **Crime** +1; **Economy** +4; **Law** +6; **Lore** +3; **Society** -1

Qualities naval base, notorious, old nobility, prosperous, strategic location

Danger +20

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 14,456 (13,400 humans, 750 halflings, 250 tieflings, 56 other)

Notable NPCs

Cartel Chief Zeran Graytooth (NE male tiefling rogue 4)

Fleet Admiral Anabeth Grinceen (LN female human sorcerer 2/swashbuckler^{ACG} 3)

Lord-Mayor Tareth Ivici (LE male human aristocrat 5/fighter 1)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 14,872 gp; **Purchase Limit** 112,500 gp;

Spellcasting 7th

Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major**

Items 2d4

SPECIAL QUALITIES

Naval Base Hinji is home to Fort Gorthoklek, where the Chelish navy trains new recruits and officers and keeps a standing fleet of ships at the ready. The sailors and ensigns are sometimes customers of the city's notorious ice tears dens, but they also patronize taverns, playhouses, and other venues. (*Corruption* +1; *Society* +1)

Old Nobility Hinji is an old city with many families connected to the old Chelish nobility. Many of these nobles have pledged their loyalty to Thrune, but the city's lord-mayor, a vicious political player, pays handsomely when citizens can prove that members of old families are clandestine enemies of the crown. Spying is rampant here, and false convictions occur frequently. (*Law* +2; *Society* -2)

anything else, though many openly eschew all religions, even the worship of Asmodeus.

The city's lord-mayor, **Marsiol Giovenci** (LE male human aristocrat 3/wizard 2), is an exemplary statesman as well as a known spy for Her Majestrix, including when he takes state trips abroad. Giovenci's diplomatic ties win him favor with the city's most powerful merchants, but there are some—particularly the city's most unscrupulous traders—who wish he would be more open to bribery when it comes to allowing black-market deals in Khari. As it stands, Giovenci harshly and publicly prosecutes anyone who engages in such illicit commerce.



Kintargo: Also known as the Silver City, Kintargo is the capital of the Archduchy of Ravounel, and serves as a popular harbor for ships heading north to Varisia or west to Anchor's End in Arcadia. Unlike many Chelish cities, the infernal influence in Kintargo is relatively subtle. Next to Westcrown, it is the most cosmopolitan and welcoming of Chelias's cities; Kintargo is a cultural bastion notable for its art and entertainment, particularly the Kintargo Opera House, which is widely known throughout Chelias for its productions' quality. Many of these features make Kintargo a natural home for rebels opposed to House Thrune and its diabolic rule. Kintargo is detailed in full on pages 58–73 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #97: In Hell's Bright Shadow*.

Laekastel: Grimy Laekastel is one of Chelias's largest coastal cities, yet its port is not as busy as those of smaller cities such as Ostenso or Vyre. Laekastel is built high on a bluff called the Upland, overlooking the Brastle River and the Bay of Deng, and its viable waterfront is a paltry strip of land along the base of the precipice. Several switchback paths rise from this narrow strip to the Upland, trodden by surly mules that visiting merchants are required to rent. Although Laekastel's

docks primarily serve as wharfs for trading vessels and Chelish naval ships, a raucous collection of pearl divers ply their trade there as well.

The bulk of Laekastel sprawls across the Upland in a chaotic array of markets, towers, and forges. Industry is a key element of Laekastel's economy; a perpetual pall of soot hangs over the Upland, staining the city's buildings a dull black. Laekastel has a higher dwarf population than any Chelish city, and dwarven crafts from Laekastel are in high demand throughout Chelias. The farmers and ranchers of the Sirmium Plains bring their goods to Laekastel's markets to trade for agricultural implements, finished goods, and field slaves. These visitors find Laekastel's sooty air unpleasant and are quick to conduct their transactions and depart.

At Laekastel's north end, an enormous river gate of stone and rusted iron controls passage from the river into the Bay of Deng, primarily so Laekastel's keen-eyed tax collectors can levy tariffs on goods from the gnome town of Brastlewark at the head of the Brastle River. As Laekastel's bombastic mayor, **Barviti Julistarc** (LN female old human bard 9), famously quipped, "We don't need to know what it is to tax it."

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Lake Sorrow: Lake Sorrow is the only freshwater lake of significant size in Cheliox. The Adivian, Sedna, and Tomarsulk rivers all flow into Lake Sorrow, ferrying crystal-clear, mineral-rich water from sources high in the Menador Mountains to the north and west. The lake's banks on the western and southern sides are tall and rocky, exposing rich, nut-brown clay deposits. The eastern edge of the lake opens into a wide and fertile flood plain. Year-round, but particularly when the lake's waters are high following the spring thaw, ancient irrigation channels carry water to the farmlands of the southern Fields of Chelam, known for the hardy and nutritious crops routinely produced there.

In this and many other ways, Lake Sorrow is the lifeblood of Cheliox. Villages and strongholds, including the capital of Egorian and the town of Dekarium, have long ringed it, and two prominent Hellknight fortresses—the bustling and strategically vital Citadel Demain and the ruined Citadel Darvhage—loom over the deep lake's placid waters. Lake Sorrow is a hub of trade and travel; its name comes from numerous tales of fisherfolk who abandoned their families to become wealthy traders across the lake. There is little truth to these stories, but Chelaxians on the lake often consider themselves one lucky catch or lucrative shipment away from a life of wealth and luxury.

Even after many generations of fishing, Lake Sorrow teems with large trout, gars, and various species of bass. In recent decades, reports have surfaced of a strange, serpentine beast lurking in the lake's most remote waters, approaching lone vessels suddenly before seemingly disappearing below the waves. Some believe the creature is a guardian that House Thrune has dispatched to keep an eye on certain travelers and traders, but others claim it's simply a water orm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 280) curious about the increase in lake traffic that's taken place since Egorian became the nation's capital.

Longacre: Longacre is a small town on the southwestern edge of the ominous Whisperwood in Cheliox's heartland. A large number of the town's population are veterans of the Chelish army, many of whom are malcontents traumatized and disillusioned by the harsh reprisals they were forced to inflict on their fellow citizens, and thus are outspoken in their criticism of House Thrune and Cheliox's military policies. In response, they have been mistreated, shunned, and driven into poverty and exile here, and some have even had their names struck from the Chelish military rolls. These former soldiers stoke a pervasive undercurrent of anti-Thrune sentiment in Longacre despite the efforts of its shrewd ruler, Archbaron **Darellus Fex** (LE male human conjurer 12). Longacre is fully detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #103: The Hellfire Compact*.

Lostmast Cape: One of the least-accessible spurs of land on Cheliox's southern coast, Lostmast Cape juts dramatically into the Inner Sea. Navigators often use the cape as a landmark, though few dare to approach it directly, either by land or by sea. From the north, rocky, trackless hills separate the cape from civilization. From the south, submerged reefs studded with jagged rocks surround the cape, as do the wrecks of the many ships that have run aground in these dangerous waters over the years.

Despite the cape's isolation, it has been occupied, if sparsely, for centuries. During the Age of Enthronement, a community of Arodenite priests called the Shinekeepers operated a lighthouse at the cape's southern point. After Aroden's death, followers of Asmodeus seeking a remote monastery supplanted the Shinekeepers, who had seemingly disappeared. The Asmodeans insist that the Shinekeepers, distraught at the severed connection to their god, threw themselves into the sea in a mass suicide, though rumor holds that the truth behind the Arodenites' disappearance is far more sinister.

Regardless, the Asmodeans formed a monastery called the Ecarradata after expanding the lighthouse and renovating its outbuildings. High walls erected around the edifice ensure privacy, and the order keeps the lighthouse dark to avoid drawing attention. The rites that occur in the Ecarradata are not public, though whispered stories of devil summoning for both martial training and lustful cavorting are likely true: in the five generations since the Ecarradata was founded, the number of tieflings who can trace their origins to the monastery has grown substantially.

In 4709 AR, three merchant ships belonging to an Egorian family all ran aground near Lostmast Cape in a storm, with all hands and cargo lost. Blaming the tragedy on the darkened coastline, the family pressured the Church of Asmodeus to restore the lighthouse to use. The incident drew more attention to the monastery than its current abbess, **Lexartath the Devout** (LE female tiefling monk 4/cleric of Asmodeus 3), would prefer, so the monks recently began operating the lighthouse for the first time since Aroden's death.

Macini: Macini is a large port city on Cheliox's southern coast, between Corentyn and Hinji. Macini's active harbors welcome many merchant ships and sailing vessels, although the city's greatest claim to fame is its highly regarded Law Court. The Hall of the Lawgiver, formerly used as Macini's great temple to Abadar, was also famous in the days before the Thrune Ascendancy; since then, however, the hall has become a minor temple to Asmodeus and has declined in prestige. A high proportion of Macinians still remain loyal to Abadar, worshiping in their homes and at smaller shrines scattered throughout the city.

The city's Law Court has its roots in an economic dispute involving salvage and property rights that took place centuries ago. At that time, a ship belonging to one noble family collided in Macini's harbor with a ship that belonged to a second family, and goods from both shipwrecks washed ashore on land that belonged to a third family. Delighting in the legal minutiae of the problem, but mindful that the solution must serve all parties, the magistrates of Macini crafted a well-reasoned apportionment that cemented the city as a bastion of legal expertise.

Today, Macini's magistrates, despite some still being of the Abadaran faith, are experts in even the smallest details of the *Asmodean Disciplines* that form the basis of Chelish law. Unlike the judges in other Chelish cities, who often seek legal loopholes to advance personal agendas, the magistrates of Macini work to preserve their reputations as rational and even-handed arbitrators. Along the southern coast, the phrase "sharp as a Macinian magistrate" praises someone as well reasoned, eloquent, and fair.

However, the city's absolute focus on law sometimes leaves it vulnerable to exploitation. Nearly 3 centuries ago, a veiled master (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary* 56), disguised as a well-loved public figure named Aylana Cantesslu, quietly controlled the city's economy. Adventurers eventually discovered that it had been operating there in various identities since the city's inception. When those curious souls attempted to follow up on evidence that the veiled master had been in contact with others of its kind throughout the Inner Sea region, they vanished without a trace.

Menador Gap: The only passage between the Menador Mountains and the Ravounel Forest, the Menador Gap is quite wide for much of its length. At one point, though, the rugged mountains close upon and constrict the pass, transforming it into a section of narrow, winding roads that cling precariously to the mountainsides. The roads, a product of dwarven engineers during the Age of Darkness, were initially meant to increase trade

traffic through the mountains. At the point where the roads grew the most narrow, the dwarves erected a small but highly defensible gatehouse, known today as Menador Keep (see below). The roads and keep itself are all of sound engineering and remain quite functional to this day.

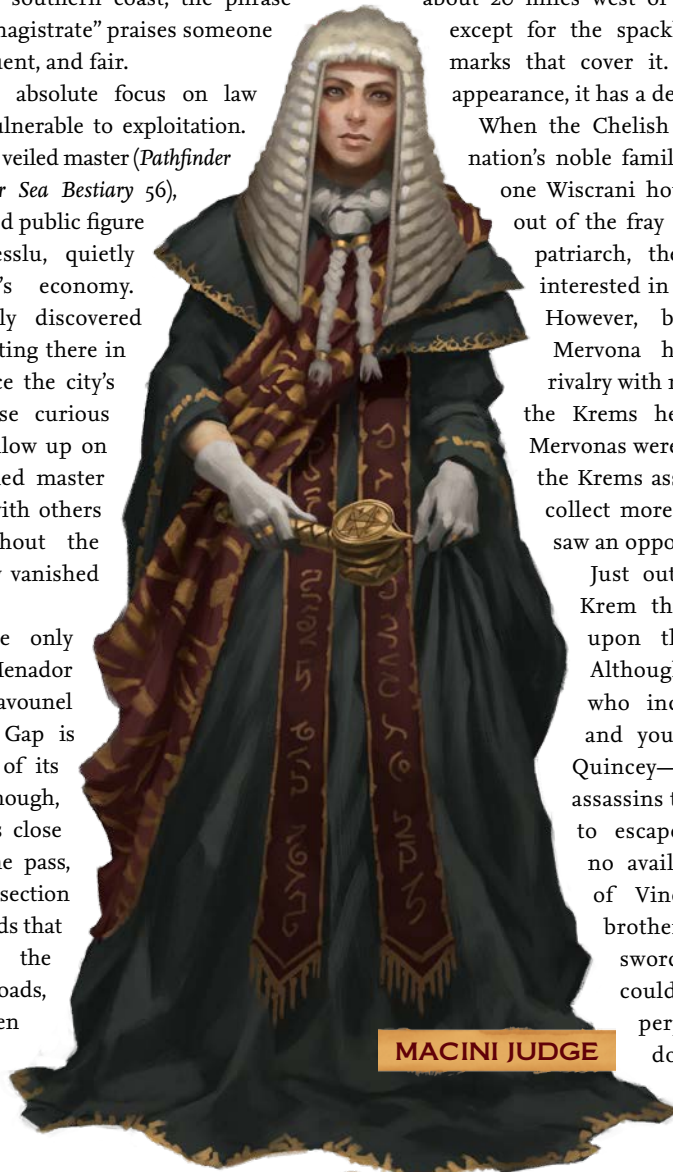
Menador Keep: This dwarven-built gatehouse sits in the Menador Gap, where the Menador Mountains close in tightest on the gap's winding roads. The two-story keep stands in the shadow of an overhanging stone arch that looms over the pass itself, forming a short, narrow tunnel through the mountains. The keep and its large gate serve as a way for the Chelish authorities to heavily tax and regulate all traffic that comes through the mountains. The keep is staffed by soldiers loyal to House Thrune who follow the government's orders without question.

Mervona's Tears: This haphazard rock formation about 20 miles west of Westcrown is unadorned except for the spackles of black, tear-shaped marks that cover it. Despite its unassuming appearance, it has a deep and disturbing history.

When the Chelish Civil War raged and the nation's noble families turned on each other, one Wiscrani house decided to pull itself out of the fray following the death of its patriarch, the only member actually interested in obtaining political power. However, before he died, Vienzo Mervona had established a bitter rivalry with nearby House Krem. When the Kremes heard that the remaining Mervonas were leaving the city for Hinji, the Kremes assumed they were going to collect more allies for their feud, and saw an opportunity to strike.

Just out of sight of Westcrown, Krem thugs suddenly descended upon the departing Mervonas. Although the fleeing clan—who included matriarch Marial and young children Jasmin and Quincey—tried to convince the assassins that they truly just wanted to escape Westcrown, it was to no avail. Not even the presence of Vincenz Mervona, Vienzo's brother and one of the best swordsmen in Westcrown, could fend off the attack, perpetrated by more than a dozen vicious criminals.

The thugs followed their orders to the letter and slaughtered



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every single one of them, even 4-year-old Quincey, as the Mervonas called out to Iomedae in vain.

The Mervonas' distant relatives later found out through painstaking, occult means that this massacre took place at the rock formation now known as Mervona's Tears. For the following 75 years, these relatives have sought a way to attribute the crimes to the Krems, whose titles they want to see stripped. However, no real evidence of the attack exists, and the Krems have time on their side. Further, their current patriarch, **Lukasi Krem** (NE male venerable human aristocrat 4) was a young man when the Mervonas disappeared, and claims that his family had nothing to do with it; rather, he says the Mervonas are still alive under a new family name in Hinji, and are using their influence in Westcrown to persecute his house unfairly.

In recent years, distant Mervona relation and Westcrown resident **Almira Acrina** (LN female venerable human aristocrat 2) has offered her life savings as a reward for adventurers who can prove the Krems' involvement in the long-ago deed. Rumors even persist that the elderly Acrina may actually be a surviving Mervona in disguise, and that the spirit of Vincenz Mervona would be willing to help adventurers bring the murderous family to justice—and grant the Mervonas' tortured spirits some measure of peace.

Misarias: Misarias is a large town on Cheliox's northeastern border with Isgar, and its well-maintained docks see river traffic from both directions. Although Isgar is a vassal state of Cheliox, the Chelish army keeps a large company of troops garrisoned in and around Misarias. The official justification is that these troops must be ready to meet an invasion from the east, but the large, visible force right on the border also serves to keep Isgar in check. In addition, the town is a waypoint for travelers of all sorts, from scouts and diplomats to thieves and brigands.

Bustling with trade, Misarias retains open and cordial relations with Isgeri merchants, many of whom transport goods from wealthy Druma to the north or the dwarven lands to the east. Traders from Molthune or Andoran also operate discreetly in the town, although they take care to present themselves as Isgeri or Druman lest they invite the authorities' scrutiny. Although valuables such as spices, jewelry, and salt are commonly traded here (and shipped down the Iseld River into the Heartlands), Misarias boasts a large market for weapons and armor; many troops stationed in Misarias strive to acquire weapons and armor of dwarven manufacture.

Despite the Chelish military presence in the area, Misarias has a surprisingly high crime rate. Beyond pickpocketing and burglary, which are common in the town, it is rumored that the Molthune Armsrunners keep a base here. Based in Logas in Isgar, the organization smuggles infernal goods back to Molthune, Andoran, and

Galt, and regularly recruits guards, customers, and scouts in Misarias.

Misarias's mayor, a gregarious woman named **Marta Eldeviet** (N female human rogue 8), commands the respect of the army as the granddaughter of a famous general. She secretly orchestrates much of the crime within her city, however, to ensure a steady influx of the luxuries she craves. Some say she even has an arrangement with the Molthune Armsrunners, who supposedly pay her handsomely to avoid heavy scrutiny from the city guard.

Mistshroud Cliff: This imposing cliff towers nearly 400 feet above southwestern Cheliox, evidence of a mountain sheared in half millennia ago. The isolated cliff is dotted with ancient passages that flicker with light when the perpetual mist around the cliff is thin. Travelers claim that Mistshroud Cliff is haunted, but in truth the cliff is home to several tribes of troglodytes who answer to a powerful demon. Mistshroud Cliff is detailed further on page 46.

Mount Emihym: More than 14,000 feet above sea level, the distinctive peak of Mount Emihym dominates a rugged area of the northern Menador Mountains just south of the North Plains. Its hooked peak is visible for miles, brilliant white against the deep blue sky and frequently ringed in fluffy clouds. Once a central location for Cheliox's border defense against Nidal, the mountain fortresses have been abandoned since the Chelish victory in the Everwar. These citadels now house orcs, trolls, and giants, and human activity on the mountain is limited to brave hunters and trappers.

Rumors circulate of territorial cloud giants dwelling near the summit with trained giant chimeras, as well as tribes of ferocious yetis who appear only in the fiercest snowstorms. Such tales may well be exaggerated, and intentionally so, by the Bellflower Network. Dedicated to helping halfling slaves escape their bonds, this organization makes extensive use of Mount Emihym's tunnels and caves. Some believe that the network has even built long-term refuges for escaped slaves deep within the mountain itself.

Mount Kudal: The region surrounding Mount Kudal in northeastern Cheliox contains some of the highest elevations in the Menador Mountains, with many of its peaks rising more than 12,000 feet above sea level. These snow-capped crests jut up from deep, fissure-like valleys where streams nourish towering evergreen trees and a variety of flora and fauna. Although bugbears are a prevalent menace throughout the Menador Mountains, a tribe of vigilant stone giants keeps the goblinoids at a distance.

Despite the ruggedness of the surrounding terrain, raiders from Nidal and Molthune have long passed through the fertile valleys around Mount Kudal. In the centuries before Aroden's death, Arodenite knights and rangers maintained a watchful presence around the

mountain. To support and shelter these brave fighters, the church of Aroden founded five monasteries on Mount Kudal's slopes, naming them simply First Stone Abbey, Second Stone Abbey, and so on.

Built of bare stone, these small abbeys housed no more than two dozen occupants apiece, with scarcely room to sleep, eat, and train; still, they served the wandering watchers of Mount Kudal well. When the Chelish Civil War broke out, though, the Arodenites scattered, and the abbeys sat vacant until just a few generations ago, when an extremist order of abstemious monks claimed the Third Stone Abbey. Recently, the monks have proselytized an artistic movement they call the New Ascetic, which seeks to expose and extol bare truths by creating art bereft of all nonessential elements. Its leader, First Ascetic **Kara Feri** (LN female human monk 9), claims that the movement opens one's mind to truths that otherwise remain elusive. The monks claim an affiliation with the Dark Prince, so the crown tolerates them, but some religious leaders view them as deviants and push for their official censure even while the New Ascetic movement grows.

Mount Rinia: Located in the western Menador Mountains, Mount Rinia stands more than 15,000 feet tall, its lush lower slopes giving way to permanent snowfields and icy peaks. Mount Rinia is the source of the Maiestas River, which flows south and eventually forms the border between the Archduchies of Hellcoast and the Heartlands. Between the predations of the orcs who dwell on the mountain and the rough-and-tumble human hunters and trappers on the lower slopes, Mount Rinia has fewer game animals than other areas of the range. The area is also home to roving clutches of yrthaks (*Bestiary* 2 290), which constantly menace the humanoids who call the place home.

The mountain's name comes from an old Taldan ballad in which a young noblewoman named Rinia is promised against her will to a wicked royal scion. On the eve of her wedding, according to the song, Rinia retreated to a nearby mountain; when she threw herself from it, enormous, white-plumed wings sprouted from her back and she disappeared, free, into the surrounding mist, her final destination unknown. The ballad was so popular, and this mountain so resembles the peak in it, that Rinia became the pinnacle's proper name.

Mount Spire: As the highest peak in the Chelish Menador Mountains,

Mount Spire towers almost 16,500 feet above sea level, far above the peaks adjacent to it. Mount Spire is the origin of the Yolubilis River, which flows north to Kintargo and into the Arcadian Ocean. The Yolubilis begins high on the slopes, just below the tree line, as a trickle that turns into a series of waterfalls. These waterfalls gather multiple streams as they surge downward, and the tallest, called the Veil of the Spire, falls more than 300 feet into a large pool that is the river's highest navigable point. Behind the waterfalls are extensive networks of caves, some of which contain their own streams and falls. Many of these caves are infested with cave fishers, chardas (*Bestiary* 2 55), and other horrors. In addition, several tribes of goblins and kobolds scratch out a living in these depths.

Caves on Mount Spire are choked with flowstone, stalactites, and other geological oddities. A few underground grottoes boast semiprecious stones, and rumors persist of veins of gold within the mountain, but the daunting terrain and dangerous inhabitants have as of yet discouraged most Chelish exploration of the area. The sole exception is a small estate constructed at enormous expense near the top of the Veil of the Spire. Owned by scions of a noble family from Egorian, Bellezeph Villa caters to an elite clientele of tourists who come to admire the falls, try out their mountaineering skills, or engage in amateur spelunking. Such tourists need watchful guards and experienced guides, which the proprietors of the villa provide at exorbitant rates. Some visitors to the region prefer to instead hire their own guards; mercenaries who sign on for such expeditions can expect much danger but high pay.

North Plains: The border with Nidal consists of rolling hills and grassy plains that are primarily settled by halfling and human farmers. The agriculture that takes place here primarily supports Kintargo's cosmopolitan population, and many of the farmers make a good living selling their harvests to markets and restaurants in the city. These hard-working folks prefer to keep low profiles, though, so as not to attract unwanted attention from nearby Nidal. Thankfully, the shadowy nation has never shown much interest in the plains or its inhabitants.

Nyshire: One of several tiny towns along the road that stretches between Egorian and Halmyris, Nyshire is most notable for the complex—and some might say petty—politics that dominate it. Officially, the town is ruled by a council



KARA FERİ

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of five, but in recent years Councilman **Dharven Leese** (LN male human bard 4) has been subtly trying to set himself apart from his peers. These attempts include vocally leading the petitioning of House Thrune for imperial funds to upgrade the trade road and improve the infrastructure in both Nyshire and the other nearby hamlets.

It is unclear whether Leese is actually hoping that Thrune will grant him more power, or whether he's simply trying to get the attention of the queen, whose beauty and guile he openly, and some think inappropriately, admires. Leese's peers have suddenly become his rivals, and escalating gossip and acts of vandalism have taken place on all sides. The most recent was the defacing of Leese's door with a large, cartoonish interpretation of the holy symbol of Iomedae. Leese disappeared shortly thereafter and hasn't been seen for weeks; some say agents of the crown have branded him a traitor and dealt with him accordingly, and others say Leese is actually a turncoat. A small third contingent believes he has traveled to Egorian and will return with Thrune-granted reinforcements to destroy his enemies. Many townspeople, though, are simply glad to see the erstwhile troublemaker gone, if only temporarily.

Orneian Reach: The stretch of inhospitable coastline from Corentyn to the Pillars of Anferita is known as the Orneian Reach. The coast is high and rocky, battered by waves and wind from the Arcadian Ocean, and holds little beyond a few insular harbor communities inhabited by rough whalers and suspicious fisherfolk. These seafarers value their privacy, selling their goods only to traders who have been visiting their hamlets for years. Otherwise, these tiny communities receive few visitors. Many of the folk on the Orneian Reach supplement their meager incomes by salvaging cargo from wrecked ships that have drifted onto the treacherous reefs, although they are too honorable to lure passing ships to their doom—in stark contrast to other coastal folk (see Cliffs of Fury on page 17). Some believe that the hamlets' leaders maintain a friendly relationship with a nearby clan of merfolk, which normally avoid other humanoids, but this is dismissed as idle rumor in most Chelish circles. The coast's only well-known settlement is Citadel Gheradesca, headquarters of the Hellknight Order of the Chain (see page 16).

Ostenso: The bustling seaport of Ostenso is the easternmost city in Cheliox, facing Andoran on Cape Erebus, and it is the capital of the Archduchy of Sirmium. With its grand, spacious docks, Ostenso is the home port of the Chelish navy and boasts one of the largest naval yards in the world. Its large, sheltered harbor is further protected by a line of enormous stone pillars called the Custodisce Break, which extends a half-mile into the Inner Sea. Enormous metal braces drilled into these columns support a sprawling maze of docks, connecting

OSTENSO
LE large city
Corruption +6; **Crime** +1; **Economy** +4; **Law** +4; **Lore** +2;
Society +3
Qualities naval base, notorious, prosperous, scrappy, strategic location
Danger +20

DEMOGRAPHICS
Government overlord
Population 14,200 (12,200 humans, 1,450 halflings, 300 tieflings, 250 other)

Notable NPCs
Duxotar Harbry Keveldian (LG male human investigator^{ACG} 7)
Harbormaster Lothera Cothos (N female human fighter 3/aristocrat 4)
Ironquay Commandant Admiral Rania Laroung (NE female human aristocrat 4/magus^{UM} 6)
Lord-Mayor Idressia Henderthane (LE female human aristocrat 11)
Prelate Athrid Darubec (LE male human cleric of Asmodeus 10)

MARKETPLACE
Base Value 14,872 gp; **Purchase Limit** 112,500 gp;
Spellcasting 7th
Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 2d4

SPECIAL QUALITIES
Naval Base Ostenso is the home port of the Chelish navy, which trains elite officers and keeps an enormous standing fleet of ships at the ready. The common sailors fuel the city's underground fighting pits and brothels, and both they and the elite naval officers add a worldly flair to Ostenso's atmosphere. (*Corruption* +1; *Society* +1)
Scrappy The citizens of Ostenso are a hardworking but rambunctious bunch. Although the rampant underground fighting and gambling that happen here aren't sanctioned by the government, neither are they explicitly illegal. These activities are considered unrefined by most Chelaxians but remain favorites of the city's residents. (*Society* +2)

them to each other and providing wharfs, shipyards, and warehouses that attract a dizzying variety of ships.

Although most citizens live and work on dry land, nearly a quarter of the city is built over the water, and the sea is Ostenso's focus; the derisive term "dirtwalker" is used for anyone whose profession or preference is unrelated to maritime work or trade. Even Ostenso's permanent population has its sensibilities colored by the boisterous, brawling attitude of sailors on leave; the city's underground fighting pits draw large crowds from



all social classes, and its bars and brothels have a wild reputation throughout the rest of Chelixa.

Ostense is the home of the Chelish navy, the most powerful naval force in the Inner Sea. The First Imperial Naval War Academy—more commonly known as Ironquay—occupies a large campus in Ostense and produces the most skilled naval officers in the Chelish armada. Persistent rumors hold that a secret division underneath Ironquay develops unconventional techniques to aid the Chelish navy, including some based on psychic powers.

Trade in Ostense is vibrant, as the city maintains relationships with several nations across the Inner Sea. Since the Ruby Prince opened Osirion's ruins to foreign explorers in 4707 AR, Ostense has seen a steady flow of Osirian artifacts from Sothis. Ostense also does a larger volume of trade with the city of Absalom than any other Chelish city. This is because Egorian places more restrictions on other port cities' trade with Absalom than it does on Ostense's, perhaps to limit communication between the City at the Center of the World and certain Chelish rebel groups. Even still, the members of Absalom's Grand Council are no fools; they have imposed a limit on Ostenson ships in Absalom's harbor, lest Chelixa leverage a friendly trade relationship into a naval invasion.

As in most Chelish cities, slavery in Ostense is rampant, and its courts make slaves of debtors, malcontents, and criminals. The transport of slaves via ship is not as common in Ostense as it is in Corentyn, but thousands of human and halfling slaves still arrive in Ostense each year. In combination with the city's proximity to abolitionist Andoran, this slave trade has led to the establishment of a vibrant but highly secretive anti-slavery network that works to smuggle slaves east.

Silks and spices from Katheer are valued luxuries throughout Chelixa, and most of these Qadiran goods arrive in Chelixa through Ostense's harbors. As a result of this trade, Ostense has more warehouses, guild offices, and banks than cities three times its size. The notorious and multinational Aspis Consortium, which boasts regional trade offices throughout Avistan and beyond, is headquartered in the towering Aspis Building here.

The people of Ostense remain keenly aware that they are situated very near Andoran, one of Chelixa's implacable adversaries on military, economic, and moral grounds. Although the Chelish navy refits and repairs many of its ships in Ostense's busy shipyards, battle-worthy naval vessels continually patrol the waters around Ostense and are prepared to launch an attack against Andoran upon the slightest provocation. Unwilling to test the might of Chelixa's navy directly, Andoran

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has elected for intrigue over brute force: the Ostenson city watch—colloquially called the Dockwatchers—are constantly vexed by Andoran spies sabotaging ships, kidnapping merchants, and instigating slave uprisings.

Ostergarde Manor: In northwestern Cheliox, the ill-omened Ostergarde Manor stands on a bluff overlooking the eastern end of the Menador Gap, the only passage between the mountains and Ravounel Forest. Although the estate lies within an easy walk of the road, few dare to ascend to Ostergarde's unkempt grounds. Long before Aroden's death and the rise of House Thrune, Ostergarde was known as a haven for diabolists. The manor's owners, the reclusive Kastner family, experimented with devil binding and amassed an unprecedented collection of diabolic lore. Rumors hold that Queen Abrogail I visited Ostergarde Manor to brush up on her knowledge of infernal contracts before making the deal that catapulted her house to the throne. Of course, no evidence of this claim seems to exist.

After the rise of House Thrune, the Kastners abandoned Ostergarde; the diabolists were welcome in Egorian and no longer needed to maintain a secluded estate for their unholy research. Ostergarde has sat vacant for decades, although travelers sometimes mutter about dancing flames and inhuman wails originating from the manor. Some wonder whether fell forces beyond the original infernal activity might inhabit the building now.

Ostergarde Manor has recently passed from the Kastner family to the infamous Blakros family; the Hellknight maralictor Damian Kastner gifted the estate to the family in 4712 AR, when he married Michellia Blakros. The eccentric Blakroses are keen to know what secrets and mysteries the isolated manor holds.

Pezzack: A large town on Cheliox's western coast, Pezzack has been under siege by House Thrune for the past five years. After the Thrune Ascendancy, Pezzack was the only city in Cheliox to repel the country's new imperial ruler and attempt to become an independent settlement loyal to Aroden. House Thrune's response was swift and brutal: the Hellknights invaded the town and burned a third of it to the ground. This ruthless response did not quell the defiant citizens of Pezzack.

No longer allowed to bear arms, the citizens instead turned to the arts: theater and literature in Pezzack skirted the edge of Thrune-mandated proscriptions for a generation. All the while, revolutionaries from Galt, Andoran, and other nations flocked to Pezzack to stoke the fires of rebellion. In 4710 AR, the bard **Amalia Wraxton** (CG female middle-aged half-elf bard 7) published an incendiary play that ignited a second rebellion in Pezzack. The mob killed the military governor and his Hellknights and ushered in anarchy.

The Chelish navy responded by blockading Pezzack's harbor, under the command of the new military governor

Vedra Sawndannac (LE female human aristocrat 1/ fighter 5/Hellknight^{ISWG} 2). Because Pezzack is hemmed in by mountains, the town is effectively blockaded, with only whaling ships allowed to leave the port (in exchange for the blockade claiming a hefty share of their catches). The strix inhabiting the high peaks around Pezzack have compounded the town's troubles by making irregular attacks on the besieged populace. The rebellion smoldering in Pezzack is, for now, contained. Its citizens remain defiantly opposed to the diabolic usurpers of the Chelish throne, despite the threat the Thrunes pose. The fact that the Chelish government has merely blockaded the city rather than destroying it outright, though, may indicate that it has plans for Pezzack—plans its upstart citizens no doubt hope to thwart.

Pezzack is fully detailed on pages 34–43 in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Towns of the Inner Sea*.

Pillar of Palamia: The Pillar of Palamia is a basalt obelisk 10 feet wide and 30 feet high located in a clearing on the northeast edge of the Whisperwood. The pillar is shot through with veins of hardwood forming strange, indecipherable runes. Explorers disagree as to whether the column is a monument to a forgotten god—or a nail piercing the earth to trap a god. Both explanations are in fact true: the pillar was erected millennia ago to honor the nature spirit who imprisoned a horrible beast beneath the ground at that site, and a cult of dangerous fanatics now labors to set the monster free. The Pillar of Palamia is detailed further on page 47.

Pillars of Anferita: Named for their proximity to the Anferita Wood, the Pillars of Anferita are 11 massive stone plinths jutting up from the Arcadian Ocean just beyond the Maiestas River delta. Each of the pillars is enormous in diameter, although all are irregular in shape, like the pieces of a broken dish. The columns are nearly uniform in height, protruding just over 200 feet above sea level. The tops of the pillars are smooth and roughly flat, crowned only with nests of sea birds and other native creatures. Smugglers and pirates have long used these salt-encrusted, guano-speckled obelisks to conceal their presence in the area. Shallow divots near sea level that have been worn into the pillars by the passage of time sometimes conceal caches of treasure—or incriminating evidence.

Although the Pillars of Anferita have long drawn scholarly attention, evidence of the plinths' origin and purpose has proved elusive until recently. In 4709 AR, the Pathfinder Eldis Grone ascended one of the pillars and discovered a hidden entrance to its hollow interior, as well as the ruins of an ancient Jistkan forge-city called Rachikan. The connection to the Jistka Imperium has also provided a clue as to the columns' origin, as the Jistkan magistrates were rumored to reinforce their cities and monuments with elemental energies. The Pillars of Anferita are the surviving pieces of elementally



reinforced terrain from a remote Jistkan province; the intervening land was sluiced away by millennia of erosion just as sand washes away from between boulders. The Jistkans were a practical people who would not spend the energy reinforcing land that was not important to protect, so perhaps each of the Pillars of Anferita conceals lost Jistkan relics; to date, however, no entrances into other pillars have been found.

Ravounel Forest: A dense forest of pine, oak, and fir, Ravounel Forest stands between the Arcadian Ocean and the Yolubilis River in northwestern Cheliox. Few dwell near the mysterious wood because of its dangerous reputation, with rumors of tribes of strix, Rovagug cultists, and malicious fey guardians make up the most oft-repeated whispers of the region.

Remesiana: Remesiana is a large, old Chelish port city that clings to its aristocratic roots and maintains an uneasy relationship with House Thrune. Located near the Bay of Solva at the hilly mouth of the Iseld River, Remesiana was established as a port to relay the goods flowing down the river—primarily timber from the Whisperwood and Isgeri goods shipped through Misarias—to other points along the Chelish coast. Early in Chelish history, the city became the home of several of Cheliox’s wealthy noble families. Its sprawling skyline is emblematic of Remesiana’s old money.

Just as House Thrune was suspicious of the old aristocracy in Westcrown, the nobles of Remesiana quickly fell under the crown’s doubtful glare for their connection to the Cheliox of old. For the past 90 years, the city’s noble families have struggled to be seen as allies of the crown while protecting their holdings from imperial seizure. Remesiana’s lord-mayor, Endorri Daelyr, ensures that the city appeases House Thrune, and Remesiana’s head of mercantile interests and economic policy, Segara Dioso, and its duxotar, Aurix Dioso, are cousins who work with Lord-Mayor Daelyr to ensure that the city’s nobles are well represented in its governance.

The practical people of Remesiana are uncomfortable with the supernatural generally and with diabolism in particular, despite the veneer of imperial support they maintain. Overt magic is generally viewed as a tool of scoundrels or the lazy. Although few in Remesiana are prone to outright rebellion—particularly after an erinyes masquerading as an angel instigated and then slaughtered a resistance group from Remesiana shortly after the Thrune Ascendancy—an undercurrent of surly discontent with the crown pervades Remesiana. Secretly stoking this sentiment is the affable Gelliano “The Wink” Tharbeck, the proprietor of Remesiana’s largest and most welcoming inn, the Ardent Ostler. In certain corners of

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the city, tieflings, who are seen as the embodiment of the diabolism Remesiana's nobles consider so distasteful, are barred from entering business; on most streets, tieflings can't wander uncloaked without inviting open derision or worse.

Remesiana benefits from much less attention from the Hellknights than other Chelish cities. To facilitate their forces' movement beyond Cheliox's borders, the Order of the Nail established a series of fortified wharves called Citadel Draythe near Remesiana. Citadel Draythe was never the main headquarters of the Order of the Nail, though, and when that order relocated to Varisia in 4682 AR, Citadel Draythe was all but abandoned. The small garrison remaining has little impact or influence on Remesiana, other than to keep other Hellknight orders out of the city to avoid the frictions of a turf war. As a result, few citizens of Remesiana have ever seen a Hellknight, much less felt beholden to their authority.

Ruins of Deng: When Aroden died in 4606 AR, the skies ripped open with storms and the seas surged against the land. For the most part, Cheliox's coastal towns weathered this destruction and rebuilt as needed shortly thereafter; the most notable exception was the city of Deng on the southern coast. Few solid buildings remain in the waterlogged ruins of the town. Throughout the ruins, the spirits of the dead in Deng appear as ghosts and reenact their erstwhile daily activities. A few more self-aware undead protect the town even as agents of House Thrune try to breach it to recover information that could spell trouble for the crown. The ruins of Deng are detailed further on page 48.

Ruins of Narona: Directly following the Thrune Ascendancy, the newly minted Chelish queen took stock of her realm and identified the most openly rebellious cities. To these cities, she bluntly required supplication on pain of death. Halmyris was one such city, and it chose to take on an imperial warden; Narona was another, and it refused to bend at all. The queen made good on her threat and promptly sent the Chelish navy to Narona, which the fleets destroyed without parley or mercy, though it could not destroy the eldritch power atop which the city was built. Now, Chelish archaeologists and Hellknights from the Order of the Pyre try to discover the ruins' terrible secrets before they can wreak destruction on or bring unsavory elements to the nation. For more information on the Ruins of Narona, see page 49.

Ruins of Rachikan: The greatest of the Jistkan temple-foundries, the multi-leveled city of Rachikan was recently discovered inside one of the Pillars of Anferita at the mouth of the Maiestas River. In their millennia of isolation, the Jistkan survivors degenerated into bestial morlocks, eager to capture and torture intruders to their subterranean realm, even as a horned devil has marshaled a veritable army to try to repel them from the

REMESIANA

LN large city

Corruption +4; **Crime** -4; **Economy** +4; **Law** +7; **Lore** +4;

Society +1

Qualities prosperous, racially intolerant (tieflings), rumormongering citizens, strategic location, superstitious

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 19,450 (16,200 humans, 2,100 halflings, 1,150 other)

Notable NPCs

Duxotar Aurix Dioso (LN male human aristocrat 4/ fighter 4)

Economic Minister Segara Dioso (LN female human aristocrat 5/rogue 6)

Innkeeper Gelliano "The Wink" Tharbeck (NG male half-elf cleric of Cayden Cailean 5)

Lord-Mayor Endorri Daelyr (LN female human aristocrat 9)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 11,440 gp; **Purchase Limit** 75,000 gp;

Spellcasting 5th

Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 2d4

site. The lowest ruins of Rachikan are detailed further on page 50.

Saint Ilna's Fountain: This supernatural spring is located in the Menador Mountains near the dwarven town of Taggun Hold. The spring forms a small pool that is sacred to followers of the goddess Iomedae. Ilna was Iomedae's squire in life and the first saint of Iomedae; she was a pious woman who preferred diplomacy and negotiation to combat. When ambushed by the demon Karash'e'tor, Saint Ilna fought back and killed the fiend, but she died from her wounds in a rocky mountain vale. Her body sank into the earth and a spring rose at that exact spot.

The fountain is a pilgrimage destination for many devout followers of Iomedae, and twice each autumn on Iomedean holy days—the Day of the Inheritor on Rova 19, and Ascendance Day on Lamashan 6—the waters of the pool shimmer and spout hundreds of feet in the air. This spray is said to heal wounds caused by evil creatures, remove curses, and provide a ward against evil outsiders that lasts for several days. In anticipation of these eruptions, the wounded and hopeful begin to congregate in early autumn. During this time, the vale can fill with hundreds of expectant sufferers, many of whom stay not only for the first spouting but through the 17 days until the second spouting as well. During these weeks, knights of Iomedae provide tents and bedding, hot food, and

simple services to the Inheritor. Enterprising merchants sometimes smuggle water from the fountain and sell it as a remedy for all manner of ills, but water removed from the fountain—even if caught during the twice-yearly fountaining—does not retain any beneficial power.

Sallow Coast: The Sallow Coast lies along the western coastal region of mainland Cheliox, stretching from the city of Pezzack in the north to the southern end of the Hellmouth Gulf. The coast consists of plains and steppes rising in the east to the Menador Mountains. The Sallow Coast is arid and receives little rain, as the prevailing climate pushes moisture north of Pezzack and toward the Ravounel Forest. As a result, the stone and sand of the coast are often the brownish-yellow color that gives the region its name. The land near the Arcadian Ocean is usually sandy and often rocky, particularly at the coast's northern end. These rocky areas often conceal hidden sea caves that flood during high tide.

The city of Pezzack is the only significant settlement in the area, although small communities of farmers and shepherds dot the region. Most of these communities have a long history and deem the Thrune Ascendancy a relatively recent development that must be grudgingly and patiently endured until it gives way to the next regime. The canny residents of the Sallow Coast know that the government is focused on Pezzack, so they pay just enough lip service to Asmodeus and the new bureaucracy to deflect official scrutiny of their out-of-the-way, impoverished region. Some say that the residents' eagerness to divert Thrune's attention is more sinister, as rumors of demon-worshippers living along the coast have permeated western Cheliox for generations.

Scar Thicket: The moist, gloomy heart of the fiend-haunted Whisperwood is known as Scar Thicket. Here, the primeval trees tower over the forest floor, shrouding it in darkness even on sunny days. Molds and fungi grow with riotous abandon in this region, and strange, deformed animals and insects hunt for unwary prey. A thin mist redolent with the stench of decay pervades Scar Thicket, condensing into a spore-laden fog in low-lying areas. Scar Thicket sits atop several tunnels to the fungal Midnight Jungle in Nar-Voth. Fecund rot, aberrant beasts, and stranger things ascend from the Midnight Jungle into the Whisperwood. Scar Thicket is detailed further on page 51.

Senara: Senara is a small city of 5,200 residents located in the Whisperwood at the confluence of the Rivers Iseld and Malvesa. Much of the land surrounding the city is forested, but the fertile fields here boast rich farms. No walls surround Senara, but Castle di Lauro defends the city from its position atop a hill overlooking the junction of the two rivers. Duxotar **Abrittia Fessellin** (LN female tiefling fighter 6) is responsible for matters of law and order within the settlement, and works tirelessly to maintain a vigil against the bandits and monsters of

the Whisperwood, which occasionally sneak into the city under the cover of darkness to prey upon the populace.

Senara is unique among Chelish cities for having a high population of devil-spawned citizens, and for elevating, rather than denigrating, tieflings in public perception. More than half of all Senarans spring from bloodlines with devilish taints, and more than a quarter are actual tieflings. The city's forthright mayor, **Gaugellio Bex** (LN male human expert 4/ranger 5), does not come from a devilish bloodline, but only because House Thrune would not stand for a Chelish city being helmed by the spawn of a devil. Still, rumors swirl around the subject of Bex's ancestry, as this hideously ugly man is often mistaken for a tiefling despite his mundane heritage.

The tieflings of Senara don't face the discrimination and prejudice that elsewhere turn Chelish tieflings to crime; as a result, Senaran tieflings tend toward neutral alignments—or even good alignments—rather than evil. The rest of Cheliox, however, looks down on Senara as an experiment in fiendish fraternization gone horribly wrong. And while diabolic dalliances are responsible for the high population of hellspawn in Senara, most of Hell considers Senara as much a disgrace as does the rest of Cheliox, both because many of the tieflings were sired by *patraavexes* (see page 59) who were acting independently, and because the resulting offspring fail to be consistently evil.

Serenity's Copse: Deep in Anferita Wood, obscured by peculiar veils of illusion and abjuration magic, a community of dryads live in a grove of ancient trees. These peaceful creatures have developed the unique capacity to bond to all of the copse's trees, instead of just their own, as well as the ability to extract a particular brand of arcane magic from the trees. For generations, the copse's pragmatic leader, **Genliss** (CG female dryad sorcerer 4), has worked with the druids of the Green Faith who live in the woods, allowing them to worship at the grove and teaching them about the magic that flows from it in exchange for the druids' alliance and lovingly crafted gifts.

Recently, however, the copse has been closed to the druids, and all magical means of contacting the dryads have failed. Even the senior members of the wood's Green Faith congregation are becoming worried that something terrible has befallen the grove. The most recent reports suggest particularly grim developments: a druid approached the wood and thought she saw Genliss, only to see the dryad turn around to reveal red eyes and a fanged, snarling visage before she disappeared. Others have seen yeth hounds skulking around the outskirts of the grove. Some of the druids fear that a fiend has infiltrated the copse and holds the dryads captive, or worse. Others worry that it may be too late for the dryads, who could be warped beyond redemption

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and may be holed up in the grove, plotting something terrible. Regardless, the druids have been looking for adventurers willing to seek out the dryads and discover the truth once and for all.

Shardstone: Shardstone is a large, mountainous island in the archipelago extending westward from the Chelish mainland into the Arcadian Ocean. Most of Cheliox believes that Shardstone is uninhabited, but in truth House Thrune has been conducting horrific human experiments there for years. Deep in a valley between the island's largest mountains is the heart of Project Phlegethon, which seeks to create fiendish super soldiers who can crush any resistance in their paths, including the Hellknights, in case the two factions ever come to blows. Shardstone and this highly secretive project and facility are detailed further on page 52.

Sirmium Plains: The easternmost of Cheliox's fertile areas used for farming and ranching, the Sirmium Plains stretch from the Whisperwood to the north and west to the Inner Sea in the south. To the east, the Sirmium Plains give way to the foothills of the Aspodell Mountains, Cheliox's border with Andoran.

The Sirmium Plains have been used as farms and ranch lands for thousands of years. Endless fields of wheat, barley, and corn march across the landscape, broken only by cattle ranches, pig farms, and orderly orchards. The plains are dotted with villages and crisscrossed with dirt roads that have been in use for many generations. Chelaxians raised on the Sirmium Plains feel a strong personal tie to the land and consider themselves superior to city folk who have never broken clods of rich earth between their fingers.

The Chelish army maintains a strong presence throughout the Sirmium Plains to rapidly respond to land-based attacks from the east. Using the coffers of the state and labor from soldiers and slaves, the army has constructed several massive citadels across the Sirmium Plains. These buildings are so tall, and the plains so flat, that signal fires atop a citadel's tower can be seen by other citadels many miles away. By the use of alchemically colored fires, the army can thus quickly send signals from Brastlewark and Laekastel to the fortresses in the interior. The farmers and ranchers accept the army's intrusion on their lands for a pragmatic reason, beyond its strength of arms: the citadels are ready buyers of crops and livestock, saving many farmers the long trip to the region's large cities. The army also offers a measure of protection against the savage threats—mostly disparate bands of goblins and worgs—common to the area.

Sorvus's Strike: In 4711 AR, a prospector named Sorvus found this enormous silver lode 2 miles north of the grisly monument known as Crackspike. The imperial authorities quickly moved to secure the claim, but the

native strix of the region fought back relentlessly against this incursion. The strix had no interest in the silver, but considered the area around Sorvus's Strike to be sacred ground. After two bloody battles that exhausted the strix and decimated the Hellknights of the Order of the Gate, the empire and the strix negotiated a truce. The accord allows for a limited number of Chelaxians to mine the claim from a small stronghold near Sorvus's Strike, but prohibits traversing any portion of the region other than the area around the mine and a trail through a narrow gorge leading from the mine to civilization.

On most days, the strix perch silently atop the nearby peaks in full view of the miners, making it clear that stepping outside of the land circumscribed by the treaty will result in immediate attack. The stress of operating under this inhuman vigilance takes a greater toll on the miners than the physical labor of working the mine; tensions run high in Sorvus's Strike. A few days each month, the strix perform private rituals elsewhere in Devil's Perch and the guard over the mining town is substantially reduced. During those times, daring miners sneak furtively through the nearby hills outside of the treaty boundaries, hoping to find the next big silver strike.



INDRA TAGGUN

Taggun Hold: This unassuming town of 6,780 inhabitants is located high in the Menador Mountains, near the Nidalese border. Founded centuries ago by dwarven trappers, the town later attracted miners who came to exploit veins of silver and other precious metals; trapping and mining remain the area's primary industries, and both are dominated by dwarves. The rough-and-tumble, frontier nature of the town comes not only from its hard-working, hard-drinking, highly individualistic inhabitants, but also from its frequent skirmishes with orcs. The town received its name during a fierce orc raid in 4502 AR, when orcs burned the settlement's wooden buildings to the ground. But for the leadership and sheer grit of mayor Eliazar Taggun, the town would have been abandoned. By holing up in nearby caves and mines and sallying forth in counter-raids, Taggun held the town against the orcs, then led the slow effort of rebuilding—this time in stone.

Today, about two dozen squat stone buildings form the town's center. Among these stand small structures built against the cliff sides that lead into warrens of underground caves. These partially underground constructions serve as homes for the town's wealthiest citizens, and are valued because a house containing caverns not only provides the best protection against orc attacks, but also can contain hidden rooms to hide contraband. Taggun Hold's dwarven citizens use arduous, secret mountain trails and back entrances into their caverns to smuggle goods tax-free between Cheliox and Nidal. The town's mayor, **Indra Taggun** (N female dwarf rogue 5), secretly encourages and facilitates this trade, and so all manner of luxury and black market goods cross the border through Taggun Hold.

Terapasillion: The site known as Terapasillion (which means "Ziggurat of Night" in the Shadowtongue language) is an ancient pyramidal structure predating Taldan settlement of the area. Built from an odd black material akin to granite, Terapasillion is continually cloaked in deep shadow, regardless of the prevailing light conditions. Rumored to have been constructed by shadow giants in the Age of Darkness, Terapasillion more recently served as an umbral dragon's lair. Although the umbral dragon has not been seen in decades, the cautious residents of the North Plains give Terapasillion a wide berth; none have been near the site in living memory.

Thuryan: This rocky island in the Hellmouth Gulf once teemed with various giant clans, but when House Throne took the Chelish throne and threatened their lives, these giants mostly gave up their holdings and fled. However, in recent years, a brash storm giant named Aisharya Khree has been discreetly gathering the remaining giants, trying to unite them, and entertaining offers of alliance from several powerful forces, including those that would see the Thrunes hang. For more information on Thuryan, see page 53.

Tolsen Peak: In the southern Menador Mountains, Tolsen Peak rises above lower mountains that descend into foothills. While Tolsen Peak is taller than the surrounding crests, with a height of 7,500 feet, it is much shorter than many famous summits farther north in the Menador Mountains. The mountain is famous for its distinctive red color and lack of vegetation, primarily the result of mining. On the eastern side, only a few shallow mines attest to the pervasive rumors of silver. The more productive mines—primarily iron mines—dot the western slopes of the mountain. Here, high above the Hellcoast region, the forlorn mining towns are little more than camps of dusty tents and shacks, with tailings left to cascade down the mountain in sweeping slopes of scree.

The Menador Mountains around Tolsen Peak have few passes and therefore serve as a natural barrier that isolates the west from the rest of Cheliox, marking a dramatic divide between the storm-wracked Hellcoast and the temperate weather of eastern Cheliox. Emigration to the unwelcoming Hellcoast region is rare, and most Chelioxians see the red, bare Tolsen Peak as the divider between fertile lands to the east and a hardscrabble existence to the west. The sparse, independence-minded people of Hellcoast owe their freedom, such as it is, to the fact that their impoverished holdings have little of value in House Throne's eyes.

Wild beasts of any sort are a rarity on Tolsen Peak, although territorial feuds with various goblinoid tribes have led to the destruction of more than one mining camp. As the Hellcoast miners dig deeper, spurred on by greedy taskmasters or mere desperation, more and more miners develop bizarre psychopathic tendencies, the result of encounters with subterranean horrors best left undisturbed.

Turanian Hills: The Turanian Hills are the rolling coastal hills west of the Adivian River that shelter much of inland Cheliox from tides and sea storms. Several creeks wind through the Turanian Hills, and the clay deposits along them and in the banks of the Adivian River are widely used in pottery and brickmaking. Although Turanian Hills clay is typically dark brown, the clay deposits around the Adivian River are a startling crimson hue; sculptors and potters use this "blood-clay" to make unique scarlet-colored works. These creations are particularly in vogue in Egorian, where rumors hint that the coloring betrays an ancient infernal taint in the clay. Some claim that centuries ago, powerful diabolists lived along the river and regularly summoned devils, but others say that the area's clay is stained red from blood sacrifices that happened long before the Taldans settled Cheliox.

The climate in the Turanian Hills is mild but changeable; long stretches of dry, sunny days are punctuated by powerful rainstorms. The area has a long,

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warm growing season, ideal for growing tree and vine crops, such as olives, grapes, and berries. Orchards and vineyards of the Turanian Hills provide a variety of agricultural goods for inland communities and for trade to other regions in Golarion. Many wealthy Chelaxians own Turanian estates as an additional source of income and as a retreat from urban life; most take the security of their property quite seriously. Adventurers with good reputations among the Chelish upper class can make good money working as protection at these holdings.

Vyre: Although technically ruled by Cheliox, the city of Vyre is far from the nation's heartland and operates as a freewheeling city where gambling and other vices are openly available for the right price. This status as a quasi-independent city suits the Chelish government, as Vyre has long served as a place for government officials to indulge their base desires far from the imperial court. Located on the northern end of Vyre Island, Vyre must import a substantial amount of food, timber, and other goods from the mainland. Protection of Vyre's waterfront district is therefore a principal concern, and keeps vital trade goods flowing into the city.

Vyre is ruled by a secret council of five self-styled kings and queens. Although the identities of these rulers are unknown to the general populace, their titles are public knowledge. Currently, these rulers consists of the Queen of Delights (responsible for the city's economy and diplomatic interests), the Queen of Whispers (leader of the city's vast intelligence network), the Queen of Blades (leader of the city's militia), the King of Keys (responsible for the city's defenses, including defense of the waterfront and the city's prison), and the Queen of Blood (the primary representative of Vyre's citizenry).

Although Vyre provides sufficient public vices to turn the heads of even liberal Chelaxians, darker rites occur in abandoned warehouses and isolated basements throughout the city. The murderous Skinsaw Cult, made up of fanatical followers of Norgorber, began in Vyre and maintains a presence in the city. A cult of Noctacula is rumored to be active in the secret, shadowy brothels of the city's Vise district, luring the dissolute or drugged for perverse—and fatal—rituals. These shady activities also often bring newly minted Hellknights, who hope to build their reputations as enforcers. The city of Vyre is fully detailed in pages 64–69 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #99: Dance of the Damned*.

Vyre Island: The city of Vyre is the only settlement of note on this relatively inhospitable isle. Most of the isle's barren interior is uninhabited save for wild beasts of the mundane and magical variety, a few tribes of bickering kobolds, several bugbear clans, and (if rumors are correct) at least one hidden cabal of faceless stalkers (*Bestiary* 2 122). Though many attempts to mine the rugged hills have been made, most of these mines are now abandoned and infested with monsters.

WESTCROWN

LE metropolis

Corruption +5; **Crime** +7; **Economy** +3; **Law** -6; **Lore** +5;

Society -1

Qualities holy site (Aroden), notorious, racially intolerant (tieflings), rumormongering citizens, strategic location

Danger +40; **Disadvantages** hunted (shadow beasts)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government secret syndicate

Population 114,700 (100,900 humans, 8,000 halflings, 5,800 other)

Notable NPCs

Duxotar Iltus Mhartis (NE male human aristocrat 3/rogue 3)

Harbormaster Casarus Vitallain (LN male human fighter 6)

Lictor Richemar Almansor (LE male human fighter 7/Hellknight^{SWG} 7)

Lord-Mayor Aberian Arvanxi (NE male human rogue 7)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 18,304 gp; **Purchase Limit** 150,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

Warlock Island: Warlock Island is one of the smaller islands in the archipelago extending from Cheliox's western shore. Not only is Warlock Island rocky and foreboding, it's also cursed. Although daring pirates and smugglers occupy a few secluded sea caves on the island's outskirts, anyone exploring the island further has vanished. In a few rare cases, the corpse of an explorer has washed up on the Orneian Coast days later with its tongue removed and strange serpentine brands on its chest and back. Some old salts insist that a powerful and antisocial druid lives on the island with his pet vipers; others insist that the Chelish government maintained a secret base on the island for dangerous summoning rituals, and one of these rituals went horribly awry.

Westcrown: The metropolis of Westcrown sprawls across a hilly peninsula where the Adivian River empties into the Inner Sea on Cheliox's southern coast. The city comprises three large districts called paregos: two on the mainland and a third on a series of islands in the river. The city's government and wealthy elite inhabit the defensible Parego Regicona in the river, while the city's large middle class lives and works in Parego Spera on the peninsula. To the north, Parego Dospera is home to the city's destitute and desperate.

A series of waterfalls north of Westcrown make most ship travel up the Adivian River to Lake Sorrow

impractical. Further, Westcrown's docks are sheltered from tides and sea storms by a massive sandbar. As a result, Westcrown boasts a busy mercantile economy. The city has nearly as many canals as streets, and residents travel by flat-bottomed barges called adels more often than by carriage.

A century ago, Westcrown served as the capital of Imperial Cheliox and the center of worship of Aroden, god of humanity. A white marble statue of Aroden over 90 feet tall still stands atop a high hill in Parego Spera, sword upraised in salute and mirrored eye emblazoned upon its chest. Pilgrims, merchants, and politicians from all over Avistan made Westcrown a hub of humanity's influence.

Although once glorious, Westcrown declined dramatically after Aroden's death in 4606 AR. The city fell into chaos as the old noble families warred for dominance; scarred by the trauma of losing their connection to their god, many of Aroden's high-ranking priests perished and rose as zealot wraiths (see page 63). By 4640 AR, weary of bloody strife, some of Westcrown's citizens welcomed the stability that came with House Thrune's dominance. This loyalty was ill rewarded, as Queen Abrogail I immediately relocated the capitol to Egorian and left Westcrown politically and socially marooned. Administrative corruption became commonplace as a secret criminal organization called the Council of Thieves quietly took over the city. Perhaps worse, after dark, the Wiscrani lock themselves indoors, as mysterious and shadowy monsters stalk the city's streets and alleys from sunset to sunrise. Today, Westcrown is a city of thuggery and fear, possessing a mere sliver of its former influence. For more information on Westcrown, see the Council of Thieves Adventure Path.

Westpool: During the reign of Emperor Stavian I of Taldor, engineers constructed three great arches to allow portage up the hazardous waterfalls from Westcrown to Lake Sorrow. The third and greatest of these Stavian Arches allowed even large ships to be portaged up Rikkan's Falls, as long as a sufficient number of workers were available to haul the ships up the 15-foot elevation to the top of the falls. Westpool grew up around this portage station.

In 4660 AR, saboteurs destroyed the Third Stavian Arch, eliminating the portage for large ships. This devastation ultimately benefited the town: smaller vessels must now be hand-carried up the Rikkan Falls at greater expense, or the goods must be off-loaded and hauled up to other ships at the docks atop the falls (as is the case for all large ships). Either option works well for Westpool and its shrewd mayor, **Tibalt Khrocini** (LE male old human aristocrat 5/rogue 3). Khrocini has a keen political mind and a natural gift for contorting the law. He has inflated the price of slave labor, instituted additional portage taxes, and press-ganged the servants and slaves of his political rivals as portage laborers.

Under Khrocini's decades of leadership, Westpool has expanded up alongside Rikkan's Falls, resulting in a town that is as much vertical as it is horizontal. The imperial investigators stationed in Westpool since the sabotage—ostensibly to discover the perpetrators and prevent further dissent—all consider the mayor a personal friend who is above reproach.

Khrocini does not know who initially sabotaged the arch; he had not yet earned his governmental position at the time. However, for the duration of his long tenure as mayor, Khrocini has worked tirelessly to see that the Third Stavian Arch is not repaired, even going so far as to arrange assassinations of imperial engineers and liberation of slaves slated for construction duty. So far, the crown has not detected Khrocini's duplicity, but it may be only a matter of time before that changes.

Whisperwood: The Whisperwood is the easternmost of Cheliox's great forests. It is an old forest, long predating the Taldan Empire—some of its oldest trees were alive when Cheliox was declared part of Taldor in 3007 AR. Although the edges of the Whisperwood are logged for timber, most of the forest is considered haunted or unsafe; communities within its borders are few. Travelers in the Whisperwood report that even ordinary forest creatures such as deer and owls exude a brooding menace. This sense deepens around the location known as Scar Thicket.

Devils, evil fey, and other unnatural creatures abound in Whisperwood, preying primarily on travelers who venture into the forest without sufficient protection. A portal to Hell colloquially known as the Inferno Gate lies within the Whisperwood. Knights of Iomedae have, predictably, ventured into the wood to close the gate, but have met with no success. Curiously, the Chelish government has also sent expeditions of Hellknights of the Order of the Gate to close the gate, and they too have failed. Why the diabolists of House Thrune would want a gate to Hell closed remains a mystery.

Because of the Whisperwood's reputation, bandits and malcontents often shelter in its gloomy recesses. These outlaws may boast that Whisperwood's dangers are overblown by superstitious commoners, but the occasional bandit camps discovered abandoned or awash in blood indicate that the Whisperwood is as dangerous as rumors aver. Several Hellknight orders are active in and around the Whisperwood—most notably the Order of the Pike, which maintains Citadel Ordeial at the forest's northeastern edge—to keep banditry to a minimum and to contain the monsters that menace settlements such as Longacre and Senara.

Windspire: Windspire is a strix settlement in Devil's Perch. The Windspire strix roost at the top of a geological formation of the same name, which the avian people have expanded upward with wood and bone. The settlement is not accessible from the

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ground; wide shelves of stone and wood arch out over the cliffs at Windspire's base, making free-climbing to the settlement impossible. Windspire is therefore a safe haven for the strix, as only creatures capable of flight or other magical transportation can enter the settlement. Windspire's current leader, or *rokoa*, is a canny strix named **Kirii** (NG female strix oracle^{APG 5}). Over the objections of many other tribes, Kirii and the Windspire strix entered into a truce with Cheliox to cease the bloody skirmishes that inflicted heavy losses on both the Chelish troops and the Windspire strix, resulting in a tenuous peace that allows Chelish miners to work the lode at Sorvus's Strike.

Like all strix in the region, Windspire residents have close ties to Ciricskree, the largest of the winged people's settlements. Their relationship is not one of governance, however, and the two tribes are in frequent disagreement, particularly over the issue of how to deal with humans. Ciricskree's notoriously outspoken *rokoa* preaches that the humans are "half-people," and that strix may thus eat their flesh without shame, as well as kill them without wearing the traditional war masks that would otherwise be required to protect strix warriors from the sin of murder.

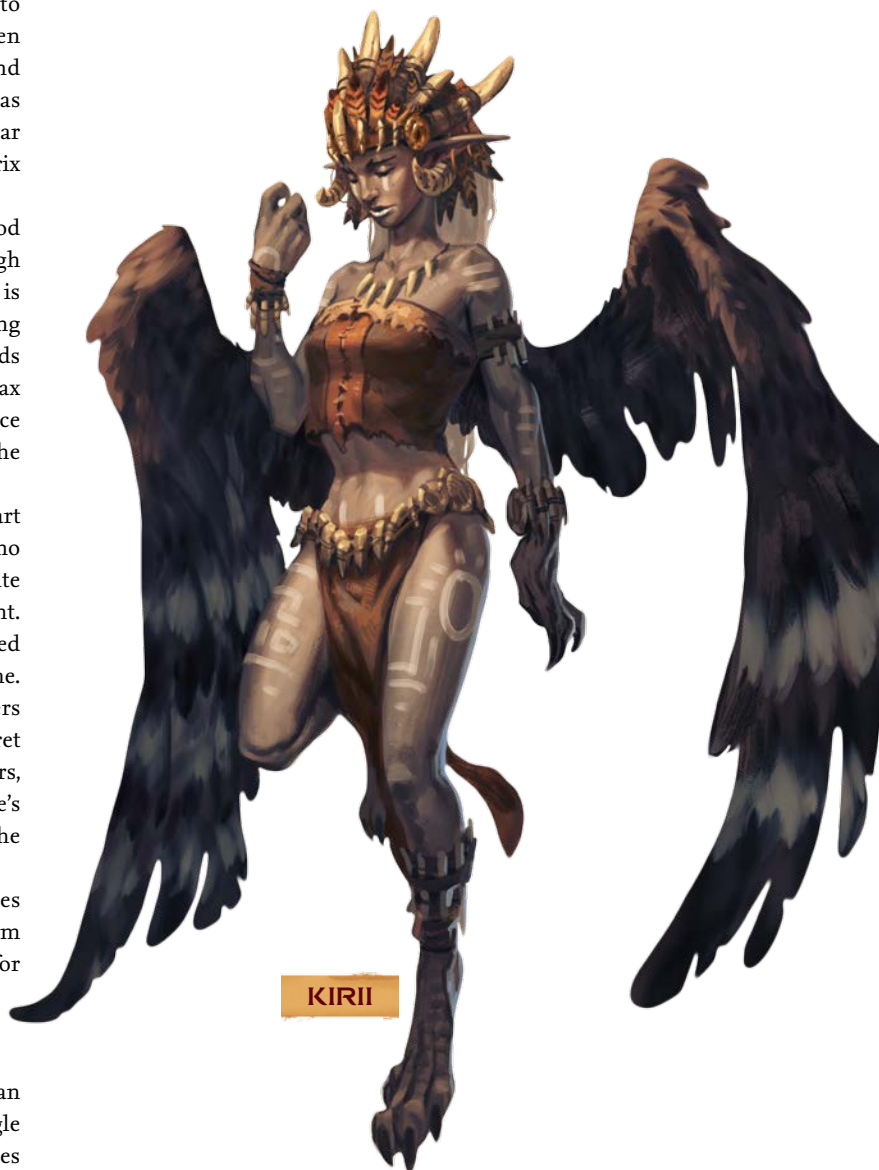
Winter Grove: Deep in the southern Barrowood stands this ruined and blackened druid grove. Although Barrowood is temperate, the area around this grove is always several degrees colder than the surrounding forest. Winter Grove was used by native Kellid druids long before the rise of the Taldan Empire, when Cheliox was nothing more than an untamed frontier. Once the region was settled by the first Taldan pioneers, the druids of Winter Grove seemed to abandon it.

An ancient summoning circle stands at the heart of Winter Grove; scholars posit that the druids who constructed Winter Grove millennia ago chose the site because the summoning circle was already present. It was in this summoning circle that Abrogail I called forth Asmodeus himself to bargain for Cheliox's throne. Although this contract has stood for decades, members of the royal family have been recently spotted on secret expeditions to Winter Grove with slaves, prisoners, and valuables. Citizens unhappy with House Thrune's dominance are keenly interested in finding out the truth behind these furtive royal undertakings.

Wolf's Tooth: Wolf's Tooth is the last in a series of islands extending into the Arcadian Ocean from Cheliox's western shore. Wolf's Tooth is named for its appearance from a distance, as it resembles a sharp fang jutting upward from the surrounding sea. The edges of Wolf's Tooth are rocky and sheer, with cliffs extending 80 feet above the surging ocean and providing no harbor or other easy access. A single narrow mountain hundreds of feet high dominates the center of the island. Wolf's Tooth has few natural

sources of fresh water and boasts only a few coppers of twisted scrub trees around the mountain's base.

Although the remote island seems both inaccessible and inhospitable, it is occupied by two opposing groups that exist in a tenuous peace. A large tribe of harpies called the Clawfoot Sisters lives in caves high on the mountain. These monsters subsist primarily upon fish they catch in their sharp claws and the bodies of careless sailors who stray too close to their shores. On the island's northwestern side, perched above the jagged sea cliffs, stands a ruined observatory complex of slate-gray stone. An extended family of degenerate human cultists inhabits this crumbling complex, practicing their obscene rites far from civilization. The harpies fear the cultists and leave them offerings of fish and the occasional unlucky mariner. What manner of being the cultists worship and their ultimate goals remain unknown.





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My friends warned me to avoid the northern Whisperwood; they said there's something foul and alien in this forest. But I didn't listen. The fastest route to Senara lies through here, and I'm a merchant on a budget. A little saved money isn't worth this, though. I'm hunkered beneath a black bush I can only describe as pulsating, watching hooded maniacs conduct what surely must be a heinous ritual. Their arms are contorting weirdly, and their chanting—oh gods, that chanting is boring into my brain, seeking my sanity like a tasty morsel. They're worshipping some horrid mass of eyes, flesh, and tentacles. And now that *thing* is consuming a poor screaming farm animal. I swear, if I make it out of here alive, I'll never set foot on this side of Cheliax again.

—From the journal of Andi Calderi, Molthuni spice dealer

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Introduction

With its infernal present layered upon its somewhat tragic past, Cheliox is a rich location that's inviting for adventurers of all stripes. Player characters who hail from this diabolical nation might use its diverse towns or mysterious forests as proving grounds to test their bravery and skill; after all, if one can emerge unscathed from a fight with fiends in Egorian or with wicked fey in the Whisperwood, surely she can face more trying tasks abroad. For parties that seek more of a challenge, Cheliox delivers heartily. Many passages of the Menador Mountains are deadly to all but the strongest PCs, as are the depths of the Whisperwood and several of the Chelish countryside's strange ruins, which offer untold riches and glory for those who can survive their horrors. Adventures in Cheliox often involve infernal influences, if not devils themselves, but fiends are not all that might challenge PCs who travel here. Below is just a sample of some of the adventure sites in Cheliox.

ARCH OF ARODEN

Ancient Horrors beneath Glassy Waves

Location: Hespereth Strait

Master: Xoxren Killiani (NE male gillman^{ISWG} psychic^{OA} 6/ fighter 3)

Inhabitants: Dire sharks, giant squids, psychic gillmen, skum

Features: Crumbling landmark, hidden above-water lairs, missing ships

Most of the Inner Sea region's residents believe the Arch of Aroden's history is tied only to the Last Azlanti, and was a shining monument to his engineering. However, deep beneath the Hespereth Strait's waves lies another relic of the past. Unraveling its mystery reveals an ancient horror, its modern machinations, and the wicked yet tragic beings that would murder a thousand sailors simply to escape its grasp.

More than 100 years ago, long after the arch was built, a clan of gillmen from the depths of the Arcadian Ocean relocated to the Hespereth Strait and founded the city of Killiani. They hoped this location would provide answers to the tribe's scholarly inquiries into Earthfall, their ancient aboleth benefactors, and their reason for existence. The gillmen bored deep into the ocean floor, believing the answers they sought would come from the earth itself. They found no such truth, but they did stumble upon an enormous, metallic artifact shaped like thousands of barnacled tentacles wrapped together.

No sooner had they cleared the muck from the object than it emitted a mighty blast of psychic energy, knocking all the gillmen in the city unconscious. When the gillmen awoke, the artifact mentally spoke to them: its name was the *Eye of the Slumberer*, and the gillmen would serve it lest it unleash another blast of power and destroy them all. Terrified, the gillmen acquiesced, and the artifact spelled out its terms. It required the sacrifice of all the

lives aboard 111 ships; the gillmen were to sink one ship each year, capture its crew, and torture them in Killiani over the course of the 12 months that followed. Afterward, they were to kill the sailors and start the cycle anew. Once they fulfilled their quota, the artifact promised it would release the gillmen from its subjugation.

Trembling, the gillmen embarked on their first mission, riding the sharks and squids they had brought with them to Killiani as mounts and pets. When the gillmen traveled to the surface and waylaid their first ship—a Rahadoumi frigate bound for Khari—they discovered that the *Eye* had imbued them with the power to cast spells with their minds. As the years wore on, the gillmen honed these abilities, and they even allied with a tribe of skum, for whom they built hidden lairs within the pillars of the Arch of Aroden. Each year, when the time for a new attack approaches, the skum scout for targets at night, then swim back to the pillars to report to their gillman overlords.

Now that the gillmen have their grim task down to a science, the clan's leader, Xoxren Killiani, eagerly awaits the day when his kin will be free from the artifact's clutches. Until about a year ago, the Chelish authorities were none the wiser to the gillmen's activities. After all, the clan was always careful to sink ships and abduct the crews at night, and the infrequency of the attacks made it difficult to identify the incidents as anything other than accidental shipwrecks. However, recently the *Eye of the Slumberer* has inexplicably required the gillmen to target ships with larger crews and increase the frequency of their sacrifices. In his desperate fervor, Xoxren has failed to realize that the skum have been witnessed scouting the strait, and that reports of gillmen aboard sinking ships have begun circulating. The Chelish authorities have been taking these sightings seriously, and they have been discreetly looking for agents to investigate these "accidents" and discover whether the skum and gillmen sightings are connected. It has become impossible for House Thrune to ignore the incidents' dangerous implications.

Below the Hespereth Strait, it remains unclear where the *Eye of the Slumberer* came from, why it compels the gillmen to carry out their cruel sacrifices, and whether it will uphold to its end of the bargain—if there ever was a bargain to begin with. Given its name, some Killiani suspect the artifact is an extension of Bokrug (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 136), the Great Old One who sleeps deep in a lake in the Dimension of Dreams. However, since Bokrug is not known for psychic power, others believe the moniker is a reference to some other, even more hideous force that could be using the gillmen to achieve something unspeakable. Regardless, with the existence of Killiani unknown to surface dwellers, it remains unclear what other missions the gillmen may have completed for the *Eye*, and whether the gillmen retrieving the Arch of Aroden's keystone from the seabed and gifting it to Almas was simply a ploy that might in fact allow the heinous artifact to spy on Andoran.

COLLAPSED HALLS

Blighted Home of Twisted Fey

Location: On the banks of the upper Maiestas River, west of the Barrowood

Master: Lenira Re (CE female blighted fey huldra^{B4} witch^{APG 2}; *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary 6*)

Inhabitants: Blighted fey (hellfire ignises, nuglubs, pixies, and satyrs), fetid spores, humanoid captives, warped oozes

Features: Fungus-covered ruins, hidden treasure vaults, trapped prison cells

This eerie, mysterious ruin was once known as the Halls of Zuberi. Around 4300 AR, it served as the luxurious castle home of Meskhenet, mistress of Khalfani Zuberi, a wealthy Osirian merchant. Less than 10 years after the complex was built, however, Meskhenet abandoned it. Distraught, Zuberi banished the place from his mind, and it languished for years, until its walls finally gave way and the entire place collapsed. The majority of Chelaxians consider the place a useless blight—a description that is ironically appropriate, as unbeknownst to most, a wicked huldra has taken up residence here. Named Lenira Re, she



LENIRA RE

works tirelessly to spread a rare and deadly fey blight into the Barrowood, and beyond.

Always more reckless than others of her kind, Lenira once lived in a small, lakeside fey commune in the western Barrowood called Everpine, where all manner of goodly fey live largely isolated from the rest of Chelax. Unlike other huldras, Lenira Re resented her hollow body, and searched for a spell or potion to make her whole. When a hooded figure approached her outside of Everpine, offering to teach her an incantation to make her wooden body more substantial, Lenira gladly accepted. She returned to Everpine, eager to share this “gift” with her friends, only to be called a fool for believing in what was surely a scam.

Incensed, Lenira fled Everpine, crossed the Maiestas River, and paused to rest in the abandoned Collapsed Halls. There she spoke the incantation aloud and fell into a stupor. Yet while Lenira did indeed change, it was not as she had hoped. When she awoke, she was covered in black, greasy fungal growths, which pulsed and filled up her chest cavity in a parody of real flesh. For the hooded figure that had approached Lenira was actually an agent of the demon lord Cyth-V’sug, who seeks a seat of power beyond the Fangwood in Nirmathas, where his insidious influence has already taken hold in earnest. The incantation transformed Lenira into a blighted fey, just like the warped creatures in the Fangwood. The blight twisted Lenira’s mind even as it turned her form into a mockery of its former beauty.

While Lenira hadn’t spread the blight to the other fey of Everpine as the demon’s agent had wanted, her infection did drive her to seek revenge on her kin, whom she mistakenly holds responsible. In the years since her corruption, Lenira has covered the ruins in diseased overgrowth, and has spread the disease to the area’s numerous hellfire ignises (see page 62), nuglub gremlins (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 143), pixies, and satyrs. These warped fey now operate out of the Collapsed Halls, serving Lenira by capturing more fey and ambushing passing travelers. Some of these captives the cruel fey simply torment and kill, but others serve as fodder for the huldra’s horrible experiments.

Lenira has become convinced that to spread the blight into the Barrowood and beyond, she must infect humanoids to serve as carriers alongside her fey minions. She hasn’t yet found a way to transfer the blight to non-fey, but she has no shortage of test subjects, whom she keeps in filthy, carefully trapped prison cells within the halls. Lenira has even begun appearing in person to powerful travelers who pass nearby, offering them sumptuous feasts and untold gifts from her castle if they follow her home. If adventurers could enter Lenira’s castle and resist her charms and jailers, or rid her of disease or convince her that she unknowingly advances a demon lord’s agenda, they could free her captives and find the riches Zuberi left within the ruins’ depths. After all, wealth means nothing to the blighted huldra, who seeks only revenge for an ailment she believes to be incurable.

Cheliax, The Infernal Empire

GANDERHAL'S LAIR

Vault of Shadow Undead

Location: Menador Mountains

Master: Ganderhal (CE male shadow wizard 15)

Inhabitants: Revenants, shadows, undead fauna (vampire dire bat swarms and zombie dire bears), vampire wraiths

Features: Arcane library, chambers filled with poison gas, winding underground corridors

Centuries ago, a bitter rivalry festered between two powerful wizards in the Nidalese capital of Pangolais. Named Ganderhal and Zonotha, they were strikingly similar: both were born into aristocratic families, both were graduates of the prestigious Duskhall, and both eventually established lairs in the same region of the Menador Mountains. The two brilliant wizards researched ways to combine shadow casting with powerful phantasms and words of power, and as their knowledge grew, they engaged in escalating acts of sabotage intended to slow each other's progress.

As the ravages of age began to slow their bodies and their minds, the wizards both began to look into the possibilities of lichdom. Of course, each was dismayed to learn that his enemy was also working toward that path to immortality. The race was on, with each wizard frantically researching ways to transfer his soul into a phylactery.

Ganderhal lost that race. Just as he prepared the final sacrifices necessary for his ascension ritual—mostly peasants and goblinoids kidnapped from the surrounding Menador Mountains—an undead Zonotha burst into his lair as wicked laughter echoed throughout the underground tunnels. He slaughtered Ganderhal and every living creature present in the tunnels. The lich then retreated back to his own abode, said to be somewhere near Mount Kudal, and considered the matter to be over.

But it was far from finished. While he hadn't achieved the immortality he wanted, Ganderhal still rose as an undead after his rival murdered him. Instead of rising as a lich, Ganderhal rose as a shadow, most likely because of his fell experiments with shadow magic. Further, after Zonotha's rampage, the evil energy that had infused the underground lair for so long also transformed every creature that had died in it into an undead, all the way down to dire bears that rose as zombies and dire bats that became vampires.

Many of Ganderhal's intended sacrifices also rose as shadows, with the more powerful individuals—including a few chieftains and adventurers—rising as greater shadows, revenants (*Bestiary* 2 235), and even vampire wraiths. With their help, Ganderhal plots to track down Zonotha and his phylactery, kill the insolent slug, and prove his own superiority once and for all. Although Ganderhal at first thought rising as a shadow was rather poor luck, he has come to see its virtues, as he can now create an infinite number of shadow allies. Even better, Zonotha's phylactery is a weakness he can exploit, if ever he could track it and his rival down—Zonotha has seemingly disappeared.

To bide his time, Ganderhal records all the information he can about liches and their weaknesses, and keeps these valuable secrets in a vault-library deep within his underground lair. But getting to the library is no simple task. While he plots against Zonotha, Ganderhal fortifies his home; it's a maze of steep, downward-winding corridors, some of which are heavily trapped and periodically filled with poison gas to defend against living creatures. Undead patrol the upper portions of the lair, ensuring that any who approach are sent running—or are involuntarily recruited into Ganderhal's undead army. As such depredations increase, Iomedaeans and Sarenites in Andoran have begun quietly looking for help against the menace.



GANDERHAL

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MISTSHROUD CLIFF

Mysterious Cleaved Mountain

Location: Eastern Eismonts

Master: Marithma (CE female coloxus^{B3})

Notable Inhabitants Golems (clay, stone, wood), orcs, ropers, troglodytes

Features Ancient Jistkan magic, dangerous traps, malfunctioning fail-safes, vertiginous cliffside openings

Although Rachikan is the most famous Jistkan ruin in Cheliah, other remnants of the long-fallen imperium lie scattered throughout the nation. One of these was a series of golem laboratories and artificial biomes the Jistkans called Arjekito, which the ancient people painstakingly built inside an isolated mountain in the eastern Eismonts. To power the facility, the Jistkan magistrates used magic to divert a portion of the Maiestas River through the base of the mountain, harnessing the rushing water's energy.

Because of bickering among the magistrates, the diverted river was insufficiently contained; after only a few years, the magic infusing the water caused it to burst through the mountain's base. Half of the peak crumbled into the deep valleys below, smashing the laboratories inside. The Jistkans abandoned the shattered facility, whose remaining areas were now easily accessible only via hallways and rooms exposed along the side of the newly created cliff. While the water flowing through the area has slowed to a trickle, enough of a current still tumbles over the cliff to cloak it in the mysterious, perpetual fog.

Unknown to the Jistkan engineers, the watery explosion did more than split the mountain in half. It also burst an opening into Nar-Voth, the upper levels of the Darklands, and it didn't take long for subterranean creatures to creep into the ruins. Several tribes of troglodytes, intrigued at the lingering magic, built haphazard lairs in the lower portions of the ruins, avoiding the constructs that still functioned. Two years ago, a coloxus demon calling herself Marithma arrived at the ruins, claiming its ancient magic and servitors rightfully belonged to her. Marithma has no means

of controlling the remaining golems in Arjekito, but is convinced that one of the Jistka Imperium's fabled golem-controlling *ivory batons* (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lost Kingdoms* 42) exists somewhere within the ruins. The complex remains rife with Jistkan wards, traps, and other dangerous fail-safes, however, so instead of venturing into the ruins herself, Marithma has established herself in the troglodytes' minds as a goddess, and dispatches them into the dangers instead. As a result, the troglodyte population in Mistshroud Cliff has dwindled somewhat.

Marithma's insistence that treasures and ancient magic remain undiscovered within these halls is accurate: the Jistkan magistrates and artificers fell into such violent quarrels after Arjekito's destruction that many were killed or forced to leave the complex in haste. In addition, many of the magistrates had planned to use Arjekito to pursue their own secret, dangerous experiments far from the imperium's capital. Half-finished doomsday devices, poorly contained biological plagues, and fiend-infused golems (see page 60) remain concealed in unexplored chambers.

In addition to the troglodytes' reckless exploration of Mistshroud Cliff, a small contingent of orcs from the Eismonts' nearby foothills has camped at the cliff's bottom. The orcs' leader, **Targa Blackknuckle** (N female orc oracle^{APG} 9), has been experiencing nightly visions of a powerful, fly-headed woman rising atop Mistshroud Cliff, and the orcs are convinced that this woman will either doom or save the world. Either way, the tribe believes they are the chosen followers of this strange being, whom they call simply Mother Musca. So far, since they have yet to brave the cliff's heights, the orcs have had only minor skirmishes with the troglodytes.

Recently, Targa has dispatched orcs throughout the Eismonts to try to find any powerful creatures willing to help them approach Mother Musca. The orcs have learned much about the cliff's defenses and potential treasure, and would be willing to work with adventurers interested in infiltrating the ruins. On the flip side, should anyone prove that Mother Musca is a danger to the orcs' existence, Targa could also be convinced to help mount a raid on the coloxus and her troglodyte minions.



TARGA BLACKKNUCKLE

Cheliox, The Infernal Empire

PILLAR OF PALAMIA

Prison of Cacophonous Madness

Location: Northwestern Whisperwood

Master: Vediss Halurexis (CE male human cleric of Shub-Niggurath 16)

Notable Inhabitants: Captured villagers, human cultists, twisted aberrations in service to Shub-Niggurath (froghemoths, neothelids, vemeraks)

Features: Creeping madness, mind-bending rituals, twisting forest paths

During the Age of Darkness, when the sun's light rarely broke through the pervasive clouds of smoke and debris that blanketed Golarion's skies after the catastrophe of Earthfall, the creatures lurking beneath the skin of the earth, once confined to the Darklands and other underground refuges, had free reign to terrorize the surface world. One of the greatest of these horrors was the Gibbering Blot, a shoggoth that had oozed from the lightless depths just as humans descended from their bolt-holes in Cheliox's eastern Menador Mountains to begin rebuilding their lives in the fertile lowlands.

The ululations of the Gibbering Blot drove the humans who heard them to madness, causing blood to run from their ears, sending them screaming from invisible horrors, and driving them to turn on one another and rip their neighbors to bloody pieces in frenzied attempts to make the sounds stop. Only their own deaths could save them from it.

A tribe called the Palamia, having heard rumors of what happened to others who encountered the shoggoth, fled into the northern Whisperwood, abandoning their homes and flocks. The Gibbering Blot pursued the fleeing tribespeople, and the Palamia called out to the gods to save them. Although no god answered their cries, an ancient being stirred. No mortals worshiped it, though some attempted to placate this forest spirit with offerings of first fruits.

As the Gibbering Blot came within hearing range of the defenseless Palamia, the forest spirit appeared in the form of an old man wielding an enormous staff made of stone and wood. The shoggoth's cries had no effect on the old man, and before the Gibbering Blot could attack, the forest spirit drove his staff into the horror's throat, silencing it, pushing it back beneath the surface, and pinning it in place. The grateful humans raised a mighty basalt obelisk, 10 feet wide and 30 feet high, on the site to commemorate their deliverance.

In 4713 AR, an insane but brilliant demagogue named Vediss Halurexis learned of the Gibbering Blot while conducting illicit research in Egorian into the cult of the Outer God Shub-Niggurath, Black Goat of the Woods with a Thousand Young, whose terrible power and fecundity fascinated the Chelioxian. Halurexis stumbled upon vague prophecies that he believed tied the freeing

of the Gibbering Blot with Shub-Niggurath's inevitable descent to and destruction of Golarion. Halurexis came to anticipate that once the smoke from her reckoning cleared, the evil entity would make him all-powerful and allow him to rule in her name. He spent months preaching his dark gospel to Egorian's most unstable and desperate unfortunates, painting a world in which they, the despised, would rise above those who had ignored and denigrated them. Halurexis brought a few dozen crazed cultists with him when he relocated from Egorian to Whisperwood, and established a camp near the Pillar of Palamia, where he continues to research how to set the trapped shoggoth free.

His cultists, meanwhile, haunt the tangled clearings around his camp, attacking any who approach and tearing them to pieces with rictus smiles of unholy glee, or dragging them back to be slain as sacrifices before the pillar. They use the blood of their victims to paint obscene sigils on the pillar and to "water" the ground around it as if the pillar were a living thing that required sustenance.

After years of rituals and sacrifices, Halurexis has succeeded in creating the slightest of fractures the shoggoth's prison, but this tiny fissure is sufficient to lend the surrounding territory a palpable aura of madness, wrenching it out of harmony with the rest of the region. Forest paths seem to twist upon themselves to avoid the pillar, conveniently hiding the cultist camp from all but the most strong-willed trespassers. Natural creatures take on aberrant forms, and a distant, hoarse braying fills the air. With each fell ritual conducted in the Black Goat's name, the earth around the Pillar of Palamia spews forth aberrations that serve Shub-Niggurath, including particularly grotesque versions of froghemoths, neothelids, and vemeraks (*Bestiary* 2 278), which now roam the area unimpeded.

As the shifting forest paths discourage most creatures from wandering anywhere near the pillar, the cultists have begun to go farther afield to capture their victims, even sneaking into nearby villages at night and kidnapping any folk roaming the streets after dark to haul them off into the undergrowth and subject them to unspeakable rituals. The residents of these villages have set curfews, and spend their nights huddled fearfully behind locked doors, peering through their windows at any noise from the street. Some locals have even reported hearing a braying sound and feeling a distinctly wicked but maternal instinct in their dreams.

A few brave individuals have resorted to requesting assistance from the nearby Hellknight Order of the Pike, but so far, their pleas have been ignored. In recent weeks, the desperate people of the northern Whisperwood have even dispatched representatives to Senara and Longacre in hopes of finding individuals who can make sense of the attacks and stop them for good.

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RUINS OF DENG

Cradle of Aroden's Marooned Flock

Location: Coast of the Bay of Deng

Master: Gharvus the Twice-Cursed (NE male advanced zealot wraith; see page 63)

Notable Inhabitants: Animated objects, incorporeal undead (ghosts, spectres, zealot wraiths), Thrune agents

Features: Hidden historical documents, indifferent spirits, sodden ruins

In 4606 AR, in the 3 days immediately following Aroden's death, earthquakes and typhoons destroyed the city of Deng. Although Westcrown boasted the most ostentatious and politically motivated monuments to Aroden, residents of this energetic coastal city were arguably even more devout worshipers of the Last Azlanti than those of the metropolis to their west. Deng was a city of philanthropy as well as innovation, and its influential council ordered the demolition and reconstruction of large sections of the city every few years, using this frequent urban renewal to provide jobs for the city's working poor and strengthen its community ties. Of the many different social services and municipal projects it attempted, Deng's communal markets, public housing, elaborate green spaces, and innovative hospitals were some of the most storied and inspirational of their time. Civic leaders and scholars from across the Inner Sea came to see the great experiments, and rumors hold that some of the city's most visionary urban designers and policymakers were secretly recruited by the nascent utopia of Hermea.

The disasters that occurred more than 100 years ago dropped a third of Deng into the bay, flattened another third, and waterlogged the rest. Since then, the ruins of the city have lain mostly undisturbed. Few looters have bothered scouring the detritus for treasure, as in addition to the danger posed by the legions of unquiet spirits that inhabit the city, it was well known that Deng poured the vast majority of its wealth into civic and artistic projects rather than into vaults or coffers.

This last bit of common knowledge, however, is not entirely true. While Deng's government did indeed devote much of its money to civic improvements, that money didn't vanish. Vast stores of gold still rest in carefully guarded city treasuries, as well as the strongboxes of the city's contractors. Perhaps the single most interesting location for looters and salvagers is the Tower of Foresight, where the city government housed their most prestigious thinkers and urban designers, supplying them with everything they could possibly need in order to do their jobs, from expensive creature comforts to keep them free to concentrate on the issues to rare texts and magic items to help bring their philanthropic dreams to life. Though it is now submerged beneath the waves, the tower nevertheless still contains a great many valuable

items, including the *Vision Stone*, an elaborate scrying device that allowed the users to view any part of the city at both a micro scale and a macro scale. Though Deng used it primarily to observe trends and habits within the populace, in the wrong hands—especially those of House Thrune—it could easily be turned into a powerful surveillance device.

Most of Deng's undead residents are ghosts who engage in endless repetitions of the tasks they performed before the city was destroyed, such as constructing monuments, shopping for clothing, and preparing meals. Each ghost remains locked in its cycle unless interrupted by the living—which earns the spirit's ire—or blessed by a lawful priest. A benediction by most lawful priests merely dismisses the ghosts for 1 day. Rumor holds that only a priest of Aroden can permanently exorcise a ghost, although with the Last Azlanti leaving all prayers unanswered, it is unclear whether this is still even possible.

Some of the undead of Deng are more powerful and more self-aware than mere ghosts. A few visionaries foresaw the looming disaster and committed suicide rather than suffer through the coming torment, but most of these souls found no escape in death—perceiving their own abandonment of the living as cowardice—and now roam the city as spectres, lost in their own shame. Devout followers of Aroden killed in the city's destruction felt crushing sorrow and betrayal as their prayers for rescue went unheeded, and many of those sorrowful individuals rose as zealot wraiths (see page 63), forever devastated by the trauma they endured when their god perished. The city's former high priest of Aroden, Gharvus the Twice-Cursed—so named because of the twin curses he vainly calls down upon the city's fallen Arodenites daily—is particularly vengeful and intolerant of the living's incursions into the ruins. He lairs in the city's main government building, the ruined Shining Hall, and seems to control the legion of animated objects scattered throughout the complex.

Sporadically since the Thrune Ascendancy, the crown has sent agents into the ruins on secretive missions. The buildings not destroyed in the aftermath of Aroden's death contain extensive documentation of pre-Thrune life in Chelixa. In addition to painting a stark contrast between life in historical Chelixa and the current oppressive state, these records may also contain certain secrets about House Thrune's early days that the ruling house would prefer to eradicate, lest they circulate through the country at large. Rumor holds that Queen Abrogail II has recently dispatched a powerful group of agents to destroy all records left in the ruins. Stopping this team from eradicating these annals, and instead bringing the secret information in them to light, might very well enable Chelish dissidents to significantly weaken House Thrune's public image and control.

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RUINS OF NARONA

Eerie Locus of Eldritch Powers

Location: Coast of Hellmouth Gulf

Master: Order of the Pyre Paralicor Carlina Khol (LN female human fighter 5/Hellknight^{SWG} 2)

Inhabitants: Ash hags, Hellknights, hydrodaemon, various devils (barbazus, imps, magaavs)

Features: Bizarre implements, fonts of occult energy, pitched battles

From the moment Queen Abrogail I seized the Chelish throne, she knew which cities she could easily subjugate and which would be more difficult to bring under her thumb. The democratically elected leaders of the peaceful yet fiercely independent town of Narona refused to bend their knees to Throne domination, claiming that they could not trust the infernally influenced rulers to treat the people for whom they were responsible with the fairness and decency to which they were entitled. Once Narona had firmly established itself in the category of impediments to her control over Cheliox, the queen abandoned her threats and attempts at persuasion and sent the Chelish navy to destroy the traitors, coldly ordering her captains to leave no resident of Narona alive. The ships arrived at Narona's shores in the dead of night, and began firing flaming siege weapons at the town without warning.

A few of Narona's citizens escaped, but over 5,000 souls perished in the flames, or under the swords of soldiers stationed around its outskirts to catch any who tried to flee. When she received reports of the butchery, Queen Abrogail was pleased with the results, considering the obstacle removed and the example made. However, unbeknownst to Abrogail and her forces, Narona had been constructed atop the site of an ancient magic repository. The nature of the repository's power and what it had been used for had long ago been lost to recorded history, though elusive references to its power crop up in the folklore of the area from time to time. Shortly after the Throne Ascendancy, the ruins became the haven of ash hags (see page 57) and cultists looking to harness the site's occult potential.

The most mysterious aspect of the ruins is a collection of 14 locked doors constructed of a red-tinged alloy that resembles no known metal and inscribed with an unrecognizable script that defies all efforts to decipher it. When the doors are touched, the metal begins to emit an eerily beautiful ringing noise that shifts in pitch and volume. Anyone within hearing range who speaks before the resounding tones fade is instantly rendered deaf and mute until the doors fall silent again. Magical effects go awry while the doors reverberate: weapons enchanted with holy power may burst into flame, potions may change their consistency, and wands may gain or lose charges. The doors' muting effect makes

attempts to magically investigate their nature more difficult, as it prevents spellcasters using spells with verbal components from completing their incantations. The doors appear to be impervious to nonmagical force, resisting any attempts to force them open, blow them up, or bore through them, and the walls around them seem to be similarly reinforced.

In the past few years, Hellknights from the Order of the Pyre have trekked across Cheliox to unearth the secrets that lie beneath Narona and protect the Chelish populace from any lingering threats. The Hellknights brought along several contingents of Chelish archaeologists to dig up relics from the destroyed city and its ancient underpinnings in hopes of understanding more about the area. So far, they have discovered a few implements with unusual powers, which the Hellknights guard carefully until they can be taken back to Citadel Krane safely. The artifacts lying within Narona could well prove of great use to adventurers, particularly those with strong ties to western Cheliox or the civilizations that predated the empire. Getting past the Hellknights, however, would normally be a tall order indeed.

Recently, the Hellknights have faced a threat in Narona more immediate than slumbering ancient powers. A hydrodaemon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 67) has emerged from Hellmouth Gulf, intent on infiltrating the ruins. Calling itself Zeucharin, the hydrodaemon believes that somewhere within the repository is an interplanar portal that connects to the River Styx. The portal has been locked since the repository's creators disappeared, but Zeucharin possesses a magical key attuned to the portal, which may be able to open it. Zeucharin intends to channel the deadly waters of the River Styx onto the Material Plane, turning the river beside Narona into an offshoot of that infamous waterway. Once the area has become sufficiently polluted with the Styx's poison, it will provide a hospitable environment for Zeucharin's kin, allowing the hydrodaemons to establish a foothold there and begin introducing that profane contamination into Hellmouth Gulf and beyond.

Try as they might to repel the creature, the Hellknights have so far managed only to achieve a stalemate with it, even as they summon various lower devils, including magaavs (*Bestiary* 4 53), to try to drive the daemon away. Zeucharin's faction has lost a series of battles with its rivals on Abaddon; the daemons worry that unless they can create a refuge elsewhere, their enemies will exterminate them, and Zeucharin's desperation makes the daemon a determined and formidable foe. Needless to say, the Hellknights' normally intractable vigils in the ruins are somewhat distracted. Leveraging the fight between the order and the daemon could reveal an opening for savvy adventurers to infiltrate the ruins, explore them, extract wondrous treasures, and escape before attracting the Hellknights' concentrated wrath.

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RUINS OF RACHIKAN

Warring Factions on Perilous Terrain

Location: Pillars of Anferita

Master: Garpesfek (CE male morlock shaman^{ACG} 14)

Notable Inhabitants: Elder magma elementals, fiend-infused golems, horned devil, morlocks, omox demons

Features: Ancient Jistkan power stations, perilous dungeon levels, raging magma

The Pillars of Anferita have long been rumored to hold ruins, artifacts, and other evidence of the fallen Jistka Imperium, but only in recent years has an entrance to the column containing the sprawling foundry-city of Rachikan been found once more. Rachikan's ruins promise to provide unparalleled riches to explorers, in the form of both artifacts valuable for their historical significance and those whose worth lies in the lost technologies they represent, not to mention the information and understanding that can be gained by studying the remains of this settlement. Several interested parties—including the Aspis Consortium and the Pathfinder Society—have established exploratory teams to plumb the ruins' upper levels and catalogue their findings in an attempt to piece together more information about this fascinating and enigmatic civilization, and delegations from universities, libraries, and other institutions of learning compete for access to both the site and any explorers who have become familiar with it. Anticipating that these organizations will unearth priceless artifacts and long-lost arcane lore, the Chelish government has placed strict controls around the most widely known access point at the top of the pillar.

There is, however, another entrance to Rachikan, exposed through recent tragedy. Only 2 weeks ago, the smuggler's ship *Bygone Tides* was hiding from Chelish naval patrols among the Pillars of Anferita, and unknowingly dropped anchor adjacent to the column containing the ruins of Rachikan. Without warning, a spray of molten rock blasted from the plinth only 30 feet above the water, raining lava upon the hapless ship. Only two survivors made it to Corentyn to tell the tale, and both claimed that the molten spray opened a narrow crack in the pillar. Sages connected with the Aspis Consortium and Pathfinder Society quietly confirmed that this was Rachikan's column. The two organizations raced to the location, and local authorities had to break up a number of physical altercations between competing exploration teams.

This new entrance leads directly to the lower levels of the ruins of Rachikan, where vast pits of magma still churn beneath narrow walkways of stone and iron. These magma pits once provided power to Rachikan, but now they are the site of a power struggle between crafty morlocks and powerful devils. A discharge of magma—a side effect of the morlocks' meddling with ancient machinery they did not wholly understand—caused the explosion that destroyed the *Bygone Tides*.

The lower levels of Rachikan are arranged like a massive flower with five oval petals; four petals each contain a massive pit that surges with magma and gleeful magma elementals (*Bestiary* 2 118). The fifth is flooded with fetid water. Intended to serve as a quenching fail-safe for the four magma pits, the once-clean water now houses a clot of omox demons (*Bestiary* 2 79), who converted the flooded silo into a shrine to Jubilex and clogged the valves that allow the putrid liquid to flow. The five petals meet at a control complex containing abandoned work chambers, defective power regulators, and guard stations. With the city above is in ruins and no longer requiring power, the control complex's horned devil guardians grew inattentive and neglectful of the fiend-infused golems (see page 60) who also stood guard here. Eventually, they misplaced the pieces of the reactor key that would unlock the foundry-city's inexhaustible power.

Unfortunately, one of the systems in the city that was powered by the magma pits was the security protocols, which appear to have kept some sort of as-yet unidentified life forms confined. Examination of the airtight cells, equipped with their own self-contained ventilation systems, has not revealed whether the occupants were humanoids, animals, or even some sort of disease. Most of the explorers and researchers scoff at the idea that the empty cells represent any sort of danger to modern visitors, pointing out that whatever lived in them has likely been dead for centuries, though a team from a Garundi university has petitioned to have the site closed to all but a small team of experts until it can be confirmed that there is no danger of infection or parasites to those who enter the ruins. Thus far, their request has fallen on deaf ears, as neither the Pathfinder Society nor the Aspis Consortium will leave while the other has access, and the Chelish government is determined to profit from whatever is found within Rachikan's boundaries.

A few decades before Rachikan's "discovery" by Chelish forces, power struggles in the ruins forced a band of morlocks dwelling within the ruins—degenerate descendants of Jistkan workers—to venture into Rachikan's lower levels when their faction was defeated by their opponents, who remained above. The morlocks who entered the control complex managed to catch the golems and inattentive devils by surprise. Led by the gifted seer Garpesfek, the morlocks managed to occupy a third of the complex, find one piece of the reactor key, and slay one of the horned devils before being stopped in what has become a years-long stalemate. The remaining horned devil, Curtagiak, has recently marshaled the magma elementals and reactivated a fiend-infused brass golem to help repel the intruders. Adventurers examining the new fissure are likely to step into the middle of this war, which could stop their attempts to salvage treasure and lore from this legendary foundry.

Cheliax, The Infernal Empire

SCAR THICKET

Fungal Forest with Darklands Threats

Location: Northern Whisperwood

Master: Avazed Udrinor (CE male drow transmuter 5)

Notable Inhabitants: Cave giants, drow, halsoras, vegepygmies

Features: Brutal cave giant settlement, Darklands tunnels, gigantic fungi, shadowed groves

Although the Whisperwood in central Cheliax is known as a dangerous forest haunted with malefic and bizarre monsters, the region of the forest known as Scar Thicket bears the most evil reputation of all. Scar Thicket lies centrally in the northern stretch of the woods. The intertwined branches of its ancient trees prevent sunlight from reaching the forest floor; on the sunniest days, its interior is no brighter than at twilight. Strange molds cover most surfaces, and mushrooms as large as ogres sprout in the perpetual gloom beneath the primeval trees. The infernal creatures that lurk throughout the Whisperwood are also present in Scar Thicket—in particular, fiendish bats and imps that flit among the branches rather than navigating the fungus-encrusted ground. However, Scar Thicket's primary inhabitants originate from lightless subterranean realms rather than fiendish planes. The region is one of the few places on Golarion where a number of Darklands species can be found living on the surface, though the area's fearsome reputation has kept out most researchers who might make this information known to the public.

Large tribes of vegepygmies inhabit Scar Thicket, growing and shaping the mushrooms and other fungi in the gloomy forest to satisfy their own bizarre aesthetics. Although the forest canopy blocks most light, rain and fog become trapped beneath the trees.

This creates a moist environment perfect for cultivating russet mold, a fungus vital to the vegepygmy growth cycle. Vegepygmies in Scar Thicket often grow thick and large; advanced and giant vegepygmies are common. The vegepygmies' current chieftain is a lean, leathery creature named **Gomphus Swolegryn** (N male advanced vegepygmy druid 5). Gomphus is protective of his people, and he equips the vegepygmies with bulbous gourds containing russet

mold. When thrown, these gourds burst and expose creatures in the area to the mold's dangerous spores.

Though the vegepygmies would prefer to inhabit Scar Thicket in peace, the twisting passages to the Darklands' Midnight Jungle beneath the region draw other creatures to pass through vegepygmy lands to raid human settlements in and around the Whisperwood. Foremost among these raiders are cave giants (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 127), which pose such a problem that the Hellknight Order of the Pike regularly mounts attacks to drive the giants back. The Hellknights have learned not to pursue the giants too deeply into Scar Thicket, however, as the vegepygmies hide from the fearsome giants but attack other trespassers with enthusiasm. The cave giants have formed a community in Scar Thicket within an enormous ring of lichen-encrusted oak trees split long ago by a ferocious lightning storm. About 30 cave giants occupy this settlement, called Blackbough, though their numbers vary based on battle losses and reinforcements from the Darklands. The leader of the giants is the violent **Bagrash Tuskrasen** (NE female cave giant barbarian 2), who gleefully punishes threats to her community with public beheadings.

Recently, the vegepygmies have come under attack from below. A disgraced drow named Avazed Udrinor and his kin occupy several fortified tunnels below Scar Thicket. This tangled maze of tunnels can confound any invader unfamiliar with its layout, but the paranoid Avazed has established further protections. The drow wizard employs charmed cave giants as bodyguards and has erected magical traps to trigger cave-ins or to polymorph intruders into harmless vermin. Avazed delights in capturing lone vegepygmies from the forest above and warping them into horrid monstrosities known as halsoras (*Bestiary* 4 104). He loses interest in his fleshwarped creations as soon as he completes them, and releases the hideous creatures back into Scar Thicket. Avazed believes that he has nearly perfected vegepygmy fleshwarping, and he now seeks to capture other types of humanoids on which to conduct his gruesome experiments.



AVAZED UDRINOR

SHARDSTONE

Secret Fiendish Breeding Ground

Location: Shardstone Island in Hellmouth Gulf

Master: Ghislaine Thrune (LE female human alchemist 8)

Notable Inhabitants: Chelish soldiers, half-fiends, tieflings, various devils (erinyes, osyluths, patraavexes)

Features: Fell human experimentation, hidden barracks, highly sensitive evidence

In the 75 years since House Thrune rose to power, the crown has held an iron grip on the country in no small part thanks to its ruthlessness, guile, prescience, and remarkable capacity to prepare contingencies for every unfavorable situation. The wicked activity on Shardstone Island is a direct example of this, and underscores the ruling house's willingness to throw empathy and morality to the wind in favor of staying in power at all costs.

Early in her reign, Queen Abrogail I tolerated and even encouraged the growth of the Hellknight orders, finding them a useful adjunct to her power. However, she recognized that their true loyalty was to their own interests and oaths, and that should those loyalties conflict with her goals, the Hellknights might turn against her throne and her family. As a check on their power, she resolved to build reserves of loyal Chelish soldiers who could unequivocally best any Hellknight force they faced. Naturally, she turned to the powers of Hell for guidance, and subsequently devised a plan for such contingencies: she would create a secret experimentation facility and breeding ground on a remote island, where her agents would research imbuing the powers of devils into elite military fighters. Eventually, the queen hoped the facility would produce battalions of hellish infantry that could trample any threat in their paths.

And so Project Phlegethon was born, named for the lair in Hell in which writhing souls are forged into fiendish weapons. The head of this highly classified project was the queen's cousin, Quenzen Thrune, a talented and unscrupulous alchemist and fleshforger. The queen trusted him implicitly with this terrible secret, and he was all too glad to serve her, seeing an opportunity to conduct the experiments he'd always dreamed of doing, with the added bonus of royal funding and aid from infernal allies. Quenzen set to work with the assistance of a contingent of immaculately trained and unwaveringly loyal bodyguards and spellcasters, as well as a handful of Chelish soldiers who had pledged their lives to the queen. Abrogail also delivered 100 additional soldiers from her dungeons: deserters, spies, rebels, and those who had failed to obey orders with sufficient alacrity or effectiveness. These unfortunates were to be the subjects of Quenzen's first experiments, allowing those soldiers whose loyalty was more certain to undergo his techniques only after they were perfected—or at least developed sufficiently to reduce fatalities to acceptable numbers. Using summoned devils

and infernal concoctions, Quenzen mutated his subjects' flesh in a variety of agonizing ways. Most of his first forays proved unsuccessful, and the resulting monstrosities were fed to his fiendish allies. Eventually, however, his efforts began to bear fruit. Though most of the soldiers upon whom he practiced his techniques still died horribly, Quenzen could discern clues as to how he might use them without killing his subjects, and his reports to Abrogail were encouraging enough that the queen threw more resources behind his clandestine project.

Several generations after the construction of Quenzen's facilities on the island of Shardstone began, Project Phlegethon has grown into a massive operation. The primary experimentation facility is in an enormous gorge between Shardstone's two largest mountains, concealed by multiple layers of illusion and abjuration magic. Dozens of half-fiends and devils are kept separate from the project's human test subjects, but staff members and augmented tieflings—who have committed their lives and souls to the cause—freely roam the entire complex. Many of these warped hellspawn cavort with patraavexes (see page 59), whose influences speed up the experimentation process. The Aspis Consortium provides the fell tinctures and equipment needed for the operation, although even they don't know the extent of the project. The Chelish soldiers who serve here obey their commanders promptly and without question, for rumors echo in the absence of soldiers who fail to do so, claiming that they have been taken away to suffer fates more terrible than execution.

The halls of the facility echo with agonized cries. Some of the curses and broken pleas hurled after any who pass through the lowest level—access to which is restricted to only researchers with special clearance—are clearly human in origin, yet others sound as if they could not originate in human throats. The rest of the employees whisper that this is the area where the project's successes are kept. Under cover of darkness, hooded figures go off to another gorge each night, returning to the lower level before the sun rises, and a phalanx of armorers have been brought in to begin crafting armor for soldiers whose physiology is not quite human.

The project's current leader, Ghislaine Thrune, Quenzen's grandniece, is equally sadistic and determined to create a hellish force in the new queen's name. In a matter of months, she plans to present the first fully fiendish soldier, enhanced with terrible abilities, defenses, and stamina, to Queen Abrogail II. For her part, the young queen is pleased with her grandmother's vision and the project's impending results, but she fears what might happen should news of the facility's existence leak. These fears might be prescient, because rumor has it that a small group of orphans in Egorian has stumbled onto evidence that their soldier parents did not die in battle, as they were told, but are instead involved in some terrible imperial scheme.

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THURYAN

Island of Giants and Intrigue

Location: Island in Hellmouth Gulf

Master: Aisharya Khree (CG female storm giant bloodrager^{AGG} 3)

Inhabitants: Assorted giants (ash, stone, storm), foreign refugees and dissidents

Features: Giant lairs, hidden bands of revolutionaries, volcanic activity

For most of Cheliox's history, Thuryan was an undisturbed wilderness. Although storm giants could be found along the coast, and ash giants (*Bestiary* 3 126) and stone giants inhabited the treacherous mountains, the Chelish authorities were content to leave these scattered bands of peaceful, insular creatures undisturbed, not wishing to give them a reason to menace the mainland.

Shortly after Queen Abrogail I took the throne, she sent a message to the major giant clans on Thuryan and the surrounding islands, announcing that the giants must immediately abandon any claims to the land and either flee or pledge undying loyalty to the empire. When 3 weeks passed without a response, the queen sent assassins after the giants' leaders to punctuate her point. She also stationed Chelish naval ships all around the island, with instructions to destroy their settlements should the giants begin mustering en masse.

Facing utter annihilation, the giants convened for the first time in the island's history and agreed: they would surrender their homes to the queen and flee. The giants' hastily appointed leader, a yellow-eyed storm giant named Frindle Khree, ferried the message to the Chelish navy. The giants' timber-and-sinew boats went in all directions, with some headed north toward Varisia, some south to Rahadom, and others west to parts unknown. However, a few individual giants managed to hide in the island's mountain crannies and avoid Chelish notice. In the generations since, these giants' numbers have increased, if only slightly, and small pockets of giants now exist where once the refugees lived alone or in pairs.

In recent years, Aisharya Khree, the daughter of the giant leader who bargained with the Chelish navy so long ago, discovered a cache of family heirlooms and journals describing the island's siege. She plans to clandestinely build up enough firepower to force Thrune to recognize Thuryan's sovereignty. From there, Aisharya intends to create a haven for all those unwelcome on the mainland.

Khree is well on her way to achieving her goals. She has managed to ally with most of the island's giants, and has provided quarters for more than a dozen Chelish freedom fighters and dissidents, who ended up on the island after attempting to flee Thrune's long reach. The island's humans have even managed to smuggle in stores of weapons, ensuring that the giants will be prepared when the Chelish navy comes calling again.

Somehow, word of Khree's planning and preparations has reached some of Cheliox's enemies. A few months ago, a boat arrived in Thuryan from Almas in Andoran. Its captain, an agent of Codwin I, offered military and political support should Thuryan attempt to declare independence. Given Cheliox's power, however, the agent stopped short of offering arms or soldiers to help with the uprising.

Now, Aisharya Khree weighs whether to delay until the Chelaxians act or to prepare her most skilled soldiers to defend their home and the island's freedom. She may not have long to wait, for rumors claim the empire is well aware of the potential giant uprising and is plotting a violent response. Should influential mainland revolutionaries coax Aisharya into acting first, it could spell trouble for the queen, who has underestimated the giants and committed few of her forces to the problem. However, should powerful Chelish agents attempt to infiltrate the island, they may find more than they bargained for, as Aisharya seemingly fights with the power of storms themselves, and the island's volcanoes and burbling lava pits are highly hazardous for those who don't know the terrain. Regardless, there could be much treasure involved, either as payment from the giants or as the spoils of disbanding Aisharya's upstart regime.



AISHARYA KHREE

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It seemed like such a glorious breakthrough! By binding fiends into the engines of our golems, we could finally infuse them with more constant power. Radiating unholy heat and impervious to magic, the golems were magnificent. But then the accidents started. Our fiend-infused golems, it seems, have an unfortunate tendency to explode. I suppose these conflagrations are beautiful in a way, but we've lost so many useful workers, and even our best golem crafters can't seem to ensure that these constructs always function correctly. It's almost as if the fiends resent being forced to toil in such a fashion. And so, after long deliberation, I've come to the conclusion that binding evil creatures into our golems may have been an ill-advised choice after all.

—From the papers of Xachil Gurvin, Jistkan golem crafter

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Random Encounter Tables

The encounter tables presented on this page are not meant to be exhaustive lists of creatures that dwell within Cheliox, but rather are presented for the GM's convenience when PCs are in each of the indicated archduchies (see pages 3–4 for more information on these regions). GMs should feel free to replace monsters on these tables with other options if it means providing players with a more appropriate challenge or more engrossing story.

Asmodean Inquisitors (CR 7): These groups are Cheliox's secret police; they carry the authority of the Church of Asmodeus as well as the tacit blessing of the nobility. Each group consists of two zealots (LE human cleric of Asmodeus 4) led by an enforcer (LE human inquisitor^{APG} of Asmodeus 6). These groups assume the PCs are lawbreakers and attempt to capture them alive unless the party shows them proof of alliance with House Thrune or the church.

Roadside Brigands (CR 5): These small groups of unaffiliated thieves and roadside hijackers are made up of a poacher (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 129), a skilled sniper (*NPC Codex* 145), and three cutpurses (*NPC Codex* 144). They stalk the highways of the vast nation, especially in wooded areas, looking for easy prey among Chelish travelers.

Thrune Thugs (CR 3): These groups of loyalists either work for House Thrune or directly benefit from the ruling house's government. Each group consists of two brigands (*NPC Codex* 266) led by a charlatan (*NPC Codex* 145). They eagerly seek to quash any dissent against the crown, using intimidation, blackmail, and brute force as necessary to do the queen's bidding.

The Heartlands

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–22	1d3 pugwampis	1	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 144
23–34	1d3+1 tiefling rogues	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 264
35–46	Thrune Thugs	3	See above
47–52	1d4 hellfire ignises	5	See page 62
53–60	Roadside Brigands	5	See above
61–67	1d3+1 centaurs	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 42
68–77	2 bearded devils	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 73
78–87	2 fiendish owlbears	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 294, 224
88–95	1d3 redcaps	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 233
96–100	2 bearded devils plus 1 Nessian warhound	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 73, 173

Hellcoast

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–26	2d3+1 strix warriors	2	<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i> 313
27–48	2 fiendish reefclaws	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 294, 234
49–64	1d3 bugbears	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 38
65–79	1d3+1 hell hounds	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 173

80–92	1 bulette	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 39
93–97	1 drowning devil	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 52
98–99	1 bone devil	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 74
100	1 bone devil plus 1 Nessian warhound	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 74, 173

Longmarch

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–21	1d3+1 tiefling rogues	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 264
22–33	1 tiefling rogue plus 1 imp	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 264, 78
34–45	Thrune Thugs	3	See above
46–56	2 accuser devils	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 84
57–66	2 giant dragonfly nymphs	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 105
67–76	Asmodean Inquisitors	7	See above
77–86	1d3 host devils	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 53
87–96	2d3 ash hags	9	See page 57
97–100	1 contract devil	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 76

Menador

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–24	1d3 lemures	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 79
25–42	1d3+1 skulks	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 248
43–57	1d3 fiendish giant eagles	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 294, 118
58–69	1d3+1 shadows	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 245
70–80	Asmodean Inquisitors	7	See above
81–90	1 erinyes	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 75
91–96	1 erinyes plus 3 bearded devils	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 75, 73
97–100	2 Nessian warhounds	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 173

Ravounel

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–22	2d3+1 strix warriors	2	<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i> 313
23–37	1d3 fuaths	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 142
38–52	1 fossegrim	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 114
53–64	1d3 hellfire ignises	5	See page 62
65–76	1d3+1 ettercaps	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 129
77–87	Asmodean Inquisitors	7	See above
88–95	1 bone devil	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 74
96–100	2d6 fiendish satyrs	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 294, 241

Sirmium

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–24	1d3 fiendish elks	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 290, 147
25–42	Thrune Thugs	3	See above
43–57	1d3 worgs	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 280
58–69	Roadside Brigands	5	See above
70–80	2 bison	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 174
81–90	1 zealot wraith	7	See page 63
91–96	1 drowning devil	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 52
97–100	1 drowning devil and 1 erinyes	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 52, 75

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Animate Aria

An inspirational song emanates from what appears to be point in thin air twelve feet off the ground. Stirring crescendos and moving fanfares can be heard throughout its melody.

ANIMATE ARIA	CR 9
XP 6,400	
N Large construct	
Init +4; Senses blindsight 90 ft., darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0	
Aura courageous inspiration (90 ft.)	
DEFENSE	
AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+4 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)	
hp 107 (14d10+30)	
Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +4	
Defensive Abilities amorphous, natural invisibility; Immune construct traits	
Weaknesses dissonance, vulnerable to sonic	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee 2 slams +18 (2d10+5)	
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.	
STATISTICS	
Str 21, Dex 18, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1	
Base Atk +14; CMB +20; CMD 34	



ECOLOGY

Environment any urban

Organization solitary or chorus (1 plus 2d4 mercenary warriors of 6th level)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Courageous Inspiration (Su) An animate aria continually emanates a rousing song to bolster its allies (typically the construct's creator and any creatures designated as allies by the construct's creator). Allies within 90 feet of the animate aria that can hear its music receive a +1 morale bonus on saving throws against charm and fear effects and a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls and weapon damage rolls. As a standard action, the animate aria can increase these bonuses by 2 for 1 round. The aura of courageous inspiration is a mind-affecting effect—as a construct, the animate aria is immune to mind-affecting effects, and therefore does not receive the bonuses of its own aura. This ability is constant and cannot be suppressed by the animate aria.

Dissonance (Ex) As creatures of sound, animate arias are particularly vulnerable to sonic effects. A bard who succeeds at a DC 25 Perform check while using his countersong ability negates the animate aria's aura of courageous inspiration and natural invisibility abilities (making it appear as a humanoid-shaped cloud of prismatic color). In addition, an animate aria in the area of a *silence* spell or effect takes 2d6 points of damage each round.

Natural Invisibility (Ex) Although an animate aria remains invisible whenever this ability is not suppressed, even when attacking, its constant song allows other creatures to pinpoint its location. Any creature within 30 feet of the animate aria that can hear automatically identifies the squares containing the animate aria. Because an animate aria's invisibility is inherent, it is not subject to the *invisibility purge* spell.

An animate aria is a piece of operatic music, either vocal or instrumental, magically solidified into a humanoid-shaped form roughly 12 feet tall. A creature of sound, the animated music is invisible but emanates the inspiring work performed during the creature's musical creation.

Construction

An animate aria must be constructed in a ceremony involving a musical performance and a framework of silver chimes worth 2,000 gp, the latter of which is consumed in the shaping of the creature's form.

ANIMATE ARIA

CL 12th; **Price** 38,000 gp

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *geas/quest*, *shout*, *solid note*^{APG}, creator must be caster level 12th; **Skill** Perform (sing) DC 25; **Cost** 20,000 gp

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Ash Hag

This spindly, hunched crone's skin is a sickly gray color, as is her stringy hair, which is peppered with globs of what appear to be ashes.

ASH HAG

CR 5



XP 1,600

LE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 52 (7d10+14)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9

Immune fire; **SR** 16

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d6+2), 2 claws +9 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks choke on cinders

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +11; save DCs are Int-based)

Constant—*pass without trace*, *tongues*

At will—*alter self*, *beguiling gift*^{APG} (DC 14), *burning hands* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *infernal healing*^{ISWG}

3/day—*burning gaze*^{APG} (DC 15), *feast of ashes*^{APG} (DC 15), *inflict moderate wounds* (DC 15), *invisibility* (self only)

1/day—*ash storm*^{UM}, *cup of dust*^{APG} (DC 16), *inflict serious wounds* (DC 17), *phantasmal killer* (DC 17)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 17, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 20

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Iron Will

Skills Bluff +6, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +10, Intimidate +7,

Knowledge (arcana) +10, Perception +14, Sense

Motive +11, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +8 (+12 in burned or ash-covered environments)

Languages Aklo, Common, Giant; *tongues*

SQ ash affinity

ECOLOGY

Environment any urban or ruins

Organization solitary or coven (3 hags of any kind)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ash Affinity (Ex) When an ash hag is in a burned environment, such as a building that has been torched, it gains fast healing 2. An ash hag in a burned environment also receives a +4 racial bonus on Stealth checks.

Choke on Cinders (Su) Three times per day as a standard action, an ash hag can fill the lungs of a single target within 30 feet with thick, ashy cinders. If the target fails a DC 16 Fortitude saving throw, it is staggered for 1d4 rounds while it attempts to cough up the cinders. Once it stops coughing, it must successfully save again at the start of its turn or fall unconscious due to a shortage of air. Creatures that do not breathe are immune to this ability. The save DC is Intelligence-based.

Despicable, flesh-hungry creatures, ash hags favor areas that fire has cleansed, such as husks of burned buildings or smoldering fields. They particularly prefer charred urban spaces, for such areas allow them to live among the ashes they love while they lure local residents to their doom. Ash hags often disguise themselves as beautiful, vulnerable maidens who just survived a devastating fire, or as charitable old women who show up at such disaster sites offering assistance. Once they have lured victims back to their lairs, ash hags sometimes toy with their captives for weeks, feeding them ashes until they eventually perish. An ash hag typically stands between 5 and 6 feet tall and weighs 140 pounds.

The changelings who result from ash hags' wicked work often have one distinctly gray eye; alternatively, they may have perpetually dry, almost desiccated skin and chronic psoriasis. The daughter of an ash hag can take the following as her hag racial trait.

Pyrophile: The changeling gains a +1 racial bonus on damage rolls when using spells with the fire descriptor. This bonus increases by 1 for every 4 levels the changeling has beyond 1st.



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Cerberus Worm

This slimy-skinned, three-headed sea beast has writhing tentacles and is surrounded by a black, poisonous cloud that flickers like fire.

CERBERUS WORM	CR 14	
XP 38,400		
N Gargantuan magical beast (aquatic)		
Init +5; Senses all-around vision, darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9		
DEFENSE		
AC 27, touch 7, flat-footed 26 (+1 Dex, +20 natural, -4 size)		
hp 229 (17d10+136)		
Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +6		
Defensive Abilities elusive; Immune poison; Resist fire 30; SR 25		
OFFENSE		
Speed 20 ft., swim 60 ft.		
Melee 3 bites +22 (2d8+9 plus grab), tail slap +17 (2d8+4)		
Space 20 ft.; Reach 20 ft.		
Special Attacks swallow whole (2d8+13 acid damage, AC 20, 22 hp), wreath in poison		
STATISTICS		
Str 28, Dex 12, Con 27, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 9		
Base Atk +17; CMB +30 (+32 bull rush); CMD 41 (43 vs. bull rush)		

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Improved Natural Attack (tail slap), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Stealthy

Skills Acrobatics +4, Escape Artist +3, Perception +9, Stealth +2, Swim +25

Languages Aquan (can't speak)

ECOLOGY

Environment any oceans

Organization solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Elusive (Su) A cerberus worm is rarely encountered unless it wishes to be. As a full-round action while in water, a cerberus worm can move up to its run speed (300 feet) without leaving any sign of its passing, as though affected by a *pass without trace* spell. An elusive cerberus worm gains a +40 circumstance bonus on its Stealth check. In addition, except when in combat, a cerberus worm is considered to be under the effects of a *non-detection* spell. Both of these spell effects function at caster level 20th and cannot be dispelled.

Poison (Ex) Wreath in poison—inhaled; *save* Fortitude DC 26; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Constitution damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Wreath in Poison (Ex) Once per day, as a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity, a cerberus worm can wreath itself in a poisonous mist that resembles black, licking flames for 3 minutes. This poisonous cloud surrounds the cerberus worm in a 30-foot radius, and creatures inside the radius are exposed to the cerberus worm's poison. A creature that successfully saves against the poison once need not attempt additional saving throws while it remains in the poison. If a creature leaves the wreath and reenters it, however, the creature is again exposed to the poison and must attempt another saving throw.

Believed to be the only beast of its kind, the cerberus worm is known for ambushing ships in Hellmouth Gulf, smashing them and eating their crew members alive. Because of the cerberus worm's flame-like poison wreath, and because all reports of sightings have occurred in the past few decades, most believe the creature is some sort of infernal monstrosity tied to House Throne. While such claims are untrue, the Chelish government has done little to quell the rumors, using the citizens' own fears of its power to deter travel through Hellmouth Gulf and rebellion on its shores. In truth, the cerberus worm plaguing the gulf is but one of many such creatures living in the depths of the Arcadian Ocean. Why it ventured to the surface in recent years is a mystery.

A cerberus worm is approximately 45 feet long and weighs 3,200 pounds.



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Devil, Sire

This fiend is a horrendous amalgamation of snapping claws and writhing tendrils with a disgusting fanged mouth running vertically across its torso.

SIRE DEVIL (PATRAAVEX)

CR 7



XP 3,200

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, see invisibility; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+5 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 84 (8d10+40)

Fort +11, **Ref** +11, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities caustic blood; **DR** 5/good; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 18

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 heavy flail +16/+11 (1d10+11/19–20) or

2 claws +15 (1d4+7/19–20)

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d4+10)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +12)

Constant—see invisibility

At will—detect thoughts (DC 16), greater teleport (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only)

3/day—protection from good

1/day—greater magic fang, summon (level 3, 1 bearded devil 50%)

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 20, **Con** 21, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 30

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (claw), Power Attack

Skills Bluff +15, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +11, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nobility) +13, Knowledge (planes) +13, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13

Languages Celestial, Common, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ change shape (Small or Medium humanoid, alter self), taint bloodline

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Hell)

Organization solitary

Treasure standard (+1 heavy flail, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Caustic Blood (Ex) A patraavex's blood is highly acidic. A creature that deals piercing or slashing damage to a sire devil as part of a melee attack with a natural weapon or unarmed strike must succeed at a DC 19 Reflex saving throw or take 2d6 points of acid damage. A creature that deals piercing or slashing damage to a sire devil with a melee weapon must succeed at a DC 19 Reflex saving throw or the weapon takes 2d6 points of acid damage (objects take full damage from this acid); if this damage exceeds the weapon's hardness, the weapon gains the broken condition. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Taint Bloodline (Su) As a full-round action, a sire devil can touch a willing, living mortal creature and infuse the creature with its infernal power, ensuring that all children born to the mortal from then on will be hellspawn tieflings. Offspring resulting from unions between sire devils and humanoids are always tieflings; patraavexes cannot create half-fiends through procreation.

Patraavexes are the progenitors of many of the Material Plane's tieflings. Seeking mortals who either want hellspawn children or are willing to bear an infernal taint on their bloodlines in exchange for the devil's offerings, a sire devil lives to insinuate hell's influence into the mortal population. Patraavexes use their shapechanging ability as a bargaining chip with potential mates, who put their immediate pleasure above the long-lasting ramifications of corrupting their bloodlines with an infernal taint. Patraavexes may not be completely honest with their targets about the price of their companionship, especially when they hope to introduce tieflings into a population where their appearance would cause a stir. In some cases, sire devils are contracted by mortals to secretly corrupt another person's bloodline, generally as a means of political and social sabotage.

A typical sire devil is 7 feet tall and weighs 250 pounds.



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Fiend-Infused Golem

The fists of this stone statue radiate flames that flicker in red and black and reek of brimstone. Its chiseled face bears a feral, wicked grin.

FIEND-INFUSED STONE GOLEM CR 13	
XP 25,600	
NE Large construct	
Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0	
DEFENSE	
AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26 (–1 Dex, +18 natural, –1 size)	
hp 121 (14d10+44); fast healing 5	
Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4	
DR 10/adamantine and good; Immune construct traits, fire, magic	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft.	
Melee 2 slam +23 (2d10+9 plus hellfire touch)	
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.	
Special Attacks berserk liberation, hellfire touch, slow	
STATISTICS	
Str 28, Dex 9, Con —, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 10	
Base Atk +14; CMB +24; CMD 33	
Feats Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam)	
Skills Intimidate +29	
Languages Abyssal, Infernal (can't speak)	
ECOLOGY	
Environment any	
Organization solitary or gang (2–4)	
Treasure none	

Berserk Liberation (Ex) When a fiend-infused golem enters combat, there is a cumulative 2% chance each round that the animating fiend breaks free and the golem goes berserk. This chance resets to 0% after 1 minute of inactivity. When a fiend-infused golem goes berserk, the animating fiend explodes in a conflagration of hellfire, dealing 13d6 points of damage to all creatures within 60 feet (Reflex DC 17 half). Half of this damage is fire damage, but the other half results directly from unholy power and is not reduced by resistance to fire-based attacks. The save DC is Constitution-based. The berserk golem then loses the fiend-infused template permanently and thereafter attacks the nearest living creature, or smashes some object smaller than itself if no creature is within reach. Once it goes berserk, no known method can reestablish control.

Hellfire Touch (Su) A fiend-infused golem's body radiates the soul-scorching heat of the evil Outer Planes, dealing 2d6 points of damage with its touch. Half of this damage is fire damage, but the other half results directly from unholy power and is not reduced by resistance to fire-based attacks. Creatures attacking a fiend-infused golem with unarmed strikes or natural weapons take this same hellfire

damage each time one of their attacks hits. A fiend-infused golem's natural attacks are treated as evil for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

- Immunity to Magic (Ex)** A fiend-infused stone golem is immune to any spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.
- A *transmute rock to mud* spell slows a fiend-infused stone golem (as per the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds, with no saving throw, while *transmute mud to rock* restores all of its lost hit points.
 - A *stone to flesh* spell does not actually change the golem's structure but negates its damage reduction and immunity to magic for 1 full round.
 - A *banishment* or *dismissal* spell quells the animating fiend temporarily, negating the golem's hellfire touch ability for 1 round with no saving throw. The spell also increases the chance of the golem's berserk liberation by 20% in subsequent rounds of combat.
- Slow (Su)** A fiend-infused stone golem can use a *slow* effect, as per the spell, as a free action once every 2 rounds. The effect has a range of 10 feet in a burst centered on the golem and a duration of 7 rounds. A successful DC 17 Will save negates the effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Although most golems are animated by the spirits of elementals, certain reckless or daring golem crafters instead bind evil outsiders such as daemons, demons, and devils to power golems. This fiend does not inhabit or control the golem in the usual manner of fiendish possession; instead, the outsider is subjugated within the golem to act as a mere engine. Although a fiend-infused golem has more self-awareness and cunning than a typical golem, it possesses only a brute, primitive intellect, lacking the animating fiend's personality beyond a base desire to destroy goodness. The fiend's rage at being imprisoned in such a manner manifests as ever-burning hellfire, which the fiend-infused golem uses as a weapon against its foes.

As with ordinary golems, fiend-infused golems primarily serve as guards or defenders. However, a fiend-infused golem's marginally improved intellect means it can be given more complex instructions, such as evaluating an intruder's intent, activating or deactivating traps, acting in disguise, or patrolling a convoluted territory. Although fiend-infused golems are obligated to follow their creators' commands in the same manner as regular golems, they sometimes do so with sullenness or frustrated defiance.

The foremost golem crafters of antiquity served the Jistka Imperium many thousands of years ago, and that empire's golem foundries at Rachikan experimented extensively with fiend-bound golems. Using evil outsiders as an animating force came with an inherent drawback that Rachikan's golem crafters could never fully overcome: the fiend's seething anger at serving

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within a golem increases the chance that the fiend-infused golem will break free of its command and run amok. Ultimately, the golem crafters of Rachikan succeeded only by increasing the size of their golems: Rachikan's enormous behemoth golems (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lost Kingdoms* 40) are the only fiend-infused golems that do not risk the bound fiend going berserk. Although the Jistka Imperium is long gone, fiend-infused golems still guard its ancient factories and treasure vaults, particularly in the ruins of Rachikan and in other hidden sites along the Chelish coast.

With renewed interest in the Jistka Imperium among such organizations as the Pathfinder Society and Egorian's prestigious Athenaeum, ancient secrets of fiend-infused golems have leaked to several modern golem crafters. Some of these crafters had already developed their own techniques for creating fiend-infused golems, and use the unearthed Jistkan lore to confirm or supplement their own designs. The artificers of House Thrune are particularly interested in harnessing and improving upon the Jistkan methods, both because the golems promise to be very powerful additions to the Thrune arsenal and because they are always looking for new ways to bind the spirits of Hell.

A fiend-infused golem is the same size and weight as an ordinary golem of its type.

Creating a Fiend-Infused Golem

"Fiend-infused" is a template that can be added to any golem that is not vulnerable to fire (referred to hereafter as the base creature). The fiend-infused template must be applied when the golem is created; an existing golem can't later acquire this template. A fiend-infused golem uses all of the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

CR: Base creature's CR + 2.

Alignment: Always neutral evil.

Defensive Abilities: Fiend-infused golems gain fast healing 5 and immunity to fire. If the base creature already has damage reduction, it adds good to the qualities needed to bypass that reduction. If the base creature has the immunity to magic defensive ability, it adds susceptibility to

banishment and *dismissal* (see the immunity to magic ability above).

Special Attacks: A fiend-infused golem gains the berserk liberation special attack described above and loses any berserk special attack of the base creature. The amount of damage dealt when the fiend-infused golem goes berserk is equal to $1d6 \times$ its CR (Reflex half; DC = $10 + 1/2$ the golem's Hit Dice + the golem's Constitution modifier). A fiend-infused golem also gains the hellfire touch special attack described above.

Abilities: A fiend-infused golem's Intelligence score changes to 4 and its Charisma score changes to 10.

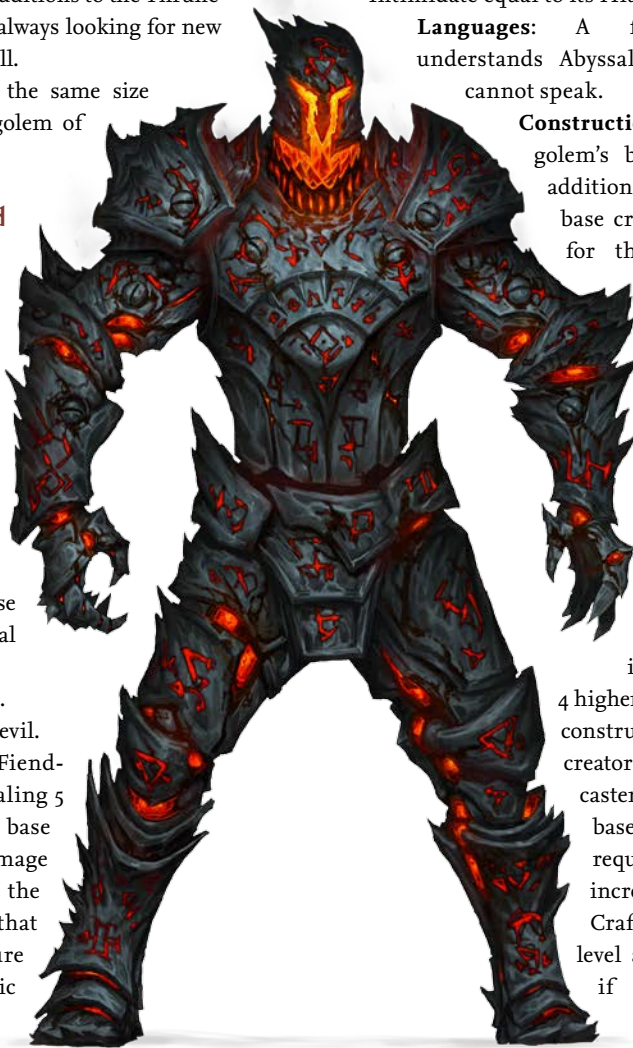
Feats: A fiend-infused golem has feats appropriate for its Hit Dice. The golem's creator determines the golem's feats as part of the process of creating the construct. Fiend-infused golems can be assigned any feats they are physically capable of using, although most feats are assigned from the following: Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Intimidating Prowess, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Toughness, and Weapon Focus.

Skills: A fiend-infused golem gains ranks in Intimidate equal to its Hit Dice.

Languages: A fiend-infused golem understands Abyssal and Infernal, but it cannot speak.

Construction: A fiend-infused golem's base materials cost an additional 25,000 gp above the base creature's cost to account for the materials that are needed to bind the fiend within the golem. Add the spells *dimensional anchor*, *magic circle against evil*, and either *planar ally* or *planar binding* to the base creature's requirements.

The DC of the Craft check required to make the fiend-infused golem's body is 4 higher than the base creature's construct skill DC, and the creator must have a minimum caster level 4 higher than the base creature's minimum required caster level. The increase to the DC of the Craft check and to the caster level are halved (to 2 higher) if the creator possesses at least 10 ranks in Knowledge (planes).



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Hellfire Ignis

The acrid smell of brimstone wafts from this small creature, which has mottled red skin and a wicked grin on its foul, warped face.

HELLFIRE IGNIS	CR 3	  
XP 800		
NE Small fey (fire)		
Init +5; Senses low-light vision; Perception +8		
DEFENSE		
AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 11 (+5 Dex, +1 size)		
hp 27 (5d6+10)		
Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +4		
DR 5/cold iron; Immune fire		
Weaknesses vulnerable to cold		
OFFENSE		
Speed 30 ft.		
Melee bite +8 (1d4+2), 2 claws +8 (1d3+2 plus burn)		
Special Attacks burn (1d3, DC 14), molten flesh		
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +3)		
At will— <i>flare</i> (DC 10), <i>spark</i> ^{APG} (DC 10)		
3/day— <i>pyrotechnics</i> (DC 12)		
STATISTICS		
Str 14, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 11		
Base Atk +2; CMB +3; CMD 18		
Feats Combat Reflexes, Step Up, Weapon Finesse		
Skills Acrobatics +13, Escape Artist +10, Intimidate +5, Perception +8, Stealth +17, Survival +3		



Languages Common, Sylvan

SQ brimstone essence

ECOLOGY

Environment any forests or plains

Organization solitary, gang (2–5), or crew (4–8 plus 1 advanced leader)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Brimstone Essence (Ex) A hellfire ignis is the product of infernal energies coalescing with the First World's influence and thus gives off a faint, constant odor of brimstone. A hellfire ignis can suppress this odor as a swift action for up to 1 minute. Otherwise, the odor imposes a –2 penalty on Stealth checks the ignis attempts in areas devoid of brimstone.

Molten Flesh (Ex) Three times per day as a standard action, a hellfire ignis can tear off a chunk of its molten flesh and hurl it as a ranged attack at an opponent within 20 feet. This attack deals 1d3 points of bludgeoning damage plus the effects of the hellfire ignis's burn special attack.

Hellfire ignises roam the rural areas of Cheliox, committing acts of arson and leaving brush, forest, and structures ablaze in their wake. Cruel and sadistic pyromaniacs, hellfire ignises are corrupted versions of fey that once represented both the destructive and rejuvenating properties of fire within nature. Unlike their untainted kin, hellfire ignises see fire as merely a tool for destruction and revel in the raw power of its hungry flames.

Unlike many fey creatures, hellfire ignises are surprisingly attracted to urban areas. The prevalence of wooden tenements, dense populations, and unpatrolled sewers through which they can travel unseen make towns tempting targets for the inveterate arsonists. There is a bounty on the heads of hellfire ignises in many cities and towns in Cheliox, with rewards reaching as much as 400 gp per specimen in some areas. Greedy hunters from Egorian and other cities have been known to travel far into the heart of the Barrowood and Whisperwood, hoping to carry a large collection of ignis heads back for a larger bounty in town.

Despite their name and infernal origins, hellfire ignises have no allegiances to Hell or those who serve it. That said, many experienced pyromancers find that the corrupted fey make excellent familiars. They tend to be more versatile than fire elementals and less sinister than imps, filling a specific niche between the two more commonly seen familiars. A spellcaster who takes a hellfire ignis as a familiar must be ever watchful that it keeps its arsonist spirit in check, however, as the mischievous fey have been known to set fire to their masters' workshops, libraries, and homes not out of spite or malice, but because they often contain so many combustible tools and decorations. A 7th-level spellcaster can gain a hellfire ignis as a familiar if she has the Improved Familiar feat.

Cheliox, The Infernal Empire

Zealot Wraith

This spectral human is draped in multicolored vestments that trail off into mist, and has open black pits for eyes and an expression of sorrow and horror.

ZEALOT WRAITH

CR 7



XP 3,200

NE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 13 (+3 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 75 (10d8+30)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2, incorporeal;

Immune undead traits

Weaknesses legacy of faith

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee incorporeal touch +11 touch (1d8 plus curse of sorrowful wasting)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (7d6, DC 18, 6/day, as 7th-level cleric), curse of sorrowful wasting (DC 18)

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 25

Feats Channel Smite, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative

Skills Intimidate +16, Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +16, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +12

Languages Common

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or conclave (3–8)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

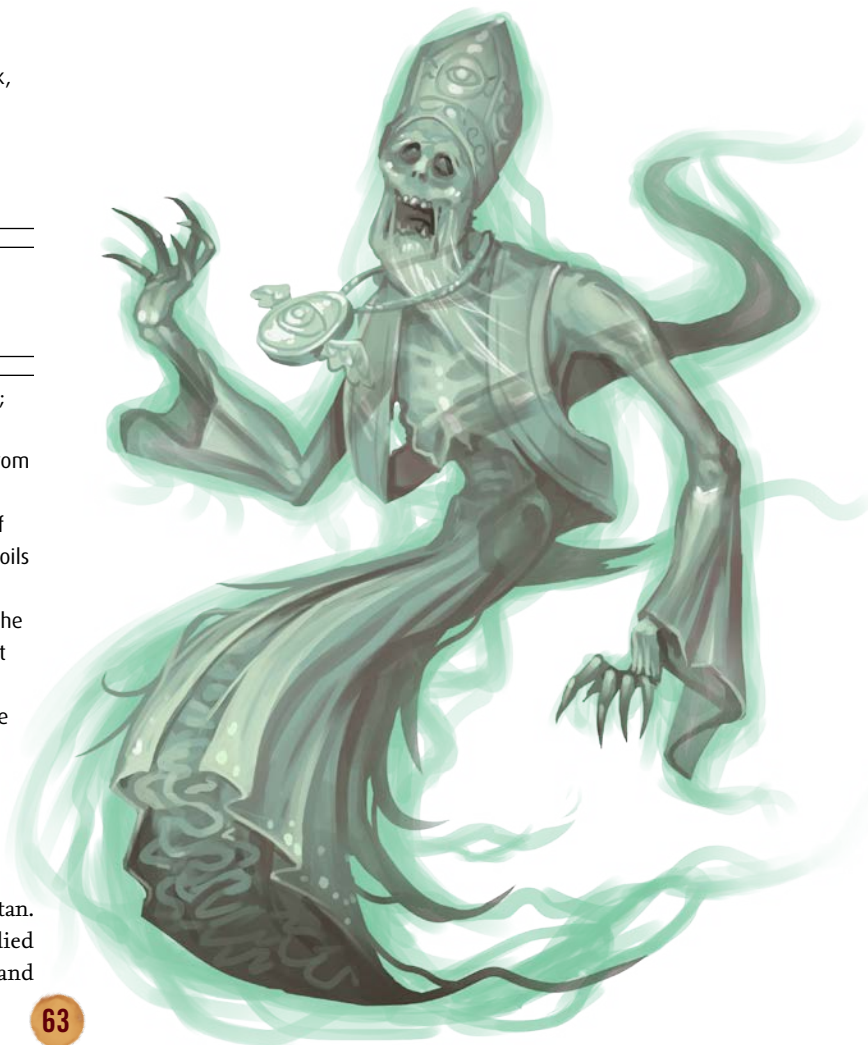
Curse of Sorrowful Wasting (Su) Curse—incorporeal touch; save Fortitude DC 18; frequency 1/day; effect 1d4 Charisma drain and the creature can no longer benefit from morale bonuses. The save DC bonus is Charisma-based.

Legacy of Faith (Su) Zealot wraiths still recall the tenets of their faith, constraining their actions. A zealot wraith recoils from strongly presented holy symbols of its god. A holy symbol does not harm a zealot wraith; it merely keeps the wraith at bay. A recoiling zealot wraith must stay at least 5 feet away from a strongly presented holy symbol and cannot touch or make melee attacks against the creature presenting it. Holding a zealot wraith at bay with a holy symbol requires a standard action. After 1 round, the zealot wraith can overcome its revulsion and function normally each round it succeeds at a DC 25 Will save.

betrayal as their prayers for succor went unanswered; for some, their sense of doubt and injustice overwhelmed their faith at the moments of their deaths. The souls of these forsaken priests were unable to pass on, and they now prowl the site of their deaths as incorporeal undead known as zealot wraiths. These restless shades harbor a hatred for the living, and their touch inflicts a curse that embodies their sense of sorrow and self-doubt.

Anytime a cleric or devout follower of a deity dies in the throes of doubt or a sense of disappointment in her god, she risks becoming a zealot wraith. Although now undead horrors, such wraiths were once devoted believers of their gods; this heritage manifests as an aversion to their deities' holy symbols (whether or not wielded by a worshiper of the associated god). As such, zealot wraiths pose little threat to those living souls who shared their faith but who did not succumb to the same tragedies that resulted in the wraith's creation, leaving the undead ironically impotent in the temples and holy sites they frequently haunt.

Arodenite zealot wraiths are common in the ruins of Deng and are occasionally spotted in destroyed Arodenite chapels in Westcrown. Zealot wraiths of other faiths, including those of Easivra, Lissala, and Ydersius can be found throughout the Inner Sea region.



When Aroden died, natural disasters wracked Avistan. Priests of Aroden killed in such disasters often died with overwhelming feelings of confusion, sorrow, and

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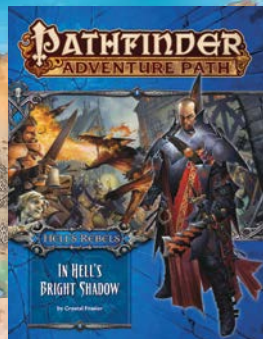
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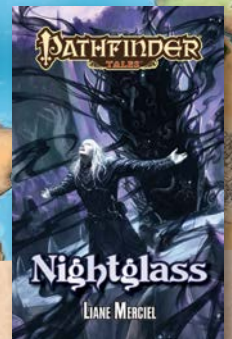
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IN HELL WE TRUST

For centuries, the empire of Cheliox stood as an example of humanity's greatness, with colonies and vassal states spread throughout the Inner Sea region. Then Aroden, god of humanity, died mysteriously on the eve of his prophesied return, and the empire fell into a vicious civil war. Seeking victory at all costs, the Thrice-Damned House of Thrune made pacts with the denizens of Hell to wrest control of Cheliox away from its rivals. While many of the empire's holdings have fallen away in the decades since, at its core, Cheliox remains powerful, both subservient to and allied with the legions of the Pit. Yet discontent looms throughout the nation, even as brash young Queen Abrogail II seeks to tighten her imperial grip on the populace.

Cheliox is the diabolical setting of the thrilling *Hell's Rebels* and *Hell's Vengeance* Adventure Paths, making this comprehensive sourcebook a perfect supplement for either campaign. Within these pages, you'll find:

- ▶ An overview of Cheliox's government, foreign relations, society, and history—including details House Thrune wants forgotten forever.
- ▶ An extensive gazetteer of the entire nation, offering more than 80 entries on such people and places as Brastlewark and its wily gnomes, the xenophobic strix of Devil's Perch, Kintargo and its rebellious citizens, and majestic Egorian's imperial sycophants.
- ▶ A breakdown of Chelish noble titles and the country's social hierarchies.
- ▶ Nearly a dozen new adventure sites ripe for intrigue and exploration, from a magical city ruined in the aftermath of Aroden's death to an isolated island where House Thrune secretly creates fiendish supersoldiers.
- ▶ Six hellish new monsters, plus random encounter tables, a template for creating fiend-infused golems, and much more!

Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Cheliox, The Infernal Empire is intended for use with the Pathfinder campaign setting, but can be easily adapted to any fantasy world.



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