

The cover art depicts a dramatic battle scene in a desert setting. In the foreground, a large, dark, scaly creature with a glowing blue eye is partially visible. In the center, a character in a blue and gold robe is engaged in combat with a dark, winged demon. Another character in a blue and white outfit is seen in mid-air, attacking the demon. The background features ancient stone structures and a bright, hazy sky. The title 'PATHFINDER' is written in a large, ornate, red and gold font, with 'CAMPAIGN SETTING' in a smaller, simpler font below it.

PATHFINDER

CAMPAIGN SETTING™

QADIRA
JEWEL OF THE EAST

JESSICA PRICE

Qadira



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REFERENCE

This book refers to several 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>Occult Adventures</i>	OA
<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Ultimate Combat</i>	UC
<i>Advanced Race Guide</i>	ARG	<i>Ultimate Intrigue</i>	UI
<i>Inner Sea Gods</i>	ISG	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM



ON THE COVER

Kyra and Sajan do battle with aghash divs amid the ruins of a lost Qadiran city in this exciting cover art by Caio Maciel Monteiro!



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INTRODUCTION

My dear young friends,

Congratulations on being assigned to the Pathfinder Society lodge in Katheer! I must admit I'm envious. Qadira gets into your blood. Even though it did its best to kill me, I still miss it.

You probably think you know the Gateway to the East, our comfortably exotic neighbor. You're looking forward to seeing sun-blessed mystics, veiled genie-binders, magnificent desert steeds, and majestic palaces. You'll get to see all of that—never fear—but those stories touch only the surface of that mysterious place.

Qadira has a dual identity: it is both an Inner Sea nation and part of a massive, ancient, and distant empire. Its familiarity can lull you into complacency just before pulling the ornately woven carpet from beneath your feet. Don't be fooled into thinking it's like Andoran. Always be on your guard.

I've included some basic tips to help you navigate your first few months in Katheer. Good luck, Pathfinders. Make us proud.

—Stanelcho Tanev, Venture-Captain, Carpenden Lodge

As the westernmost satrapy of Kelesh, Qadira provides a potent reminder of the strength of one of Golarion's most powerful empires. Though Qadirans have long been at odds with neighbors who fear them and mutter jealously over Qadira's riches and culture, the region is not the death trap her enemies spread rumors about. Yet visitors should remember a few key points during their stay in the so-called Gateway to the East. The tips outlined below are taught to new Pathfinders before undertaking missions to Qadira, but any adventurer would do well to take these lessons to heart.

Listen carefully. Qadirans are a silver-tongued lot, likely to bewitch an unwary listener. If conversation is an art form for Keleshites, then haggling is a spectator sport. As skillful with words as they are with blades, Qadirans can often do even more damage with the former. They speak Taldane as well as you do—probably better—and your Kelish isn't as good as you think it is, so learn to listen more than you talk.

Family comes first. If you ask a Qadiran how she is, she'll answer with how her family fares. So when you talk to a Qadiran colleague, remember you're not just dealing with an individual. She speaks for herself and her interests, but she also represents her family, tribe, and empire. Keep that in mind when negotiating. Similarly, Qadirans show intense curiosity about the families of foreigners. Tell them

your mother's name and give them a tale or two about your most eccentric relative, and they'll warm right up to you.

Don't expect straight answers. Keleshites know that information is power, and they like to answer questions with questions. You can sit in a Katheerite bazaar for an hour or more before you hear a single declarative statement. It can unsettle visitors at first, but once you become accustomed to it, you'll realize that the answer is usually contained in the responding question.

Find a patron as quickly as possible. Qadiran society comprises a dense tapestry of family and business ties, tribal affiliations, and religious allegiances. These relationships rival the hypnotic patterns on their carpets for complexity. Almost everyone requires a patron or patron family. As a foreigner, you'll need a patron to conduct even the most basic business in Qadira, let alone gain an audience with anyone of importance. Use your Pathfinder Society connections to find one, if nothing else.

Register as a foreigner as soon as you arrive. Foreigners enjoy some basic protections so long as they register immediately upon entering the country. If you fail to do so, don't expect help from the authorities when you're robbed. And absolutely never pretend to be a citizen. Citizenship in the Padishah Empire of Kelesh comes with a host of privileges and protections, and Keleshites guard that status fiercely.

Don't start fights you can't finish. Every Qadiran serves a mandatory 2 years in the military, and even of those in noncombat roles still get basic weapons training. If you can win a fight—preferably without killing anyone!—you'll earn back the respect you lost for starting it; if you lose, however, you'll find yourself a laughingstock.

Don't start religious battles. Kelesh is enormously tolerant of other religions, but the Sarenite faith is the empire's official religion, and Keleshites expect everyone walking their streets to respect that. They won't try to convert you unless you show interest in the faith, but if you hold negative opinions about the Dawnflower, keep them to yourself.

Be a gracious guest. Keleshites see hospitality as a sacred obligation, and those who observe the old ways even keep a special room in their homes for greeting guests and offering them ritual food and drink. Have a gift handy. It doesn't need to cost much, but try to choose an unusual present your hosts can't easily obtain. Distinctive crafts from your homeland tend to please, especially if they come with a story.

Don't approach a noble unless you have an introduction. If you want to talk to a noble, you'll have to work your way up a chain of patronage. This holds especially true if you want an audience with a member of the imperial family. The house guards can be rough with those who presume upon their master's time without an introduction.

SPEAKING KELISH

Kelish developed as a trade language that eliminated the most difficult sounds and baffling grammatical features of Old Keleshite. Nevertheless, given that transcription conventions vary wildly, it can still prove hard for Taldane speakers to learn. The two sounds that pose the most difficulty for nonnative speakers are the "hard" *h* sound (usually written in Taldane as *kh*) and the two rolled *r* sounds (*r* usually indicates a trill made with the tip of the tongue, while *rh*—sometimes transcribed as *gh*—indicates a sound rolled at the back of the tongue).

Common Keleshite Expressions

Foreign visitors to Qadira will find the following common expressions useful in carrying on friendly relations with the locals.

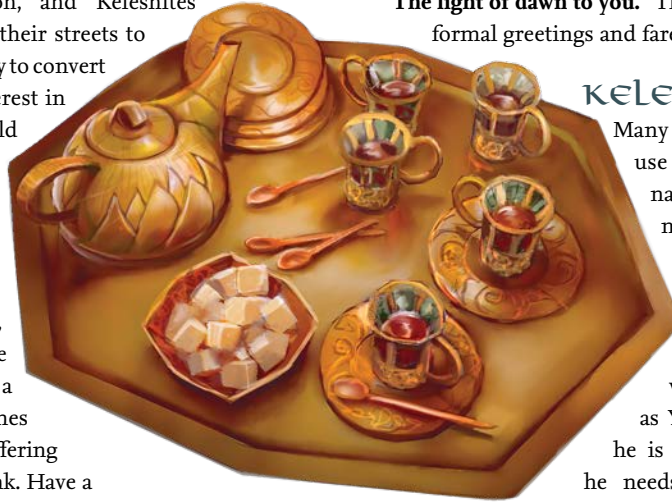
"As rare as a camel in Katheer." This phrase is often uttered in marketplaces to indicate a worthless item.

"My shade to you tomorrow." This phrase expresses gratitude for hospitality or some great favor by promising to return the gesture.

"Only fools and Taldans..." This expression of derision exhibits the tensions between Qadira and Taldor.

"The edge of your coin is sharper than your scimitar." This phrase is often heard when a seller wants the potential buyer to know her offer is insufficient.

"The light of dawn to you." This phrase is reserved for formal greetings and farewells.



KELESHITE NAMES

Many Keleshites in Qadira use two names—a given name followed by a matronymic—in casual dealings, but their full names are typically longer and more complex. A Keleshite who introduces himself as Yaqib al-Marah is saying he is Yaqib, son of Marah. If he needs further identification, he may add the name of the ancestor (usually a maternal great-great-grandmother) whose descendants makes up his broader family. Keleshites who have a tribal affiliation rarely include it except in formal situations, when they may append the name of their tribe to the end of their full name. A member of a merchant house includes his house name after his tribal marker, and he often adds the name of his city to the end of his full name. For example, Yaqib al-Marah Tiferi Bekhzadi Al-Hiraf, is Yaqib, son of Marah, of the Tiferi tribe, member of the Bekhzadi merchant house, from the city of Al-Hiraf.

Noble names often follow a similar pattern, replacing the house name with a family name. If a noble bears an individual title or is the family head, an honorific may precede the family name.

Particularly devout clerics and similar religious leaders among various faiths will often discard all but their given name, replacing the other designations with the name of their chosen temple. For example, Yaqib al-Lehalyah is Yaqib of the Lehalyah Temple.

Members of the imperial family frequently bear a given name, followed by a form of their mother's name, a name earned upon reaching adulthood, a name indicating which branch of the imperial family they're from, and finally the family name al-Parishat.

These naming conventions are Althameri (one of the original ethnicities of Kelesh—see page 26) in origin and have been adopted by many Keleshites, but those who identify strongly with different Keleshite ethnicities often use different naming conventions.

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HISTORY OF QADIRA

“We stand on the edge of civilization, precarious, fragile, and under constant threat from the enemy. That Qadira has never fallen to this enemy should not be taken as a guarantee that we cannot be defeated, for the warmongers of Avistan and Garund are plentiful. Without constant guard they will seek to take from us that which makes us great. Our riches. Our culture. Our history. To not strike first is to invite defeat, yet to strike first is to embrace war. Neither is the better choice. Neither is the right choice. But to make no choice is the worst option of all.”

—Ghadir al-Gohar, archery trainer at Omash

To understand Qadira, one must understand its dual identity as a bridge between two very different cultures. Qadira is an Inner Sea nation, fully engaged with the regional politics and history, as well as shaped by its disasters, climate, and social struggles. It also forms a part of the Padishah Empire of Kelesh, an ancient and powerful empire—wealthy beyond the imaginings of most Inner Sea nations—with priorities and beliefs that are alien to the average denizen of the Inner Sea region.

Qadira anchors the westernmost end of the Golden Path, the primary Keleshite trade route that spans the massive continent of Casmaron. As such, it is of vital importance to Kelesh. More riches cross Qadira's borders in a week than most Avistani nations have ever held in their coffers. Yet while Qadiran cities like Katheer appear luxurious by Inner Sea standards, most of that wealth does not remain in Qadira. It is a common saying among disgruntled Qadirans that Qadira makes do with glass while the rest of Kelesh drowns in diamonds.

In the eyes of Kelesh, Qadira remains something of a frontier region, even after millennia of existence. Keleshites see Avistani cultures as primitive and bloodthirsty, but no satrapy is more acutely aware of the danger they pose than Qadira. Stranded at the edge of the empire, sharing a border with avaricious and often hostile Avistani, and separated from its nearest imperial neighbors by a harsh desert that prevents easy travel, Qadira believes that its existence hangs by a thread.

PRE-IMPERIAL QADIRA

Qadira's extreme climates kept its population low during much of its post-Earthfall history. Scattered farming communities dotted the coasts, nomadic tribes roamed the deserts and plains, and a few major towns rose and fell. Little evidence remains of these settlements other than the ruins outside Katheer. Keleshite archaeologists suspect that Katheer existed even before Earthfall, and that many settlements had been built on the site, each rising from the ruins of the last, but except for inscriptions suggesting that the city may once have been settled by the Aishmayar culture (see page 26), the identities of its previous occupants remain lost to the mists of history.

Over the course of many centuries during the Age of Destiny, several cultures that would eventually combine to become the Keleshite people occupied the area, as did Garundi and Mwangi settlers. Though trading caravans from central Kelesh traversed the area with some frequency, many centuries passed before Kelesh began to establish any formal trade relationships with the native peoples.

The popular horse races near Katheer regularly attracted Keleshite visitors, and imperial travelers began to call the area surrounding this favored attraction Katheerah, which was standardized as Qadira in -78 AR with the first formal preparations for colonization.

IMPERIAL CONQUEST

As Taldor began to expand its reach in Avistan, Padishah Emperor Adalan IV recognized the importance of the coastal region south of the Pashman River in maintaining imperial control of the Golden Path. In -78 AR, Keleshites first invaded Qadira, though without the emperor's direct orders to do so. However, Adalan IV approved the territorial acquisition afterward and fortified it against reclamation by Avistani powers. Given the sparseness of the native population, most of the battles the Imperial Forces fought were with Taldor, not the region's residents.

Kelesh moved quickly to prepare the colony for full incorporation as a satrapy, and engineers, governors, clerics, and architects followed in the army's wake. The empire, experienced at assimilating foreign populations, took care to fund local industries, offer communities the same services given to Keleshite settlements, and promote local leaders into its administration. It largely succeeded in portraying itself as a benefactor interested in preserving the autonomy of the existing communities—so long as they paid their taxes—and protecting them from the Taldans (who, the imperial emissaries explained, would exploit and impoverish the Qadirans).

In the year of -43 AR, Kelesh officially welcomed Qadira as the empire's newest satrapy, installing the first satrap, Cerush, and setting formal borders. The Keleshite administration rapidly expanded southward. Though Keleshite traders had been visiting Garund for centuries prior to claiming Qadira as a satrapy, their new control over the region allowed the construction of several port cities to make trade between the continents safer and easier.

For the first 1,500 years of Qadira's existence, skirmishes with its enemies in Taldor were a daily reality of life. Qadiran satraps focused on increasing the size of their forces, building the largest division of the Satrapian Guard in Kelesh. Qadira's desire to prove itself as a significant military power reached its height in the second millennium AR, when conflicts with Taldor intensified until open war seemed inevitable. At the time, Satrap Xerbystes I negotiated with Empress Kharilah III to make his position a hereditary one and to assume complete control over Qadira's internal affairs. The empress believed that Taldor's economic policies were unsustainable and ruinous and that its army was overextended. Confident that Taldor would inevitably collapse in on itself and that its vestiges would voluntarily submit to Kelesh stewardship, she had no interest in the expense or bloodshed of an unnecessary war. She eventually agreed to Xerbystes's requests, but demanded he turn management of Qadira's foreign affairs over to an imperial vizier. Though it was Xerbystes who signed the eventual peace treaty with Taldor, the treaty was the vizier's in all but name.

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GROWTH AND EXPANSION

During the Age of Enthronement, Qadira engaged in a frenzy of city building, attempts to expand their territories, and increased fortification of important Keleshite trade routes.

When Keleshite agents first reached Osirion, they found an ancient land ruled by a powerful dynasty, although the land's ruling pharaoh had fallen to corruption and complacency. Seeing a great opportunity to expand Qadira's influence, agents of the Padishah Empire worked to inspire slave revolts and further destabilize the already compromised government. This revolution allowed Qadiran forces to seize control of the Garundi nation. During this time, the worship of Sarenrae spread further, and the radical and unusually aggressive Cult of the Dawnflower first rose to prominence.

A massive earthquake in 2920 AR killed tens of thousands of Qadirans, and Satrap Gheber II, a convert

to the Cult of the Dawnflower, declared this to be proof of Taldan allegiance to evil gods. He requested permission to go to war with Taldor, but the empress refused, and in secret, she began exerting more political and economic influence over the willful state. Relative peace settled over Qadira for nearly a millennium after the imperial throne took a more direct hand in managing Qadira and compelled the satrapy to focus on its role as a trade center. Prosperity enriched many Qadiran families enough to produce hundreds of new merchant houses and allowed Qadiran emigrant families to join the ruling class of the growing city-state of Absalom. Even amid this economic boom, however, some settlements did not thrive. The city of Al-Bashir mysteriously fell into ruin, pirates conquered the resort city of Sedeq, and the Taldans reclaimed territory along Qadira's northern border.

In 4067 AR, the succession to the imperial throne turned bloody, and many of the extended imperial family members living in Katheer returned to Kelesh to support their chosen candidates or put themselves forward as potential successors. The struggle only intensified over the next decade. The imperial vizier soon followed the returning Keleshites, and without a direct representative of the imperial throne present, Satrap Gheber III invaded Taldor in 4079 AR with an army of more than 40,000 members of the Satrapian Guard and detachments of the Imperial Forces, who were receiving conflicting orders from the capital. Already overextended in its efforts to maintain its western holdings, Taldor could not hold off the invasion. The nascent nation of Cheliox and several others took advantage of the distraction and broke away from Taldan control, while Qadira almost took Taldor's capital. Most of the Inner Sea region knows this period as the Even-Tongued Conquest, but in Qadira, it is known as the Gheveran Victories.

It would be another 500 years before Taldor and Qadira achieved peace again, and the conflict increased both Qadira's confidence as a military power and its conviction that Taldor must fall for Qadira to become a safe and stable nation. The satraps continued to focus on increasing the size of the Satrapian Guard, conscripting slaves into its ranks and fueling a slave trade that operated through the former resort city of Sedeq.

Today, Qadira enjoys wealth nearly unrivaled in the Inner Sea region, and it maintains one of the largest militaries on Avistan. It is finally beginning to salve its diplomatic relations with Osirion. Though the nations of Taldor and Qadira signed a peace treaty in 4603 AR, border skirmishes between the two longtime rivals remain frequent, and both sides secretly prepare for the seemingly inevitable war to come.



QADIRA TIMELINE

Presented below is a timeline of major events that helped to shape the nation of Qadira.

-5293 AR	Earthfall.	2768 AR	Empress Aleshat VI marries the son of Satrap Aphama I. The Qadiran navy grows.
-4983 AR	Ancestors of the Althameri tribespeople flee the Grass Sea to escape retribution for a now-forgotten transgression.	2920 AR	An earthquake kills tens of thousands in northern Qadira. Satrap Gheber II declares this proof of Taldan allegiance with evil gods and requests leave to invade Taldor. The empress refuses.
-4583 AR	Althameri tribespeople settle in the deserts of modern-day Ayyarad.	4067 AR	Uncertainty over the succession to the imperial throne causes violent conflict in Qadira. Eager to refocus the unrest on an external enemy, Satrap Gheber III proposes war with Taldor.
-3923 AR	The Pit of Gormuz opens in Casmaron, disgorging the first of the Spawn of Rovagug into the world and causing incredible devastation.	4079 AR	The war known in Taldor as the Grand Campaign begins. Qadira invades and occupies southern Taldor.
-3822 AR	General Bitharah al-Hezbat conquers the last of the Aishmayar cities.	4080 AR	Emperor Darial III raises Qadiran taxes to a punitive level in an attempt to halt the invasion of Taldor. Qadiran nobles threaten to secede, and the emperor relents, but dies from a suspicious fall off a balcony the night after he instructs the vizier to communicate his change of mind. Qadiran forces enslave the city of Zimar and burn most settlements in the Zimar scrublands.
-3470 AR	Osirion is founded.	4082 AR	Taldan Grand Prince Cydonus III, who mired his nation in debt and failed to prevent the Qadiran conquest of southern Taldor, is poisoned by angry nobles in a palace conspiracy. His successor, Beldam I, claims that the poisoning was carried out by Qadiran agents.
-1281 AR	Taldor is founded by descendants of Azlant who intermarried with local human tribes and Keleshite traders.	4083 AR	Qadira finishes conquering southern Taldor, held back only by the natural barrier of the River Porthmos, in a string of military successes known as the Ghevrans Victories.
-632 AR	The Tarrasque destroys Ninshabur before heading west in a furious rampage that reaches the Garundi nation of Shory.	4096 AR	Repeated Taldan sieges of the Qadiran city of Koor prompt Qadira to abandon it.
-614 AR	Keleshite forces complete their conquest of the trade routes formerly controlled by the empire of Khattib.	4276 AR	Taldan forces destroy Qadira's Resolute Citadel, an academy for spellcasters.
-78 AR	Keleshite troops invade the region surrounding Katheer, acting without the permission of Kelesh's leaders.	4328 AR	Taldor attempts to invade Qadira. At the urging of Satrap Arsinoah II, Kelesh sends a detachment of 50,000 cavalry to swell Arsinoah's forces.
-43 AR	Padishah Emperor Adalan IV formally establishes the satrapy of Qadira and places it under the rule of the satrap Cerush.	4528 AR	Grand Prince Stavian I initiates the Great Purge of Sarenites. He declares worship of Sarenrae illegal, propagandizes the Cult of the Dawnflower as treasonous spies, and encourages destruction of Sarenrae's temples. Many Sarenite clerics are imprisoned or murdered.
1396 AR	Empress Ashtirat II visits Katheer, prompting a flurry of construction that defines the shape of the city even today.	4603 AR	The Grand Campaign ends. Taldor and Qadira sign a peace treaty.
1531 AR	Qadiran troops conquer Gurat and skirmish with the Taldans.	4609 AR	The Osirians throw off Keleshite control and install Khemet I as ruler.
1532 AR	Qadiran agents defeat Pharaoh Menedes XXVI of Osirion and place Osirion under the control of the Qadiran satrap.	4679 AR	Xerbystes II, current satrap of Qadira, is born.
1532 AR	Xerbystes I, satrap of Qadira, convinces Empress Kharilah III to make his title a hereditary one. In return, he relinquishes control of Qadira's foreign affairs to an imperial vizier.	4689 AR	Taldor begins using Zimar corsairs to harry Qadiran trading ships.
1553 AR	Xerbystes I signs a peace treaty with Taldor.	4692 AR	Emperor Kalish XXII takes a Qadiran noble as a consort. She bears a son named Yaril, whom Kalish chooses as his heir, empowering the Qadiran faction in the imperial court.
2206 AR	The Cult of the Dawnflower begins founding its own churches in Qadira, independent of the mainline church of Sarenrae.		
2217 AR	The Cult of the Dawnflower's influence catches the notice of the Qadiran satrap, who banishes its followers to the deserts of Thuvia.		
2253 AR	The Cult of the Dawnflower drives Osirian Keleshites to overthrow the Osirian satrap, replacing him with a Keleshite noble independent of Qadira.		

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QADIRA AND KELESH

Qadira's relationship with its parent empire has been fraught with tension since its inception. Empress Azarmidah VI first dubbed the satrapy "our angry daughter" in 1429 AR, and while it is considered an indelicate epithet, it has remained in quiet use ever since.

The effects of Earthfall were far less dramatic in Casmaron than in Avistan, and human civilization in the former was thus not thrust back into as primitive a state. Though none of Casmaron's pre-Earthfall empires still exist today, not all their knowledge was lost, and Kelesh was able to build upon their advances as it assimilated their descendants. Individual members of the imperial family have access to the most potent methods of extending their life spans that money can buy, but the family's pact with the goddess Sarenrae prohibits them from using magical means to extend their lives to more than 200 years. Nevertheless, the unusual continuity of the imperial family and the empire they rule causes Kelesh's rulers to think in terms of centuries, gradual shifts in climate and population, and the inevitable march of progress. It has had time to experiment with many methods of governance. Kelesh has seen virulent ethnic divisions fade away as populations intermingle. It has gone from conquering with sword and spell to persuading with gold and diplomacy, and from forcing subject peoples to join it to allowing nations to seek its protection, lured by its wealth, its strength, and its patient stewardship. Kelesh's rulers believe that all of Golarion will someday pay them fealty voluntarily, but they feel no need to rush the process.

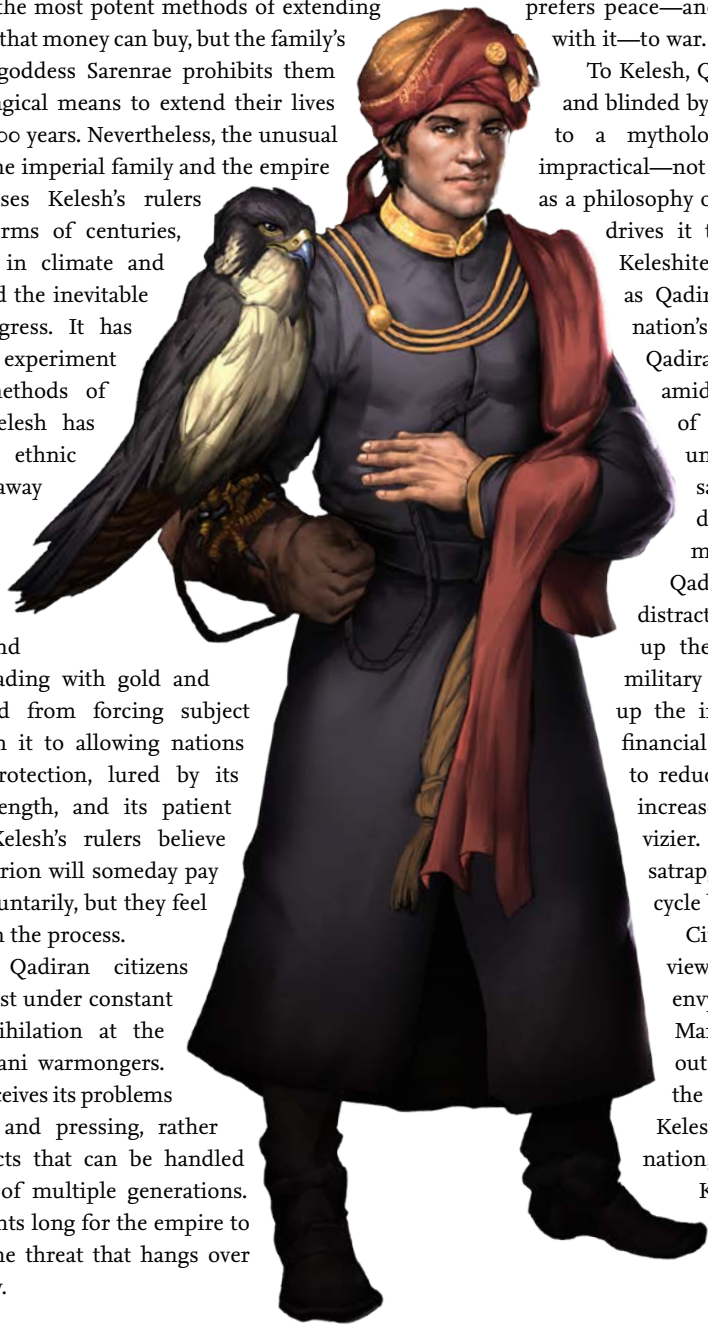
Yet, many Qadiran citizens believe they exist under constant threat of annihilation at the hands of Avistani warmongers. The nation perceives its problems as immediate and pressing, rather than as conflicts that can be handled over the span of multiple generations. Qadira's residents long for the empire to comprehend the threat that hangs over them right now.

The history of Qadira's relationship with Kelesh has been defined by these incompatible modes of thinking. Kelesh long ago put aside the sword in favor of the coin as the preferred means of expanding its reach. Its rulers oversee a vast and largely stable empire supported by trade networks that span the planet—and beyond. While individual empresses and emperors have ranged from those of almost superhuman benevolence and enlightenment to those of stunning cruelty and depravity, the imperial family's devotion to the goddess Sarenrae helps to minimize the rule of the truly depraved and evil, removing them from the throne before they can do too much harm. Kelesh is patient and prefers peace—and the robust trade that comes with it—to war.

To Kelesh, Qadira is impatient, belligerent, and blinded by a foolish, romantic attachment to a mythologized warrior past that is impractical—not to mention unenlightened—as a philosophy of governance. That impatience drives it to adopt practices that many Keleshites consider unethical, such as Qadira's embrace of slavery or the nation's conquest of Osirion. To Qadira, Kelesh sits complacently amid its wealth and safety, ignorant of Avistani bloodthirst and unprepared to deal with those savages should Avistani nations decide to invade. Through the millennia, a pattern has emerged:

Qadira's satraps take advantage of distractions in central Kelesh to build up the Satrapian Guard and begin military campaigns, and Kelesh cleans up the inevitable aftermath, decreases financial support to force the satrapy to reduce the size of its military, and increases the authority of the imperial vizier. Upon the ascension of a new satrap, Kelesh eases its hold, and the cycle begins anew.

Citizens from central Kelesh are viewed with a mixture of respect, envy, and annoyance in Qadira. Many Qadirans consider them out of touch and naive about the realities of life in Avistan. To Kelesh, Qadira is a vitally important nation, given its significance to Kelesh's trade routes, and a hardy one, given the wars it has survived, but a rough and rowdy one nonetheless.



QADIRA AND TALDOR

The only power that has done more to shape Qadira than the Padishah Empire of Kelesh is Taldor. From the very beginning of the satrapy's existence, the threat of destruction at the hands of one of the most powerful nations in the Inner Sea region has fostered a siege mentality among the people of the Gateway to the East.

When Kelesh first took control of the region that would become Qadira, it fortified the border to the north and sent nearly a hundred thousand soldiers to pacify the area as it set up its administration, then withdrew most of the troops. Taldor, tempted by Qadira's trade routes and ports—not to mention displeased at having an outpost of a foreign empire on its southern border—immediately attacked the fledgling nation. Had it not been for the empire's powerful genie allies, who remained behind when the human forces left, Qadiran history might have ended almost as soon as it began.

It was almost 300 years before Qadira raised enough soldiers to strike back. Border skirmishes continued until Taldor attacked in earnest, only to be driven back by the satrap's troops. An all-out war seemed inevitable, but to the surprise of both populations—and to the displeasure of many on both sides—the satrap signed a peace treaty with Taldor in 1553 AR.

The peace held for less than 2 decades before both sides began feinting across the border, sending privateers to harass one another's ships and deploying agents to foment unrest among the other's populations. Yet, neither nation admitted the treaty had been truly broken until Taldor's political and economic decline forced it to focus on quelling internal unrest. In 4079 AR, Qadira invaded Taldor and nearly took the capital. Taldor recalled its armies to its heartland to drive out the invaders in a war known as the Grand Campaign, allowing the nation of Cheliox to break away—a loss that may have been the death knell for the empire of Taldor.

In 4528 AR, Grand Prince Stavian I attempted to expunge his nation of the Sarenite faith. Most of Taldor's Sarenite clergy were murdered or imprisoned, and Sarenite worshipers were required to publicly convert to another religion or face imprisonment or expulsion. Most fled, and the majority of those who remained had to change their religion, but underground congregations persisted, some surviving until Stavian III revoked the decree. Non-Sarenites of Qadiran descent escaped the official purge, but they often met tragic ends at the hands of their Taldan neighbors.

Qadirans in Taldor are subject to intense prejudice, and non-Qadiran Keleshites often feel its sting as well. On the other hand, Taldans in Qadira are less likely to become the targets of open persecution, as the empire has been adamant that Qadirans make peace with their neighbor to the north. Qadirans tend to express their dislike through

supercilious disdain rather than physical force, though Taldans in the rougher areas of Katheer would be advised to bring bodyguards.

Imperial Keleshites find Taldor's contempt for them both amusing and baffling, given that Taldans are descended from Keleshite peoples who intermarried with Azlanti—a people whose technological and magical sophistication Keleshites acknowledge, but whom they view as morally primitive. To imperial Keleshites, Taldans remain their degenerate cousins. Their attempts at high fashion are hopelessly gauche, and their political machinations embarrassingly transparent. However, Qadiran Keleshites' fear of Taldan invasion tends to erode their ability to find this humorous. At the same time, the two countries' shared border and history of interaction has resulted in many Taldans moving to Qadira, and many Qadirans moving to Taldor. Inter-marriage is common. Movements within Qadira advocate aid to Taldor's struggling economy, operating on the Keleshite belief that economic insecurity increases crime and aggression.

REGIONAL TRAIT

The following trait can be taken by characters from Qadira who have had family members, neighbors, or friends affected by Taldan aggression or who have fallen victim to this hatred themselves.

Watching Taldor. You have spent your adult life waiting for Taldor to give you an excuse to fight. You gain a +1 trait bonus on initiative checks, and if you are able to act during the surprise round of an encounter, you can draw a weapon (but not a potion or magic item) as a free action during that round.

RING OF RETURN		PRICE 6,000 GP
SLOT ring	CL 13th	WEIGHT —
AURA strong conjuration		

The imperial intelligence agency, the Hatharat, entrusts *rings of return* to agents within Taldor and other hostile regions. When a transport command word is spoken (a standard action), a *ring of return* whisks the wearer to the nearest imperial administration building within Kelesh's borders, as if via *greater teleport*. If anyone attempts to remove a *ring of return* from the wearer's finger without speaking a removal command word (a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity), the attempt triggers the effect, transporting both the wearer and the person attempting to remove the ring. A successful DC 20 Will save allows a character to resist the teleportation, but in any event, a *ring of return* can be used only once; after its single charge is expended, it becomes an ordinary, nonmagical ring.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 3,000 GP
Forge Ring, <i>greater teleport</i>	

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QADIRA AND OSIRION

Qadira's relationship with Osirion has historically been mired in political intrigue, military coups, and religious tension, leaving a complex legacy of betrayals and machinations that have had repercussions far beyond both countries' borders.

The peace negotiations between Taldor and Qadira that began in 1531 AR were not well received by much of the populace. Worried that Taldor would not be content until it had conquered Qadira, Qadiran leaders saw the wisdom of increasing the satrapy's position of power in the Inner Sea region. Convinced that any show of weakness would be too tempting for Taldor to ignore, and fearing the great military nation would crush Qadira, certain rabble-rousers in Qadira argued the satrapy should expand its reach if it was to survive.

After agitating for Qadira's secession from Kelesh, these agents turned their efforts to influencing the satrap's family. They failed to sway Xerbystes I but gained the sympathies of his granddaughter Alsiyona, High Commander of the Satrapian Guard. Knowing the Osirian pharaoh was weak, Alsiyona decided to act on Qadira's imperial ambitions by conquering the Garundi nation of Osirion. She succeeded but was fatally wounded in the campaign.

Negotiations with Taldor stalled abruptly after the attack. The imperial representative, Guyun al-Yanat, objected to Qadira's aggression toward a nation with which the empire had no quarrel, as well as to the derailment of the Taldan negotiations. She demanded that Xerbystes place Pharaoh Menedes XXVI's closest relative on the Osirian throne and withdraw the satrapy's forces immediately. Xerbystes was unwilling to relinquish the nation that his granddaughter died to conquer, and he threatened to secede. The empress, whose attention was focused on a civil war on the Plane of Fire that threatened to disrupt Kelesh's trading relationships with its extraplanar partners, instructed Guyun al-Yanat to provide aid in resettling Osirians uprooted by the coup and to begin grooming an Osirian successor to the throne. Unfortunately, al-Yanat was assassinated by angry Osirian nobles upon her arrival in Sothis before she could explain her purpose there.

Over the following centuries, the extremists who had helped push Qadira into the conflict with Osirion coalesced into a religious movement—an unusually militant sect that called itself the Cult of the Dawnflower. The empress appointed her aunt, Kliamatarra, as the Osirian regent. She instructed the Qadiran church of Sarenrae to rein in the Cult of the Dawnflower and its political machinations, threatening to make membership in the sect illegal if it were not brought to heel.

When the Sarenite church attempted to bring the cult back to the fold, its efforts backfired; what had once been a politically motivated group within the mainline church

broke away as a schismatic sect. Both the Cult of the Dawnflower and the subject nation of Osirion continued to cause headaches for Qadira, until an attempted coup in 2217 AR prompted the satrap to expel the Cult of the Dawnflower from both Qadira and Osirion. Taking refuge in Katapesh and in secret cells in Taldor, the cult engineered the overthrow of the Osirian satrap who, like the Qadiran satraps, had held his hereditary position as a member of Xerbystes's line. The cult, aided by efreet allies from the Plane of Fire, replaced the ruler with a Keleshite noble independent of Qadira in 2253 AR, dubbing the new ruler a "sultan" after the rulers of their extraplanar allies. They declared Osirion a Keleshite satrapy independent of Qadira. Though the empire did not acknowledge Osirion as such, it also refused the Qadiran satrap's requests for military aid to bring Osirion back under Qadiran control.

The cult's coup set off the decline of Keleshite power in Osirion. Cut off from acknowledgment and aid from the empire and at odds with Qadira, the local sultans saw control of the populace slip from their fingers. Despite their often oppressive measures to regain their influence, it waned. When Harun, a Garundi cleric of Abadar, sailed into Sothis in 4609 AR with a Garundi army at his back, claiming to be the descendant of the first Osirian pharaoh and the legitimate ruler of Osirion, the sultan and her family fled to Kelesh, relinquishing the throne.

Empress Rashanah XXVII immediately offered to be the first head of state to formally recognize the authority of Harun, who now called himself Khemet I, if he extended Osirion citizenship to ethnic Keleshites living in Osirion and protected them from retaliation. He agreed, and the empress traveled to Sothis to meet with him, extending imperial citizenship to any Osirian national of Keleshite descent wishing to relocate to central Kelesh.

Kelesh had enjoyed warm relations with most Garundi peoples until Qadira's invasion of Osirion, but the conquest damaged the perception of Keleshites in northern Garund. The empire continues to attempt to repair the damage, and the imperial intelligence agency, the Hatharat, has quietly encouraged affluent ethnic Keleshites in Osirion to invest their wealth in their communities and bring themselves to be seen as an integral part of Osirian society. Despite these efforts, anti-Keleshite sentiment in Osirion remains strong. Though the empire has largely salvaged its relationships with other Garundi nations and settlements, many in northern Garund still view Keleshites, and especially Qadirans, with suspicion.

REGIONAL TRAIT

This trait is available to characters from Qadira or Osirion.

Empathic Diplomat: You have long followed the path of common sense and empathic insight when using diplomacy. You modify your Diplomacy checks using your Wisdom modifier, not your Charisma modifier.

QADIRA AND THE INNER SEA

Beyond Qadira's neighbors of Taldor and Osirion, attitudes toward Keleshites vary widely among the peoples of Avistan and Garund. Anti-Keleshite prejudice is common in rural areas and small towns; even Keleshites who are not citizens of Kelesh are often suspected of being in its employ, and the empire's power and foreign practices make it an object of great distrust.

On the other hand, Keleshite traders are often the only source for coveted goods. Keleshite economic acumen has saved individuals, businesses, and even governments in Avistan and Garund from financial ruin. Those with Keleshite business relationships are among the first to learn news from other areas of the world, and those connections let them set fashions and introduce new cuisines and customs to their neighbors. The Keleshites' talent at learning others' languages and cultures, combined with the outsider perspectives that many possess as travelers and international businesspeople, lets them understand different sides of many conflicts and serve as objective voices of reason.

Keleshites in the Inner Sea Region

The following summaries describe the major Inner Sea nations, cultures, and races that hold distinctive views of Qadira.

Absalom: Absalom's urbane sophistication matches Kelesh's well, and Qadiran culture and customs helped shape those of the City at the Center of the World. Qadiran traders are warmly welcomed here, and ethnic Keleshite residents are usually safe from persecution. Residents of Absalom usually begin with an attitude of friendly toward Keleshite strangers.

Andoran: Andorens frown on Qadira's slave trade and they often suspect Keleshites of being imperial envoys sent to soften up the nation for a takeover. Andorens usually begin with an attitude of unfriendly toward Keleshite strangers.

Brevoy: Brevoy's geographical position between Avistan and Casmaron gives it particular insight into the culture of Casmaron, including familiarity with the empire of Kelesh. The people of Brevoy understand the distinctions between ethnic Keleshites, Qadirans, and citizens of Kelesh better than most Avistani. Residents of Brevoy usually begin with an attitude of friendly toward ethnic Keleshite strangers and citizens of Kelesh, but with an attitude of unfriendly toward Qadirans.

Cheliox: Given that Qadira's invasion of Taldor diverted the Taldan forces long enough to allow Cheliox to break away, Qadira enjoys a highly positive reputation among nationalistic Chelaxians. However, under the rule of House Throne, that status is eroding due to the enmity between Sarenrae and Asmodeus. Residents of Cheliox usually begin with an attitude of friendly toward Qadiran

strangers and Keleshite traders, but the attitude drops to unfriendly if the Chelaxian worships Asmodeus and the Keleshite bears any visible symbols of Sarenrae.

Druma: Druma's focus on wealth means Keleshite merchants, bankers, and economic advisors are welcomed with open arms. Residents of Druma usually begin with an attitude of helpful toward Keleshite bankers and traders, and friendly toward other Keleshites.

Elves: The patience and farsighted policies of the Padishah Empire of Kelesh, along with its allegiance to a benevolent deity, earn the approval of most elves. Elves usually begin with an attitude of friendly toward most Keleshites, though their attitude toward Qadirans usually begins at indifferent.

Halflings: Qadira's slave trade, especially its trade with Cheliox in halfling slaves, makes most halflings suspicious of all Keleshites. Halflings usually begin with an attitude of unfriendly toward Keleshites, and their attitude toward Qadirans who do not quickly disavow the slave trade begins at hostile.

Holomog: Tensions over the establishment of the Keleshite colony of Tirakawhan eroded the relationship between this southern Garund nation and the empire of Kelesh, but both sides have put considerable effort into repairing it, and trade flows freely between them. Residents of Holomog usually begin with an attitude of indifferent toward Keleshites, but they may be friendly or helpful to representatives of merchant houses with whom they have trading partnerships.

Katapesh: Katapesh has strong economic ties with Qadira, and many of its residents are ethnic Keleshites. Katapeshi usually begin with an attitude of friendly toward Keleshites.

Taldor: Anti-Keleshite prejudice is strongest in Taldor, given the nation's history of war with Qadira. However, citizens of at least partial Taldan descent are also common in Qadira, making the relationship between the common people of both nations complex. Still, it's unusual for a Taldan to begin with an attitude other than hostile or unfriendly when interacting with a Keleshite.

Varisia: Qadira maintains an ornate embassy in Magnimar and enjoys warm trading relations with the city. Residents of Magnimar and its holdings usually begin with an attitude of friendly toward Keleshites, but elsewhere in Varisia people are typically indifferent on first meeting.

REGIONAL TRAIT

A character from Kelesh or Qadira can take the following regional trait.

Keleshite Trader: Your cosmopolitan upbringing has given you familiarity with many cultures. You gain two bonus languages and a +2 trait bonus on Knowledge (local) checks.

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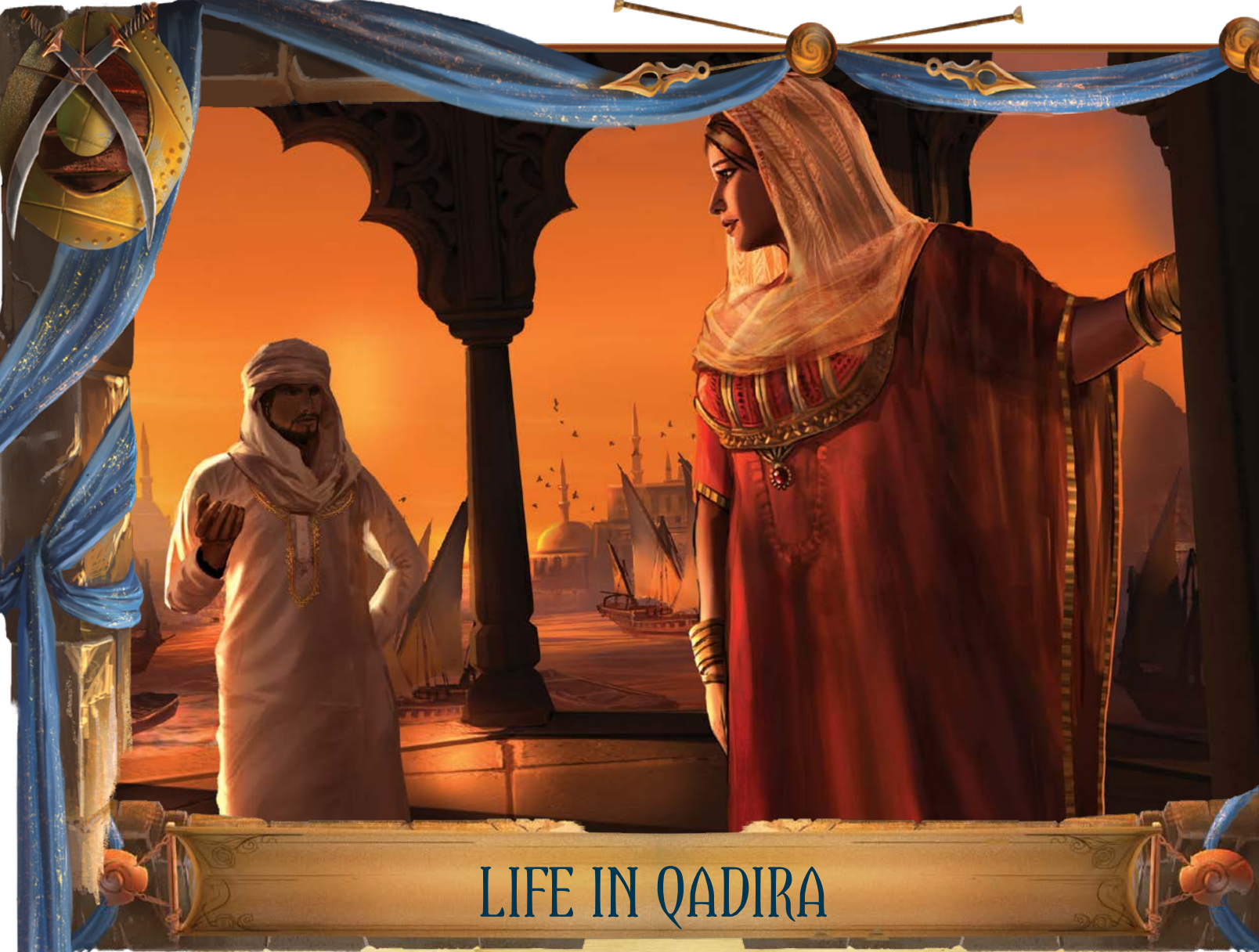
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“If Katheer is Qadira’s heart, then the Golden Path is its arteries and veins. Without blood, the body cannot survive. Without trade, Qadira cannot survive. With it, Qadira thrives. Yet mere physical wealth is not and cannot be the only path to greatness. All the coin in Qadira cannot purchase an audience with the satrap. Qadira’s true wealth is not in its spices and jewels, but in its culture. It is not what fits in your purse that makes you rich—it is who you know and how you are known that brings true wealth.”

—Jalailah al-Mehenet, lecturer at the Planar Institute

The Qadira of today is a thriving Inner Sea nation through which much of the world's wealth passes. Though Qadirans still believe Taldor plans to wipe them out as soon as it can rebuild its armies, the Gateway to the East is in the midst of one of the most stable periods in its history. The Taldan and Qadiran governments have signed a peace treaty and are attempting to repair their relationship, trade routes are secure, and the Cult of the Dawnflower has largely ceased its calls for invasion of Taldor. Yet this newfound stability is fragile: the succession in Kelesh threatens to ignite unrest in Qadira, strange and dangerous things stray out of the deserts, the Dawnflower Cult and the mainline church still compete for the hearts of Sarenites in many cities, and raiders prey on travelers in the Plains of Paresh and other deserted regions. Qadiran culture struggles to define itself, caught between the practices and attitudes of its Inner Sea neighbors and those of its parent empire.

CUSTOMS

Qadirans live by several sets of customs that are not truly part of the satrapy's legal system, yet still bind citizens as strongly as official legislation.

Blood Laws: Keleshite blood laws originated among the Althameri tribes (see page 26) and are intended both to prevent the escalation of intertribal conflicts into full-on feuds and to ensure that conflicts over tribal leadership don't turn violent. The blood laws permit the family of a murder victim to kill the murderer—but only the murderer—and do not permit the murderer's family to take revenge so long as the victim's family kills no one else in the attempt. These laws come into effect in contemporary Qadira when an individual escapes conviction for murder; while vengeance killings under the blood laws are technically illegal, most authorities turn a blind eye as long as the avengers follow the strictures preventing escalation. In addition, the blood laws prohibit close relatives—defined as those descended from the same maternal great-grandmother—from shedding one another's blood. Of course, many a scheming noble has eliminated a hated relative by hiring someone else to do the killing. Keleshite legal authorities differ on whether to apply the blood laws to non-Keleshites. Most argue that they apply to all residents of Kelesh, but more conservative schools argue that their protections extend to citizens only, or even just to those of Althameri descent.



Courtesy: Qadirans are a courteous lot, even to their enemies (though outward courtesy often veils subtle mockery). Their notions of politeness are extraordinarily complex, but center around several organizing principles, such as the belief that a person of higher rank should never humiliate one of lower rank in public, and the idea that what is done or said to one family member is done or said to the entire family. A host considers herself responsible for the needs and safety of her guests, but expects them to reciprocate with a thoughtful gift and acquiescence to her requests while in her house.

Food: Keleshites enjoy the finer things in life, and consider a good meal to be one of the finest. They see it as gauche to directly discuss business over a meal, but often use meals to get a feel for those with whom they're contemplating a deal or partnership. Dinners are often lengthy affairs that start after dark. Since food spoils quickly in hot environments, Keleshites have adopted numerous methods of preserving or stalling this inevitability. The use of spices is a favorite solution, and Keleshite food is often a painfully shocking surprise to one unaccustomed to the unprepared tongue.

Haggling: Qadirans take pride in their business acumen and respect it in others. They consider haggling to be something of a sport and engage in the practice with all the silver-tongued wit and complex wordplay prized by their people (those who are especially skilled at it may draw crowds in marketplaces). At the same time, there are some transactions in which Qadirans consider this rude or inappropriate. They see haggling with an artist or artisan over works he has created as insulting, and they do not haggle with other Keleshites over horses, though they certainly have no compunction about doing so with non-Keleshites.

Hospitality Laws: Althameri culture evolved in an unimaginably harsh environment, where access to oases spelled the difference between life and death. Adherence to Althameri customs still requires Keleshites to provide access to water, food, and shelter for the night to any traveler who requests it, though the requirement ends at the next dawn. Custom also requires them to protect any traveler who begs sanctuary until the next dawn, though violent or disruptive actions by strangers can negate this imperative. Though the original intent of hospitality laws is rarely relevant outside the deserts, it has formed a culture throughout Kelesh that views being a good host as a sacred obligation.

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GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY

In most of Kelesh, the military exists to protect citizens and enforce the will of the imperial throne. In Qadira, it is also one of the powers that drives the government.

GOVERNMENT

Technically, the satrapies of Kelesh (of which Qadira is the westernmost) answer absolutely to the imperial throne. Important government figures and their positions are listed below.

Imperial Throne: The ultimate authority, even in Qadira, is the emperor or empress of Kelesh. As the twilight years of Kalish XXII's life draw to a close, the coming succession is pushing Keleshite society into a frenzy of gossip and intrigue. His wife, Queen Shubat, has indicated that if the current heir, Yaril, does not change his dissolute ways, she will disown him, rendering him ineligible to take the throne.

Satrap: The unmarried Xerbystes II is a brooding man who wishes to prove himself to his emperor through military conquest of Taldor. His cousins Feraz and Melchior angle to replace him, and the unrest around the Qadiran succession mirrors that which surrounds the imperial throne. Xerbystes II supports the emperor's niece Layilah. To speak to the satrap, one must be introduced by a noble in favor at the satrap's court.

Imperial Vizier: Vizier Hebizid Vraj maintains magical contact with the imperial court and attempts to sway the satrap toward peace. He sponsors numerous expeditions to explore ruins in the Ketz and Meraz Deserts with the hope of redirecting Qadiran violence toward ancient horrors rather than bordering nations. To speak to the vizier, one must be introduced by a noble.

Noble Families: Only nobles may own land in Kelesh. Adult nobles belong to a council that votes on issues and pressures the satrap to comply with their decisions. Even the emperor must step carefully when the noble families unite on an issue. To meet with a noble, one must be introduced by a wealthy merchant, highly placed civil servant, or member of the noble's family.

Civil Servants: Any empire as large as Kelesh requires considerable staff to run, and civil service is an old and honored tradition for many families in Qadira. Given the inaccessibility of the nobles and satrap to most citizens, having a good relationship with those in the lower echelons of government is often the first step toward getting word to those in higher positions.

Silent Blades of Katheer: These thieves and assassins are the eyes, ears, and blades of the satrap when he wishes to act outside the authority of his office or the auspices of the imperial vizier. These loyal servants work for the betterment of Qadira, or so they believe, by slaying those who draw the satrap's ire or those who side with the emperor against the satrap.

MILITARY

The empire mandates 2 years of military service from all citizens. Though the definition of "service" can vary, all able-bodied citizens receive at least basic combat and survival training conducted in one of the satrapy of Ayyarad's deserts (even if they don't serve in combat positions). Their training period also includes remedial education for citizens from underprivileged upbringings, which allows the empire to maintain a high literacy rate.

Strict training in Ayyarad's dangerous environment is designed to create the ideal citizen-soldier: loyal to the empire, ambitious, and able to fight competently even years after her service concludes, should the empire ever need to increase the size of its armies. At the conclusion of their service, citizens receive a generous bonus and a month-long furlough in the capital city of Isfahel, as well as an invitation to a formal court ball, where they might catch a glimpse of the emperor or empress.

There are two primary military divisions in Kelesh: the Satrapian Guard and the Imperial Forces. The Satrapian Guard is stationary. It protects each satrapy's borders, aids citizens during disasters, and functions as a police force. The Imperial Forces—which are considered more prestigious—protect the capital and outside borders of the empire, fight wars, guard embassies in foreign lands, escort dignitaries, and protect the trade routes.

In Kelesh's military, command rank is as follows.

Supreme Commander: A single individual, appointed by the throne, oversees both military branches.

High Commanders: The Satrapian Guard has one high commander for each satrapy, and the Imperial Forces have 13, each of which commands one category of their forces: air, clergy, engineers, heavy cavalry, heavy infantry, intelligence, light cavalry, light infantry, mages, medical, navy, ranged fighters, and reconnaissance. The high commanders report to the supreme commander.

Generals: A general commands a unit of 10,000 soldiers and reports to a high commander.

Colonels: A colonel commands a unit of 1,000 soldiers and reports to a general.

Captains: A captain commands a unit of 100 soldiers and reports to a colonel.

Lieutenants: A lieutenant commands a unit of 10 soldiers and reports to a captain.

QADIRAN COMBAT

Though developed by Keleshites, these character options can be selected by foreigners as well.

ASHIFTAH (WITCH ARCHETYPE)

Qadira's armies strike terror into foes, but tales of something even more terrible than desert dervishes or charging cavalry haunt foot soldiers serving Qadira's neighbors. Known in Taldane as a "battle witch," an

ashiftah drifts like a phantom among the enemy armies, calling down disaster upon their heads and weakening their resolve. Qadiran ashiftahs usually go veiled, and even their cohorts in the Imperial Forces superstitiously believe that seeing their faces brings misfortune.

Protecting Veil: An ashiftah's veil is not merely a uniform, but a magical vestment imbued with power. Its ability to hold spells functions identically to a witch's familiar. An ashiftah must veil herself and commune with her patron each day to prepare her spells and cannot prepare spells not stored in the veil.

This ability replaces familiar.

Ghostwalk (Su): Starting at 2nd level, as a move action after using a hex, an ashiftah can become invisible as per *vanish*^{APG} and can then take a 5-foot step. Using ghostwalk doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

This ability replaces the hex gained at 2nd level.

Deliver Touch Spells (Su): Starting at 3rd level, an ashiftah can use her veil to deliver touch spells. After casting a touch spell, as a full-round action, she can tear a strip from her veil and whisper to it, designating a target. She then releases the scrap of fabric, which drifts on the wind to the target and delivers the spell as a ranged touch attack. The target must be within 20 feet of the witch. The veil mends itself after the spell is delivered.

Fog of War (Sp): At 6th level, as a standard action, an ashiftah can blanket a 20-foot-radius area of the battlefield in a clammy mist that functions as per *barrow haze*^{ACG}, allowing her to treat any area within the mist as within 30 feet for purposes of her hexes, as long as some part of that area is within 30 feet of her.

This replaces the hex gained at 6th level.

COMBAT TRAIT

The following trait aids those who hurl their weapons.

Strong Arm, Supple Wrist: You have been trained in the javelin and the spear, and you know how to make the best use of your momentum. When you move at least 10 feet before making an attack with a thrown weapon, you can add 10 feet to the range increment of the weapon thrown. You can gain this benefit only once per round.

MOUNTED BLADE (COMBAT FEAT)

You can use your mount's momentum to carry your weapon through one foe and into another.

Prerequisites: Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, base attack bonus +1, Ride 3 ranks.

Benefit: When you use the Ride-By Attack feat, if your attack hits, you can also make an

attack against a target adjacent to your original target. You take a -5 penalty on the attack roll for this additional attack. You can use this feat whether riding a mount or using a flying item such as a *broom of flying* or *carpet of flying*.

Witch Hex

Any witch can choose the following cruel hex.

Deathcall (Su): The witch's presence makes death more likely for wounded foes. Creatures within 120 feet of the witch take a -1 penalty on checks to stabilize when dying. At 8th level, this penalty changes to -2, and at 16th level, it changes to -3.



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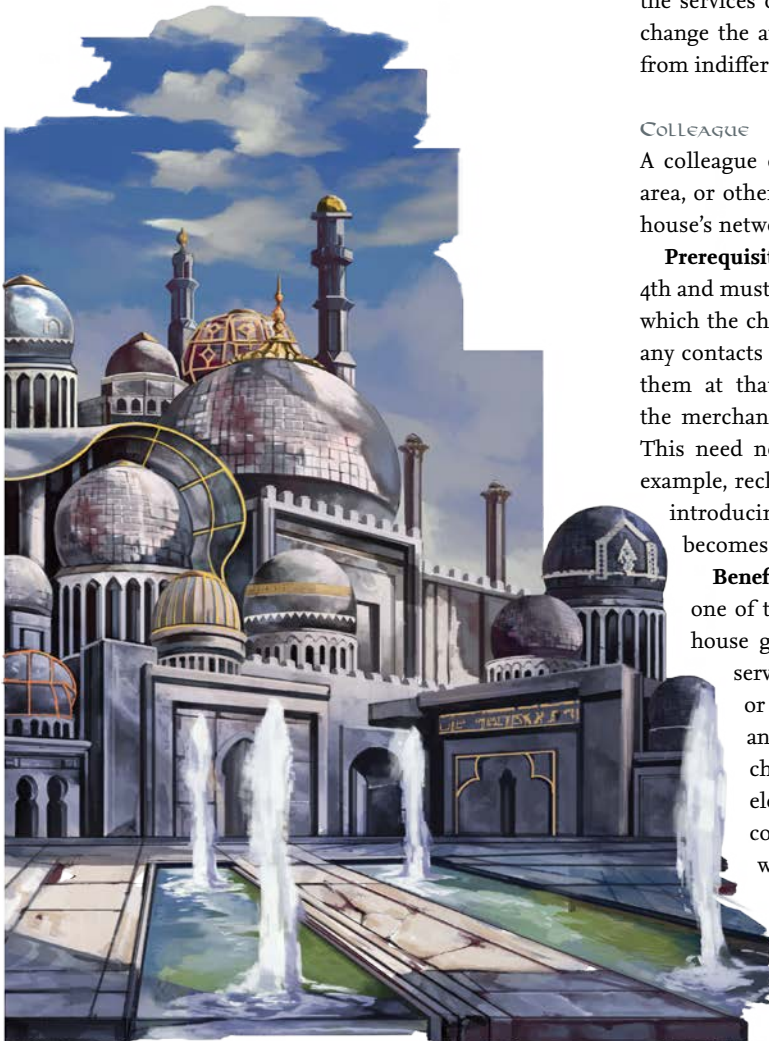
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EDUCATION AND TRADE

Not every citizen of Qadira is a wealthy trader or financial genius, but most realize that success in business depends on two things: a portfolio of skills ranging from mathematical acumen to a silver tongue and the way one reacts to changes in fortune.

Several of Qadira's universities are well known outside Kelesh. Al-Lehiyah Magical University is Katheer's leading magical college, and is staffed predominantly by Garundi and Mwangi professors. The College of the Green Dawn, positioned at the edge of the Meraz Desert, focuses on both magical and mundane means of halting Casmaron's increasing desertification. The current satrap founded the Katheer Military Academy to create a force of well-trained leaders loyal to their homeland. The Mahruyat Institute for the Study of History is Golarion's premier training program for archeological research, located in the ruins outside Katheer. The Shamar Divinity School is under the auspices of the church of Sarenrae, but is devoted to the nonsectarian study of theology.



TRADE

For foreigners who wish to trade in Qadira, the best option is to develop a business relationship with a merchant house (or noble family). There are three levels in such relationships—client, colleague, and partner. The GM should decide the exact prerequisites for achieving each level, but examples are provided below.

CLIENT

A client or client family is usually a supplier or local merchant who enjoys the patronage of a merchant house.

Prerequisite: The character must own a business that can supply a single type of good worth 10 gp or more in bulk to a Keleshite merchant house, or a business that can donate a unique rare good (an antique, an object of archeological interest, an artwork, or a magical weapon) of the patron's choice at least once per month.

Benefits: Once per month, a client can choose one of the following: 500 gp, the services of a house guard (human fighter 3; use the statistics for a traitorous brigand from page 81 of the *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*) for 24 hours, or the services of a house emissary who can automatically change the attitude of a ruler or other influential NPC from indifferent to friendly or from friendly to helpful.

COLLEAGUE

A colleague controls a significant business or trading area, or otherwise wields significant influence within a house's network.

Prerequisites: The character must be of character level 4th and must have been a client for at least 1 year, during which the character must have changed the attitudes of any contacts from the house to helpful and maintained them at that level. The character must also present the merchant house with a unique gift of great value. This need not be monetary in nature—it may be, for example, reclaiming an ancestral sword thought lost or introducing a member of the house to someone who becomes her spouse.

Benefits: Once per month, a colleague can choose one of the following: 1,000 gp, the services of four house guards (see Client above) for 24 hours, the services of a house emissary (see Client above), or the services of a house lawyer (who pays bail and advises the colleague if she is arrested or charged with a crime). Upon the character's elevation to the status of colleague, the house commissions a custom crafted magical item worth up to 4,500 gp as a gift.

PARTNER

The closest relationship one can achieve with an established merchant house is to be named a partner.

Prerequisites: Character level 9th. The character must have been a colleague of the merchant house for at least 3 years, and must have performed a life-changing service for a member of the house, such as saving her life or setting up a lucrative trade network in an otherwise inaccessible area (such as another plane).

Benefits: The character is offered adoption into the merchant family and citizenship in the empire of Kelesh, if she is not already a citizen. The character draws a stipend of 1,000 gp per month (funded by the house), can borrow up to 50,000 gp per year at no interest (the amount must be paid back within 1 year), and receives the non-monetary benefits detailed at the colleague level. Upon the character's elevation to the status of partner, the house gifts her with a custom magic item worth no more than 12,000 gp.

Merchant Academies

Two sample Qadiran merchant academies are presented below, using the school rules first detailed in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic*. To be accepted to a merchant academy, a candidate must pass the entrance exam and pay the entrance fee. To remain a student, she must pay the tuition and succeed at the listed Education check twice per semester. For each successful education check against a DC equal to 15 + her current ranks in the skill being tested, her Fame score increases by 1. Each time her Fame score increases, she earns an equal number of Prestige Points (PP), which she can spend permanently to purchase rewards if her Fame is high enough. When her Fame reaches 50, she has the option of joining the school's faculty. Faculty do not pay tuition and receive a stipend equal to the school's tuition.

IMPERIAL SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Any proper Keleshite knows that trade is the lifeblood of great empires. A solid foundation in rhetoric, economics, and etiquette prepares one for a life of astute dealings and well-earned luxuries.

Location Katheer

REQUIREMENTS

Entrance Fee 200 gp

Entrance Exam DC 15 Diplomacy, Knowledge (engineering, history, local, or nobility), or Linguistics check

Tuition 100 gp/semester

EDUCATION

Education Check Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Linguistics

Semester 4 months

Flunk 3 consecutive failed Education checks

EXTRACURRICULAR TASK

Economics Thesis (+1 Fame, 100 gp/month) Over the course of a semester, you can work on a research project and present your findings to the dean. If you succeed at an Appraise check (DC = 10 + your current Fame score),

you impress the dean, who gives you a grant to test your theories in the real market. Your Fame score increases by 1, and your portfolio of investments gives you a return of 100 gp per month for the next 9 months, after which you can write a new economics thesis.

AWARDS

Business Magnate (30 Fame, 20 PP) Intensive training has given you insight into how best to appear trustworthy and compelling. You gain a +2 bonus on Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motive checks—this bonus doubles when you are in Katheer. When you sell magical items or other expensive goods in Katheer, you earn a bonus from the sale: a percentage equal to your Charisma bonus.

Shrewd Investor (15 Fame, 2 PP) Your studies have taught you to assess financial risk and calibrate your plans with virtuosic precision. Appraise is a class skill for you, you gain a +2 bonus on Appraise checks, and you can purchase magical items or other expensive goods in Katheer at a 5% discount.

PLANAR INSTITUTE

Their history of dealing with genies and desire for plane-spanning trade networks have convinced a consortium of merchant houses to sponsor a university dedicated to studying the planes and teaching humans strategies and business etiquette for dealing with extraplanar contacts.

Location Katheer

REQUIREMENTS

Entrance Fee 150 gp

Entrance Exam DC 15 Diplomacy, Knowledge (planes or religion), or Linguistics check

Tuition 200 gp/semester

EDUCATION

Education Check Diplomacy, Knowledge (planes)

Semester 6 months

Flunk 4 consecutive failed Education checks

EXTRACURRICULAR TASK

Planar Sabbatical (+2 Fame) You can travel with a professor to a different plane to study for a month once per year. If you succeed at a Diplomacy check (DC = 10 + your current Fame score) to demonstrate the correct etiquette to the Institute's contacts there, they instruct you in the norms of their home. Your Fame score increases by 2, and you gain a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks against outsiders.

AWARDS

Planar Expert (10 Fame, 2 PP) You have studied how to quickly adapt to differing planar environments. Knowledge (planes) is a class skill for you, and you can choose two planar languages, which you receive as bonus languages.

Planar Savant (30 Fame, 15 PP) You can exist comfortably on many planes, and can cast *planar adaptation*^{APG} once per day as a spell-like ability (CL = your character level).

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FAITH

Keleshite myth holds that the Althameri tribes who founded Kelesh fled the Grass Sea to the harsh, empty deserts of Ayyarad, a land no other peoples claimed—or wanted. Monsters and evil outsiders haunted the deserts, and the environment itself allowed them no more than a wandering subsistence existence. For centuries, they sacrificed the finest of their meager flocks to placate demon lords and other vicious powers until a desperate tribal leader challenged the sun itself, asking how it could watch this cruelty and remain unmoved. The goddess Sarenrae responded to their plight, and for the millennia since the Althameri tribes have remained largely faithful to their covenant with the Dawnflower.

FAITHS OF QADIRA

Sarenrae's worship is the most widespread in Qadira (see "Sarenite Faith" below), but the empire comprises many cultures and peoples, and is highly tolerant in matters of faith. In addition to the faiths of Abadar, Calistria, Irori, Lamashtu, Nethys, Rovagug, and Shelyn, as well as less widespread faiths such as Naderi, Nurgal, Sivanah, and Zyphus, worshipers of more obscure religions largely unknown outside Kelesh can be found in Qadira. The most notable of these are summarized below.

Atarshamayyin: The Name on the Wind is an ancient and mysterious deity, said to have gifted horses and prophecy to humankind. Little is known of his nature, but it is said that in his remote temples, if one is quiet enough, one can hear echoes on the wind of words spoken in both the distant past and the future.

Cult of the Hawk: A mysterious organization formed of Qadiran and Osirian mystics and traders, the Cult of the Hawk has managed to take positions of power in many commercial ventures in Absalom.

Dust Speakers: These gray-robed priests wander the streets and seem to trail misfortune in their wakes. They are said to be the clergy of a lost culture's deity, who still seethes at his people's fall.

Lugalismaru: The Palm Tree King, a pre-Keleshite deity from Casmaron, is revered in Qadira as the guardian of oases. Travelers leave gifts of small bronze palm leaves set with sapphires at his shrines to invoke his protection.

Nightseers: The Susianam culture (see page 26) has largely assimilated into Keleshite culture, but some of its wandering oracles, known as nightseers, remain. Nightseers give up a portion of their ability to relate to the material world in order to hear their deity's wisdom more clearly.

Oathos: The Ever-Lost is a pre-Keleshite moon god from Casmaron. Worshiped in the ancient empire of Khattib, Oathos was the lover of a goddess who grew jealous and poisoned him. Now reimagined as a consort

of Sarenrae who suffers from a divine wasting disease, Oathos is the patron of those with chronic illnesses.

Qedeshatam: Less a religion than a sort of monastic philosophy, this sect holds that a bond with divine energy can be achieved through physical union. A *qedeshat* is a highly trained mystic and healer who focuses on helping people overcome difficulties related to intimacy.

Roidira: Little is known about this deity, sometimes called the Dark Sister of Knowledge. Members of her cult claim that deep understanding of truth appears as madness to the less knowledgeable, and that nihilism is the ultimate result of complete understanding.

Shahar: The only records of this ancient goddess's existence are nearly illegible inscriptions in deep desert ruins. Taboos and rumors of curses keep most would-be researchers away, though some desert tribes claim that knowledge that bestows terrible powers waits for any who dare the ruins—should they be willing to pay the price.

Temple of Law: While Keleshites are not as obsessively lawful as Chelaxians, they understand that knowing the law—and its loopholes—is essential to doing business. The Temple of Law, which treats the legal profession as a type of priesthood, venerates the trinity of Abadar, Asmodeus, and Zohls.

Usij: Worshipers of the div lord Ahriman, Usij cultists seek to bring down civilization by corrupting resources and whispering poisoned counsel in leaders' ears.

White Feather: Pacifists who dress in white, the followers of the White Feather preach the rejection of material wealth. After a secret meeting with a group of White Feather adherents, the satrap prohibited them from public proselytizing. The followers of the White Feather seem undeterred, though some now publicly claim that Qadira's martial ambitions will cause the nation's fall.

Yahaiya: The Cry in the Wastes hears the prayers of childless families or those who have borne no daughters to inherit their wealth and carry on their family's business and honor. She is known to grant children to those who petition her—even to those past childbearing age—but her gifts always seem to come at a cost.

SARENITE FAITH

Keleshites introduced Sarenrae's worship to Avistan, and Kelesh remains the heartland of her faith. For many non-Keleshite Sarenites, visiting Qadira is a revelation; here, the faith is not merely one belief system among many, but the unchallenged, dominant religion of an entire people.

A state religion inevitably fractures, however, and the faith has split into two unique forms in Qadira. The "old" or mainline denomination is a proudly eastern version of the faith. For this denomination, worship of Sarenrae is emphatically pacifist, urging its adherents to focus on purifying their own souls rather than those of others.

In opposition to these “old ways,” the Cult of the Dawnflower is a more militant form of the faith. The Cult focuses on Sarenite ideals of purification and justice, and holds that the scimitar alone can keep believers safe. For more information, see page 134 of *Inner Sea Gods*.

SOLAR (SORCERER BLOODLINE)

Sorcerers who serve in the sun goddess’s court display powers infused with the glory of the sun itself.

Class Skill: Perception.

Bonus Spells: *searing light* (3rd), *fury of the sun*^{ARG} (5th), *daylight* (7th), *shield of dawn*^{ISG} (9th), *flame strike* (11th), *true seeing* (13th), *sunbeam* (15th), *sunburst* (17th), *overwhelming presence*^{UM} (19th).

Bonus Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Spell Focus, Spell Penetration.

Bloodline Arcana: Whenever you cast a spell with the fire descriptor, if it deals damage, it deals +1 point of damage per die rolled.

Bloodline Powers: The solar power that infuses your being alters the way you interact with the world, searing through your spells.

Sunsight (Su): At 1st level, you gain low-light vision and cannot be dazzled. If you already have low-light vision, you instead gain a +4 bonus on saving throws against blindness effects.

Friend of Fire (Su): At 3rd level, you gain fire resistance 10. At 5th level, when in contact with flame or a burning object (including a *flaming* weapon, lantern, or torch), add 1 per die to any healing effect of which you are the target. At 9th level, your fire resistance increases to 20. At 20th level, you gain immunity to fire.

Cleansing Flame (Su): At 9th level, twice per day, you can use fire to restore the health of yourself or your allies. As a standard action, you can wreath your hand in a halo of flame and touch yourself or another creature. The touch heals 2d8 + your character level points of damage. You can also remove one of the following conditions affecting the target: 1d6 points of ability damage, blinded, confused, dazzled, deafened, diseased, exhausted, fatigued, nauseated, poisoned, or sickened. At 20th level, you can use this ability three times per day.

Healing Fire (Su): At 15th level, you can channel energy twice per day as a cleric of half your level. Instead of using this ability to damage undead, you can convert the positive energy to flame and deal an equivalent amount of fire damage instead.

Solar Ascension (Su): At 20th level, as a full-round action, you can become an incorporeal being of light for 1 round per sorcerer level. While in this form, you gain the incorporeal subtype and take half the normal damage from corporeal magic attacks (you take no damage from nonmagical weapons and objects). Your spells deal half damage to corporeal creatures, but spells and abilities that do not deal damage function normally. The duration need not be continuous, but it must be used in 1-round increments. While in this form, any creature you move through (as the overrun combat maneuver) takes 2d6 points of fire damage.



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PATRONAGE

In Qadira—as is true for the Padishah Empire of Kelesh as a whole—everyone who fits into the grand social hierarchy. Successfully interacting with society in Qadira is all about whom you know, whom that person knows, and how well you respect this time-honored tradition of patronage.

Qadiran patronage centers on the relationship between a patron (who wields the influence) and a client (who hopes to benefit by association). These terms are relative, for someone who serves as a patron to one person is almost certainly also the client of an even more influential patron. Likewise, clients or patrons need not be individuals; tracking the benefits of patronage is easiest if the PCs are treated as a group, though there should always be an individual PC who serves as the spokesperson for the purpose of calculating their Clout and other values.

TRACKING PATRONS

Once a PC secures a patron, be it for himself or for his whole adventuring party, the player should track five pieces of crucial information for that patron: the patron's category, affiliation, Rank, and disposition, as well as his Clout with that patron. These values are unique to a particular patron. Should a PC gain multiple patrons, the information (and Clout earned) is tracked separately for each.

Category: In Qadiran society, each patron belongs to one of seven categories that represent her sphere of influence: academic, mercantile, military, political, religious, social, or tribal. A patron's category affects what kinds of services the patron can provide, as well as what deeds a client can perform to further their relationship. At the GM's discretion, patronage systems for other societies might include additional categories (e.g., criminal or monstrous). A patron's category also determines her key skills—these two skills are those most valued by the patron, and ranks in these skills influence a client's starting Clout.

Affiliation: Most patrons maintain strong connections with important figures of categories other than their own; such social connections are referred to as affiliations. Affiliated categories do not impact the resources a patron can provide to a client, but they do affect the patron's ability to connect a client with other patrons.

Rank: A patron's rank in Keleshite society is indicated by a numeric representation on a scale of 1 to 10. A Rank 1 patron might be a mere student in a university or a single shop owner among a merchant consortium, while a patron whose Rank is 10 is most powerful person in the region—the satrap. Rank affects the resources that a patron can dedicate to a client in addition to determining whom that patron knows and can influence. Patrons whose Rank scores are equal—even if they belong to different categories—typically receive equal respect from all members of society.

Disposition: A patron's disposition reflects her view of—and loyalty toward—the client, which, in turn, affects what types of assistance she's willing to provide her client. Disposition falls into three levels: aware, impressed, and indebted. A client can improve his patron's disposition by spending Clout. To improve a patron's disposition from aware to impressed, a client must spend 10 points of Clout. A client must spend 20 points of Clout to improve the patron's disposition from impressed to indebted.

Clout: Clout is a numeric representation of social currency, reflecting a client's importance to a patron. It is often earned through deeds performed in the patron's name. A client's Clout increases as he works with a patron, and it can decrease if he uses it to request risky favors, embarrasses the patron, or spends it to improve the patron's disposition. The tables on pages 22–23 list typical ways to earn Clout while serving a patron's interests or while doing great deeds and acknowledging the patron's contributions.

SECURING A PATRON

The GM should build the securing of a patron into the campaign's evolving story line—perhaps gaining a patron is the final reward for the party's first adventure, once they've proven themselves in the eyes of a local merchant, priestess, or civic leader. Alternatively, a PC can seek out a patron of a specific category in a manner similar to how one uses Diplomacy to gather information. With a day's work (8 hours spent in an area where the prospective patron's interests lie, typically the settlement wherein the patron maintains a base of operations) and a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check, the character can secure an audience with a patron in that category.

When a PC secures a meeting with a potential patron, calculate the PC's initial Clout using the following formula:

Initial Clout = highest number of skill ranks the client has in one of the patron's key skills + client's Charisma modifier – (3 × the patron's Rank) + 2 if the client speaks and understands Kelish + any situational bonuses

If a client's initially has 0 or fewer points of Clout, the patron feels no social obligation to honor her presence or conduct business, and a relationship does not automatically form. If the client still wants to pursue the patron, she must work to increase her initial Clout by gaining ranks in a key skill, learning Kelish, increasing her Charisma, or most often by performing specific deeds or giving appropriate gifts to sway the patron (see Gaining and Losing Clout on page 22). Once a character manages to increase her Clout to a minimum of 1 point, she becomes a client of that patron. At this point, she

can increase her Clout further by performing additional deeds or giving additional gifts.

If a client's Clout attributed to a patron ever falls below 0, her patron's disposition immediately falls one step and her Clout resets to 0. At this point, the client must take care to earn additional Clout and avoid her losing more Clout to prevent her patron's disposition from decreasing by additional steps. If the patron's disposition was only aware, the patron immediately severs any ties to the client and gains the offended patron quality (see page 23).

BENEFITS OF PATRONAGE

A happy patron is an advocate for her client, connecting him with otherwise inaccessible supplies, contacts, and capital. A client's benefits are derived from the patron's disposition, and in some cases a client can spend Clout in order to secure greater favors. A patron's services are free except where noted, though a client cannot draw upon a patron's services in the same way more than once a month.

No matter how indebted a patron is to a client, the patron's ability to assist relies heavily on his patron's category, her Rank, and other considerations. The GM always has the final say in what is or is not within a patron's abilities. When in doubt, assume a patron's favors cannot extend far beyond her area of influence, be that a business, a neighborhood, a city, or a larger region. It is worth remembering that the patronage mechanics merely set the foundation of what a client can expect from a patron; a patron might provide services that far exceed those suggested by her disposition for an untested client, though the patron might be doing so for her own benefit.

Services fall under three major categories: access, resources, and references. A client can make one request per month of a patron from each of these three categories.

Access: A patron can secure entrance to a restricted area that would otherwise require the client to pay a fee or have specific credentials. Depending on her category, a patron typically enables clients to access exclusive (but rarely dangerous) places, goods, and services. These might include the ability to conduct trade without a license or fees, purchase tickets to a popular event, buy restricted goods, enter controlled areas, travel through the patron's territory, or invoke the laws of hospitality. A patron whose disposition is impressed is often willing to secure access that is far pricier (either politically or financially), such as negotiating safe passage through a rival's territory, providing entrance to a high-security facility, or obtaining tickets to a sold-out event's debut. An indebted patron is willing to take significant risks on the client's behalf, reducing the Clout cost to perform dangerous tasks for her client by half.

Resources: A patron can spend her own capital to secure services or supplies for her client. Based on her category, a typical patron might secure mounts for an expedition,

legal advocacy, catering for an event, research assistance, religious paraphernalia, or an armed escort (of a CR equal to the patron's Rank) for up to 1 day. Such a favor does not require the expenditure of Clout as long as its gold piece cost does not exceed the patron's Rank cubed. For example, a Rank 5 military patron would readily provide a client with arms and armor worth up to 125 gp.

A client can spend up to 10 points of Clout in order to multiply this gp limit by the amount of Clout spent. A client can further multiply this limit by 10 if the resources are a loan—either physical objects to be returned in equally good condition or costs that the client will repay. The loan must be returned or repaid within 1 month, unless the client negotiates a longer loan ahead of time.

References: A patron maintains connections with others who match her category or any affiliation, and she can arrange a formal introduction to these influential friends for trustworthy clients, sometimes at the cost of her own social capital. Unless doing so would serve her agenda, a patron performs this service only if her disposition is impressed or indebted. An impressed patron can introduce her client to another patron, though the new patron's Rank can be at most 1 higher than her own. Furthermore, the new patron's category must match either the current patron's category or one of her affiliations. If the current patron is indebted, she can instead introduce her client to a patron whose Rank is up to 2 higher. When introduced to a patron in this way, a client always begins the new relationship with at least 1 point of Clout.

Additional Favors: A client can spend Clout in the following ways to secure greater favors.

ADDITIONAL PATRON FAVORS

Favor	Clout Expenditure
Secure a patron's services more than once per month	Varies ¹
Request a spellcasting service spell	1/3 spell level ²
Service presents a minor risk to the patron's life, property, or reputation	2
Service presents a moderate risk to the patron's life, property, or reputation	6
Service presents a major risk to the patron's life, property, or reputation	10
Improve disposition of aware to impressed	10
Improved disposition of impressed to indebted	20

¹ This costs 1 point of Clout. Each additional time the client requests aid in a month, the cost increases by 1.

² Round up when calculating the Clout cost for spellcasting; the client must pay for any expensive material components, and the spell's spell level can't exceed the patron's Rank.

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GAINING AND LOSING CLOUT

The following actions can affect Clout for any patron.

UNIVERSAL PATRON EVENTS

Event	Clout
Help improve a patron's Rank by 1	+5
Marry or be adopted into the patron's family	+5 ¹
Overcome an encounter whose CR is at least 4 higher than the patron's Rank	+4 ²
Give a thoughtful gift ³	+2 ⁴
Overcome an encounter whose effective CR is 1 to 3 higher than the patron's Rank	+2 ²
Overcome an encounter whose effective CR equals the patron's Rank	+1 ²
Fail to fulfill a task's secondary objective	-1
Perform no significant task	-1 per 3-month period
Be refused marriage or adoption	-2
Fail to return a loaned resource	-2 per month
Be accused of a crime while serving the patron's interests	-4
Embarrass the patron	-4
Fail to fulfill a task's primary objective	-4
Patron-specific event	Varies ⁵

¹ If the client's class level is higher than the patron's Rank, the client instead gains 10 points of Clout.

² A client can earn this benefit up to twice during a long or especially complicated mission.

³ A thoughtful gift is typically worth a number of gold pieces equal to the patron's Rank squared.

⁴ A client can gain Clout in this way with each patron only once per year.

⁵ See the table for the patron's category below.

PATRON CATEGORIES

Each of Qadira's patron categories has unique associated skills and specific events that can affect a client's Clout.

ACADEMIC PATRONS

These category include people affiliated with academies, schools, and universities. An academic patron's key skills are any two of the following: Knowledge (arcana, engineering, geography, history, nature, or planes), Linguistics, or Spellcraft.

ACADEMIC PATRON EVENTS

Event	Clout
Make a major discovery	+3
Recover a valuable text	+1
Submit a formal research paper*	+1
Be caught stealing credit for a discovery	-3
Be caught falsifying data	-5

* The paper must be on a topic associated with the patron's key skills, and the client must succeed at a DC 20 skill check in that skill for the paper to be worth the patron's notice.

MERCANTILE PATRONS

These patrons include members of guilds, consortiums, and criminal organizations. A mercantile patron's key skills are Appraise and any one Craft or Profession skill.

MERCANTILE PATRON EVENTS

Event	Clout
Negotiate a major advantageous deal for the patron	+3
Complete an adventure while using and extolling a patron's product	+2
Represent the patron's economic interests while visiting another region	+1
Negotiate a minor advantageous deal for the patron	+1

MILITARY PATRONS

Military patrons include the army, navy, and the like. A military patron's key skills are Intimidate and Ride.

MILITARY PATRON EVENTS

Event	Clout
Receive a military commendation	+5
Provide strategic information to the military	+2
Win a contest of athletic or martial prowess	+1
Retreat from a major military engagement	-5
Commit a war crime	Varies*

* Depending on the severity, this could range from -2 to the immediate loss of the patron.

POLITICAL PATRONS

Political patrons include members of the satrapy's government. A political patron's key skills are Bluff and Knowledge (nobility).

POLITICAL PATRON EVENTS

Event	Clout
Be appointed to a political office of a Rank equal to or greater than the patron's	+5
Complete a covert task for the patron without leaving a trail	+1
Resolve a violent encounter nonviolently ¹	+1
Use violence to solve a problem when negotiation was an option	-3
Undo the patron's political accomplishments	Varies ²

¹ A client can earn this benefit up to once per month.

² Depending on the severity, this could range from -2 to the immediate loss of the patron.

RELIGIOUS PATRONS

Religious patrons include religious leaders, influential oracles and prophets, and organizations devoted to deities and philosophies. A religious patron's key skills are Diplomacy and Knowledge (religion).

RELIGIOUS PATRON EVENTS

Event	Clout
Recover a major relic of the faith	+4 ¹
Act in accordance with the patron's faith under challenging circumstances ²	+2
Participate in a significant religious service ²	+1
Recover a minor relic of the faith	+1 ¹
Act against the faith's teachings (minor)	-2
Act against the faith's teachings (major)	-6

¹ Double the Clout earned if the PC donates the relic to the patron or patron's church.

² A client can earn this benefit up to once per month.

SOCIAL PATRONS

Social patrons include entertainers, artists, and aristocrats who pursue intrigue or wish to be patrons of the arts. A social patron's key skills are Knowledge (local or nobility) and any one Craft or Perform skill.

SOCIAL PATRON EVENTS

Event	Clout
Be the subject of a major social event ¹	+5
Establish a regional trend	+5
Establish a local trend	+2
Attend a major social event ¹	+1
Participate in a performance for the patron ²	+1
Succeed at a public battle of wits or verbal duel ¹	+1

¹ A client can earn this benefit up to once per month.

² The client must succeed at a Perform check whose DC is equal to 20 + twice the patron's Rank. A client can earn Clout in this way only once per month.

TRIBAL PATRONS

Tribal patrons can represent members of extended families in urban settings, traditional native groups, or even roving gangs of barbarians. A tribal patron's key skills are Sense Motive and Survival.

TRIBAL PATRON EVENTS

Event	Clout
Provide critical aid to an entire settlement	+8
Defeat an equally skilled member in a contest	+4
Provide critical aid to a member of the tribe	+2
Represent tribe interests outside its territory	+2
Respectfully participate in a tribal ceremony*	+1
Serve a patron in a way that threatens the tribe	-5
Betray the tribe's hospitality when staying with the tribe	-5

* A client can earn this benefit up to once per month.

ADDITIONAL PATRON QUALITIES

Some patrons have one or more special qualities that modify their rules and abilities in unusual ways, as detailed below.

Deep Pockets: Treat the patron's Rank as 1 higher when calculating the resources she can provide to a client.

Jaded: The Clout a client must spend in order to improve the patron's disposition increases by 50%.

Jealous: When a client earns 1 or more points of Clout with any other patron of equal or higher Rank, the client loses 1 point of Clout with this patron.

Offended: The patron views the client with disdain for the client's past wrongs. Reduce the client's initial Clout with the patron by 5.

Related: A patron gains this quality only if her client is part of her family. The client's Clout does not decrease over time if he stops performing services for the patron. The patron ends the relationship only if her disposition to the client is aware and the client has -5 points of Clout or fewer.

Unforgiving: When a client loses Clout with the patron for any reason except improving disposition, the loss to Clout doubles.

Well-Connected: Treat the patron's Rank as 1 higher when she's introducing her clients to other patrons.

SOCIAL STRATA

The following are common designations or examples of patrons within a particular category. Any entry that is blank (—) denotes that there are no patrons who can hold that rank within that category.

Rank	Academic	Faith*	Mercantile	Military	Political	Social	Tribal
1	Student	Lay priest	Shop owner	Soldier	Civil servant	Performer	Member
2	Researcher	Cleric	Horse breeder	Cavalryman	—	Innkeeper	Accomplished artisan
3	Instructor	—	Caravan leader	Lieutenant	Magistrate	—	Proven warrior
4	—	Local leader	—	—	Noble or amer	Famed poet	—
5	Proven sage	—	Trade prince	Captain	—	—	Clan matriarch
6	University dean	—	Head of trade house	—	—	Celebrity	—
7	—	Regional leader	—	General	Governor	—	Tribal chieftain
8	Peerless	—	Peerless	Peerless	—	—	—
9	—	Head of faith	—	—	Shahiyen	—	—
10	Satrap	Satrap	Satrap	Satrap	Satrap	Satrap	—

* In Qadiran culture, religious patrons dedicated to Sarenrae typically have a rank 1 higher than shown above.

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“Sarenrae has watched over us, and yet I can only assume she weeps to see the state of the church today. Our inability to learn from her teachings has led us to this place, to the growing schism among our ranks. The Cult of the Dawnflower pushes the faith in directions it was never meant to go, and yet those who remain behind in the temples seem to be no better. What have we come to that we must look to the worshipers of Sarenrae in foreign cultures like Andoran, Thuvia, or even far Varisia for advice? Can we ever regain what have we lost?”

—High Priestess Samisalah, on Qadira’s church of Sarenrae

Qadira is at the far end of a vast empire filled with fascinating people and ancient customs. To understand Qadiran culture, it is helpful to understand aspects of the culture of the Padishah Empire of Kelesh.

FAMILY AFFILIATIONS

For a Keleshite, family is everything. It determines one's place in society, one's profession, where one lives, and how one sees the world. Keleshites use the term "family" to refer to an extended network of cousins as well as an immediate family.

Keleshite descent is matrilineal, meaning an individual is a member of his mother's family (and tribe, if applicable). A man's closest female relatives are not his daughters, but his sisters. Outside of inheritance, men have the same rights and status as women, and the same likelihood of ascending to positions of authority, but the fact that a son's children will be members of their mother's family causes most Keleshites to focus on their daughters, whose wealth will remain in the family, when teaching their children the family business.

Marriage is important in Keleshite society for cementing alliances and business relationships, but bearing children outside of marriage is not stigmatized, and same-gender unions are accepted. However, a woman without sisters finds herself under pressure to provide an heir, whether through extramarital liaisons, magical means, or adoption. A son is vital in forming marital unions, serving as a contact between his family and his wife's, living among her kin and negotiating on behalf of his family's interests in their partnership, and returning to his own family in old age to help manage it as an elder.

In cases where a man outranks his wife, such as when male members of the imperial family marry women outside it, part of the marriage ceremony includes the bride's adoption as a "daughter" of his family, so that their children's affiliation remains within his family. This practice has led to tales of emperors marrying their sisters, but while it is not uncommon for a member of the imperial family, whose members number in the thousands, to marry a distant cousin, the status of adopted "sister" is purely a legal workaround to protect the imperial family's inheritance rights.

QADIRAN SOCIETY

Qadiran society is shaped by imperial social norms, but its position as a nation of the Inner Sea region have formed it into a unique environment, with social strata (listed below in descending order) that don't align precisely with those in the rest of Kelesh. See page 14 for additional information.

Imperial Throne: The emperor or empress of Kelesh also rules over the satrapy of Qadira.

Satrap: The satrap controls most aspects of governance that do not go beyond his borders.

Imperial Vizier: Though the satrap rules Qadira, all decisions that reach outside its borders—such as those concerning war and trade—require imperial approval.

Shahiyans: Members of the extended imperial family, whose title is often erroneously translated in Taldane as "Prince" or "Princess," number in the thousands.

The Peerless: Around 20 successful citizens of Qadira—adventurers, artisans, generals, merchants, and scholars—form a council of advisors chosen by the satrap.

Noble Families: Qadira's nobles wield great power over the common people, and even the emperor must step carefully when the noble families unite on an issue.

Amers: Because Keleshite descent is matrilineal, only the children of a female member of the imperial family are shahiyans. However, it's not uncommon for emperors to have additional consorts. Children of emperors who are not members of the imperial family are each known by the title *amer* and exert their own influence in Keleshite politics.

Merchant Houses: The most powerful merchant houses exceed the noble families in wealth and influence.

Imperial Bankers: The highest-ranked civil servants in Qadira (aside from members of the satrap's court) are representatives of the imperial bank. They are attended at all times by genie bodyguards, and are ostensibly politically neutral, though their word can start or stop a war.

Imperial Forces and Satrapian Guard: The Satrapian Guard in Qadira numbers more than 100,000 well-trained (and predominantly mounted) soldiers.

Citizens: The role of those who are not nobles or members of merchant houses is determined by their family and tribal affiliations, as well as membership in guilds, religious orders, and other organizations.

Foreigners: While Qadira realizes the importance of trade and tourism to its economy, and extends noncitizens basic protections, a foreigner can't enter into contracts, purchase buildings or apartments, or marry a Keleshite citizen without the backing of a patron who is a citizen. Visitors to Qadira are advised to register soon after arriving; the registration fee is 10 gp (waived if one has a mercantile or political patron) and provides the visitor with protections and permissions to legally conduct business in Qadira.

Slaves: In the larger empire, a slave is someone whose total income belongs to another person. One owns—and can buy or sell—the slave's labor only, not the slave himself, and the term of unpaid servitude can't last for more than 7 years. Under Qadiran law, however, one can own another sentient being, often for life, and it is not uncommon for slaves to be prisoners of war. Nobles, citizens, and registered foreigners cannot be involuntarily enslaved in Qadira, but even registered foreigners would do well to avoid being caught alone in Sedeq.

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Ethnicities

Most Avistani consider “Keleshite” to be an ancient ethnicity, but to the people of Casmaron it is a constructed identity designed to bring unity to the myriad cultures of the Padishah Empire. Most of the contemporary Keleshite nobility is of mixed Althameri and Aishmayar descent, though they consider themselves Althameri. After conquering the empires of Khattib and Midea, the nascent empire of Kelesh began referring to its people as Keleshites (though the name had been applied to them for centuries by outsiders) and focusing on establishing a unified Keleshite culture.



Major Keleshite Ethnicities

Six peoples are credited with building the empire, each of which is said to have contributed one of the major virtues that characterize the Keleshite people (listed in parentheses in the headings below). A seventh virtue, unity, is considered a hallmark of the general Keleshite identity.

Aishmayars (Grace): Keleshite history claims the Althameri conquered the ancient Aishmayar civilization, but common wisdom in Casmaron is that the Aishmayars tamed the Althameri before disappearing peacefully into the Keleshite empire, taking on near-mythical status as paragons of beauty, gentleness, and taste. Only a few noble families can prove predominantly Aishmayar descent, though artists, socialites, and others often claim Aishmayar blood. Aishmayars have warm olive skin, delicate builds, and dark hair that gains almost metallic-looking copper and gold highlights in the sun.

Althameri (Zeal): These tribespeople were the first to be called Keleshites, and official histories credit the mythologized purity of their nomadic lifestyle with the empire’s ascent. The imperial family and Keleshite nobility identify as Althameri, and most practices and dress that people outside Casmaron identify as “Keleshite” are Althameri in origin. Althameri tend to be tall, bronze-skinned, and dark-haired, with strong features.

Khattibi (Inventiveness): The Khattibi people once controlled an ancient, pre-Earthfall empire that claimed the jungles and rich farmland of Casmaron’s southern coast. Known for their great libraries and feats of engineering, they set up the trading routes now known as the Golden Path, making contact with Tian Xia, Vudra, and Garund. Small in stature, they have very dark skin and straight, glossy black hair, the underlayers of which they often dye in bright patterns. Most are dark-eyed, though amber, gray, and green eyes are not uncommon.

Mideans (Elegance): The Mideans raised an empire that warred with Khattib for most of its existence and claimed many of the port cities of Khardaji Bay. Their love of efficiency inspired an unprecedented financial system that includes the oldest still-operating banks on Golarion. The short, ruddy Mideans view roundness as beautiful, eschew red meat and poultry (though they are gourmands when it comes to seafood), and are enthusiastic patrons of the arts. Most who identify as Midean prefer to work in the financial sector or civil service.

Susianams (Adaptability): Known as the People of the Tides, the Susianams set to wandering Casmaron after an ancient disaster destroyed their home cities, and a few in Kelesh still maintain their distinct traditions. The clergy of their moon god, known as nightseers, go veiled in white and bear silver tattoos. Nightseers are able to sense the presence of water, making them valuable guides in the desert, though they become sick and may even die if kept far from the ocean for too long. Such clergy travel

with protectors, tattooed in gold designs and patterns, who call themselves dayguards.

Tzorehiyi (Honor): Sharing ancestral roots with the Althameri and Kara peoples, Tzorehiyi still prefer to live in the steppes and grasslands of Casmaron, herding and farming. Their distinctive ornately woven clothes, tightly curled hair, and hooded eyes make them stand out in cities, which they prefer to avoid except as needed for trade.

Other Ethnicities

The empire of Kelesh is vast, and the myriad peoples that make up its populace are too numerous to detail here, but the following are some of the more common, distinctive, or notorious.

Amai Birtim: Now known only by the epithet forced upon them by the Keleshites, the People of the Fortresses once controlled a string of oases in a desert through which the fleeing Althameri had to pass. The Amai Birtim required the Keleshites' ancestors to pay their way with temporary slavery in return for the water they needed to survive. When they rose to power, the Althameri conquered the culture's cities and wiped every instance of their name from history. Most Keleshites believe them to be extinct, but a few families are said to live in Kelesh, secretly maintaining their traditions and plotting the empire's downfall. The mysterious Dust Speakers are thought to be clergy of their forgotten deity.

Beshzens: The cities of the Beshzens, a highly militaristic people, were destroyed by a Spawn of Rovagug that escaped from the Pit of Gormuz roughly a millennium ago. They became disciplined roving raiders and made a deal with Moloch for protection and aid. As a result, Beshzens are generally regarded with distrust at best from other Qadirans.

Garundi: Though Garundi are viewed with warm approval in central Kelesh due to their love of learning and desirable trade goods, Qadira's fraught history with Osirion causes the people of northern Garund to receive a cooler and more suspicious welcome there.

Jalunahs: The ancient and unusual Jalunah civilization seems content to remain small. Jalunahs are known both as the Bee People for their hive-shaped homes and as the Ebony Lords for the dark wood they trade and their dark skin. Their kingdom is a place of fabled wealth and intricate craft carefully nurtured and protected by the Keleshites, who enjoy a monopoly on its exports. Jalunahs are rarely seen in Qadira outside the company of their Keleshite trading partners.

Karas: The dominant people of the Windswept Wastes of Karazh are divided between city-dwellers and nomadic horse clans. Karas are viewed with respect and some awe in Kelesh, where they are seen as preserving the ancient lifestyle of the ancestors of the Althameri people.

Mishyrians: Mishyrians split off from the Beshzens when the Beshzen leaders made their pact with Moloch. When the Mishyrians called upon Heaven to help them suppress the ravages of their Hell-bound former kin, the empyreal lord Falayna took the grieving people under her care, impressed by their chieftain's wisdom and dedication. Mishyrians are known for their equestrian skills, marksmanship with their distinctive short bows, and elaborately sculpted golden jewelry, usually featuring griffons or other winged creatures.

Ninshaburians: Though the great empire of Ninshabur is long fallen, some descendants of ancient Ninshabur still await the return of their national hero Namzaruum and their empire. Ninshaburians are more numerous in Qadira than elsewhere in Kelesh, but those who dwell in Qadira typically have little in the way of traditions and have more or less wholly adopted the Qadiran lifestyle.

Qalahs: The Qalah people occupy wintry mountaintops in Kelesh. Accompanied by their distinctive snowy hawks, they come down to trade their furs, gems, and fine embroidery. Most families are headed by a grandmother, and many generations live together in the same house. Marriage is traditionally unknown among the Qalahs, though many of the younger generation have moved off their mountains and are attempting to integrate with the rest of Kelesh.

Tians: The relations of the Padishah Empire of Kelesh are close with many of the civilizations in Tian Xia, given their trading partnerships. Qadiran Keleshites and Tians share the experience of being seen as exotic foreigners in the Inner Sea region, which brings with it both favor and prejudice. Qadiran expatriates in the Inner Sea region are likely to live near and socialize primarily with Tian and Vudrani humans. The fact that most trade between this continent and Kelesh flows through the city of Goka ensures that Keleshites, and thus Qadirans, are most accustomed with Tian-Shu visitors. Tian-La and Tian-Sing are all but unknown in the region, but are not viewed with anything approaching suspicion or prejudice by the typical Keleshite.

Vudrani: Keleshites view their Vudrani neighbors as hailing from a society that rivals their own in sophistication. Millennia of cultural exchange have made the two peoples familiar with one another, and, like the Tians, they share the experience of being seen as exotic foreigners in the Inner Sea region. Qadirans often see their homeland as offering a mature sanctuary to Vudrani "stranded" in Avistan.

Yenchaburians: Like Ninshabur, the ancient civilization of Yenchabur is long fallen. Its landless descendants are known mainly as mercenaries and assassins, viewed with distrust and disdain by the civilized peoples of Kelesh. As a result, many of this ethnicity take pains to hide their past when they interact with others.

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NON-HUMANS

Non-humans in Qadira tread on precarious ground. Exceptions exist, but most non-humans are denied citizenship in Kelesh, retaining foreigner status regardless of how long they reside there. Patronage is important to humans attempting to operate in Qadira, but it is crucial for non-humans to have powerful Qadiran patrons who can vouch for them.

Aasimars: Aasimars are an exception to Qadirans' suspicion of and disdain for non-humans, largely due to the work of the church of Sarenrae. As the Dawnflower herself was once an angel, those bearing celestial blood are considered sacred, and most are claimed and protected by the church from a young age. Sarenrae's association with fire means that power over fire and resistance to it is often seen as a sign of divine favor. Combined with the Sarenite focus on redemption, this makes peri-blooded aasimars, also known as emberkin, become celebrities of a sort when they are identified. The empress's or emperor's personal bodyguard, the Dar Quribat, is composed of emberkin who, like the occupant of the throne, are healed rather than harmed by fire. The Eleli, or Pure Ones, are a uniquely Qadiran order of emberkin within the Sarenite church.

Dwarves: Qadiran dwarves enjoy a fairly privileged non-human status in Qadira due to their fine craftwork, and a few have even been granted citizenship and appointed as heads of the imperial forges. Most, however, maintain a comfortable living and the respect of wealthy patrons, but are never fully part of Qadiran society. A small community of dwarves, known as the Paraheen, operate a complex of forges and weapons shops in Katheer.

Elves: Elves are one of the few species of non-human citizens in Kelesh, according to a decree from Empress Ashtirat II, known as the Morning Star. Ashtirat II's favorite consort,

an elf named Hedessa with whom Ashtirat II was said to have a permanent *telepathic bond*, uncovered a plot to assassinate the empress, devised by the empress's own husband. Though Hedessa was killed because of her discovery, she had time to notify the visiting delegation from Kyonin. The elven ambassadors saved Ashtirat's life. To repay them and honor her fallen lover, the empress declared that elves within Kelesh were to have all the privileges and protections that humans enjoyed. While uncommon in Kelesh, elves are admired for their beauty and longevity. Though not quite as revered as their elven forebears, half-elves have the same citizenship rights in Qadira.

Geniekin: Keleshite culture has a long and fraught history of war, friendship, enslavement, trickery, cautious alliances, and temptation with geniekind. The imperial throne has numerous alliances with powers from the Elemental Planes, as well as genies residing on the Material Plane, and has prohibited coercive means of binding genies. Qadira's desire to be a military power, however, means that this decree is largely ignored within that country's borders. Genies—and their almost-human descendants—are still enslaved by those who can manage it. While Keleshites understand genies' allure, the idea of mixing one's family line with them provokes disgust from most. It is possible for geniekin to rise to positions of power in Qadira, but they do so with the knowledge that they could fall at any minute. Ifrits who can manage it often attempt to pass as emberkin aasimars instead.

Gnomes: Gnomes' cleverness and colorful personalities make them entertaining curiosities in Qadira. Still, the Qadiran hunger for slave labor ensures that most simply pass through, rather than staying too long and risking capture by a Sedeqan slaver.

Halfings: Most halfings in Qadira are either well-paid servants of noble and merchant houses or slaves imported from Cheliox.

Half-Orcs: Qadirans consider orcs to be dangerous, mindless brutes, only safe to have around if they are enslaved and restrained. Half-orcs' brawn, combined with intelligence exceeding that of



their orc kin, makes them sought-after slaves for the war effort. A number of half-orc mercenary companies operate out of Qadira, with bases in the Zho Mountains, though Qadirans' unwillingness to put much effort into distinguishing between half-orcs and orcs makes the companies cautious about dealing with Qadirans, and pushes many half-orcs to become bandits and raiders.

Tieflings: If the idea of mingling one's blood with that of genies provokes disgust from most Keleshites, the idea of mingling it with fiends sparks outright horror. Tieflings face a culture in Qadira that believes they can only be trusted when they are in shackles, and—like ifrits—they often attempt to pass as emberkin if they can manage it, going so far as to seek out surgical or magical means of attaining celestial beauty to further their disguises. Div-spawn tieflings are common in the wilder areas of Qadira.

Other Non-Humans: The state religion of Sarenrae worship and its focus on light and truth make non-humans associated with darkness or trickery suspect. Dhampirs, fetchlings, tengus, and wayangs all struggle to win the trust of the average Qadiran, and they are greatly hampered unless they can find a powerful patron. Intelligent species with obviously animalistic characteristics, such as catfolk or kitsune, are often considered curiosities, and are treated with condescension. Lashunta and other extraterrestrial species are welcomed, if in a somewhat baffled manner, for the trade opportunities they bring. Kelesh's long association with Vudra means that the presence of vanaras and vishkanyas are not often regarded with shock, as they are in more western reaches of the Inner Sea region where the appearance of these individuals often raises eyebrows.

Of particular note are various aquatic races—while members of races such as aquatic elves, gillmen, and merfolk often visit the coastal cities of Qadira, to those who live inland, particularly among the various desert-dwelling peoples, aquatic races are regarded with a strong and often contradictory element of curiosity and fear. Many mistakingly believe such people are touched, at least in part, by magic from the Plane of Water, and such races are often mistaken for undines as a result.

REGIONAL TRAITS

The following regional traits can be taken by characters from Qadira.

Emberkin Impostor: You have found it is easier to be mistaken for someone with celestial blood than to reveal your true nature. You gain a +5 trait bonus on Disguise checks when pretending to be an aasimar, and a +2 trait bonus on Diplomacy checks against those you have convinced of your supposed celestial nature.

Paraheen Weaponsmith: You are a descendant of a long line of skilled dwarven weapon makers or have

THE PURE ONES

Formed in response to abuses by the Cult of the Dawnflower, the Eleli, or Pure Ones, are an order of emberkin inquisitors who are called upon to determine whether an individual has committed a sin that warrants expulsion from the church. Eleli inquisitors attempt to avoid any connections with those outside their order who might compromise their judgment, and follow a strict code of devotion. Their ideals require celibacy, refusal of any gifts or aid not given in pursuit of their current goal, and polite rejection of unnecessary physical contact. Most go veiled, desiring that others see them only as representatives of their order, rather than as individuals, and many habitually speak in the plural.

apprenticed under such artisans. Either way, you learned their long-held secrets relating to the production of magical arms and armor. You treat your caster level as 1 higher for purposes of creating magical weapons, and gain a +1 trait bonus on Craft checks to create magical armor, shields, or weapons.

SUN TOTEM (BARBARIAN RAGE POWERS)

The orcs and half-orcs of the Zho Mountains and surrounding desert gain power from the fierce heat of the sun. First introduced in *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*, barbarian rage totem powers grant powers in a theme. A barbarian cannot select from more than one group of totem rage powers.

Sun Totem, Lesser (Su): The sun's fire invigorates the barbarian. She is immune to environmental effects from heat and severe heat, and she gains a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves against the effects of extreme heat. In addition, the barbarian gains fire resistance 5 while raging.

Sun Totem (Su): The touch of flame fuels and bolsters the barbarian's rage. She gains fire resistance 10 when raging. In addition, for 1d6 rounds after coming in direct contact with open flame, her speed increases by 10 feet. A barbarian must have the lesser sun totem rage power and be at least 6th level to select this rage power.

Sun Totem, Greater (Su): The barbarian takes on aspects of the sun. She gains fire resistance 20 when raging. While raging, she is surrounded by a halo of flame that deals 1d6 points of fire damage to anyone that hits her with a touch attack or unarmed attack or succeeds at a bull rush, drag^{APG}, or grapple combat maneuver against her. Her unarmed strikes and attacks with natural weapons deal 1d6 additional points of fire damage. A barbarian must have the sun totem rage power and be at least 10th level to select this rage power.

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ANTI-KELESHITE PREJUDICE

Prejudice against Keleshites is common in Taldor, Osirion, Andoran, and Nirmathas. When the common people are prejudiced, they usually exhibit it by enacting social exclusion, showing distrust, and making occasional threats. When the government shares these views, it may institute policies designed to disadvantage Keleshites.

The most common form of prejudice derives from the fear that the empire of Kelesh is planning to take over Inner Sea nations, and that Keleshites in these nations are agents of the empire, sent to gather intelligence or undermine local governments prior to invasion. In truth, most ethnic Keleshites who are permanent residents of Inner Sea nations aren't citizens of Kelesh and view themselves as citizens of the nations in which they make their homes.

The idea that Keleshites have disproportionate wealth and financial acumen sparks fears that they use these advantages to exploit non-Keleshites. While it is true that Keleshites usually come out on top in negotiations over money and contracts, most also view such discussions as a game of sorts, and see cheating as a sign of weakness or incompetence.

Keleshites' role as the people who brought the Sarenite faith to Avistan and northern Garund also spurs prejudice, especially among worshipers of deities with inimical relationships with Sarenrae or communities in which religion is strongly bound up with national or ethnic identity. In the latter type, adherents view worship of Sarenrae as a "foreign" religion that lures people away from their heritage and dilutes their culture.

QADIRAN CHARACTERS

To be Qadiran is to serve as a bridge between Kelesh and the Inner Sea nations, and to be both an insider and a stranger in each. It is to hold the line against the erosion of Keleshite culture in the face of pressure to assimilate into Inner Sea cultures, yet to learn enough to serve as an envoy. Many Qadirans live in envy of the luxuries and peace of central Kelesh, yet take pride in being part of the satrapy that brings Keleshite culture and sophistication to Avistan and Garund. Some long for a return to Keleshites' roots as proud desert warriors against whom few in Casmaron could stand.

Qadirans face suspicion, or even outright prejudice, throughout much of the Inner Sea region. Many westerners worry that Qadirans are spies for the empire, attempting to weaken Inner Sea governments so that the empire can sweep in and take over. Westerners also fear that Qadiran economic prowess will give them unfair advantages in the marketplace, that Keleshite clannishness will result in unfair treatment for non-

Keleshite employees of Qadiran businesses, and that Qadirans' global connections compromise their potential for loyalty to their communities. Qadirans' aggressiveness and the perceived effects of living among "barbarous Avistani" often subject them to condescension from other Keleshite citizens as well.

Yet Qadiran traders bring goods unobtainable through other means to Inner Sea markets; Qadiran advisors have saved countless governments from economic ruin; and a Qadiran adventuring partner can ensure smooth roads for her party in many nations, drawing upon her connections and expertise in navigating different cultures. It's not easy for non-Keleshites to win a Qadiran's admiration, but once they do, her loyalty is fierce and she works as hard for their success as for her own.

CLASSES IN QADIRA

Below are suggestions for the roles many character classes are likely to play in Qadira.

Alchemists: Qadira's access to substances from all over the world makes it an ideal location for alchemists, and its residents' desires for good health, beauty, and superhuman powers provide alchemists with an ample customer base.

Arcanists: Keleshites gained respect for the formal study of magic from their Garundi and Mwangi trading partners, and the Sarenite church employs a number of white mages^{ACG}. Given the prevalence of genie and elemental magic, elemental masters^{ACG} are also common.

Barbarians: In the glittering enclaves of cities like Katheer, Qadirans turn up their noses at less civilized folk, but outside the safety of city walls, many of the elite are all too happy to have barbarian bodyguards, especially those considered fashionably exotic, such as Shoanti or Ulfen. A clan of half-orcs known as the Scorched Tongue roam the Alavah Peninsula, and their fire elemental kin^{APG} barbarian soldiers are both raiders who prey upon Qadiran humans in the area and mercenaries who serve them.

Bards: Qadirans love the arts, and their cosmopolitan tastes fund legions of performing bards, especially as archaeologists^{UC}, archivists^{APG}, court bards^{APG}, dervish dancers^{UC}, flame dancers^{ACG}, impervious messengers^{UI}, sandmen^{APG}, and wits^{UI}. In addition, a few Qadiran bards are employed as Hatharat agents (see page 47).

Bloodragers: Bloodragers with elemental and genie-derived bloodlines are common in the Meraz Desert and Southern Zho Mountains. Celestial-blooded bloodragers are found among the tribes of the Northern Zho Mountains, sharing ancestry with the reclusive tribe of garuda-blooded aasimars (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Races* 120) that wanders the peaks.

Brawlers: Northern Qadira has a sizeable population of Taldans, whose ancestors brought with them their

enthusiasm for pugilism. Many brawlers hire themselves out as mercenaries or entertain crowds in Katheer and other large cities.

Cavaliers: Cavaliers raised among the desert horse-breeding tribes and plains nomads make up much of the Imperial Forces' cavalry stationed in Qadira. Most are members of the order of the saddle (see page 43), though those devoted to other orders are common, especially among the divisions that ride flying mounts. Many utilize specialized talents that allow them to use genie-touched horses as mounts (see page 60).

Clerics: Keleshites have a reputation in the Inner Sea region for being especially religious, most likely due to their role in bringing one of the most popular faiths in the region to Avistan. Compared to many Inner Sea religions, the Sarenite faith is unusually well organized, and while not all Sarenites belong to the organized church of Sarenrae, its vast resources can make its clerics seem more powerful and numerous than they are. In Qadira, where this faith is overwhelmingly the religion of choice, Sarenite clerics can be found in every level of society, teaching at universities, working as religious lawyers, running hospitals, serving in the government, and ministering to their communities.

Druids: The harsh climate of Qadira's deserts ensures that Qadirans have deep respect for the power of nature, and even city-dwellers hold druids in high esteem. Though few have ties to the government, desert druids^{APG} of Qadira are fierce in their love of their land, and invaders who rouse their protective fury soon come to regret it. The druids of the Ketz Desert are often glimpsed upon the dunes with their scimitar oryx companions (use the statistics for an antelope companion on page 313 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3*). Druids of the College of the Green Dawn in the Meraz Desert research the causes of Kelesh's increasing desertification and advise the imperial court on how to slow it.

Fighters: Fighters are most common among the Satrapian Guard, serving as archers, cavalry, infantry, and siege engineers. While the Guard's scimitar-wielding dervishes and horse archers are most famous outside Qadira, fighters serve in myriad roles within the army.

Gunslingers: While the Imperial Forces prefer shortbows or the power of magic, a few gunslingers, usually gun tanks^{UC}, are found among their ranks.

Hunters: Like Qadira's desert druids, hunters attempt to mediate between the needs of Qadiran civilization and protection of its wild spaces. The hunters of the Alavah desert's Al-Inari tribe partner with the region's distinctive black-maned lions and seem to be protecting an unidentified ruined temple.

Inquisitors: The Sarenite church is less concerned with wiping out heresies and strict adherence to doctrine

than many religions, but at times even the Cult of the Dawnflower must grapple with false prophets whose machinations could harm thousands of worshipers. Sarenite inquisitors root out these dangerous demagogues and expose their lies. In extreme cases, a sanctified slayer^{ACG} is brought in to deal with the problem.

Investigators: Investigators in Qadira serve as private sleuths, aid police forces, and infiltrate Taldan circles to ensure they aren't plotting against the nation. Ciphers^{UI} and conspirators^{UI} excel at these roles, while majordomos^{UI} are in high demand in many noble houses.

Kineticists: Combatants who wield flame like a weapon, pyrokineticists are familiar sights among the soldiers of the Imperial Forces.

Magi: The combination of magical and martial discipline practiced by magi makes them well suited to positions as officers in the Imperial Forces, where they often command both magical and nonmagical fighters.



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A division of suli elemental knights^{ARG} is also currently deployed in Qadira, though not even the satrap is certain of the group's orders.

Mediums: Qadira's complex history, extensive wars, and mysterious non-human inhabitants give mediums a rich variety of spirits to invoke. Relic channelers^{OA} are common and often hire adventuring parties to help them locate ancient artifacts in isolated ruins.

Mesmerists: Rumors abound that some of the charismatic leaders in the Sarenite church are aasimar mesmerists who draw their power from the celestial realms, rather than the Astral Plane, and use it to inspire divine certainty in the church's warriors.

Monks: Monks are favored among the Satrapian Guard for policing duties, as their skill at unarmed combat helps them keep conflicts from escalating to fatalities, and their serene demeanor helps them calm nervous citizens.

Occultists: As coercive methods of binding genies have waned in popularity, sha'ir^{OA} occultists have increased greatly in number. Reliquarians^{OA}, often in the employ of the church of Sarenrae, use holy relics for their divine potential. Battle hosts^{OA} serve as officers in the Imperial Forces and in the church's armies, often clad in sunsilk armor (see page 33) when their station warrants it.

Oracles: Oracles often serve as leaders of nomadic tribes. They are especially

common among the non-human tribes that live secretly in the Pashman hills and the Tapur Forest.

Paladins: The Sarenite church has three paladin orders who focus on protecting religious communities, spreading knowledge of Sarenrae's faith through good works, and wiping out evil. One of these orders, the Purifying Flame, is dominated by oathbound paladins^{UM}.

Psychics: Vudra is Kelesh's oldest and closest trading partner, and its mental disciplines are common in central Kelesh. They are less well known in Qadira, but are growing in popularity. Qadirans still see psychics as exotic and a bit unnerving.

Rangers: Rangers in Qadira tend to serve as cavalry and scouts with the Satrapian Guard, guides and guards for caravans, horse breeders and falconers for noble houses, and imperial messengers. Horse lord rangers^{APG} are common on the Plains of Paresh and in Al-Zabrit, where their skill as mounted archers makes them feared opponents of invaders, bandits, and predators alike. Use of the Genie-Touched Companion feat (see page 61) allows these rangers to take advantage of genie-touched horse mounts (see page 60).

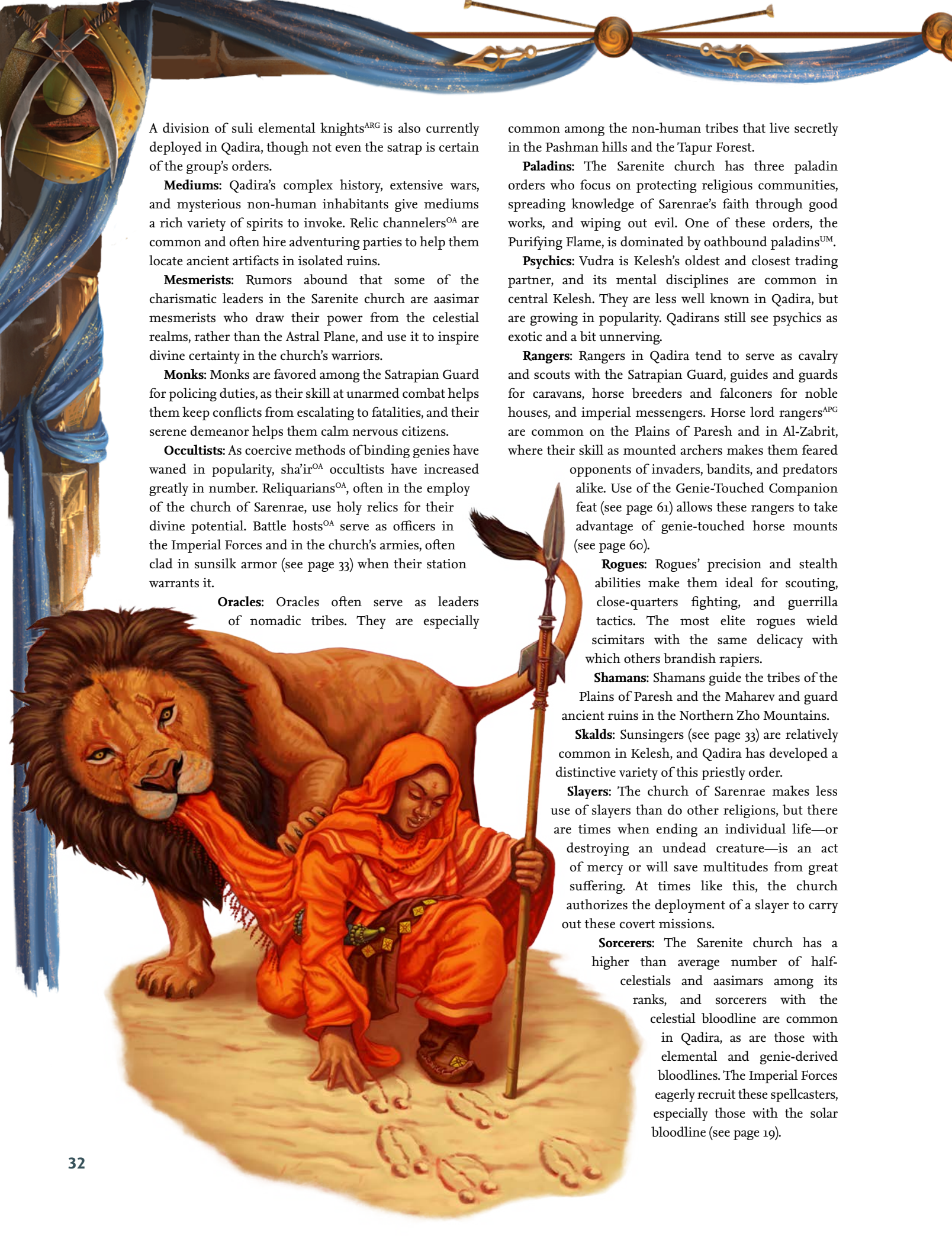
Rogues: Rogues' precision and stealth abilities make them ideal for scouting, close-quarters fighting, and guerrilla tactics. The most elite rogues wield scimitars with the same delicacy with which others brandish rapiers.

Shamans: Shamans guide the tribes of the Plains of Paresh and the Maharev and guard ancient ruins in the Northern Zho Mountains.

Skalds: Sunsingers (see page 33) are relatively common in Kelesh, and Qadira has developed a distinctive variety of this priestly order.

Slayers: The church of Sarenrae makes less use of slayers than do other religions, but there are times when ending an individual life—or destroying an undead creature—is an act of mercy or will save multitudes from great suffering. At times like this, the church authorizes the deployment of a slayer to carry out these covert missions.

Sorcerers: The Sarenite church has a higher than average number of half-celestials and aasimars among its ranks, and sorcerers with the celestial bloodline are common in Qadira, as are those with elemental and genie-derived bloodlines. The Imperial Forces eagerly recruit these spellcasters, especially those with the solar bloodline (see page 19).



Spiritualists: Qadirans' distrust of necromancy makes them suspicious of spiritualists, and most spiritualists would be advised to pretend their magic comes from different sources while living or traveling in Qadira.

Summoners: Many of the summoners in the Imperial Forces are trained by the church of Sarenrae, and most call forth eidolons that appear to be celestial creatures.

Swashbucklers: Qadira's famed whirling dervishes (*Pathfinder Player Companion: Advanced Class Origins* 23) are often swashbucklers, and these dramatic soldiers are also numerous in Qadira's navy.

Warpriests: Warpriests are unusually common both among the Cult of the Dawnflower, where they tend to be frontline crusaders, and in the mainline church of Sarenrae, where they defend religious communities and lead expeditions against divs and other evil outsiders haunting Qadira's deserts.

Witches: Ashiftahs, or battle witches (see page 14), are a rare sight in Qadira, as the imperial throne guards their magic and practices carefully. Those that come to Qadira are usually found at the side of their commanders, often with a phalanx of bodyguards.

Wizards: Study of magic is a revered discipline, and Qadirans emphasize academic research into the true nature of magic. Daivrat (*Pathfinder Player Companion: Qadira, Gateway to the East* 20)—wizards who specialize in genie magic—often study at Katheer's Planar Institute.

ADDITIONAL RULES

Qadrian characters can benefit from the following items, spell, and archetype.

Alchemical Remedy

Known colloquially as "healing myrrh," gildea myrrh is the most famous invention of the scholars of Katheer's Venicaan College of Medicaments and Chirurgery.

GILDEA MYRRH

PRICE 50 GP

WEIGHT —

When you burn a dose of gildea myrrh, it fills a 15-foot-radius spread with faint smoke that persists for 24 hours (or until dispersed by a moderate or stronger wind). Any creatures resting or receiving long-term care in the area while the myrrh is active regain 1 additional hit point per level. Multiple uses of gildea myrrh in a 24-hour period do not stack.

SPECIAL MATERIAL

Sunsilk, produced by a silkworm species native to central Kelesh and closely guarded by the Sarenite church, takes on a golden glitter after it has been left to cure in the sun. Though it is light and flexible, when multiple layers are pressed together, its myriad thin fibers inhibit weapons and can slightly help prevent slashing or piercing weapons from causing harm. Clothing made

from sunsilk grants its wearer DR 2/bludgeoning. Sunsilk can be incorporated into any suit of armor without hampering the armor's other qualities, typically as an inner layer of soft lining. Sunsilk adds 6,000 gp to the cost of the garment or armor.

SPELL

This new spell is a litany. See pages 234–236 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* for numerous other litany spells.

LITANY OF TRUTH

School divination [language-dependent]; **Level** inquisitor 6, paladin 4

Casting Time 1 swift action

Components V, S, DF

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one creature

Duration 1 round

Saving Throw Will negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

With a tirade against deceit, you strip the target of any illusions cloaking it. Any illusion spells or effects affecting the target are suppressed for the spell's duration. In addition, the target can't benefit from concealment.

While subject to this spell, the target cannot be the target of another spell that has the word "litany" in the title.

SUNSINGER (SKALD ARCHETYPE)

Qadrian sunsingers are particularly religious skalds of Sarenrae who call down their goddess's glory to fill soldiers with fire.

Alignment: A sunsinger skald must be lawful good, neutral good, or neutral, and must worship Sarenrae.

Pillar of Light (Su): At 3rd level, a sunsinger skald can use her raging song to call upon her goddess to imbue her with glory and make all who see it pay heed. A great beam of sunlight shines down upon the skald, casting bright light in a 30-foot radius, and allows the skald's raging song to function as the fascinate bardic performance.

This ability replaces song of marching.

Channel Solar Energy (Su): At 5th level, a sunsinger skald can channel energy as a cleric once per day to heal wounds or harm undead like a good-aligned cleric. When she does so, she fills the area affected by the channeled energy with light, and can outline creatures in the area of effect as per *faerie fire*. The sunsinger uses her skald level as her effective cleric level when channeling positive energy. Undead who are particularly harmed by sunlight take a –2 penalty on saving throws against this channeled energy, and take 1 additional point of damage per die of damage dealt by the effect.

At 11th level, a sunsinger can channel energy twice per day. At 17th level, she can use this ability three times per day.

This ability replaces spell kenning.

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“We heard the songs of the haunted city long before we caught sight of its spires. Even with our precautions, a dozen of our people fell prey to the harpies’ lure. They abandoned their weapons and raced to obey the call, and when we caught up to them, their bodies had already been broken and savaged. Soon after, the remainder of my company learned that wax in the ears did little to aid them from the talons of Al-Bashir’s keepers or the magic of its rulers. I alone survived that slaughter, and I would sooner seek a deserter’s death than return to that cursed city.”

—A survivor’s account of a raid on Al-Bashir

Qadira isn't entirely desert, but deserts do cover a large portion of its mass, and anyone who wants to travel between major cities is likely to cross one at some point in their journey. The deserts of Qadira are dangerous and hostile places, and travelers are well advised to follow established trade routes, due to the presence of oases and the probability of encountering other travelers in times of need. Those who seek to explore the deeper, trackless dunes of the Qadiran deserts may earn great rewards in the form of lost treasures or hidden lore, but the perils waiting that far off the path are significant indeed.

A GM seeking to run an adventure set in desert terrain should become familiar with the rules for deserts, as presented on pages 430–431 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. In addition to the information detailed there, the following pages present rules for desert adventuring you can use to enhance your game.

DESERT HAZARDS

In addition to periodic duststorms (*Core Rulebook* 438), the following additional hazards plague Qadiran deserts.

Heat Haze (CR 2): This hazard occurs in areas where the air close to the surface of the desert is heated to a significantly higher temperature than the air above it. Creatures beyond 30 feet appear indistinct, as though affected by *blur*, and they gain concealment against ranged attacks. Effects and abilities that would allow a character to ignore this concealment, such as *blindsight* and *true seeing*, negate this effect. Heat haze has no effect on navigation and cannot be disbelieved.

Khamsin Storms (CR 5): These powerful duststorms can last for days. A khamsin storm reduces visibility to 1d6 × 5 feet and imposes a –8 penalty on Perception checks. The storm's sands deal 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per hour of exposure. A khamsin leaves behind 1d6 inches of dust and sand per hour it rages. A single khamsin can last anywhere from 1d4 hours to 1d3 days, and historians report a rare few lasting a week or even longer, generally leaving a completely different landscape in the wake of its shifting sands.

Mirages (CR 3): Mirages are naturally occurring optical illusions that function similarly to illusion (glamer) spells, particularly *hallucinatory terrain* and *mirage arcana*. Unlike magical illusions, mirages cannot be dispelled, though they can be disbelieved upon first sight with a successful DC 20 Will save. Mirages are long-distance phenomena in which hazy images appear on the distant horizon, often in the shapes of rock formations, flat pools of reflective water or oases, and city walls. These mirages pose the greatest threat to travelers suffering from dehydration (whose desperation may persuade their minds to believe in an otherwise obvious mirage) or to those using the desert's few landmarks as aids to orient themselves. When navigating through the desert, the existence of a mirage

imposes a –2 penalty on Survival checks to keep from getting lost. Spells such as *true seeing* indicate a mirage's true nature but can't reveal what the mirage is obscuring because of the distance (generally several miles) at which the phenomena are observed. A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Survival check while observing a mirage can estimate the perceived distance to the image. When the character has traveled the estimated distance toward the mirage, he can attempt a DC 10 Will save to disbelieve the mirage. Otherwise, the mirage either vanishes or seems to be even farther off in the distance (equal chances of either result).

Sunburn (CR 4): Characters who spend long periods exposed to direct sunlight risk the effects of severe sunburn. After 8 hours of exposure to the sun (but no more than once per day), a character in such a situation must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or become severely sunburned, taking 1d2 points of Constitution damage and becoming sickened as long as any of this damage remains in effect. Whenever a character fails three successive Fortitude saving throws against sunburn, the Constitution damage increases to 1d4 points and he becomes fatigued (or exhausted if already fatigued). The fatigue or exhaustion lasts until the damage caused by the sunburn is healed. Wearing clothing or armor that covers the skin grants a +5 bonus on this saving throw, and *endure elements* provides complete protection from sunburn. The Endurance feat grants a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves against sunburn, while a successful DC 15 Survival check each day grants a +2 bonus on that day's Fortitude save.

FINDING WATER

One of the most vital tasks in traveling the desert is locating the next water source. An individual requires roughly a gallon of water a day while traveling in the desert's heat, or more if she wishes to have enough to bathe or cool off. The temperatures around oases are often cooler due to the presence of water and shade, making them important resources for resting, treating sunburn, and so on. A gallon of water weighs about 8 pounds, meaning that 3 to 4 days' worth of water constitutes a light load, or half of a medium load, for an average PC. *Create water* can only conjure 2 gallons per caster level, which makes scrolls or even *wands of create water* limited in their usefulness when multiple people require water.

The Survival skill can help characters find water and survive the Qadiran wilds, but in the deep deserts off the established trade routes, water and food alike are difficult to come by. In these harsh, remote regions, the DCs of Survival checks to get along in the wild increase to 20, and an adventurer can provide food and water for one other person for every 4 points by which the check result exceeds the DC. At the GM's discretion, a roll of a natural 20 can indicate the discovery of a small but reliable oasis.

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REGIONS OF QADIRA

Qadira is divided into nine regions, largely defined by their geographical characters, though they also correspond to formal administrative divisions. Note that while each of the following regions has several key resources listed, all of Qadira should be considered rich in a wide range of goods and services due to the nation's well-established and well-traveled trade routes, which keep them connected to the empire to the east.

ALAVAH PENINSULA

Notable Settlements Ayesh (41,300), Jawafeeq (27,400), Sadiyah (14,250), Sedeq (89,760), Sukri (68,690), Ushumgal (9,300)

Resources brass, bronze, copper, grain, livestock, mercenaries, salt, ships, slaves, spices, tin, weapons, zinc

Citizens miners, nomadic herders, shipbuilders, slave traders, soldiers

Other Inhabitants brass and bronze dragons, desert-themed fey, desert-themed undead, divs, half-orc raiders, shaitans, sphinxes, vermin (particularly desert spiders and wasps)

A large landmass extending southward from the Zho Mountains, the Alavah Peninsula is a coastal desert with fine-grained, salt-laced soil. The southern tip of the peninsula, known as the Emerald Coast, is more fertile, and its farmland supports a dense collection of medium-sized cities. The proximity of the danger-haunted Minatory Isles to the south keep those who dwell upon this lush coastline on constant watch for threats from across the narrow sound. The center of the peninsula is drier, covered with translucent, shimmering sands and iridescent crystals that rear up out of the dunes. Beautiful though they may be, the strange sands that refract the harsh sun into rainbows and mirages also intensify the heat, making the area uninhabitable for most humans.

Alo-Gakil: The largest island of the Minatory Isles, Alo-Gakil is detailed further on page 49, under the entry for the Minatory Isles.

Citadel of Flame: History books claim that the Citadel of Flame, headquarters of a cult of Moloch, was completely buried by a sandstorm. Yet, the mysterious cleric **Hafshi al-Moloch** (LE female human cleric of Moloch 7) regularly recruits followers in Sedeq to return with her to her desert retreat, which rumor holds to be this lost citadel.

Dagon's Fang: See the entry for the Minatory Isles on page 49 for more information about this isle.

New Burnt Lands: A blasted, div-haunted region, the New Burnt Lands are ruled by a sepid div (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 89) who preys on the coastal settlements to the south (see page 51).

Sedeq: Anything can be bought and sold in Qadira, and nowhere is this truth darker than in the slave markets of Sedeq. The city was once a resort for visiting Keleshite

nobles, but now more than half of its residents are slaves, brought here to be trained for lives of misery among the opulent gardens and elegant plazas. The presence of the church of Sarenrae has been all but scrubbed from this fallen city, and to date no centralized religion—save the worship of profit—has risen in its place (although whispers persist that divs, outcast efreet, or other nefarious outsiders have had their hand in shaping Sedeq's fortunes). Meanwhile, the Qalli Spice Market offers the widest selection and best prices on goods that often cannot be obtained elsewhere outside of Casmaron.

Spider Island: This isle, the third largest of the Minatory Isles, is named for the unusually organized and sinister spiders found there. See page 49 for more details on the Minatory Isles.

Tents of Erukh: This encampment of impossibly beautiful men and women boasts a massive central tent owned by **Erukh** (CN male djinni vizier wizard 11), an exiled genie who never speaks of the reasons for his banishment to the Material Plane. He accepts no gifts from those who enter his home, requesting the fulfillment of a task instead. Only the bravest accept, in hopes of being invited deeper into the tents.

Ushumgal: An ornate city with soaring towers, broad streets, and stone filigree buildings, Ushumgal has few visible guards for a settlement of such obvious wealth. Yet, few would dare attempt to enter without an invitation, for the city is ruled by a cabal of powerful and mysterious women known as the Sisters of Bronze. Rumors persist that these women are in fact bronze dragons who maintain human form to run the city, but, true or not, their influence over many banks and most of Qadira's internal initiatives cannot be denied.

Wyo's Rest: Nestled in the gulf between Sedeq and the Meraz Desert is a small chunk of rock covered in verdant life and elaborate structures. On this garden island, **Lady Wyo** (CN female siren bard 10; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 247) presides over a harem of handsome young Qadiran men, supplied by Sedeq, who spend 4 years in indentured luxury. This tribute buys Qadiran ships free passage around her island, and she actively comes to the aid of troubled Qadiran vessels in her waters.

Yalakheen: A mysterious settlement known as the Wailing City, Yalakheen is the center of the cult of Yahaiya (see page 53).

KETZ DESERT

Notable Settlements Hanpa (480), Hawah (39,560), Khundurai (34,500), Merev (72,700), Merishai (2,140), Tekeh (22,300)

Resources armor, artisan carpets, elephants, mercenaries, salt, ships, weapons

Citizens artisans, herders, merchants, religious believers, soldiers

Other Inhabitants blue dragons, camels, desert-themed undead, dire bats, eagles, gargoyles, genies and geniekin, giant centipedes, giant desert worms, hyenas, lizards, maftets, scorpions, troglodytes, vipers

Though areas of the Ketz Desert feature the rolling golden sands and domed white oasis cities that make up Qadiran landscapes in the imaginations of the Avistani, most of the area is semiarid desert, with dry grasses, cacti, and sagebrush. In the east, as the elevation rises, the desert gives way to plains and eventually the lush Tapur Forest.

Ehur: In the center of the Ketz lies the genie city of Ehur, where Qadira's trading partners on the Elemental Planes maintain embassies. Geniekin elsewhere in Qadira, facing prejudice and mistreatment against their kind, often flee here to serve the genies, but their lives do not always improve under these new masters.

Hanpa: The remote town of Hanpa is most famous for a large shrine to Pazuzu and the windstorms it summons. Its citizens keep largely to themselves. They make no secret of their worship of the demon lord, but they purport to venerate him out of fear rather than adoration. The town's location away from most trade routes helps keep the people of Hanpa isolated, and the potent windstorms that protect it have, to date, held off any real attempt to eradicate the demon cultists.

Khundurai: The luxurious plush carpets of Khundurai, with their hypnotic patterns, are prized across Golarion. Most are merely decorative floor coverings, but if one pays enough to the right weaver, one might receive a command word that instructs the carpet to fly.

Temple of the Eternal Obelisk: A mysterious ancient temple buried beneath the Ketz salt flats, the Eternal Obelisk is said to hold the secret of eternal youth, but is protected by a tribe of maftets (*Bestiary* 3188)

Yanimere Island: Rocky Yanimere Island is host to the city of Merve, one of Qadira's strongest naval ports and, by extension, one of its strongest military bases. The fortress-city of Merve has never fallen to an enemy, and the deep caves that riddle the isle are said to be stocked with supplies that could last the city for decades. Moreover, these subterranean passages supposedly connect to escape routes via the Darklands that allow foot travel between Avistan and Garund far beneath the waters that separate them.

Maharev

Notable Settlements Al-Hiraf (19,890), Isa (4,450), Nirfan (11,200), Qaharid (52,430), Rashiz (14,500), Rikhist (3,500), Sanmeshul (28,990)

Resources art, copper, fruit, gems, grains, livestock, magic, pottery, spices, timber, turquoise, vegetables, wine

Citizens artists, farmers, gardeners, historians, inventors, military officers, researchers, university students and professors, vintners, wealthy merchants

Other Inhabitants carnivorous plants, dire crocodiles, giant desert worms, green dragons, jungle drakes, jungle giants, manticores, poison frogs, qliphoth, tigers, will-o'-wisps, wyverns

Bounded to the west by the Zho Mountains and the Maharev River, and to the east by the Meraz River, the region of Maharev contains lush jungles and fertile farmland sheltered by the rain shadow of the Zho Mountains. The region's rich soils ensure it provides much of the produce that feeds the rest of the nation of Qadira. Nestled between the harshest peaks in the Zho range, the Shamai Mountains, and a largely impassable desert to the south, Maharev is the region most sheltered from any foreign aggression—indeed, on many maps of the Inner Sea region, cartographers erroneously indicate the region of Maharev to be nothing but empty desert. Qadira certainly feels no compunction about not correcting this error. Combined with bountiful harvests, the relative safety of the so-called “Jewel of the Meraz” has created a generous yet complacent populace that feels more connected with its parent civilization of Kelesh than with most of its Qadiran neighbors.



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Maharev Jungle: The depths of the Maharev Jungle are largely unexplored, and—as with any large unknown area—they have inspired many rumors. The strong presence of qliphoth (*Bestiary* 2 218) and an unusual number of carnivorous plants help to limit serious exploration of the jungle, as does a particularly aggressive tribe of jungle giants (*Bestiary* 3 129). These giants train the local jungle drakes (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 100) and worship the Green Mother, viewing the jungle's numerous carnivorous plants as direct manifestations of her will from the First World.

Qaharid: The Turquoise City sits at the meeting of the Maharev and Meraz Rivers, amid rich copper and turquoise mines. In addition to the jewelry it produces, it is known for its fine pottery, which often incorporates crushed jewels into its glazes. It is also the

center of worship of the White Feather monks, and has recently become a pilgrimage city for cultists of Roidira, Dark Sister of Knowledge.

Rikhist: A rough border town on the Maharev River, Rikhist remains the center of Rovagug's worship in Qadira. Despite the satrap's best efforts to destroy the town and scatter the populace, it stubbornly hangs on, supported by orc tribes from the Zho Mountains. The stark, ragged town appeals to criminals, outcasts, and murderers, of both the human and non-human variety; a fair number of gnolls and bugbears reside within Rikhist's walls. Although the cave giants of the nearby mountains don't dwell in Rikhist, the town maintains an agreement with them of mutual defense, one backed by the personal guarantee of Rikhist's sadistic ruler, **Magyarsh** (CE female qliphoth-blooded tiefling warpriest^{ACG} of Rovagug 13; *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Races* 252).

MERAZ DESERT

Notable Settlements Dimayen (4,890), Heger (12,530), Husanah (14,000), Ihalar (19,860), Izzet (21,000)

Resources archaeological relics, horses, livestock, mercenaries, salt

Citizens archaeologists, church administrators, desert druids, geniekin, herders, hermits, horse breeders, raiders, warriors

Other Inhabitants basilisks, behirs, camels, daemons, demons, desert giants, desert-themed undead, desert-themed vermin (particularly scorpions and wasps), djinn, efreets, genie-touched horses, giant desert worms, girtablilus, horses, jackals, jann, lamias, medusas, phoenixes, shedus, sphinxes

The vast Meraz Desert in southern Qadira hides a glorious lost history—and forgotten evils. The endless desert was once a magnificent, fertile savanna teeming with life. Then the four Heralds of Dust withered its fields down to endless sand dunes and its trees to bone-white skeletons. Now it separates Qadira from the rest of Kelesh.

The Meraz is covered in rolling dunes of gold and white sand, and home to ancient structures protected by shedus (*Bestiary* 3 243). The subregion of Al-Zabrit is famous for its especially secretive tribes, who also breed Golarion's finest horses—see page 57 for more details and page 60 for information about genie-touched horses. The Meraz itself is extremely arid, and temperatures during the day reach deadly levels of heat.

Dimayen: This oasis town in the Meraz Desert clings to life despite the collapse of its irrigation tunnels, a plague of ankhegs, and the predations of supernaturally intelligent jackals. See *Pathfinder Module: Feast of Dust* for more information on Dimayen.

MAGYARSH

Ihalar: The westernmost example of a Khattibi-style underground city, Ihalar is a massive and still-occupied complex supporting close to 20,000 people, though its lower levels have been abandoned. Light wells allow underground gardens, and the residents emerge only to trade with passing merchants and graze their herds.

Jezonna Oasis: Home to the Amellas Hekbah tribe, a clan of desert giants granted imperial citizenship as thanks for their protection of caravans passing through Kelesh's deserts, this oasis town serves as the headquarters for their work. The oasis covers roughly 50 square miles around a trio of lakes known as the Three Wisdoms. **Janar Malakra** (LN male desert giant ranger 6; *Bestiary* 3 128) heads the giants' mercenary troop and is the most influential of their chieftains.

Qumarin: Only a handful of reclusive girtablilus (*Bestiary* 3 130) know the exact location of these ruins, but they are rumored to lie in the Meraz Desert (see page 51).

Sunbleached Tower: North of Dimayen, this massive structure of interlocking human bones vanishes into a dizzying haze 300 feet above the ground. See *Feast of Dust* for more information on this edifice and the daemons (*Bestiary* 2 62) that are drawn to it.

NORTHERN ZHO MOUNTAINS

Notable Settlements Gazbilah (15,400), Kharif (10,900), Naamat (6,200), Omash (23,500), Qadlus Mavari (1,201), Salav (13,400)

Resources armor, copper, gems, gold, iron, mercenaries, weapons

Citizens farmers, goldsmiths, jewelers, miners, monks, soldiers, traders, weaponsmiths

Other Inhabitants bugbears, chimeras, cyclopes, fey, giants, griffons, lamias, ogres, orcs, red dragons

The people of the northern end of the Zho mountain range and its surrounding hills and plains stare across the border at Taldor, wondering when war will erupt. Qadira's least affluent region does not share the rest of the nation's hunger for war, though a larger-than-average percentage of its population is career military, since they have fewer options than their counterparts to the west.

Omash: Omash is the primary training facility for the Satrapian Guard (see page 51).

Qadlus Mavari: One of the easternmost settlements in Qadira, Qadlus Mavari is a thriving oasis town along the Golden Path built around a shrine to Lugalismaru, the Palm Tree King (see page 18). Here travelers buy supplies, charms to offer Lugalismaru at oasis stops, and—if they can afford them—magical items that create water or protect against heat and thirst.

Sunhill Monastery: A high plateau just to the west of the Zho Mountains, Sunhill boasts a monastery complex

between two chapels, one to Ragathiel and one to Sarenrae. This monastery is the headquarters of the Eleli (see page 29), presided over by a peri (*Bestiary* 3 218) named Nuryah.

White Pass: The western stretch of the Golden Path passes through the White Pass in the Zho Mountains before ending in Katheer.

PASHMAN

Notable Settlements Butraf (56,000), Ishad (79,300), Kerim (66,420), Khoka (920), Lopul (55,260), Shamara (51,200), Shileh (71,000)

Resources armor, artwork, food, furs, iron, leather, livestock
Citizens architects, armorsmiths, artisans, artists, astrologists, engineers, farmers, fortune-tellers, hunters, musicians, writers

Other Inhabitants dire corbies, duergar, giant apes, giant lizards, goats, harpies, hippogriffs, horses, lamias, lynxes, nagas, wolves

Pashman is bounded to the north by the River Ladan and to the south by the Pashman River. Mountainous but relatively fertile, it is known for its snow-capped peaks, crystalline rivers, and flourishing wildlife. The breathtaking vistas from its mountainside cities are thought to inspire great creativity.

Al-Bashir: Once a thriving city, Al-Bashir has now fallen into ruin. The treasure rumored to be strewn throughout these ruins, left behind by entranced victims of the harpies, is said to be significant, yet to date none have managed to confront the harpies and escape Al-Bashir with enough loot to make the expedition worthwhile.

Kamawgyar Shrine: This abandoned shrine in the Zho Mountains features a massive statue of the god Irori carved above a natural cave that used to serve as a home to the priests that tended the shrine. It is now occupied by a mother-and-daughter harpy pair exiled from the larger community in Al-Bashir, along with a small gang of dire corbies (*Bestiary* 3 80)

Khoka: Khoka is the last stop in Qadira for most travelers heading east into Kelesh (see page 49).

Koor: The empty streets of the ancient forge city of Koor are scattered with broken bronze ingots and traveled only by whistling winds. The city was abandoned during the wars with Taldor, and rumors abound of a powerful and mysterious guardian naga who roams the ruins, keeping intruders out—and perhaps keeping some great terror confined within.

Lopul: Lopul, a large caravan city located in the driest and hottest area of Pashman, is centered on the Pool of Sihbon oasis. Most of the city's buildings are low mud-brick houses, but tents from the caravans that pass through the city outnumber any permanent structures by a ratio of almost two to one. Sheikh **Samraf al-Hadari** (LG male human magus^{UM} 9), who rules the city, is an

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ardent imperial loyalist married to the amer Jabiyah al-Juwan. The question of his loyalties is something of a thorn in the satrap's side.

Magrevore: In the Darklands under the city of Khoka roils a magma pit, in the center of which sits a portal to Malebolge, the sixth layer of Hell. **Mardehzuk** (LE male advanced pit fiend), a servant of Moloch, guards this portal and oversees a network of duergar that bring him slave-sacrifices from the surface to be impaled on the horns of Moloch's altar.

PLAINS OF PARESH

Notable Settlements Al-Varish (118,400), Avilan (93,250), Delenah (99,400), Demirah (101,200), Katheer (132,450)

Resources clothing, livestock

Citizens alchemists, city dwellers, clerics, clothiers, falconers, farmers, herders, lawyers, merchants, physicians, raiders, scribes, traders

Other Inhabitants baboons, camels, cobras, elephants, giant ants, herd animals, horses, jackalweres, lions, zebras

These grassy plains are home to seminomadic tribes descended from the peaceful, indigenous herding peoples that intermingled with Keleshite settlers. Most continue to breed bison, cattle, goats, sheep, and other livestock, but some tribes have taken to raiding. The

most famous city in the Plains of Paresh is Katheer, the Qadiran capital, but the trading cities of Al-Varish, Avilan, Delenah, and Demirah have populations similar to Katheer's. In all of Qadira, the people of the Plains of Paresh are the most eager for war with Taldor,

perhaps because their region is that most often subject to attacks from their northern rival.

Border Wood: The Jalrune River divides Qadira from Taldor and bisects the Border Wood. Both Qadirans and Taldans use the woods on their respective sides of the border to dispatch reconnaissance teams and harry the opposing side's troops, and the woodlands are marred with the scars of skirmishes and forgotten traps.

Golden Path: A massive network of trade routes spanning Casmaron and facilitating trade between Avistan, Garund, Tian Xia, and Vudra, the Golden Path is the source of Kelesh's vast wealth. Also known as the Silken Way, it consists of broad, white-paved roads marked at regular intervals with magical fountains surmounted by the gold-and-white silk banners of the imperial throne. The Imperial Forces patrol its length, and wayside inns funded by the state ensure that merchants may spend their nights in safety and comfort. Nevertheless, many caravans choose to brave the deserts rather than travel the Golden Path, to avoid the heavy taxes the empire levies on noncitizens who use the network.

Katheer: Qadira's capital glitters on the banks of the Pashman River. See page 44 for more details.

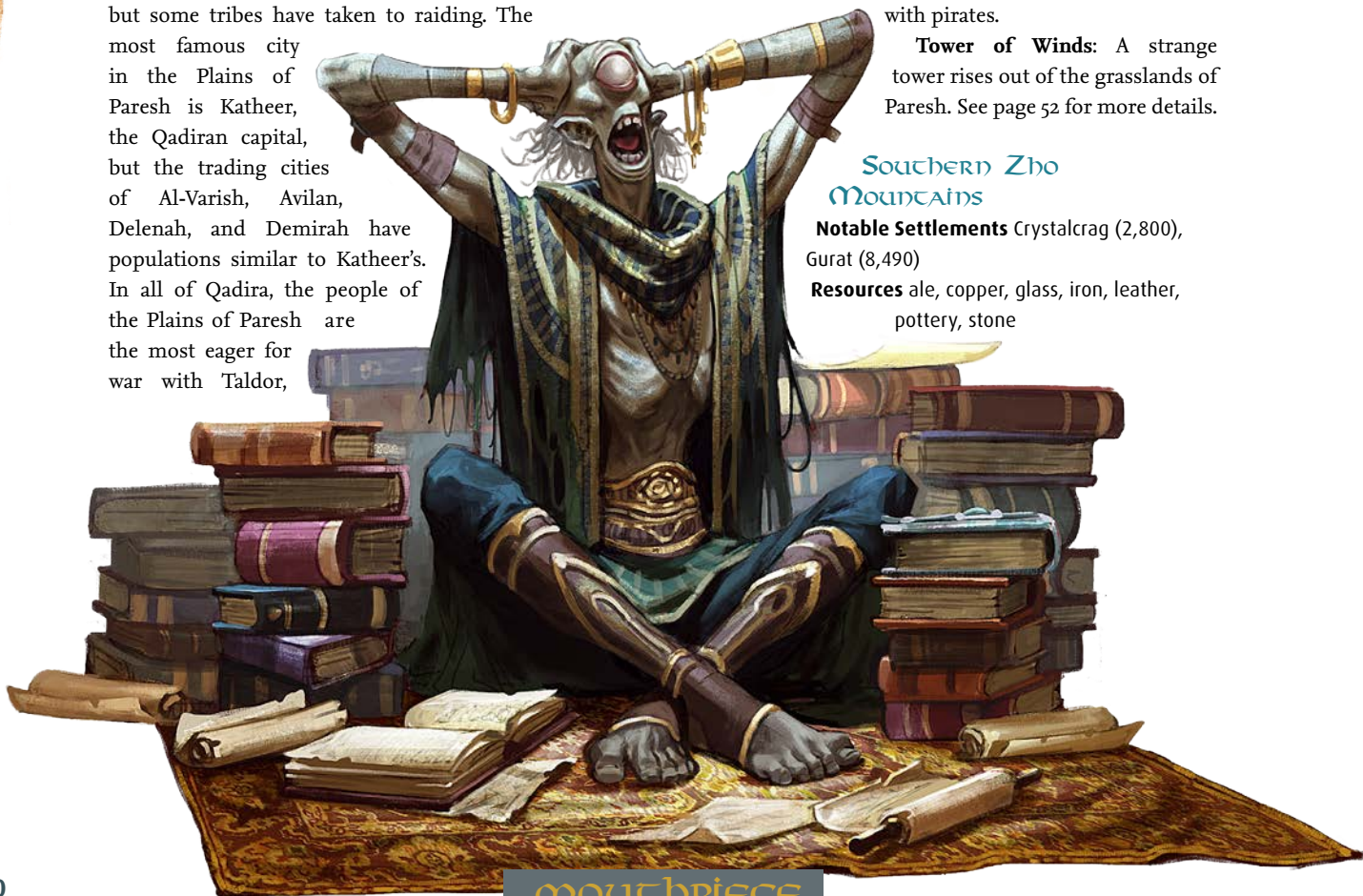
Saray Coast: The lush coastlands and high bluffs of the Saray Coast feature numerous hidden crannies where jackalweres (*Bestiary* 3 155) lair and port towns popular with pirates.

Tower of Winds: A strange tower rises out of the grasslands of Paresh. See page 52 for more details.

Southern Zho Mountains

Notable Settlements Crystalcrag (2,800), Gurat (8,490)

Resources ale, copper, glass, iron, leather, pottery, stone



Citizens brick makers, brewers, coppersmiths, glassblowers, leatherworkers, potters

Other Inhabitants aasimars, blue dragons, couatls, dire lions, genies, giant lizards, giants, gnolls, gorgons, ifrits, ogres, orcs, oreads, rakshasas, red dragons, rocs, sphinxes, thunderbirds

The longest unbroken stretch of the Zho Mountains in Qadira runs south from the Pashman River before curving westward and extending to the coast. The rugged landscape makes travel and shipping in the area difficult, keeping settlement sizes small. It also makes the region an excellent hideout for smugglers and others who live outside the law. As one of the least traveled of Qadira's regions, the southern Zho peaks are home to some of the most dangerous creatures in Qadira, including dragons and their flame drake kin (*Bestiary 2 106*), sphinxes, thunderbirds (*Bestiary 2 264*), and numerous types of giants, as well as to the orc tribes the satrap often hires as mercenaries.

Blood Rise Rock: A hidden stronghold in the foothills of the Zho Mountains located some 50 miles from the city of Dimayen, Blood Rise Rock has, over the centuries, been held by gnolls and humans who have worked a massive image of Lamashtu's swollen torso into the stone. See *Feast of Dust* for more information about Blood Rise Rock.

Crystalcrag: A remote ifrit (*Bestiary 2 160*) and oread (*Bestiary 2 205*) settlement in the Zho Mountains, Crystalcrag protects its geniekin residents with veils of illusion created by the efreeti **Tygora Cinderfury** (LE female advanced efreeti).

Gurat: Ringed by an 8-foot wall, this small city high in the Zho Mountains is home to the supposedly deathless **Mouthpiece** (N male cyclops oracle^{APC} 17), a 300-year-old cyclops who speaks in riddles. The satrap has declared it a capital offense for anyone but him to speak to the Mouthpiece, and he has set a thousand deafened eunuchs to guard the site, yet anyone who can pass these defenses will be welcomed by the cyclops. The city is a popular haven for mystics, philosophers, and astrologers, and a number of schools have sprung up here in the past few decades. Gurati carpet weavers are famed for their skill, and many Qadirans believe the patterns of their rugs hold secret prophecies.

Lethe Springs: A hot spring shrouded in mist bubbles in the twin shadows of Zhobl and Zhonar. Its waters seem to offer a comforting way to warm oneself during the chilly mountain nights, but if ingested, they wash away drinkers' memories and twist the unfortunate victims into fiendish versions of their former selves. See *Feast of Dust* for more information on the Lethe Springs.

Shadun: Once a thriving city, Shadun is now reduced to gnoll-haunted ruins (see page 52).

Zhobl and Zhonar: The volcanoes Zhobl and Zhonar are often called the Angry Brothers, after a Qadiran myth that they were once two titans turned into volcanoes after their enmity nearly destroyed the world. Zhobl, although the smaller of the two volcanoes, erupts more often. Zhonar, the larger one, is more dangerous when it erupts, but it is less volatile than Zhobl.

TAPUR

Notable Settlements Hatavit (280)

Resources dyes, herbs, lumber, spices

Citizens dyers, furniture makers, furriers, herbalists, lumberjacks, scouts, spies

Other Inhabitants dire boars, drakes, fey, green dragons, leopards, pards, spriggans, viper vines

The Tapur region divides the Ketz Desert from the plains west of the Zho Mountains. The eastern savannas are lightly settled at this point and serve mostly as the homes for numerous nomadic tribes. The Tapur Forest itself is divided into two distinct sections. The Northern Tapur Forest is drier, dominated by cedar, pine, oak, and olive trees, and it is more heavily settled by humanity. The Southern Tapur is dense, lush, and far wilder, with silk, pear, pomegranate, ironwood, beech, hornbeam, chestnut, locust, and lime trees. Boars, leopards, monkeys, tigers, wolves, and even pards (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4 211*) roam the area. Colorful parrots flit between the branches of the trees, and marshy areas are home to ibises, herons, and swans.

Both areas support numerous towns and villages, though the dense forest and dangerous creatures—including evil fey, spriggans (*Bestiary 2 257*), and carnivorous plants such as viper vines (*Bestiary 2 279*) of the Southern Tapur tend to limit these settlements to its fringes.

The people of the Tapur region are considered provincial by much of Qadira's population, since they tend to stay out of Qadiran politics and are less interested in foreign luxuries than the average Qadiran.

Of note is the encroachment of the Ketz Desert, which is slowly expanding eastward and consuming the forestland. The rate of expansion is infinitesimal, yet over the centuries it has increasingly come to concern many of the region's longer-lived species.

Hatavit: Hatavit, a lumber camp outside the Northern Tapur Forest, was recently hit by a massive sandstorm. Most of the carvers, lumberjacks, soldiers, and woodworkers there fled, and Katheer has had no contact with the camp since. Rumors persist that the sandstorm was no natural event, and that the vengeful sorcerer who created it did so to free some (or perhaps all) of the slaves kept at the camp.

Tafinyah: Few know of the existence of this imperial intelligence outpost (see page 46).

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AL-ZABRIT

Deep in the Meraz Desert, after days of encountering only sand and mirages, an adventurer might see waving palm fronds marking an oasis. Before venturing forward, however, she would be advised to take a look around, for chances are good that she has trespassed upon the lands of Al-Zabrit.

The holds of the Al-Zabriti horse-breeding families are surrounded by 50-foot-tall stone pillars flying flags in the tribe's colors at regular 1-mile intervals. Beside each pillar is a large bell and a barrel of water. The tribespeople of Al-Zabrit keep tightly to ancient Althameri hospitality customs, which forbid those who control an oasis to prevent others from drawing water, but they also do not permit strangers into their holds. Should a traveler require assistance, he need only ring the bell (as a successful DC 12 Knowledge [local] check confirms). Soon after, a teenage boy or girl riding bareback on a small, swift desert mare will gallop over the dunes to greet him.

If the traveler is fleeing from enemies, the tribe's warriors will assemble to drive off the foes. If the traveler needs a safe place to camp for the night, the tribe will pitch a tent for him just inside the ring of pillars—and thus inside their patrol routes—and feast there with him. But no stranger will see their holds, where they build houses atop one another and grow terraces of vegetable gardens, let alone the sparse pastures where they graze their stock.

The treasure these people guard is not gold or jewels, but some of the finest horses on Golarion. The tribes of Al-Zabrit maintain scrupulous records of their horses' lineages that rival those of Taldan noble families, and often tie a charm-laden silk bag—containing a tiny scroll of a foal's family tree—around a foal's neck to ward off illness and injury. Only geldings and mares deemed unsuitable for breeding are sold at the yearly Saffeh Horse Fair. The finest mares are given away as princely gifts, usually to mark a momentous marriage or alliance, and it is unheard of for a stallion to pass to anyone except a tribal leader's eldest daughter to enable her to begin her own business. The Al-Zabriti tribes largely enforce their own laws; though they pay fealty to the imperial throne (and share blood ties with other Althameri), the empire looks the other way when they enforce their own justice. They practice a particularly strict form of the Sarenite faith and kill only in self-defense, but they are all too willing to disable intruders and let the desert finish them off.

The swift and tireless shissah (see page 63) is the iconic Keleshite horse, the daughter of the eastern wind who carries children to safety and soldiers into battle. But the breeders of Al-Zabrit have long used genie magic to infuse elemental power into four additional breeds: the stoic and powerful istaheq, the fiery misayyah, the lithe tuanu, and the swift zefaheen (see pages 60–61).

These elemental breeds are never sold; they are given to the imperial throne in return for favors that neither the Al-Zabriti tribes nor the empire disclose. Al-Zabriti refresh the bloodlines of these four breeds every few generations with an otherworldly sire gifted to them by their genie allies, and occasionally introduce one of the elemental breeds into their shissah lines to increase desirable characteristics.

SECRETS OF AL-ZABRIT

Either of the storylines detailed below provides GMs with ways to allow PCs to investigate the mysteries of Al-Zabrit.

The Stolen Stallion: Though his pride makes him reluctant to ask for help, the chieftain of the Tiferi tribe, **al-Jahin Vasti** (LN male human sorcerer 8), is desperate enough to turn to outlanders. The pride of his family, the great golden stallion known as the Phoenix, has disappeared. The stallion is the foundation stud of the Tiferi's line of misayyah horses, and the Tiferi are hoping to regain the lost sire without ever admitting he was gone. Jahin suspects the horse was stolen by his old rival, **Lelah al-Zereshah** (CN female human oracle^{APG} 8), the chieftain of the Binai tribe, but to accuse her without proof might start a generations-long feud. Jahin's son, **Yaqib al-Marah** (N male human fighter 3), believes that the horse simply ran away. Yaqib's mother, **Marah Yaelat** (LN female human fighter 8), suspects that Qiyah is jealous of his sister, **Elissah al-Marah** (LN female human sorcerer 4), and her pending inheritance of the tribe's leadership; he may be keeping the horse somewhere to force concessions from his family. Untangling the knot of family and tribal rivalries should prove difficult, since neither tribe is inclined to let outlanders into their territory.

Sun-Crossed Lovers: Soon after the PCs ring the bell beside the pillar to announce their arrival in Al-Zabrit lands, a young woman astride a silver mare rides toward them. Sixteen-year-old **Khanimah al-Rivqah** (NG female human fighter 2) offers them food and shelter, then begs them to help her escape after dark. As heir to the Ketheri tribe, she is expected to choose a spouse who will bring wealth or an important alliance to her people. But at the recent Saffeh Horse Fair, she fell in love with a beautiful but penniless Chelish orphan boy named **Venn Acciai** (N male human bard 1), who works as an ostler for a Wiscrani horse trader. Worse, he pays lip service to Asmodeus, making him utterly unsuitable for a good Sarenite girl. Khanimah promises the PCs two fine mares (a reward that could fetch upward of 10,000 gp in the right market) if they help her escape, and moreover promises to direct them to an ancient ruin said to house a great treasure. She admits that aiding her is likely to make the PCs hunted targets, but points out that she plans to run away regardless, and their status as strangers is likely to make suspicion fall on them when she disappears.

ORDER OF THE SADDLE (CAVALIER ORDER)

Cavaliers of the order of the saddle have pledged themselves to the pursuit of perfect partnership between rider and mount. This order holds that the balance found when such a partnership is achieved contains the seeds of a better self, a better relationship with one's community, and a better sense of how to keep the world itself healthy.

Restriction: Only horse-riding cavaliers are eligible to join this order.

Edicts: The cavalier must care for her mount before herself. She must show mercy to any noncombatants or less intelligent creatures who serve her opponents. She must teach any who ask about how to better communicate with their mounts. The only meat she may eat must come from animals that have been humanely raised and slaughtered. She must strive to ensure her community lives in harmony with the land it occupies and that it doesn't cause unnecessary suffering to the animals under its care.

Challenge: Whenever an order of the saddle cavalier issues a challenge and is astride her mount, she can charge the target of her challenge—moving and attacking as if with a standard charge—and then move again as if using Ride-By Attack.

Her total movement for the round can't exceed her mounted speed. This maneuver provokes attacks of opportunity, but the cavalier gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC against attacks of opportunity while charging the target of her challenge. This bonus increases by 1 for every 4 levels the cavalier has. If the cavalier already has the Ride-By Attack feat, this dodge bonus increases by 2.

Skills: An order of the saddle cavalier adds Knowledge (nature) and Perception to her list of class skills. When she uses Survival to track a creature or find food and water for herself and her mount, she receives a bonus on the check equal to 1/2 her cavalier level (minimum +1).

Order Abilities: A cavalier that belongs to the order of the saddle gains the following abilities as she increases in level.

Mounted Synergy (Ex): At 2nd level, the cavalier receives Mounted Combat as a bonus feat and, whenever she is mounted, gains a +2 bonus on initiative checks as long as her mount is conscious and mobile.

Stalwart Mount (Su): At 8th level, the cavalier's mount becomes healthier and more robust.

It gains Toughness as a bonus feat (if it already has Toughness, or takes this as a feat later, the hit points granted by the feat are doubled) and gains a +2 bonus on saving throws.

Protective Partner (Ex): At 15th level, the cavalier wreaks terrible vengeance on those who would try to harm her mount. Whenever an opponent attacks the cavalier's mount, the attacking creature provokes an attack of opportunity from the cavalier. The cavalier receives a +2 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls when she makes these attacks of opportunity.



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KATHEER

Katheer was already an ancient city when the Keleshites conquered it. It had risen, fallen, been left in ruins, been rebuilt, fallen again, and largely been abandoned when the nomads of the Plains of Paresh began to meet among the eerily beautiful broken statues and collapsed white stone buildings to trade.

In 1290 AR, these nomads held a great horse race, the Histaqen, to celebrate their yearly meeting, and the tradition has continued ever since. As the Histaqen grew in fame, and Kelesh grew in power, the campground became a city. The first visit by a Keleshite ruler, Empress Ashtirat II, in 1396 AR prompted a flurry of construction as the residents attempted to prove to their far-off potentate that the barbarism of Avistan had not reduced them to something less than proper citizens of the empire. In time, Katheer expanded to devour most of the ruins of the ancient cities that stood on the site before it, though some outlying areas (known as the Old City) remain untouched. Satrap Meryste III, during a period of tension with the tribes of the Plains of Paresh in the late 3100s, ordered the construction of a wall. Not wanting to limit the city's future growth, she ordered the semicircle's center point to be constructed 2 miles north of the palace, which was well outside the city limits at the time.

Today, Katheer is a distillation of Qadira itself: wealthy, beautiful, proud, harsh, and ever-watchful for slights to its honor or threats to its security. Glittering, ornate palaces coexist with the abject horror of slave markets. Newly constructed buildings, each more luxurious than the last, shoulder their way toward the sky while their ancient neighbors fall into disrepair.

To Avistani eyes, Katheer is a wonderland of wealth and exotic sophistication. By the standards of central Kelesh, it is a frontier town, albeit a strategically important one, stranded at the far end of the empire among the primitive and belligerent peoples of Avistan. Its position as one end of the all-important Golden Path, and as the center of Keleshite trade with Avistan and Garund, guarantees the empire's attention. Yet Kelesh tends to operate on a grand scale that encompasses centuries and involves the long-term politics of entire continents, whereas Katheer's concerns are immediate and acute.

Most Keleshite residents of Katheer see themselves as attempting to uphold Keleshite standards of living under deprived conditions. They believe the empire's desire for bloodless economic expansion is driven by complacency, and they wish to return to the days when Keleshites conquered with the sword rather than the coin. They are defiant in the face of the empire's disapproval of Qadira's slave trade, insisting that they need the additional labor to fortify their defenses against Taldor's hostility. Most of all, they are determined to force Kelesh to recognize that military conquest is the destiny of their people.

KATHEER

N metropolis

Corruption +4; **Crime** +2; **Economy** +7; **Law** +6; **Lore** +7;
Society +2

Qualities academic, holy site, magically attuned, prosperous, strategic location, tourist attraction

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 132,450

NOTABLE NPCs

High Priestess Samisalah (NG female human cleric of Sarenrae 17)

Satrap Xerbystes II (N male human aristocrat 3/ cavalier^{APG} 12)

Vizier Hebizid Vraj (NG male human aristocrat 4/ investigator^{ACG} 10)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 28,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 170,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items nearly all minor magic items are available;

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

IMPORTANT LOCATIONS IN KATHEER

A full map of Katheer appears on the inside back cover of this book, marked with the following well-known locations and notable landmarks.

1. Garden of Gifts: A towering, jeweled brass palace, the Garden of Gifts is filled with beautiful young serving men and women, games of chance, high-end shopping, and other delights. Run by genies, the Garden also offers visitors the chance to do a favor for a genie in return for a wish. Visitors would take care to bring a lawyer with them to formalize terms, however, as the genies usually get the better end of the deal when negotiating.

2. Visitors' Center: A gold-and-white building in ornate Keleshite style, the Visitors' Center should be the first stop in Katheer for those without imperial citizenship. Foreigners who register here receive benefits and protections, while those who neglect to register may quickly find themselves on the wrong side of the law.

3. Port of Katheer: A long stretch of riverbank that has been painstakingly carved into a semicircular harbor, the always-bustling Port of Katheer is constantly crowded with every type of water-going vessel imaginable. The captain of any non-Qadiran vessel must invite a port inspector aboard and present a cargo manifest, as well as a gift of salt—often accompanied by a monetary contribution. No cargo is prohibited in Katheer, but the size of the bribe determines to which dock the ship is guided (central docks have better access to porters and the impromptu markets that spring up along the water), as well as how long the captain must wait before unloading goods.

4. The Great Market: Nestled against the northern edge of the port is Katheer's Great Market, where ancient buildings and makeshift stalls stand side by side, and anything can be obtained. Rapid-fire haggling that would be considered insulting in the more sedate Old Souk rings through the spice-laden air, but the greatest commodity sold here is secrets.

5. Venicaan College of Medicaments and Chirurgery: This sprawling complex stands at the center of the university district and boasts faculty trained in the latest medical science coming out of central Kelesh. The college was attacked three times over the course of the war with Taldor, but the common citizens of Katheer came to its defense each time.

6. House of the Morning Star: Named in honor of Empress Ashtirat II, the House of the Morning Star is home to an order of well-trained monks that keep the peace in Katheer's streets.

7. Azure Canal: This wide, shallow canal is flanked by marble-and-gold promenades. The clarity of its 3-foot-deep waters is magically maintained, allowing viewers to enjoy the mosaics that line the canal's walls. While the canal's official purpose is to ferry goods from the Pashman to the palace, the cool, clean waters make it irresistible to Katheer's children—and many adults. The promenades, shaded by fragrant cedars, palms, flowering trees, and ornate marble arches, are a popular place for meals, lectures, and festivals. For a mere 2 gp, one can rent a brightly painted raft and relax upon the water while enjoying chilled fruit and beverages.

8. Qahir Palace: The seat of imperial power in Qadira, the palace houses the satrap, the imperial vizier, and Katheer's imperial court. Commoners and foreigners are not allowed inside unless accompanied by a noble patron. A smaller administrative building bordering the palace's public courtyard is open to everyone and provides Keleshite citizens with liaisons to the empire.

9. Lioness's Den: This glass palace is the home of Safiya, a shahiyani of the Haxaemenid branch of the imperial family, and a distant cousin of Queen Shubat. Exiled to Katheer after a disagreement with the emperor, she is attempting to sway Katheer's nobility into supporting the emperor's son Kalan in the succession.

10. Old Souk: The oldest market in Katheer is also the most prestigious, though its status comes with considerable government oversight, and the resulting taxes drive up the prices. Nevertheless, for a first-time

visitor to Katheer, the Old Souk provides a safe, clean venue where one can obtain a dazzling array of goods, foods, and services.

11. Temple of Dawn's Grace: Katheer's largest cathedral is the center of Sarenite worship in Qadira, though its blunt rejection of the militant Cult of the Dawnflower has brought it under fire from the cult's sympathizers in Katheer's government. Nevertheless, the graceful, open-air building still welcomes thousands of loyal worshippers each morning as the faithful assemble to greet the sun.

12. Planar Institute: The imperial court maintains trade relations with multiple extraplanar powers and it sponsored this grand school to better train merchants in the intricacies of extraplanar etiquette and business.

13. Sunset Crown: The western terminus of the Golden Path is a massive, raised round plaza on the waterfront. Slender white pillars support a roof shaped like a giant replica of the imperial crown. While the Golden Path is, in

reality, a network of routes rather than a single path, its name becomes stunningly literal in Katheer, where a wide, gold-paved avenue blazes through the city to the Crown. The plaza hosts a different assortment of merchants each day, though most of the goods sold there are too expensive for the average person to even dream of buying. Patrols guard the Golden Path itself incessantly, yet in the end their presence isn't necessary as the ancient genie-fueled magic that helped pave the path protects it as well—any amount of gold scraped or pried from the Golden Path fades to nothing and automatically replenishes on the path itself, making theft of the gold essentially impossible. Whispers of a curse that targets these reviled "pathscrapers" (a term some folks have taken to use derogatorily against the Pathfinders and their often overly aggressive agents) help to prevent attempts as well, although whether or not this malediction exists at all is unknown.

14. Zenith of the Dawnflower: A simple, windowless spire of white marble, the Zenith rises nearly 200 feet, its interior a great, spiraling stairway from ground level to the top landing. Sarenrae favors those who visit the Zenith in supplication—a spellcasting worshiper of Sarenrae who travels to the Zenith and watches the sun rise gains one additional spell slot of her highest available spell level the next time she prepares spells. A particular spellcaster can only gain this benefit once per year.



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TAFINYAH

The small stronghold of Tafinyah appears on no official maps, and few are aware of its existence. Tucked away deep in the Tapur Forest, it is protected by a tangle of illusions, mystical wards, and occult magic designed to confuse anyone who approaches and send the person walking in the opposite direction.

The only way to approach the forest's interior is to bear a Tafinyah stone—an ornate but nonmagical opal amulet (typically worth 100 gp) keyed to the wards—which allows its bearer to pass through the stronghold's defenses. All that stands at the forest's heart is a single, aged cedar tree in the midst of an eerily still clearing. The cedar stands as a silent sentinel, and only those who present their Tafinyah stones and speak the correct passphrase can pass through the ancient tree into a stairwell descending deep underground, to an iron door standing in a humble sandstone cave. Magically reinforced, the door opens only on command with a second passphrase.

Beyond lies an entire hidden village that serves as the western center of operations for the Hatharat, Kelesh's intelligence agency and diplomatic corps. While the public face of the organization is one of running Keleshite embassies and training the charismatic envoys who represent the empire in most major nations, the Hatharat has two other branches, the existence of which Kelesh refuses to acknowledge.

The Right Hand of the Hatharat is concerned with the safety of Keleshite citizens. Should a citizen living abroad fear for her life because of unrest or anti-Keleshite prejudice, the Right Hand will help her reach safety. Should a Keleshite spy be unmasked, he need only go to the nearest Keleshite embassy and convey his suspicions to the civil servants working there. Agents of the Right Hand will contact him discreetly soon after and guide him to a safe house from which he can be smuggled back to lands under the empire's control. The Right Hand also engages in numerous campaigns to improve opinions of the empire and the Keleshite people across Golarion, sponsoring plays, novels, and works of art that portray the empire positively and guiding the behavior of Keleshites who marry royals or other prominent figures in non-Keleshite lands so they are seen as benevolent.

The Left Hand of the Hatharat handles the harsher necessities of protecting the empire and its people. It may incite conflicts or diffuse them, buy elections, or even assassinate powerful figures who work against the imperial throne, although such drastic actions are authorized only in the most desperate of situations and only after every attempt to achieve a more peaceful solution has failed. When a target must be assassinated, agents of the Left Hand thus believe their enemies left them no other option to ensure the safety and prosperity of the subjects of the imperial throne.

Hatharat agents are not always ethnic Keleshites. Non-Keleshite agents are often among the most valuable to the Hatharat in Qadira, for they are not only capable of interacting with other cultures in the Inner Sea region without tipping the hand of the Hatharat's interest, but also (and perhaps more importantly) bring to the Hatharat perspectives and opinions that traditional Keleshite ways of thought may not have considered.

Tafinyah itself may be small, but it is not primitive. Magical mirrors allow communication with the Hatharat's headquarters in Isfahel, and an entire complex is devoted to magical and nonmagical methods of altering agents' appearances. **Mariq Tehzadi** (N male human investigator^{ACG} 14) oversees Tafinyah's operations and can usually be found in his office, absorbing intelligence reports with nearly superhuman speed.

SECRETS OF TAFINYAH

Hidden Tafinyah offers many adventure hooks apart from determining its location and proving its very existence.

Talisman of Trust: An old friend sends a message that he must see the PCs. The PCs find him in his death bed, only days from passing on from old age. With feeble hands, he presses a bloodstained amulet into a PC's hand, insisting that the party go to Tafinyah. He tells the PCs to warn a contact there that one of the Peerless is a Taldan agent plotting to bring down the Qadiran government, and gives the PC the current passwords. The amulet allows the PCs to see through the illusions and resist the magic that guards Tafinyah, but only Hatharat agents know how to navigate around the stronghold's mundane and magical booby traps as well. The dying man expires before he can pass on those details. To fulfill a friend's dying request, the PCs must travel to Qadira, choose one of their number to wear the amulet and serve as a guide, navigate the dangerous defenses surrounding Tafinyah, and talk their way into the closely guarded enclave of one of the world's most secretive intelligence agencies.

Under the Hatharat's Wing: The PCs are hired to retrieve a stolen heirloom for **Leodor Alerion** (LN male human aristocrat 4), a wealthy Taldan noble. After investigating, they trace the artifact to **Tana al-Mitanna** (N female human adept 3), a Keleshite store owner. Before they can confront her, however, Tana vanishes. Further digging suggests she may have been a Hatharat agent exfiltrated because of rising anti-Keleshite sentiment in the area. Lord Alerion makes an offer that is hard to refuse for the return of his heirloom, but finding it will involve tracking down a woman who has made vanishing and changing identities her life's work, and who is watched over by an organization that will do anything to protect its own. Moreover, Lord Alerion's "heirloom" may be something far more dangerous, and his claim to it may not be as clear-cut as he makes it out to be.

HATHARAT AGENT (BARD ARCHETYPE)

Although the Hatharat employs all manner of specialists, bards who take up the role of agent are among its most infamous and widespread.

Called Favor (Ex): At 1st level, a Hatharat agent can use his contacts to ask for a favor from various individuals who have benefited from Hatharat aid in the past. The agent must spend 1d4 hours in an urban area with a population of at least 200 people to use this ability, and must succeed at a DC 20 Diplomacy check to secure the favor. Once an attempt to call in a favor has been made, whether or not the Diplomacy check was successful, the Hatharat agent must wait 2d6 days before attempting to call in a new favor, so as to not overtax the favors owed the society as a whole.

The Hatharat agent can use a successful called favor to secure an introduction to an important NPC, either to learn an important piece of information (something that would otherwise require a successful DC 20 Knowledge check to know) or to secure a pardon for a minor crime of which an ally has been convicted. Similar favors could be granted at the GM's discretion.

At 7th level, an agent need only wait 1d6 days between uses of called favors. In addition to the favors above, he can now ask for a favor that supplies the aid of a single 5th-level specialist for 24 hours. This specialist is treated as a short-term cohort for the agent, but should remain under the control of the GM. The exact statistics for the specialist (who can be of any class) should also be calculated by the GM. The maximum level of the specialist the agent can secure increases by 1 for every 2 bard levels the Hatharat agent has above 7th, to a maximum of an 11th-level specialist at 19th level. The *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* contains numerous pregenerated NPCs that can be used as these specialists.

This ability replaces bardic knowledge.

Informed Persuasion (Ex): At 2nd level, a Hatharat agent uses his knowledge of a target to increase his persuasiveness. If he has at least 1 rank in an associated Knowledge skill, he applies his Intelligence modifier (in addition to his Charisma modifier, as normal) to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks against that Knowledge skill's associated category of targets. The types of Knowledge and their associated groups are arcana (spellcasters), geography (tribal citizens), local (urban citizens), nobility (politicians and nobles), and religion (worshippers of a recognized faith).

This ability replaces well-versed.

Bardic Performance: A Hatharat agent gains the bardic performance listed below.

Master of Manipulation (Su): At 8th level, a Hatharat agent gains a reputation of being able to sense lies. When using

bardic performance, his very presence can often draw the truth out of others. This ability affects all creatures selected by the bard within a 20-foot-radius emanation from the bard. Any affected creature can't speak any deliberate or intentional lies, but is aware of the effect and can choose to avoid answering a question to which it would normally respond with a lie, or may be evasive as long as it remains within the boundaries of the truth. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

This performance replaces dirge of doom.



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ADVENTURE SITES IN QADIRA

This section details several sites where adventurers can uncover Qadira's secrets. Each entry begins with a short summary of the site's location, the kinds of inhabitants that dwell in the site or nearby, and features that define the place.

AL-BASHIR

Harpy-Haunted Ruins

Location edge of the Zho Mountains, Pashman region

Inhabitants dire corbies, harpies, lamia-kin, rocs

Features dangerous underground city, desecrated temples, ruined city districts

For 2,000 years, the great city of Al-Bashir served as a bastion of civilization and luxury in the largely untamed Zho Mountains. Its strong walls and well-paid mercenary guards bought the city centuries of peace even as they skewed its culture toward decadence and self-indulgence,

but its inhabitants were too comfortable to care. Then, seemingly overnight, the city fell under a curse. Knowledgeable artisans left the settlement, and no others could be convinced to visit it. Al-Bashir's foundations began to decay, and many of its giant, ornate minarets crashed into the street, frightening the populace. Merchants fled, and, as no self-respecting Keleshite citizen would remain in a city where commerce has dried up, the rest of the population followed within months. Qadiran satraps have sponsored a few halfhearted attempts to resettle Al-Bashir, but none have proven successful. The city is now barely more than a footnote in Qadira's history.

Now Al-Bashir's once-gracious streets are choked with weeds and collapsed towers, yet the gold on its domes and banisters remains untouched. Feuding gangs of harpies roost atop its towers, claiming districts of the city and bickering with competing broods. They are ruled by sorcerer matrons with demonic, genie, and rakshasa bloodlines, and they care little for Al-Bashir's abandoned

treasures except as lures to bring in new prey. Dire corby (*Bestiary* 3 80) enforcers carry out the matrons' wills, and in the southern quarter of the cities, condorlike lamia-kin known as kuchrimas (*Pathfinder Adventure Path: Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition* 411) have taken over some of the gangs. They drive their followers toward all-out war with the lamia matrons who rule elsewhere in the ruins.

Xerbystes II's desire to grow his standing forces has made him hungry for the wealth remaining in Al-Bashir, and he has sent several small armies to the ruins. None have exited alive, and the harpies take great amusement in flinging captured banners and flesh-stripped bones from the ramparts, pelting the compatriots of the failed invaders with the disturbing remains of their compatriots.

Had the satrap's soldiers been able to get past the thousands of harpies, dire corbies, and lamias that control the streets, they may have faced an even greater danger. Rumors persist that some formidable power lurking in the underground levels subtly encouraged the city's inexplicable decline and later drew the harpies to the location, and that it might one day mobilize its monstrous armies against the Qadiran people. Whispers of links to the worship of the demon lord Pazuzu have, to date, not been corroborated by direct evidence, although the amount of circumstantial evidence pointing to the demon lord's involvement continues to grow.

See pages 54–56 for a detailed description of Payaham's Villa, one of the many dangerous sites of interest that await discovery in Al-Bashir.



AL-BASHIR



Khoka

Town of a Thousand Rumors

Location shores of the Pashman River, Pashman region

Inhabitants caravan guards, Imperial Forces, merchants, rumormongers and gossipers

Features caravans, horse fair, temple of Falayna

Khoka is a wayside town adjacent to a base for the Imperial Forces. As the easternmost stop in Qadira for travelers heading further into Kelesh, it does a brisk business in travel supplies, camels, and horses, yet the settlement has staunchly resisted the temptation to grow in size—permits for settling in Khoka are rarely granted. Still, for those with sufficient coin, Khoka offers an unusually wide selection of magic items and fine weapons for a town of its size. **Usman al-Dugarah** (N male human alchemist^{APG 5}) sells potions and alchemical items from his shop, the Queen's Cup, which the locals claim has the best offerings for the most reasonable prices. **Anishah al-Lianat Behiri Basmat** (LN female human fighter 7), scion of the famed Basmat merchant house, maintains a massive emporium of masterwork and magical weapons, the Basmat Armory. Khoka is a fine place to find deals on other goods, since many caravans passing through seek to unload merchandise they don't want to take back to Kelesh or see taxed in Qadira. In addition to offering a robust selection of necessities for travelers, Khoka is also an excellent spot for those looking for work to land jobs as caravan guards, and for those wishing to travel off the Golden Path in relative safety to join up with a well-protected caravan.

Noncitizens bearing goods into Qadira fall subject to a border tax, the collection of which is enforced by the Imperial Forces, led by **Captain Jathbiyyah al-Istiyaz** (NG female human fighter 8). A few of Khoka's enterprising merchants specialize in tools for smugglers: false-bottomed chests, belts and shoes that can conceal coins; magical means of disguising objects; and other clever merchandise for the discerning scofflaw. **Mezj al-Illiar** (CN male half-elf rogue 4) is the most notorious of these merchants.

Khoka's most valuable commodity, however, is information. Travelers and merchants trade rumors even more freely than they trade goods—and indeed, the right piece of information can purchase material items of great value. Everyone is always interested to know what merchandise is popular in Katheer or Isfahel. Currently, the information commanding the highest prices is word of the latest developments in the succession in Kelesh and intelligence on the satrap's war plans.

Caravans that travel west off the Golden Path sometimes bring in travelers suffering from a mysterious condition acquired in the desert: their eyes grow bright blue, and they seem to forget who they are, speaking in an unintelligible tongue.

Minatory Isles

Perilous and Sinister Archipelago

Location off the Emerald Coast, Alavah Peninsula region

Inhabitants arachnids, cultists of Mahathallah, ettercaps, sea monsters

Features jungles, rocky shores, temples

A narrow strip of water known as the Emerald Sound is all that separates one of Qadira's most lush and fertile regions from one of its most notorious. The Minatory Isles have haunted sailors' yarns since trade first began to flourish along the eastern shores of the Obari Ocean. Be it the strange lights and eerie songs drifting from the shores of jungle-choked Alo-Gakil or mere glimpses of hideous forms lurching across the web-strung beaches of the aptly named Spider Island, those who draw near the islands witness enough to frighten them off. Few serious attempts at landfall on the Minatory Isles have been made since early efforts to establish trade and to seek resources ended in bloodshed, madness, or mysterious vanishings.

The Minatory Isles consist of three major islands and nearly two dozen smaller islets. Most of these smaller islets measure less than a mile across, yet each also plays host to a different type of dangerous creature. Those islands not used as lairs have surrounding waters infested with monsters.

Alo-Gakil, sometimes called the Black Talon, is the largest of the Minatory Isles. It is an expanse covered with dense jungle and best known for the strange black mountain that rises like a single claw from the island's heart. No plants grow more than a quarter of the way up the slopes of this 5,000-foot peak, save for an oily sort of lichen that clings tenaciously to rifts and crevices where sunlight rarely shines directly. The sight of strange purple lights dancing on the mountain's upper slopes on certain nights of the year prompts many rumors, as does the sprawling stone temple that broods upon the island's northern shore. This immense structure of violet porphyry stands almost like a sentinel, glowering out across the Emerald Sound toward the mainland. The temple is devoted to the whore queen Mahathallah and is staffed by a small town's worth of worshipers. Stories hold that numerous devil worshipers (many of whom are changelings or tieflings) make regular pilgrimages to a "true" temple hidden near the black peak of the island's most prominent feature.

The second largest of the notorious Minatory Isles is Dagon's Fang. As the southernmost of the isles, Dagon's Fang has traditionally been the least visited, and its reputation may well be the darkest. While many rumors tell conflicting tales of the primary inhabitants of the island (ranging from marsh giants to debased fey to the hungry undead of countless doomed shipwreck survivors), the most infamous accounts whisper of an

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ancient visit to the isle by the demon lord Dagon to spawn an entire brood of malformed sea monsters within the isle's numerous weed-choked lagoons.

Spider Island is a fittingly named realm, for even from afar one cannot mistake the adornments of its rocky shores for anything other than the immense and complex silken webs that they are. Spiders of all sorts dwell upon this island, making their lairs in complex tunnels among the webs that shroud the stony surface. Pale ettercaps abound along the shores, but deeper inland dwell the island's true rulers—dozens of manipulative Leng spiders who use the isle as a base of operations in the waking world for their own nefarious plans.

NAAMAT

Luxurious Tent City of Bedchambers

Location shores of the River Ladan, Northern Zho Mountains

Inhabitants clerics, doves, qedeshatam followers

Features lively salons, ornate silk tents, traveling baths

Naamat is the largest of the traveling qedeshatam (see page 18) encampments in Qadira. Magic hangs heavy on its perfumed air, allowing the qedeshats to create an atmosphere of luxury even in the middle of deserts or

sparse plains. The encampment comes complete with sparkling musical fountains, relaxing baths, outdoor dining areas, and shaded courtyards redolent with the scent of flowering fruit trees.

Though foreigners often tell tales of orgies with courtesans of surpassing beauty, whose company for a night costs a king's ransom, qedeshats consider themselves healers as much as courtesans and choose their clients based on whom they think they can help, not on what a client can pay. It is up to the client to decide what to leave as an offering to the qedeshat's patron deity. Qedeshats worship a range of deities—some of the most popular being Calistria, Shelyn, Sarenrae, and Arshea—but share a mystic philosophy that holds that union with the divine can be achieved in the ecstasy of physical union.

A visitor to Naamat is greeted by **Tamidah Zufiq** (NG female half-elf cleric of Shelyn 9), the camp's leader, and led to a central courtyard where the qedeshats hold a salon, engaging in conversation on light topics and playing gambling games in which the forfeit is a kiss or a song. Between meals, visitors are offered spiced wine and honey cakes, and they may introduce themselves to the qedeshats present to solicit a companion for the evening.

Naamat is an excellent place to find regular healing as well, as clerics often travel with the qedeshats. Tamidah manages her flock with a serene smile, but an astute observer can see that she conceals worry behind it. Though she carefully screens those who join her group, she suspects that worshipers of the whore queen Ardad Lili have infiltrated the camp, playing the long game to gain entrance before using their position to twist and defile qedeshatam sacred practices.

NEW BURNED LANDS

Blasted Wasteland of Dirs and Desert Drakes

Location center of the Alavah Peninsula region

Inhabitants desert drakes, dirs, jackalweres

Features mysterious massive skeletons, obsidian palace, roaming pillars of fire

Much of the Alavah Peninsula was a thriving region of fertile farmland until shortly after the Qadiran-driven coup that overthrew the pharaoh of Osirion and installed a Qadiran satrap. In 1535 AR, a massive sandstorm blew in, seemingly from nowhere. Hidden inside it were whirlwinds of fire, and in a matter of days the fire and sand had scoured every trace of life from the central peninsula.

A thin strip of land along the southern coast has overcome the desertification, but the center of the peninsula remains as arid as any desert. Deep within these blasted lands lies a



NAAMAT



region the locals call the New Burnt Lands, ruled by a div known as the **Lady of the Burnt Lands** (NE female sepid div fighter 6; *Bestiary* 3 82). The parched dunes shift in the hot winds, sometimes revealing the massive skeletons of unidentified creatures. Jackalweres (*Bestiary* 3 154) and desert drakes (*Bestiary* 3 105) patrol the area, pillars of fire dance over the sand and pursue invaders, and the Lady's div handmaidens bring any mortal who ventures into her lands back to her obsidian palace. Its interior is a labyrinth of razor edges and twisted reflections where the Lady confines her victims, applying mind-bending magic and poisoned whispers to twist their psyches before sending them back to undermine and destroy their communities as agents of her fiendish goals.

Villagers from the coastal settlement of Mahayir recently petitioned the satrap to send forces to deal with the Lady of the Burnt Lands, but their requests have fallen on deaf ears. Desperate, the villagers have assembled their meager wealth to offer a bounty to any who can defeat her. They suspect that the Lady holds someone important to the satrap as surety against his interference, and that the satrap would gratefully offer rich rewards to anyone who could rescue the victim.

Omash

Military Training Ground on the Border

Location Ladan Hills, Northern Zho Mountains region

Inhabitants aurumvoraxes, desert fey, ogre bandit clans

Features military training facilities, model castles and towers

On a leveled mountaintop on the border between Taldor and Qadira sits Omash, a sprawling fortress that serves as the easternmost stop for patrols riding from the coast to the Zho Mountains. It is also the primary training ground for Qadira's Satrapian Guard. At any given time, it houses close to 30,000 soldiers and support staff.

Twelve schools of war, each specializing in a particular tactic or troop type, share the facilities. Soldiers train as light and heavy horse, camel, and elephant cavalry on broad riding grounds and complex obstacle courses. They acquire competency in bows, pikes, and spears, and they practice swordplay, siege warfare, and storming castles. A few elite warriors even train as riders of flying creatures, while others have been working diligently (and with no small cost to fingers or even entire hands) at training the ill-tempered aurumvoraxes (*Bestiary* 2 35) that dwell in the region as allied fighting beasts.

High Commander **Zarathus al-Samiya Ursani Hakkal** (N male human fighter 6/noble scion 10; *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Paths of Prestige* 38) commands Omash and badgers the satrap for permission to feint across the border in hopes of provoking a Taldan attack that will lead to war. Xerbystes II denies his requests, but both

are impatient for battle and separately consider staging false attacks from Taldor that will leave the emperor with no choice but to declare war. The ogre raiding parties of the Zho Mountains, well paid by Zarathus, would be only too happy to instigate conflict, though as a loyal soldier, Zarathus still sends emissaries to the ogres to quell their bloodthirst. Only about half the emissaries return.

While for decades the camp avoided conflict with the desert fey that inhabit the foothills, recently a hostile fey known as a rabisu (see page 62) has begun to prey on the camp. It is fond of taking on the forms of various soldiers and officers and sowing discord among their units. At his wits' end, Zarathus is desperate for help in getting rid of the creature.

QUMARIN

Accursed Lost City

Location unknown, Meraz Desert region

Inhabitants unknown

Features bloodstained stones, sand-buried ruins, well-preserved ancient documents

Only the tribes of the Meraz Desert remember Qumarin, and they pass on its name only as a warning. Even they don't know the exact location of the ancient settlement, for the shifting sands capriciously reveal and re-veil it. Qumarin was a pre-Earthfall metropolis, but it fell into ruin long before the plummeting *Starstone* created the Inner Sea. Nothing is known about the nature of Qumarin's inhabitants—only that subsequent civilizations considered it so accursed that they labored to shift the Meraz River tens of miles away from the site rather than build their cities anywhere near it.

To venture into Qumarin unprepared is to risk death, or worse—to become a desiccated corpse left kneeling upon a nearby dune in a posture of awestruck supplication. Such mummified figures are usually found by nomads who take them as signs to avoid the area, though the sands have always covered the ruins before the desert tribes can find them. Those few who survive a visit to Qumarin are unable to talk of what they saw there—they are sometimes unable to speak at all—but frequently babble about not having brought an appropriate gift. These survivors return blind, their faces burned with brands depicting wheels of wings, eyes, and fire.

A few legends of the mysterious goddess Shahar hold that the ruins contain documents recording the true names of angels and devils, written in a primordial language that reshapes reality as it is spoken. Other legends claim that Qumarin was a city built by aliens who visited Golarion before humanity first rose. Creatures such as the alien elder things (*Bestiary* 4 85) or the enigmatic anunnaki (*Bestiary* 5 28) are often cited as Qumarin's architects. The truth is likely something else entirely.

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SHADUN

Ash-Strewn Lair of Twisted Humanoids

Location Southern Zho Mountains region

Inhabitants flesh-eating undead (particularly ghouls and ghastrs), gnolls, hyenas, yrthaks

Features hallucinogenic gasses, lava-coated buildings, volcanic rift

For centuries, Shadun was one of Qadira's major breadbaskets, a city of terraced gardens and stepped farmlands perched on either side of a rift in the Zho Mountains. Its buildings boasted intricate jeweled mosaics, many of which were imbued with magic that caused them to move and play out historical scenes. Mineral sediments, frequent snowmelt, and the soft soils of the Pashman River's watershed basin made Shadun's crops incredibly fertile.

In 3862 AR, the twin volcanoes of Zhobl and Zhonar erupted, raining lava and volcanic ash upon the massive city of Shadun. The devastation cut off escape to the north, where Gurat and Katheer might have taken in refugees. Most of the inhabitants died in the initial destruction. The few survivors fled south into the mountains and the desert beyond. Most turned to the flesh of hyenas and gnolls for sustenance in the bleak wastes they wandered. Before long, having forsaken the laws and morals of their culture and faith, they began to kill one another to feed. Though none can say whether it was triggered by their cannibalistic hungers and the flesh of the creatures they consumed, or whether the transformation was controlled by some malicious power, the Shadunai began to twist into monsters. They took the name Sat'un, and they wander the mountains and deserts today as particularly vicious gnolls (the Sat'un are gnolls with the advanced template). Sat'un whose bodies are not destroyed upon death almost always rise at the next sunset as ghouls, their eyes aglow from within as if they contained blots of molten lava.

Most of these creatures turned to worship of Lamashtu, who fuels their bloody hungers, or to the supplication of other demon lords (particularly Kabriri and Zura). Some Sat'un have feverish dreams of reversing their transformation, though none have had the strength to resist their cravings and turn back to human civilization. Tribal leaders claim that such dreams are sent by Lamashtu to test the faith of her chosen people. It is common knowledge in Qadira that the Sat'un were once human, and consequently gnolls are even more reviled in the Zho Mountains region than elsewhere in human lands. Even the rare merchant-gnoll is more likely to find violence than commerce from human traders.

Shadun itself remains cloaked in eerie stillness, frozen in the moment of its destruction. Lava coated many of the stone buildings, which are now covered with twisted volcanic rock. In some cases, further seismic shifts in the

area have cracked the rock on the mountainsides, causing parts of it to fall away and reveal human-shaped hollows marking the last moments and postures of Shadun's inhabitants. Shadun was a wealthy city, and it is likely that ancient treasures and important historical clues remain in its buildings, but the Sat'un—and worse dangers—haunt its outskirts, eager for fresh prey. Rumor holds that the place is cursed, and those few who have ventured there and managed to return speak of creeping dread, impossible things glimpsed in one's peripheral vision, and sudden evil thoughts toward their companions.

The satrap is searching for volunteers for an expedition to excavate the ruins, accompanied by a sizeable detachment of the Satrapian Guard. **Nabil al-Isri** (CG male human bard 4), a professor at the College of the Green Dawn, quietly approaches volunteers and requests for them to bring him a live Sat'un gnoll, as he wishes to attempt to reverse the transformation.

TOWER OF WINDS

Citadel Where the Past and Future Are Present

Location Saray Coast, Plains of Paresh region

Inhabitants hawks, gazelles, shamlemn

Features burial mounds, carved jewels, white tower

In the middle of the Saray Coast, a strange peninsula extends into the Inner Sea. The peninsula is covered with tall grasses in myriad pale shades of green, blue, yellow, pink, and white, some bearing featherlike plumes. The swift winds that chase one another around the fields create a constant susurrus, echoing the crash of waves upon the cliffs that edge the peninsula. The peoples of the nearby Plains of Paresh do not consider the peninsula dangerous—indeed, venturing there to hunt the spiral-horned gazelles that bound through the grasses is a popular pastime—but no one settles there, for the arid soil and tough, strangling grasses make farming impossible, and the unusual flora will not sustain most animals. Thus, when one ventures to the plain, one usually finds it empty of life save for gazelles and endlessly circling hawks. Hints that the area was once inhabited can be found; children who play in the grass while their parents hunt sometimes bring back jewels carved with an unknown script, and ancient burial mounds lie beneath the rustling plants.

Those who explore the plain sometimes report encountering others who at first appear human. One of these beings—they are always encountered singly—engages the explorer in conversations that grow ever more unsettling. While it talks, the plain seems to fall silent; the sounds of whistling winds, hissing grasses, mournful hawk cries, and even the distant crashing of waves vanish. It becomes clear that this stranger isn't human, though none can quite identify what aspect of its mien or behavior identifies it as such. Eventually, the

being asks a simple yes or no question. When the explorer answers, some distraction briefly draws that person's attention elsewhere. There is a great rushing sound, and when the explorer turns back, the stranger is gone, leaving the former to wonder what might have happened if he had given the other answer. The peoples of the Plains of Paresah have taken to calling these strangers *shamlemnu*, or "evil winds."

In the center of the plain rises a strange white tower that bears the symbol of the ancient deity Atarshamayyin at its base. If an adventurer mounts the stair, pauses upon it, and listens carefully to the wind, she begins to hear voices. These snatches of conversation sometimes come from the climber's past, overheard as if they were happening at that moment, though just as often they are between people unknown to her. Sometimes, however, they reference events that have not yet happened, as if the winds were bearing them back from the future.

YALAKHEEN

The Wailing City

Location middle of the Alavah Desert, Alavah Peninsula region

Inhabitants criosphinxes, desert fey (particularly rabisus), predatory birds, priestesses of Yahaiya

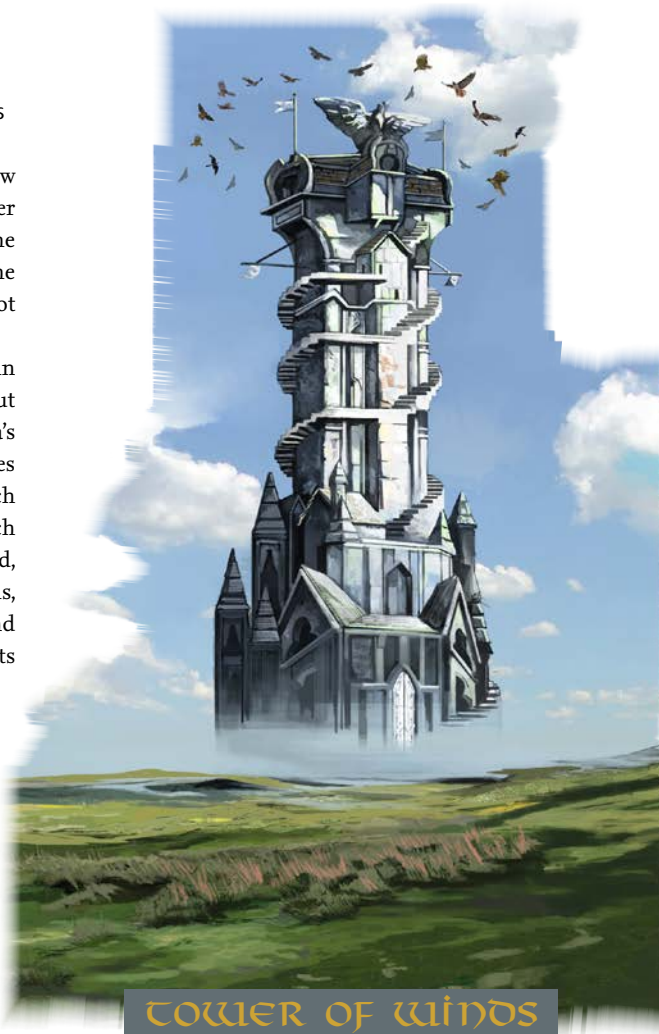
Features fallen watchtowers, glowing springs, mausoleums

Few travelers make the journey to Yalakheen, and few Qadirans willingly speak of it. The city lies in the center of the Alavah Desert, and the dunes around it are home to myriad predators. Those who are driven to brave the dangers of the harsh desert and its inhabitants do not expect to return.

Yalakheen is sacred to the goddess Yahaiya, the Cry in the Wastes. Its visitors usually come from families without an heir and tend to be in their twilight years. Yahaiya's silent priestesses, robed in pale violet with their faces hidden behind the shimmering folds of veils to which tiny circular mirrors are attached, wordlessly greet each visitor and lead him to the temple's shaded courtyard, where he can partake of a simple repast. As evening falls, a priestess conducts the visitor to a broken tower and leaves him inside. Desert owls settle on the highest points of the tower. The priestess departs.

Inside, the visitor offers his prayer. If the offer is accepted, the owls break into a chorus of mournful cries. The priestess returns and leads the supplicant out into the desert to an ancient altar, where she presents a silver blade. The supplicant can choose to return to the temple; if he does, he will receive a chamber in which to spend the night and a pack of supplies to sustain him on his journey back to civilization. He may instead spill out his life's blood on the altar; if he does so, his prayer will be answered.

Zahaidah al-Efe (CN female human cleric 12) oversees the temple. She turns away most visitors who have not come to seek Yahaiya's aid. If they request it, she gives them the refreshments and night's shelter demanded by Keleshite hospitality laws, but she confines them to the guest quarters and tells them only the basics: that she is the head priestess at this temple to Yahaiya and that they must leave in the morning. She expects them to depart at first light. Members of a clan of criosphinxes (*Bestiary* 3 252) in the area claim that the temple sits on a burial site that once belonged to their people, and the creatures attempt to convince visitors to search the temple complex for the hidden entrance in order to reclaim ancient relics for their people. Elsewhere in the ruined city, troublemaking fey, including several rabisus (see page 62), seek to intercept those who come seeking the assistance of Yalakheen's clergy, posing as priestesses so they can extract their own sinister promises from deluded victims. The city's clergy and these fey clash often, yet they are relatively evenly matched; to date neither faction has won the upper hand in the battle for control of Yalakheen.



TOWER OF WINDS

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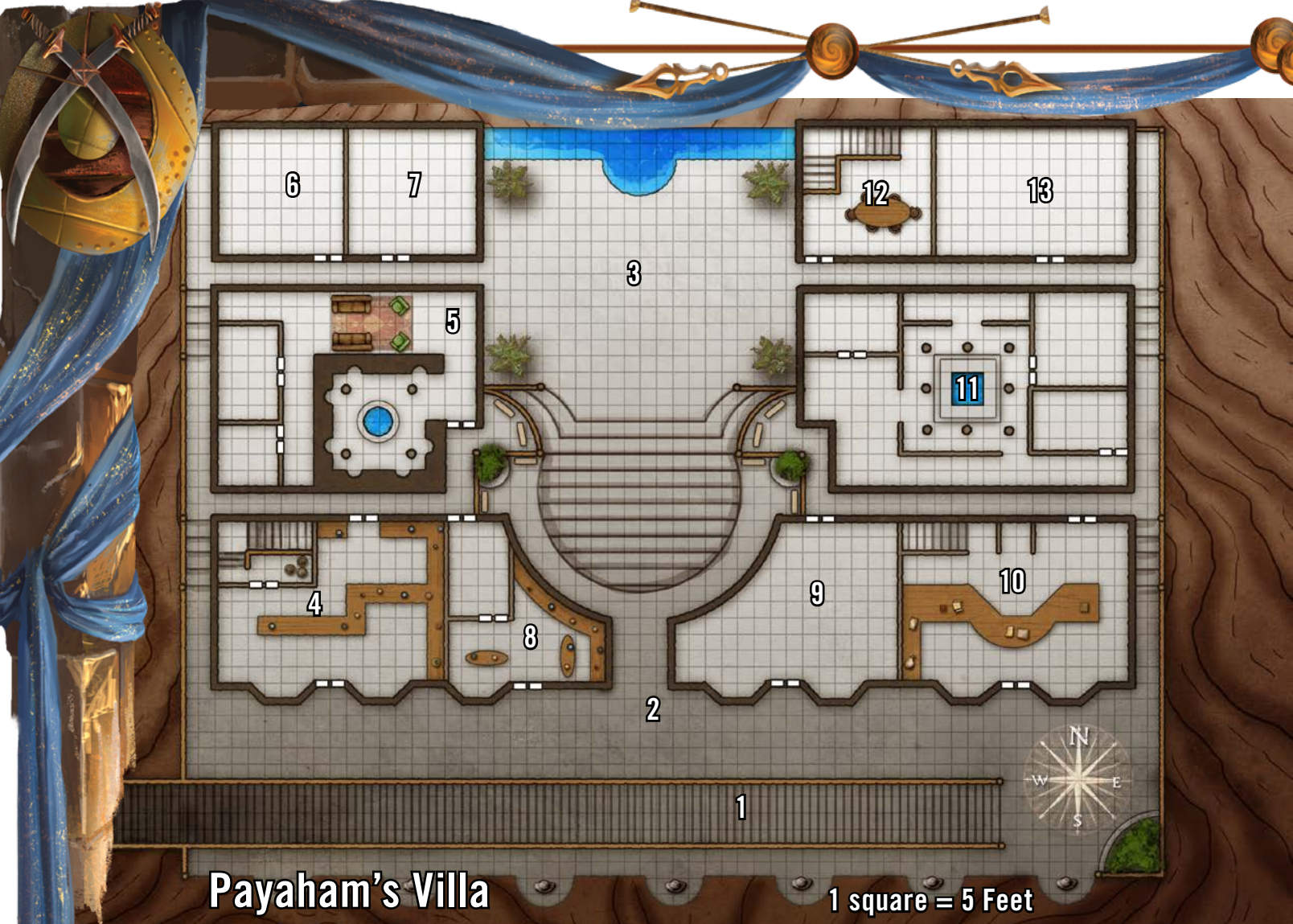
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Payaham's Villa

1 square = 5 Feet

PAYAHAM'S VILLA

The next few pages present an example adventure site in the ruined city of Al-Bashir, along with an adventure hook designed to send a group of 6th-level characters into the ruins. Only brief notes for each encounter area are provided, so GMs can expand upon the dangers in and around this ancient villa as best suits their games.

Outlanders tend to think of Qadira as a vast desert and picture its cities as rising from its golden sands. Yet most oases can't support large populations, and the majority of the satrap's largest cities are located in the mountains or on the coasts—as are the majority of its ruins. Here, in cities like Al-Bashir, the legacies of powerful families have been left behind, claimed by monstrous denizens that dwell in the places humanity has abandoned.

Yet not all of these lost legacies are forgotten. Amer Zhaleh Yesfihir plans to return to Isfahel for an audience with her father, the emperor, to support Layilah, a candidate to become heir to the throne. But before Zhaleh does so, she hopes to hire mercenaries to locate and retrieve an ancient diadem from a time when her ancestors were queens in their own right, so she can wear it during the audience. The diadem was last known to be

in the possession of an ancestor, Payaham, who died in the now-ruined city of Al-Bashir. How Zhaleh hears of the PCs is left to your design, but if a character in the group is hoping to secure the patronage of a powerful Qadiran, Zhaleh makes a perfect candidate for just such a quest. She gives the PCs instructions as to where to find her ancestor Payaham's villa and promises 10,000 gp and her patronage if they bring her the diadem.

If the PCs bring the diadem back to Zhaleh, she pays them as promised and offers them her patronage. Though she is not on good terms with the satrap, she is of sufficient rank to provide introductions to members of his court, and has connections with many of Katheer's noble families and merchant houses.

The ruined city of Al-Bashir itself is a dangerous region, and is detailed further on page 48 of this book. Harpies patrol its ramparts, and to reach Payaham's villa, the PCs must either evade their notice or fight their way through. A map of the neighborhood that contained Payaham's villa is presented above. This is a neatly segmented section of the city comprising three tiers built into the side of the mountain, with 40-foot-high walls to the east and the west separating it from adjacent districts. Specific areas

of interest for the PCs to explore as they make their way through the neighborhood are presented in brief below.

1. Promenade (CR 6): A 3-foot wall overlooks a 200-foot drop down the mountain's side, and a wide staircase ascends from the lower neighborhood to Payaham's. Regularly spaced plinths host statues of important figures in the city's history; each statue was once a construct programmed to attack invaders in case the city was ever overrun. While most of these guardians have long since been destroyed, three caryatid columns (*Bestiary* 3 46) still function and move to attack anyone who attempts to climb the stairs—the denizens of the neighborhood generally use flight or simply climb to come and go, leaving these guardians to vex land-bound intruders (such as the PCs). These caryatid columns do not pursue foes off the stairs.

2. Pearl Street (CR 7): This street was once a popular place for residents and visitors to gather, eat, talk, and shop, viewing merchants' wares through the ornate bay windows of their stores. On Pearl Street's north side, a wide arched opening leads to Pearl Plaza (area 3). The rest of the north side is taken up by storefronts. On the south side, an elegant wrought-iron railing ornamented with gilded suns prevents anyone on the street from taking an unexpected tumble down the stairs. The roofs of each store were once gardens used by the houses on the next tier up, but now hold only weeds, dust, and a trio of harpies. These three monsters prowl the rooftops, watching the street below for prey. They enjoy watching as the caryatid columns that guard the promenade attack intruders, and swoop in to fight if the PCs escape or defeat those foes. The harpies take great delight in using their captivating song to lure victims off ledges. If one is slain, the surviving harpies flee to area 11 to warn their mistress.

3. Pearl Plaza: Broad, shallow steps lead up to this open-air gathering place, which is 10 feet above Pearl Street. The plaza, which is surrounded by 10-foot walls, served as a place of rest for the residents. At the plaza's northern end, a long pool stretches its width, presided over by a statue of a serene woman in flowing robes, with a fountain springing from her outstretched hand. The waters of this pool and fountain are magically enhanced even today; the waters remain pure despite the fountain's lack of maintenance, and restore 2d6 hp to anyone who drinks of them (a creature can't benefit from this effect more than once in a 24-hour period).

4. Tonics and Trinkets: This was once a prosperous magic shop, though its shelves now hold only a few broken potion bottles. One parchment upon which a pile of glass fragments rests is actually a *scroll of scorching ray*. Several of the broken bottles are decorated with carved gemstone figures or stoppers. A carved ivory scroll case hidden in a cabinet under the counter (Perception DC 20 to notice the concealed compartment) is worth 60 gp

and holds a *scroll of bestow weapon proficiency*^{UC}. A carved wooden counter bisects the main floor. In the northwest corner, a back room contains a few empty barrels as well as one holding 50 unworked pink quartz crystals worth 5 gp each. The stairs in this room go up to a second floor. This floor's layout is identical to that of the main floor, except that it's simply an open storage space without a counter, and without the walls surrounding the stairs. A chest in a corner of the second floor (Disable Device DC 30 to pick the lock) contains a chess set with translucent white stone celestial figures and obsidian fiendish ones, which is worth 400 gp.

5. Hepsibanat's Domain (CR 7): From the outside, this villa appears as weathered as any of the other buildings, but it takes on an entirely different feel as soon as the adventurers step inside the front door. The entryway opens onto a gracious marble atrium cooled by a running fountain, and its thick walls screen a luxurious sitting area from immediate view. As the PCs enter, a melodious voice beckons them to a sitting area, where a beautiful woman sits upon a couch, drinking chilled wine. Though she appears to be a Keleshite noble, she is actually a succubus named **Hepsibanat**, who is looking for someone to help her. She seeks the elimination of the harpy matron Mehaira (see area 11); in return, she offers a *martyr's tear* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 310). If she thinks she can get a PC to accept it, she also offers her profane gift. Hepsibanat is not interested in fighting the PCs, and considers the very suggestion insulting. She teleports away at the first sign of aggression and does not return while the PCs remain in the city. Hepsibanat maintains the rest of the villa, including two bedrooms, which she allows the PCs to use for rest and recovery, provided they each tell her the thing that both frightens and tempts them the most. Whether she uses this information later to the PCs' detriment is left up to you.

6. Student Apartment: University students shared this apartment in the city's heyday. The northwest corner has collapsed, but a magically protected masterwork oud carved with serpents, still in tune after all these years and worth 300 gp, hangs on the opposite wall.

7. Weaver's Apartment: This apartment belonged to a weaver, and ragged examples of his work—tapestries with hypnotic geometric patterns—still hang on the walls.

8. The Glittering Gate (CR 6): This jeweler's shop has been looted of its wealth by Mehaira and her gang, but keen-eyed PCs who succeed at a DC 25 Perception check can find small, flawed gemstones worth a total of 85 gp among the detritus. Unfortunately, digging through the refuse is certain to arouse the anger of the two centipede swarms that dwell in the shop's walls and floorboards.

9. Collapsed Shop: This shop is almost completely in ruins. The harpies from area 2 maintain nests in the rubble here.

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10. The Elegant Elephant: This pristine shop offers a faded glimpse into what life in Al-Bashir was like before the city's demise. A sign bearing an image of a well-dressed and improbably thin and dapper elephant hangs above the door. Within, folded outfits still lie neatly folded on the counters, the raiments made of silks from Vudra and Tian Xia. They are too fragile to wear, but if carefully transported back to Katheer, they would be of interest to museums and private collectors, and the 14 garments still whole could draw as much as 200 gp apiece.



11. Payaham's Villa (CR 9): This luxurious villa once belonged to Payaham, though it has now become the headquarters for **Mehaira** (NE female harpy sorcerer [rakshasa bloodline^{UM}] 5) and her gang. The harpy matron keeps her lair in the central, open-air courtyard, from which she can quickly take off. She has converted the former pool into a cushioned, sunken seating area. She wears Payaham's diadem, which she considers a whimsical sign of her authority. It has become a bit bloodstained.

Mehaira had a (now long-dead) charmed minion rig an acid arrow trap (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 421) in the entryway to keep out members of rival gangs; her own minions know to avoid the trap by entering via roof access. The harpy sorcerer is served by two advanced harpies who act as combination bodyguards and sycophants (in addition to the three harpies in area 2). If any of these minions alert Mehaira to the PCs' intrusion into the area, she has her two bodyguards lurk on the rooftops to keep an eye on the area, but not so far away that they can't swiftly come to her side to defend her.

Mehaira has collected an impressive stash of treasure in addition to Payaham's diadem (which is actually a *circlet of persuasion*), including an impressive jewelry collection. Most of these pieces were looted from homes in the area; their total worth is about 3,500 gp. Mehaira uses one of the villa's bedrooms as a prison cell for enemies or those who displease her—it currently contains a lone harpy named **Phaera**, a member of a rival gang, whom Mehaira has been interrogating. If freed, Phaera helps in the fight against Mehaira, but turns on the PCs immediately afterward.

12. Merchant's Meet (CR 5): This apartment had been converted into a meeting space for a merchant house, but today it serves as the lair for one of Mehaira's minions, the jackalwere **Wurud al-Tarub** (CE male jackalwere rogue 4; *Bestiary* 3 154) and his two pet jackals (use the statistics for a small dog). Wurud often journeys to Katheer in human form to pick up supplies for his mistress. He refuses, even under duress, to give the PCs any information about Mehaira.

13. Elegant Apartment (CR 6): This dwelling has finer construction than the others on this tier, though its ceiling bows alarmingly inward. A lamia named **Aleghasteh** is currently braiding her hair in the entry area to braid her hair, since there is still a polished bronze mirror on the wall. Aleghasteh is supposed to be supervising Wurud—whom Mehaira sees as unreliable due to his frequent contact with humans—but she finds his jackals annoying and has left them to work on their own while she takes a few minutes for herself.

RIDERS OF QADIRA

Horses carried the ancestors of the Keleshites out of the Windswept Wastes, took them to the safety of their deep desert holds, and bore them into war. Desert-dwelling Keleshites view their horses as members of their families, and tell anyone who questions this attitude that horses are wiser, more honest, and more loyal than humans—and have better senses of humor too. Children traveling with their tribes often sleep with their heads pillowed on a mare's belly, and when the family pitches its tent for the night, they see first to the needs of their horses.

The major horse-breeding families of central Kelesh keep meticulous records of their steeds' lineages and sell only geldings and mares considered unfit for breeding. A worthy mare might be given as a great gift on a momentous occasion, such as an important alliance or marriage, but studs never leave the family.

Keleshites ride only mares into battle, seeing stallions as too easily distracted. A Keleshite calls his swift, nimble mount a “daughter of the eastern wind,” and rides without spurs or whips. Foals begin their training at 3 months of age, usually at the hands of the tribe's children. The training is playful and without punishment, for the fiery spirit of a Keleshite horse is something to be shaped, not broken. When she is a few months older, a mare begins more focused battle training.

In Qadira, most horse breeders dwell in the region of Al-Zabrit in the Meraz Desert. They maintain their herds in remote desert holds from which most strangers are barred on pain of death. In addition to the ubiquitous Keleshite horse breed, the shissah (see page 63), the breeders of Al-Zabrit also work with genies to produce elemental-touched lineages (see page 60).

In the fall, horse breeders travel with the stock they are willing to sell to the city of Saffeh for the yearly horse fair. This month-long festival turns the otherwise sparsely populated city into a bustling hub of ornate tents, temporary bazaars, and carnivals. The fair also holds a horse race, the Path of Flame, which draws hundreds of participants who compete for fame and glory, as well as the 20,000 gp purse given to the winner. Alliances are sealed, marriages are made, and fortunes are won or lost at the gambling table. Food, drink, and cheerful company are bountiful as the wary caution of the secretive Al-Zabriti tribes relaxes.

The Saffeh Horse Fair represents a rare opportunity for an outlander to obtain a shissah mount of his or her own. Such a notable steed commands a price of 5,000 gp or more, assuming the owner can be convinced to sell to a non-Keleshite in the first place. If the owner decides an outlander can be trusted to treat the horse well, the sale usually involves several days of training for both the buyer and the mount, who must be taught to recognize and obey her new owner.

QADIRAN HORSE TRICKS

Below are several examples of additional tricks (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 97) a shissah purchased at the Saffeh Horse Fair might know.

Drive (DC 25): The animal attempts to drive away any enemy mount not bearing a rider or any non-magical creature belonging to an opponent. The enemy mount or creature must succeed at a DC 10 Will save to resist being driven away. If it fails, it flees at its move speed with the animal in pursuit until they are 120 feet away from where they started. The animal attempts to keep its enemy there until the animal's master instructs it to release the enemy mount. After it flees, the enemy mount can attempt a new Will save to break free of the animal's control. Animal companions cannot be affected by this trick.

Find Master (DC 15): The animal attempts to locate its master. If it has scent, it tracks her via scent as per the track trick. It does not move at a greater speed than the person who gave it the command, and it stops to wait if that person ceases to follow it.

Herd (DC 20): The animal herds any non-animal-companion mounts not bearing a rider and any friendly non-combatants away from combat. An animal with an Intelligence score of 2 or higher selects four targets, plus an additional one for each point of Intelligence above 2, and drives them away from combat. If an enemy attacks the animal or any of its targets, the animal attacks the opponent until its targets are no longer within the enemy's reach, then resumes driving them away. After the animal and its targets are 120 feet from the nearest foe, the animal stops and waits until recalled by its master. A target can attempt a DC 10 Will save to resist being herded.

Protect (DC 20): The animal stands beside a designated target and readies an action to attack any non-ally that moves into a space adjacent to that of the target.

Quiet Watch (DC 20): The animal stands watch over an area as per the watch trick. If alerted to danger, it attempts to silently alert its master, such as by nosing her. If the animal's master cannot be silently alerted, it raises an alarm as per the watch trick.

Riding Equipment

Qadiran riders treat their horse-riding equipment almost as well as they treat their horses.

QADIRAN SADDLE

PRICE 200 GP

WEIGHT 5 lbs.

Developed by Al-Zabriti riders, a Qadiran saddle is sturdy but minimal, allowing horse and rider to communicate through slight muscle shifts and delicate balance adjustments. A Qadiran saddle gives a rider a +2 circumstance bonus on Ride checks, and it allows a rider to ignore the AC penalty from a charge when she is mounted and her mount charges.

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"I have heard tales of how the brutes to the north and west train their mounts, and it sickens me. Would you treat your own blood as a slave? It boggles the mind. The advent of a new foal is as joyous as the birth of any child to the family, so why do they torment such a beautiful gift with lashings and cages? You must trust your mount with your life. Mounts will carry you to safety and protect you in battle, and if they do not love you as you love them, you are as good as bleached bones in the sand."

—Atarah al-Zierat, Al-Zabrit horse trainer

While the cities of Qadira can prove dangerous, particularly to the purse or reputation of the untrained or naive visitor, they are also well guarded from the terrors that dwell in the wilds. The threats that lurk in the deserts, jungles, and mountains of Qadira are not to be scoffed at, particularly in regions such as the Minatory Isles, the New Burnt Lands, or the blistering heart of the Meraz Desert.

Certain encounters on the following tables concern mixed groups of humanoid NPCs with class levels, and these unique random confrontations are described in greater detail below.

Ahriman Cultists: This group of cultists consists of a band of six 7th-level clerics of Ahriman, lord of the divs (use the statistics for vivisectionist clerics on page 48 of *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*).

Orc Warband: An orc warband consists of an orc lieutenant (*Pathfinder RPG Monster Codex* 166), two orc sergeants (*Monster Codex* 166), an orc mystic (*Monster Codex* 167), an orc war drummer (*Monster Codex* 168), and 20 orcs.

Raiders: A group of raiders consists of six brigands (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 266) led by a single mounted archer (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 130). All of these are mounted on horseback.

KETZ DESERT/MERAZ DESERT			
d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-10	1 giant scorpion	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 242
11-15	1 basilisk	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 29
16-25	1d6 monitor lizards	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 194
26-30	1 death worm	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 76
31-35	1d4 gargoyles	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 137
36-40	1d6 wights	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 276
41-60	Raiders	6	See above
61-65	1d6 jann	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 141
66-70	1 behir	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 34
71-75	1 girtablilu	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 130
76-80	1 sphinx	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 257
81-85	1d4 maftets	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 188
86-95	1d8 shissahs	8	See page 63
96-100	1 desert giant	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 128

MAHAREV JUNGLE			
d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-10	1d4 griefgalls	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 5 133
11-20	1d4 jungle drakes	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 5 100
21-30	1d4 tendriculoses	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 259
31-45	1d4 will-o'-wisps	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 277
46-60	1 dire tiger	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 265
61-70	1 dire crocodile	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 51
71-80	1d6 wyverns	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 282
81-85	1 jungle giant	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 129
86-95	2d6 serpentfolk	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 242
96-100	1 viper vine	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 279

NEW BURNT LANDS			
d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-10	1d8 aghashes	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 83
11-25	2d6 jackalweres	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 154
26-30	1d4 desert drakes	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 105
31-40	1d6 pairakas	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 88
41-55	1 elder fire elemental	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 125
56-70	Ahriman Cultists	11	See above
71-80	1 shira	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 90
81-90	1d4 ghawwas	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 87
91-95	1 sepid	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 89
96-100	1 black scorpion	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 240

PLAINS OF PARESH			
d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-15	1d6 baboons	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 212
16-20	1d6 giant solifugids	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 253
21-25	1d6 jackalweres	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 154
26-35	1d8 venomous snakes	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 255
36-40	1d6 lions	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 193
41-45	1d8 giant ants	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 16
46-60	2d6 wild horses	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 177
61-85	Raiders	6	See above
86-90	1 pairaka	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 88
91-100	Orc Warband	9	See above

TAPUR FOREST			
d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-5	1d4 dryads	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 116
6-10	1d4 pards	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 211
11-20	1d4 forest drakes	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 107
21-30	1d4 satyrs	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 241
31-40	Raiders	6	See above
41-50	1 nymph	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 217
51-60	1d6 dire boars	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 36
61-70	2d4 spriggans	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 257
71-80	1d4 jungle drakes	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 5 100
81-86	1 kapre	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 172
87-95	2 aurumvoraxes	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 35
96-100	1 viper vine	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 279

ZHO MOUNTAINS AND FOOTHILLS			
d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-10	Raiders	6	See above
11-20	1d4 lamias	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 186
21-33	2d6 ogres	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 220
34-36	1 roc	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 236
37-41	1d4 chimeras	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 44
42-53	1d8 dire lions	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 193
54-58	1d8 hieracosphinxes	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 253
59-75	2d4 harpies	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 172
76-88	Orc Warband	9	See above
89-95	1 rukh	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 228
96-100	1 rabisu	11	See page 62

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GENIE-TOUCHED HORSE

This magnificent creature seems to be a horse, but the sparkle in its eyes reveals its supernatural origins.

GENIE-TOUCHED HORSE

CR 6



XP 2,400

N Large magical beast

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 73 (7d10+35)

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

Resist energy 10 (see genie-touched abilities)

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee bite +12 (1d8+6), 2 hooves +11 (1d6+3)

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

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 15, **Con** 20, **Int** 4, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 26

Feats Endurance, Multiattack, Run, Weapon Focus (hooves)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Perception +9, Survival +5

Languages see below

SQ genie-touched abilities

ECOLOGY

Environment warm plains

Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3–10)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Genie-Touched Abilities Each of the four breeds of genie-touched horse (istaheq, misayyah, tuanu, and zefaheen) has three unique genie-touched abilities. In addition, each breed has energy resistance to a specific form of energy and can understand (but cannot speak) one elemental language.

Legends hold that in the distant past, genies gifted certain Keleshite tribes with the companionship of a powerful race of equine mounts. Exactly what these mysterious creatures originally were is now lost to time, but their descendants exist still in the form of four distinct breeds of supernatural steeds known as genie-touched horses.

Istaheq

The stoic istaheq is the favored mount of the Al-Zabriti horse-breeding tribes. Istaheqs are dark gray or black.

ISTAHEQ

Resist acid 10

Languages Kelish, Terran (cannot speak any language)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Scion of Stone (Ex) Istaheqs are immune to petrification. An istaheq does not treat rubble or other uneven stone or rocky footing as difficult terrain, and it is immune to the effects of *spike stones* and caltrops. Finally, an istaheq's natural armor bonus is +10, rather than the typical +8 for most genie-touched horses.

Steadfast (Ex) An istaheq gains a +4 racial bonus on saving throws against all mind-affecting and fear effects. While serving willingly as a mount, an istaheq is immune to fear effects.

Thundering Hooves (Su) Once per day as a standard action, an istaheq can rear up and slam its hooves down hard against the ground. For 1 round, the ground in a 30-foot radius around the istaheq shakes, allowing the istaheq to attempt a single trip combat maneuver check against all creatures standing in this area. This action does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Misayyah

Temperamental, fierce, and courageous, a misayyah usually tolerates only one rider, with whom it forms a close bond—it often grows despondent if separated from its chosen partner. Misayyahs' coats are a shimmering metallic gold or bay, and they have intense amber eyes.



MISAYYAH

Resist fire 10

Languages Ignan, Kelish (cannot speak any language)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Firesight (Ex) A misayyah can see through fire and smoke without penalties. It is immune to the dazzled condition, and it gains a +4 saving throw on Fortitude saves against blindness caused by bright light.

Flaming Trail (Su) Once per day when a misayyah charges, it can leave behind a trail of fire up to 20 feet in length along its path. This functions as per *wall of fire* (CL 7th) and lasts for 1 round. If the misayyah makes a single hoof attack after using flaming trail, it deals an additional 2d6 points of fire damage on a successful hit. A creature that takes this fire damage must succeed at a DC 18 Reflex save or catch on fire. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Sunborn (Ex) A misayyah gives off more body heat than a normal horse, and while a misayyah can exist comfortably in hot environments, its rider takes a -2 penalty on Fortitude saving throws to resist detrimental effects from hot environments while riding one. In cold environments, a misayyah's rider is protected from the temperature as if via *endure elements*. During the day, while outside and above ground, a misayyah gains a +4 racial bonus on initiative checks.

TUANU

Tuanus are known for their fluid gait and intuitive responses. They are dark dappled gray with blue eyes.

TUANU

Resist cold 10

Languages Aquan, Kelish (cannot speak any language)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fluid Movement (Ex) A tuanu gains a +2 bonus to its CMD. A tuanu's rider gains a +5 circumstance bonus on Ride checks to stay in the saddle and on concentration checks attempted as a result of the motion while riding the tuanu. However, the bonus does not apply to concentration checks triggered by other causes, such as being injured while casting or when casting defensively.

Water Sense (Ex) A tuanu can use Survival to dowse for water (see the dowsing skill unlock on page 195 of *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures*). A tuanu does not require a dowsing rod to use this ability, and it gains a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks (for a total bonus of +9) to dowse for water.

Waterborn (Su) A tuanu has the aquatic subtype and the amphibious special quality. It has a swim speed of 30 feet. For up to 1 hour per day, the tuanu can grant a rider the ability to breathe underwater as long as the latter remains mounted.

ZEFAHEEN

Intelligent, strong willed, and fast as the wind, zefaheens are silvery gray in color and have startling gray eyes.

ZEFAHEEN

Resist electricity 10

Languages Auran, Kelish (cannot speak any language)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Air Walker (Sp) Once per day, a zefaheen can use *air walk* as a spell-like ability (CL 7th).

Desert Walker (Ex) A zefaheen suffers no harm from hot environments, and it never treats natural desert terrain as difficult terrain. It gains a +4 bonus on all Survival checks made while in a desert. A zefaheen does not leave tracks in a desert, as if under the effects of *pass without trace*.

Sand Sense (Ex) A zefaheen gains a +5 racial bonus on Perception checks in sandy desert environments, as well as a +2 racial bonus on Will saves against illusions (including mirages). The zefaheen can see through mist or sandstorm winds.

Genie-Touched Horse Companions

Any character who meets the prerequisites can take the following feat to gain a genie-touched horse as a mount or animal companion.

Genie-Touched Companion

Your animal companion is descended from creatures from one of the Elemental Planes.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, animal companion or mount class feature.

Benefit: You can take a genie-touched creature as an animal companion. This animal companion functions as a horse companion, with the adjustments that follow. When you choose your genie-touched companion, you must select your companion's breed: istaheq, misayyah, tuanu, or zefaheen. Your choice determines the type of energy resistance your companion gains, as well as the three additional abilities your companion acquires as you advance in level.

GENIE-TOUCHED COMPANIONS

Companion Type	Resistance	Starting Ability	4th-Level Advancement	8th-Level Advancement
Istaheq	Acid 10	Steadfast	Scion of stone	Thundering hooves
Misayyah	Fire 10	Firesight	Sunborn	Flaming trail
Tuanu	Cold 10	Water sense	Fluid movement	Waterborn
Zefaheen	Electricity 10	Desert walker	Sand sense	Air walker

Qadira
Jewel of the East

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BESTIARY

RABISU

This hollow-eyed, blue-skinned woman has a vulture's wings, birdlike talons for hands and feet, and a fang-filled mouth.

RABISU

CR 11



XP 12,800

CE Medium fey

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision, scent, see in darkness; Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 18, flat-footed 17 (+7 Dex, +1 dodge, +7 natural)

hp 147 (14d6+98)

Fort +11, **Ref** +16, **Will** +14

DR 10/cold iron and magic; **Immune** fire, bleed, fear; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10

Weaknesses susceptible to salt

OFFENSE

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

Melee bite +17 (1d6+8 plus blood drain), 4 claws +18 (1d4+8 plus grab)

Special Attacks blood drain (1d2 Constitution)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +18)

Constant—*greater magic fang* (self only)

At will—*command undead* (DC 18), *invisibility*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 19)

3/day—*charm monster* (DC 20), quickened *invisibility*, quickened *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 19), *ray of exhaustion*, *vampiric touch*

1/day—*mirage arcana* (DC 21), *veil* (self only), *waves of fatigue*, *wind walk*

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 24, **Con** 24, **Int** 19, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12 (+16 grapple); **CMD** 30 (34 vs. grapple)

Feats Ability Focus (*ray of enfeeblement*), Combat Casting, Dodge, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*invisibility*, *ray of enfeeblement*), Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Acrobatics +24, Disguise +23, Escape Artist +24, Fly +28, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (nature) +21, Perception +22, Sense Motive +22, Stealth +38, Survival +19; **Racial**

Modifiers +8 Stealth

Languages Aklo, Auran, Common

SQ blood frenzy

ECOLOGY

Environment warm deserts, hills, and mountains

Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3–6)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blood Frenzy (Ex) When a rabisu successfully drains blood from a creature, it becomes frenzied.

For 1d4 rounds after it drains blood, it acts as if affected by *haste* and gains fast healing 5.

Susceptible to Salt (Ex) A handful of salt burns a rabisu as a

flask of acid would, causing 1d6 points of damage per use. Ground sprinkled with salt functions as difficult terrain for a rabisu. A line of salt placed across a doorway, window, or other aperture can largely prevent a rabisu from passing through that opening. It can attempt to go through the opening as a move action, but unless it succeeds at a DC 20 Fortitude save, the salt prevents it from completing the movement, and it becomes nauseated for 1 round.

Despite their ghoulish appearance, rabisus are living creatures, not undead. While they can manipulate objects with their talons, they cannot wield weapons. Rabisus take great delight in the taste of blood. To these fey, this flavor can vary greatly, even between two similar creatures. Rabisus might keep particularly delicious victims prisoner for months to prolong the pleasure of savoring their blood.

A rabisu stands 6 feet tall and weighs 160 pounds.



shissah

This sleek equine is slightly smaller than an average horse, but its eyes contain a gleam of higher intelligence.

SHISSAH

CR 4



XP 1,200

N Large animal

Init +5; **Senses** desert senses, low-light vision, scent; Perception +8 (+12 in deserts)

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+5 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)

hp 42 (5d8+20)

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d8+4), 2 hooves +5 (1d4+2)

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

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 20, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14,

Cha 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 23

Feats Endurance, Multiattack, Run^B,
Weapon Focus (hoof)

Skills Perception +8 (+12
in deserts), Survival
+4 (+8 in deserts);

Racial Modifiers

+4 Perception
and +4 Survival
in deserts

SQ desert dweller, easily trained

ECOLOGY

Environment warm deserts

Organization solitary, pair, or herd
(3-16)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Desert Dweller (Ex) A shissah feels at home in the desert and does not treat light rubble or sand as difficult terrain. It gains a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks in the desert, and it treats hot temperatures as one category less for the purposes of heat danger. Thus, a shissah does not suffer unduly in very hot conditions, treating severe heat as very hot and extreme heat as severe heat.

Desert Senses (Ex) A shissah is familiar with mirages and gains a +4 racial bonus on saving throws against mirage effects and against effects that cause the dazzled condition. It gains a +4 racial bonus on Perception checks in deserts.

Easily Trained (Ex) A shissah is unusually quick to pick up tricks and animal training. Anyone attempting to train a shissah gains a +2 bonus on her Handle Animal checks. A shissah can

learn an additional 2 tricks beyond what an animal of its intelligence can normally be taught.

Shissahs are smaller and seem more delicate than most horses, but their fragile appearance belies their hardiness. They can travel for weeks on minimal water rations and survive on desert scrub and even locusts if necessary. Their large, wide-set eyes, which are surrounded by a thin ring of black, hairless skin, enable them to see despite the glare of the desert sun. Their wide foreheads, tapering to a slender muzzle, indicate their great intelligence. Their high-arched tails are often taken as a sign of their fiery spirit.

Shissahs come in a wide range of colors, and they are often used to refine the lines of other breeds and lend them greater intelligence and bravery. Few leave the hands of Keleshite owners, for a shissah is no mere mount, but a fierce and loyal partner.

SHISSAH COMPANIONS

A shissah companion starts with slightly less natural armor than a typical horse, but it is easier to train; while it doesn't advance until 7th level (unlike a typical horse, which advances at 4th level), the superior boons it gains in the end often make the wait worthwhile.

Starting Statistics: **Size** Large; **Speed** 60 ft.; **AC** +1 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d6), 2 hooves (1d4; secondary attack); **Ability Scores** Str 16, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 10; **SQ** desert dweller, easily trained.

7th-Level Advancement: **AC** +3 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d8), 2 hooves (1d4, secondary attack); **Ability Scores** Str +2, Dex +4, Con +2; **SQ** desert senses.



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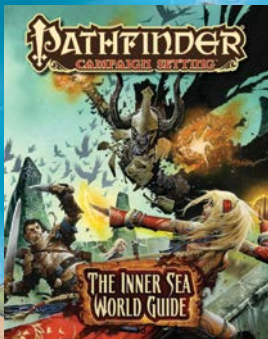
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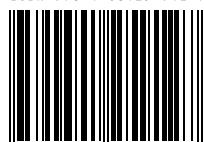
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