



A 3.5/OGL ADVENTURE FOR LEVEL 5

**LB1**

# Tower of the LAST BARON™



# PATHFINDER™

MODULE

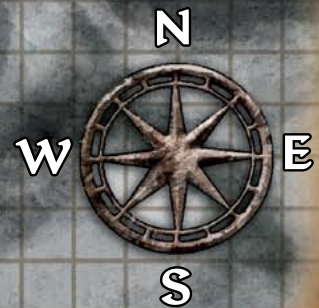
BY STEPHEN S. GREER

# Piren's Bluff



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one square = 20 feet



# TOWER OF THE LAST BARON

PATHFINDER MODULE LBI  
LB SERIES ADVENTURE

**Design:** Stephen S. Greer

**Development and Editing:** Jason Bulmahn, Mike McArtor, James L. Sutter, and Jeremy Walker

**Editorial Assistance:** Chris Self and Vic Wertz

**Art Director:** Drew Pocza

**Cover Artist:** Christian Pearce

**Interior Artists:** UDON, Drew Pocza, Wayne Reynolds

**Cartographer:** Rob Lazzaretti

**Managing Art Director:** James Davis

**Vice President of Operations:** Jeff Alvarez

**Director of Sales & Marketing:** Joshua J. Frost

**Paizo CEO:** Lisa Stevens

**Corporate Accountant:** Dave Erickson

**Staff Accountant:** Chris Self

**Technical Director:** Vic Wertz

**Publisher:** Erik Mona

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*LB1: Tower of the Last Baron* is a Pathfinder Module designed for four 5th-level characters. By the end of this module, characters should reach 7th level. This module is designed for play in the *Pathfinder Chronicles* campaign setting, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. This module is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the world's most popular fantasy roleplaying game.

The OGL can be found on page 31 of this product.

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**A**fter three decades of civil war, in which the diabolists of House Thrune consolidated their hold on the mighty empire of Chelias, the tide of revolution swept through Andoran. Frustrated with centuries of foreign rule and appalled by Chelias's new masters, the people of Andoran banded together to throw off the shackles of empire and embrace republican rule. During those days, the Andoren nobility faced a difficult choice: side with the people of Andoran and forfeit their titles, or join with the evil Chelish empire and face the wrath of the people. In the end, those who openly sided with Chelias were killed or driven into exile, while those who embraced the revolution retained much of their wealth and influence. A brave few nobles chose neither side, unable to relinquish their cherished nobility and unwilling to side with the foreign empire. The most famous of these is Baron Vendikon, once master of a large barony, who now controls little more than the few miles around his keep in Piren's Bluff. While his remote holdings were small enough to avoid the wrath of the mob during the revolution, Piren's Bluff is key in defending the new nation of Andoran from its enemies in Chelias. Of late, the People's Council in Almas has been leery of leaving such a strategically important position in the hands of a neutral party, but as of yet, they have been unable to take direct action.

## Adventure Background

When Andoran cut ties with Cheliox and became a free nation, the two countries took vastly different paths. Under the rule of the Thrice-Damned House of Thrune, Cheliox grew ever more decadent and debased, and its nobility began binding and bargaining with devils. Although the diabolists succeeded in restoring order to the empire, they failed to maintain a grip on the outlying nations.

Andoran became a nation of free people under the leadership of men who labored to promote the liberty and welfare of themselves and their people. Its aristocracy is barely one generation removed from the power and comforts of divine right, and some former nobles long for a return to the old days. One such lord is Baron Vendikon of Piren's Bluff. Situated at the furthest reaches of what is still technically considered Darkmoon Vale, Piren's Bluff sits on the border between Cheliox and Andoran, overlooking a pass across the Aspodell Mountains that is key to Andoran's defensive strategy. The pass—to say nothing of the keep—makes a tempting target for Chelioxians obsessed with regaining their old empire.

In the last few years, Chelish emissaries have visited numerous border towns in a subtle scheme to gain the sympathy, and eventually the fealty, of their leaders. Their plan is to take back Andoran one town at a time by instigating civil unrest, and hopefully even civil war. One of their first targets was Baron Vendikon of Piren's Bluff. Emissaries came to Baron Vendikon and whispered promises of arcane power and political might beyond his dreams. At first, the baron, still very much the political player he had been at the height of his power, entertained his visitors and politely rebuffed their offers. Yet the trickle of Chelish visitors coming to Piren's Bluff bearing small gifts—magical scrolls and baubles or rare texts—continued to swell, and the seeds of rebellion they planted in the baron's corrupt heart began to flower. Eventually, Baron Vendikon's passion for arcane knowledge and the secrets of the planes overcame his good sense, and he began accepting the more diabolical Chelish gifts—everything from hell hounds to a fiendish magical assistant. Finally, 2 weeks ago, the baron recanted his neutrality and vowed to hold Piren's Bluff for his allies in Cheliox.

Now, Cheliox is moving swiftly to consolidate its position. Sinister agents of the House of Thrune and its allies have already arrived in town, and soldiers from the Chelish army are not far behind. Although Baron Vendikon made every effort to keep the Council from learning of his treachery (at least, before it was too late), the townsfolk of Piren's Bluff guessed the truth and managed to get word to the Andoren forces in Darkmoon Vale. The military is already mobilizing to take back the

town and oust the corrupt baron before a Chelish army pours across the border.

While the Andoren army marches to Piren's Bluff, its spies have learned that some members of the town still oppose the baron's plans. General Dakovya and his soldiers have no desire to kill loyal Andorens, and he has instead decided to infiltrate Piren's Bluff with a small group of adventurers disguised as merchant guards. While the army surrounds the town and gives all appearances of a prolonged siege, this small group will sneak into the keep and put an end to the baron and his Chelish compatriots once and for all.

## Adventure Summary

The PCs enter Piren's Bluff just before the Andoren army arrives to lay siege to the town. Once inside, they must sabotage the baron's operations as much as possible, as well as uncover any secret defenses he might employ against the approaching army. Though the baron is aware of the threat of spies, several Andoren loyalists in Piren's Bluff can aid the PCs, and rumors provide clues to point them in the right direction. Once the PCs accomplish their objectives in the town, they must infiltrate the keep itself, gather information, and assassinate or capture the baron before his lust for power costs innocent lives.

## Introduction

*LB1: Tower of the Last Baron* is the first of two adventures in a series. In this adventure, the PCs arrive in Piren's Bluff disguised as merchant guards bringing much-needed food and supplies in advance of a besieging army. Acting as agents of Andoran, the PCs must head off an unwanted war between countrymen before it has a chance to happen. Their dangerous mission requires them to sabotage the baron's plans and dethrone him, either through assassination or capture, before an attack on the town is made.

If the PCs have ties to Andoran or merely a reputation for upholding justice, General Dakovya of Andoran contacts them secretly and prevails upon them to undertake the mission for the good of Piren's Bluff and all of Andoran—in his eyes, preventing one man's arrogance from destroying a town of loyal Andorens is reward enough. If your players prefer the role of mercenaries, however, getting them involved is simply a matter of finding the right price. Having heard rumors of their exploits, General Dakovya may offer them as much as 2,500 gp up front and another 2,500 gp upon completion of the mission, as well as looting rights to anything they can carry from the baron's castle.

Once the PCs accept the offer, the general lays out the party's objectives for the mission: gathering information, sabotaging any defenses, and above all, taking out the baron and bringing his turncoat reign to an end. While the general doesn't have any other active saboteurs within

the city, he's managed to get a message to some Andoren sympathizers within Piren's Bluff. Though not even he knows exactly who they are—the less everyone knows, the safer they remain—they can be recognized by displaying a secret sign: a sprig of mistletoe tied with a yellow ribbon.

General Dakovya tasks one of his civilian agents—a balding, jovial merchant named Gaskar Drolp—with taking on the PCs as guards and allowing them to escort him to Piren's Bluff. Once there, he quickly conducts his business at the Forest Bounty (area 7) and hurries off again, leaving the characters to navigate a city bustling with refugees fleeing the dust cloud raised by Dakovya's approaching army—still distant, yet growing ever closer.

## PART ONE: A TOWN BESIEGED

Sitting atop a flat shelf of rock overlooking a narrow canyon leading deeper into the mountains, a tall wooden palisade broken here and there by watchtowers surrounds the town of Piren's Bluff. A keep of obvious antiquity watches over the town from the highest elevation. Protected by stout stone walls and guard towers, this ancient bastion has long been the seat of power for the leaders of Piren's Bluff and protects Andoran's western border. Here, Baron Vendikon rules his people—for better or worse. From the reports trickling out of the isolated border town, “worse” seems to be most accurate.

A steady stream of men and women dressed in the thick clothing of mountain folk hurriedly enter through the open gates, some of them pushing or pulling carts, others leading horses pulling wagons while guards watch them closely. The guards search wagons and carts, and scrutinize everyone entering, but none of the people entering the town—including the PCs—are detained for very long. Not long after Gaskar departs, however, the last stragglers enter and the gates are sealed. Less than an hour later, a faint rumble is answered by cries from the watchtowers. The Andoren army has arrived.

### Piren's Bluff

As a border town, Piren's Bluff sees a lot of traffic—merchants, adventurers, miners, mountain trappers, and rangers—which allows strangers to mingle with its residents and regular visitors without standing out. This should let PCs move around the town without too much difficulty if they keep a low profile. If they

cause trouble, however, the town is small enough that news spreads quickly.

Baron Vendikon is the undisputed leader of Piren's Bluff. His soldiers and personal guards ensure that his laws are observed and crush any threats to his power. Despite his position, Baron Vendikon is unable to effectively assert his authority over the Chelish House Almir, which has long acted as the financial backbone of Piren's Bluff. Lord Dreyxor Almir is the last scion of this once-decadent house. The venerable Lord Almir has no loyalty to Andoran or Chelias, and is concerned only with furthering the interests of his numerous mining operations in the Aspodell Mountains. Thus, the baron grudgingly leaves matters as they are.

### PIREN'S BLUFF

**Size** hamlet (conventional); **AL** Lawful Neutral

**GP Limit** 100 gp; **Assets** 1,050 gp

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

**Population** 210

**Type** isolated (96% human, 2% halfling, 1% elf, 1% other races)

#### AUTHORITY FIGURES

**Baron Galdur Vendikon**, LE male human

aristocrat 2/wizard 5, **Guard Captain**

**Blacklock**, LN male human fighter 5,

**Dreyxor Almir**, CN male human sorcerer 6 (scion of House Almir), **Tandifor**

**Stroot**, NG male elf ranger 4 (Master of the Hunters' Guild),

#### NOTES

A walled keep acts as the seat of power for Piren's Bluff, while the rest of the small hamlet is clustered near its western walls. The wooden palisade provides adequate protection against most threats. When it doesn't, the citizens can retreat into the keep to defend themselves. Due to the rocky terrain Piren's Bluff is situated on, growing food is difficult, and the town's residents depend on a steady flow of merchants coming in from Chelias and Andoran carrying supplies of food and other commodities they can't produce themselves.

### Exploring the Town

By the end of the PCs' first day in town, the Andoren army has laid siege to Piren's Bluff. The army maintains constant pressure on Piren's Bluff by making minor attacks on the watchtowers and



**GENERAL DAKOVYA**

# TOWER OF THE LAST BARON

the town's fortifications, but its primary motive is choking off supplies and support (and secretly giving the PCs time to complete their mission).

Other than their basic objectives, PCs have little guidance regarding how to go about infiltrating the keep and assassinating the baron. While some parties might choose to mount a stealthy assault of the keep straightaway, others might opt to first spend some time in town, gathering information, formulating plans, and perhaps seeking out allies among the townsfolk who can help sneak them into the castle. Presented below is an overview of the town's key locations and several of its more notable residents, as well as a sampling of events that might occur during the siege.

## 1. Watchtowers (EL 4)

*Stout wooden towers rise above a thick palisade. Soldiers in red and gray livery stare out with expressions of grim apprehension.*

Each tower keyed to this location has a peaked roof covered in wood shakes. Arrow slits in the walls provide occupants improved cover against attacks from outside the towers. Each watchtower is accessed via a ladder leading up to a trap door that can be barred from the inside.

**Watchtower:** hardness 5, hp 80, Break DC 30.

**Trap door:** hardness 5, hp 20, Break DC 25.

**Creatures:** Three members of the town militia, made up of locals and conscripts, and two keep guards stand watch here at all times. Shift changes are made at sunrise (7 am), midday (12 pm), sundown (7 pm), and midnight (12 am). The watch details are rotated every day to the next watchtower along the palisade, moving clockwise.

### TOWN MILITIA (3)

CR 1/2

Male human warrior 1

LN Medium humanoid

**Init** +0; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +3

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14

(+4 armor)

**hp** 6 (1d8+2)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

#### OFFENSE

**Spd** 30 ft.

**Melee** spear +2 (1d8/x3)

**Ranged** light crossbow +1 (1d8/19–20) or  
spear +1 (1d8/x3)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** If the tower guards sense trouble, they sound the alarm, bringing reinforcements within 2d4 rounds.

They focus their attention on the area outside of the town, watching for trouble from the encamped Andoren army.

**During Combat** The militia use crossbows to attack enemies

## AWARDING AD HOC XP

Many of the encounters in this adventure are designed to reward players for their cleverness, ingenuity, and social skills. Unless an encounter recommends a specific ad hoc XP award, each time the PCs successfully negotiate their way through an important social encounter that yields a clue or aids in helping them accomplish their objectives, or bypasses an encounter altogether through stealth and cunning, award them experience points as if they'd defeated the NPCs involved in combat.

outside of the watchtower and spears to repel attackers trying to get inside.

**Morale** Tower guards fight to the death if trapped inside the watchtowers. Otherwise, they flee for reinforcements.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 11, **Dex** 11, **Con** 11, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +1

**Feats** Alertness, Weapon Focus (spear)

**Skills** Climb +0, Handle Animal +2, Jump +0, Listen +2, Ride +2, Spot +3

**Languages** Common

**Combat Gear** chain shirt, light crossbow and 20 bolts, spear;

**Other Gear** trail rations, whetstone, wineskin, 8 sp, 17 cp.

### KEEP GUARD (2)

CR 1

hp 12; see page 17

**Development:** Patrols of additional soldiers are never very far from any of the watchtowers. If an alarm is raised, the watchtower details can be bolstered with 1d4+1 additional warriors in 2d6 rounds.

## 2. The Dead Well

*A two-story construction of stone and timber towers above the rooftops of nearby buildings and rivals the watchtowers for prominence. A sign near its entrance depicts a stone well surrounded by weeds. Bronze letters affixed to the sign above the picture read "The Dead Well."*

*Long-railed hitching posts frame a wide stoop and tall, narrow pine doors providing entrance into the inn. Wood smoke wafts from stone chimneys rising from the steep, wood-shake roof, carrying the promise of warmth and a hot meal within.*

This inn was built around a dried-up well as an oddity and curiosity. The owner of the Dead Well, "Lucky" Ben Willhuff, was a professional gambler in Absalom who retired to Piren's Bluff to enjoy his spoils. It didn't take long for Willhuff to gain a reputation as the luckiest man

in town, and locals frequently toss copper coins into the well to gain some of that luck for themselves.

**Creatures:** The baron stations two out-of-uniform guards in the inn to keep an eye on the common room at all times, hoping to catch any hint of rebellion in its formative stages. In such a small town, the guards' presence is obvious to the locals, but most would rather play along than arouse the baron's ire. The PCs, being outsiders, can sense something suspicious about the guards with a DC 20 Sense Motive check.

**LUCKY BEN WILLHUFF**

**CR 8**

Venerable male human rogue 10  
CN Medium humanoid

**Init** +4; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +12

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15  
(+5 armor)

**hp** 17 (10d6–20)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

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

**OFFENSE**

**Spd** 30 ft.

**Melee** +2 *dagger* +7/+2 (1d4/17–20)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +5d6

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** If Lucky Ben feels a fight coming on, he attempts to hide or position himself so as to make a sneak attack.

**During Combat** Lucky Ben uses Combat Expertise to add +5 to his AC. He uses Improved Feint to sneak attack single opponents if he finds himself in a favorable tactical position. He does his best to keep a means of escape open so he can get help. He uses his *potion of invisibility* to sneak past enemies if necessary.

**Morale** If Lucky Ben cannot slip away or talk his way out of trouble, he fights to the death.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 7, **Dex** 10, **Con** 6, **Int** 18, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +7; **Grp** +5

**Feats** Alertness, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Balance +7, Bluff +7, Climb +8 (+10 climbing ropes), Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +7, Disguise +2, Escape Artist +5 (+7 to escape rope bonds), Forgery +8, Gather Information +7, Hide +5, Intimidate +7, Jump +3, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nobility & royalty) +8, Listen +11, Move Silently

+5, Open Lock +10, Profession (gambler) +6, Search +8, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +12, Spot +12, Survival +3 (to avoid getting lost or natural hazards and to find or follow tracks), Swim +3, Tumble +7, Use Rope +5 (+7 binding someone)

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven

**SQ** rogue special abilities, trap finding

**Combat Gear** +2 *dagger*, +1 *mithral shirt*, *potion of invisibility* (2); **Other Gear** keys to the doors of the inn, masterwork thieves' tools, 15 gp, 28 sp, 10 cp

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Skill Mastery:** Lucky Ben may choose to take 10 on Bluff, Climb, Disable Device, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble checks even if stress and distraction would normally prevent him from doing so.

**KEEP GUARDS (2)**

**CR 1**

**hp** 12 each; page 17

**AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

**TACTICS**

**During Combat** If they notice anyone attempting to penetrate the well, one of the guards attempts to arrest the troublemakers while the other one slips out for reinforcements, which arrive in 3d4 rounds.

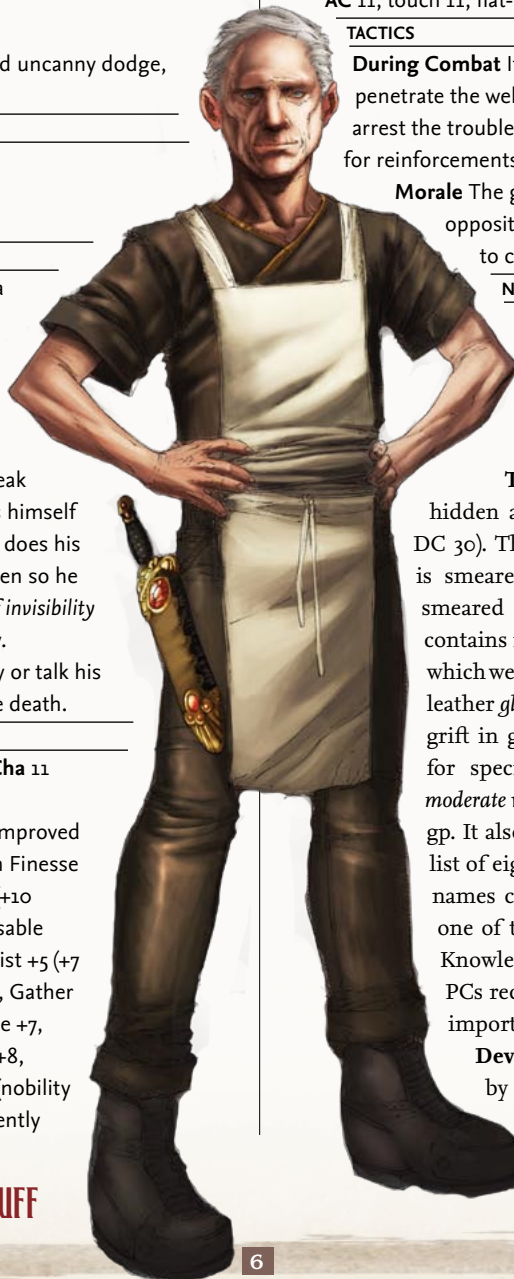
**Morale** The guards flee in the face of determined opposition, hoping to get back to the keep to call for aid.

**NOTES**

These guards are unarmored and do not have spears or crossbows, only their longswords, which they tend to keep hidden beneath tables or cloaks.

**Treasure:** Ben keeps an iron chest hidden atop a rafter in his room (Search DC 30). The chest isn't locked, but the latch is smeared with contact poison (doorknob smeared with contact poison, DMG 72). It contains mixed coins worth 800 gp (many of which were minted in Absalom), bloodstained leather *gloves of Dexterity* +4 (which he used to grift in gambling houses, but now reserves for special occasions), six *potions of cure moderate wounds*, and an emerald worth 1,000 gp. It also contains a sheet of vellum with a list of eight of Ben's old enemies, five of the names crossed out. Ben plans to kill every one of them before he dies. With a DC 20 Knowledge (nobility & royalty) check, the PCs recognize some or all of the names as important citizens of Absalom.

**Development:** Lucky Ben is infuriated by the baron's intrusion into his inn and the unwanted presence of



**LUCKY BEN WILLHUFF**



guards loitering in the common room. If the PCs can improve his attitude from indifferent to helpful with a DC 30 Diplomacy check, he approaches them about the unwanted situation and might even help them accomplish their mission. Ben isn't interested in politics, but he wants to come out of the current state of affairs on the winning side. He recognizes that it probably won't be the baron's. He also knows the password that allows entry into the keep (see area K1).

### 3. Shenk's Dog Yard (EL 5)

*Crouched in the shadows of the tall northern wall of the keep proper, a humble shack occupies one corner of an open yard surrounded by a crooked iron fence. A row of doghouses lines the western side of the yard, while kennels occupy the space along the fence opposite them. Several mastiffs wearing spiked iron collars roam the yard, masters of their small patch of land, while younger ones pace back and forth within the confines of the kennels. A sign fastened to the gate in the southern portion of the fence reads, "Shenk's Dog Yard."*

A quiet, hermit-like old ranger named Tweiford Shenk runs a modest business breeding and training dogs with his assistant Bumbo, the halfwit nephew of the baron. Tweiford, a wiry man with a heavy lantern jaw and dark, close-cropped hair, lives in a small shack. Bumbo sleeps in an add-on that is little more than a lean-to attached to the shack.

When not working with his animals, Tweiford keeps to himself, whittling and sketching pictures of animals from his memories of exploring the wilds of Golarion. The walls and shelves of his tiny home are covered with hundreds of carvings and pictures crafted by his own hands.

Tweiford doesn't care for the baron's recent decisions, but keeps his opinions to himself. Tweiford is kind and gentle with Bumbo, usually allowing the young man lots of time to wander the town unless he needs an extra pair of hands. Bumbo's imbecility is a source of considerable shame to the baron, and as a result he's asked Tweiford to take on his nephew as an assistant simply to keep him out of the baron's hair.

**Creatures:** Bumbo is shamming his mental deficiency and familial relation with the baron. His real name is Dindler Magrak. He has served as the baron's spy for several years, donning various disguises maintained for as long as they serve his needs. As Bumbo, the baron's spy is a shaggy-haired, freckle-faced man with a faint look of nobility. He wears mismatched woolens and a stained cloak that's too big for him, which he often trips over. The disguised Dindler wanders the town grinning like a fool and babbling nonsense to anyone who listens or even looks at him. He uses the town fool facade to listen in on conversations and watch new visitors. A secret passage under one of the doghouses (Search DC 25), which leads

### BUMBO'S SPYING

PCs interacting with Bumbo/Dindler can make a Sense Motive check opposed by his Bluff skill to determine that something about the supposed idiot is not quite right. Each time the PCs visit a new area, there is a 25% chance Bumbo arrives while the PCs are there and spies on them until they leave. Use a Sense Motive check, opposed by a passive Bluff check rolled in secret, to determine if the PCs' actions arouse his suspicion. If Dindler wins the opposed roll, he tags along with the PCs to observe them further until he feels it's time to cut them loose again. If they act suspiciously enough, Dindler reports them to Baron Vendikon that night, in which case things can get complicated very quickly, as Guard Captain Blacklock arrives with an arrest squad in the middle of the night to capture the PCs (see The Arrests Begin on page 16).



**BUMBO**

up into an empty stall in the baron's stables (area D), allows Dindler to give a daily report to Baron Vendikon. Dindler also knows the password that allows entry into the keep (see area K1).

A few young mastiffs and a female with a new litter occupy the kennels. Although they aren't much of a threat, they can raise quite a racket if strangers enter the yard. The four adult dogs that roam the yard are disciplined guardians. They are trained to attack anyone except Tweiford or Bumbo who enters the yard, unless one of the two commands them otherwise (either with two high-pitched blasts from their training whistles or with a verbal command).

**DINDLER MAGRAK (AKA BUMBO) CR 5**

Male human rogue 5

NE Medium humanoid

**Init** +2; **Senses** Listen +9, Spot +9

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(+3 armor, +2 Dex)

**hp** 20 (5d6)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

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

**OFFENSE**

**Spd** 30 ft.

**Melee** masterwork dagger +6 (1d4-1/19-20)

**Ranged** masterwork dagger +6 (1d4-1/19-20)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +3d6

**TACTICS**

**During Combat** Dindler attacks first only if he can make a sneak attack, otherwise choosing to flee and return another time when his prey is unsuspecting.

**Morale** Dindler is a coward and flees if he is outnumbered or wounded in any way. He saves his *potion of invisibility* in case of this kind of emergency. He surrenders if cornered, and gives up every dirty secret he knows if it means saving himself from pain or death.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +2

**Feats** Alertness, Skill Focus (Disguise), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Bluff +11, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +13 (+15 acting), Gather Information +10, Hide +5, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (local) +6, Listen +9, Open Lock +6, Perform (act) +10, Search +3, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +9, Tumble +3

**Languages** Common

**SQ** trapfinding

**Combat Gear** masterwork dagger (2), +1 leather armor,

*potion of invisibility*; **Other Gear** *elixir of love* (blue bottle containing 10 doses), masterwork thieves' tools, signet ring (inscribed with the symbol of Cheliox, hidden in pocket), 5 sp, 25 cp

**MASTIFF (4) CR 1**

**hp** 13; **MM** 272 (riding dog)

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** The mastiffs alertly watch the yard for anything that doesn't belong there. Sneaking up on them can be quite difficult, regardless of the time of day.

**During Combat** The mastiffs attack the nearest target, but they are trained to hold opponents rather than kill them. They can make trip attacks as per wolves. Once they knock down opponents, they grapple their foes (holding on with their teeth) unless their lives are threatened, at which point they instinctively react with deadly force.

**Morale** If any of the mastiffs are slain, the others attack to kill, gaining a +1 morale bonus on their attack and damage rolls. They fight to the death to guard their master's property.

**TWEIFORD SHENK CR 3**

Male human ranger 3

N Medium humanoid

**Init** +2; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +7

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

(+3 armor, +2 Dex)

**hp** 20 (3d8+3)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

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

**OFFENSE**

**Spd** 30 ft.

**Melee** longsword +5 (1d8+2/19-20)

**Ranged** masterwork longbow +6 (1d8/x3) or masterwork longbow +4/+4 (1d8/x3)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy +2 (animals)

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** Tweiford only fights if his life and livelihood are threatened or if his dogs are attacked. He wears masterwork leather armor under his work clothes.

**During Combat** Tweiford favors his masterwork longbow to make ranged attacks. If forced into melee combat, he uses his longsword and fights defensively.

**Morale** Tweiford fights to the death as long as his four adult mastiffs are alive and fighting by his side. If they are killed, he flees to get help from the keep guards.

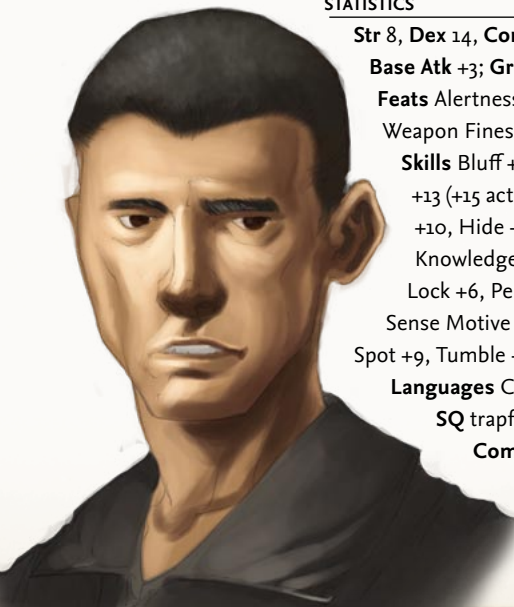
**STATISTICS**

**Str** 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +5

**Feats** Animal Affinity, Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track

**Skills** Handle Animal +7, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +7,



**TWEIFORD SHENK**

Profession (animal breeder) +7, Ride +4, Spot +7, Use Rope +7

**Languages** Common

**Gear** longsword, masterwork leather armor, masterwork longbow with 40 arrows, dog biscuits (7), work clothes, 12 sp, key

**Treasure:** Dindler keeps a masterwork disguise kit, 10 pp, and 25 gp of Chelish mint under a loose board beneath his sleeping mat (Search DC 25). Tweiford keeps his earnings and the remnants of wealth collected from his adventuring days in a locked metal box (Open Lock DC 30) hidden under his bed (Search DC 20), which consists of 15 pp, 600 gp, 186 sp, and a small ruby worth 500 gp. Tweiford keeps the key on a leather thong around his neck.

**Development:** If the PCs decide to stake out Shenk's Dog Yard or keep an eye on Dindler Magrak, the baron's spy creeps out of his tiny sleeping quarters at around midnight each night, coaxes a mastiff named Daisy out of her doghouse, lifts the hidden trap door built into the bottom, and slips down into the secret tunnel. Dindler usually returns about an hour later, crawls out of the secret passage, and returns to his sleeping mat. If they follow him down, the PCs discover that this tunnel is in fact quite spacious and well made—an escape route for the baron constructed long ago and then forgotten by all but the keep's master. The baron keeps two guards stationed at the far end lest someone other than Dindler use it to gain entry to the castle (see area D).

If the PCs attempt to befriend Tweiford, complimenting his dogs or taking an interest in them grants a +5 bonus on their Diplomacy check. His initial attitude is indifferent. If the PCs improve his attitude to friendly or better, Tweiford tells the PCs all about some of the prized "sniffers" the baron keeps on hand within the keep in order to keep watch over the crucial food stores and sniff out thieves and assassins.

## 4. Graden's

*A sign in front of this simple building bears the name "Graden's." Shovels, mattocks, and pickaxes lean against the front wall along a covered stoop. Shelves full of more tools and gear are clearly visible through the front windows.*

Graden's is a simple supply shop. Most items found in the equipment section of the PH are available here at a 10% markup.

**Creatures:** **Jeb Graden** (LE male human expert 2) runs this shop with his harridan of a wife and two boorish sons (LE male and female human commoner 1). The Gradens are xenophobic racists and unfriendly toward everyone. Though they have no particular love of Chelaxians or

the baron's politics, the current atmosphere of fear and paranoia suits them perfectly. Charisma-based checks to improve their attitudes suffer –10 penalties. The Gradens are eager to try and cash in on the siege, and any check that does not improve their attitudes results in arbitrary price increases and a prompt report of the characters as suspicious undesirables to the baron's guards.

## 5. The First Light

*A tall, angular building of white marble stands atop this lonely spot of ground. A steeple topped by a timeworn statue is the makeshift aerie for more than a dozen pigeons, their droppings covering the face and shoulders of an effigy that has obviously faded out of importance for the people of Piren's Bluff. Wood and brass doors under the shadows of the steeple stand open, revealing a clean but empty nave.*

With a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check, the PCs recognize the worn figure covered in bird droppings as Aroden. At one time, his church was popular among the folk of Piren's Bluff and they worshipped in this temple. With Aroden's death and the loss of his clergy's powers, however, most residents turned to other gods or simply lost their faith altogether.

The temple nave is a sad, empty place. Its wooden benches, marble pillars, and the statue of Aroden that stands atop a marble plinth opposite the doors are kept clean by an elf cleric of Aroden named **Tulrin Endessell** (LG male elf ex-cleric 5). The old priest spends his days scuttling about the nave armed with cleaning rags and a bucket of soapy water, waging a hermit's war against the dirt and grime that constantly threaten the temple interior. Tulrin is a harmless, kindly man. If attacked, he runs away and returns after his enemies depart.

**Development:** Tulrin is blissfully ignorant of events outside the temple and more than a little insane. He rarely leaves this building, using the small dormitory behind the altar to sleep. Neighbors bring him food and clean clothing. If the PCs engage him in conversation, it is obvious he is lost in dementia, but in his occasional lucid moments he warns against the priestess of Asmodeus and the papers with which she has spellbound the citizens of Piren's Bluff. When asked for further details, he warns that the pact papers must be destroyed. After that, he slips back into dementia.



**TULRIN ENDESELL**

## 6. Terron's Yard

*A building of brick and wood sits at the front of a large fenced-off yard full of horses and ponies. A long stable abuts the yard, and a sign over the wide gate reads "Terron's Yard."*

**Terron Redgrove, Jr.** (LN male human expert 2) is the town's hostler and recipient of his late father's business selling mounts and beasts of burden. He sells most varieties of horses and ponies here at the normal prices found in the PH.

## 7. Forest Bounty

*A sign over the open doors of this building depicts a satyr holding a cornucopia spilling fruits and vegetables. Rows of bins and shelves within are filled with a variety of food items, from produce to pickled pigs' feet and kegs of ale and wine.*

Forest Bounty is the town's one and only grocer. The Tuckets, a cheerful family of halflings (NG male and female halfling expert 1), sell the food and spirits they stock here at a 10% markup from the prices listed in the PH, and are nervously considering raising their prices, though the baron has promised he has enough food stocked in his storehouse to keep the town fed for far longer than the Andoren army can feed itself.

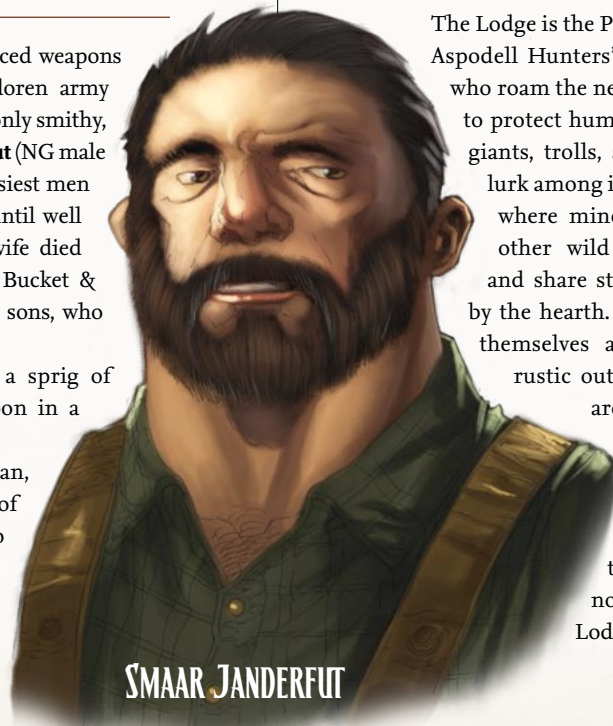
## 8. Bucket & Bellows (EL 2)

*This squat brick building echoes with the sound of metal striking metal. A sign depicting an iron bucket and a bellows hangs over the wide door. Inside, a large black anvil stands next to a massive bellows connected to a coal forge.*

Bucket & Bellows busily produced weapons and armor even before the Andoren army arrived. Operating Piren's Bluff's only smithy, retired adventurer **Smaar Janderfut** (NG male human fighter 4) is one of the busiest men in town. He works from sunup until well after dark every day. Since his wife died almost 2 years ago, Smaar runs Bucket & Bellows with the help of his five sons, who range in age from 9 to 18.

A DC 15 Spot check reveals a sprig of mistletoe bound in yellow ribbon in a corner of the front window.

**Creatures:** Since the siege began, the baron has ordered two of his men to stand guard here to protect the smithy from Andoren saboteurs and interference from the town folk.



**SMAAR JANDERFUT**

## KEEP GUARDS (2)

CR 1

hp 12 each; see page 17

### TACTICS

**During Combat** If outnumbered, one of the soldiers runs to get reinforcements. The soldiers fight to subdue opponents if possible. If lethal force is used against them, they respond in kind with their swords, seeking to flank opponents.

**Morale** The soldiers prefer to withdraw for help and subdue opponents with overwhelming numbers if faced with defeat.

**Development:** Smaar is unhappy about the baron's soldiers guarding his smithy, and fears they suspect his treasonous leanings. He's happy to do whatever he can to help the Andoren army defeat Baron Vendikon and his corrupt regime, but will not risk himself or his sons unnecessarily.

If the PCs gain Smaar's trust, he can provide them with any weapons and armor they need (to a maximum of 200 gp each, no more than 50 gp value for any individual item) or offer them a place to hide out. The guards are lax and don't suspect anything. Smaar has also noticed that Bumbo has a strange knack for showing up wherever grumblings against the baron are vented, and gladly shares his suspicion that the idiot is more than he seems.

## 9. The Lodge (EL 5)

*A longhouse made of thick logs with a massive brick chimney rising from the center of its roof dominates the rest of the buildings at this end of Mine Cart Road. Crossed hatchets and an enormous set of antlers overhang the wide door facing the road.*

The Lodge is the Piren's Bluff guildhall of the Aspodell Hunters' Guild—men and women who roam the nearby mountains and strive to protect humanity and nature from the giants, trolls, and other fell beasts that lurk among its peaks. It is also a cantina where miners and rangers from the other wild places of Avistan come and share stories or warm themselves by the hearth. New visitors who identify themselves as something other than rustic outdoorsmen and naturalists are bluntly advised to seek what they're looking for at the Conqueror's Blade or the Dead Well.

**Creatures:** Most of the men and women who normally patronize the Lodge have been conscripted.

## 【 TOWER OF THE LAST BARON 】

Only 1d4 hunters (CG male human expert 2) with various impairments and **Tandifor Stroot** (NG male elf ranger 4), Master of the Hunters' Guild, are usually in the cantina these days. Tandifor's wolf companion, Dapple, is always near the elf.

**Development:** Tandifor refuses to aid in the fighting and has earned the baron's enmity. The elf ranger had a dream a week ago, in which a wolf pack came to him and warned him that he must not side with the baron. Although the baron promised to hang Tandifor following the siege, the ranger fears no repercussions for his decision.

If any of the PCs are rangers or druids, Tandifor offers them shelter in the Lodge if they need it. If there is a good-aligned ranger or druid in the party, Tandifor's initial attitude is friendly—otherwise it is indifferent. If the PCs shift Tandifor's attitude to helpful, he offers his assistance in their struggle against the baron. He is willing to cast *calm animals* on Twieford's dogs if the PCs need help getting past them to use the secret passage into the keep.

### 10. The Black Candle

*This squat building sits at the middle of Dawn Lane. Ivy covers much of its walls and partially blocks several diamond-shaped stained-glass windows. Near the front entrance, a large iron arm thrusts up from the ground, its palm facing the sky. A black candle nestles in the palm, a bright flame dancing on its wick.*

The Black Candle specializes in herbal remedies for common ailments and injuries. The natural concoctions available at the Black Candle are very popular in Piren's Bluff. Any Heal checks made after using the special herbs sold here gain a +2 bonus. If combined with normal rest, they also provide the benefit of healing 1 extra hit point per day. A variety of poultices, teas, and infusions may be purchased for an average price of 1 gp.

The fire that burns from the large black candle near the door is a *continual flame*. Pushing open the front door causes a string of bells hanging in front of it to jingle loudly, and at the chain's end dangles a sprig of mistletoe wrapped in yellow ribbon. **Viaren the Apothecary** (CN female half-elf expert 3) is a raven-haired, half-elven beauty with green eyes and pale skin. Her shop is always open, since there's no telling when someone might need her remedies.

**Development:** If the PCs identify themselves as allies and succeed on a DC 15 Diplomacy check, Viaren can provide

them with a few varieties of poison she prepares for some of her customers. Although none are deadly, the poisons might help the PCs accomplish their mission a little easier. She has 1d3 doses each of malyss root paste, terinav root, oil of taggit, and blue whinnis (DMG 297). Viaren describes the qualities of each type of poison and how to use them.

Viaren suspects that the baron is dabbling in some form of necromancy. Lately, his agents have purchased a lot of herbs and concoctions used to preserve dead bodies. She fears he intends to use undead against the Andoren army.

### 11. The Conqueror's Blade (EL Variable)

*A stone building looms over the surrounding homes and shops, rivaled only by the temple across the street. A peaked roof sports a massive chimney merrily exhaling clouds of smoke heavy with the pleasant odor of roasting meat. Fiendish suits of armor stand guard next to the wide entrance of a place that a wooden sign over the door names "The Conqueror's Blade."*

This tavern is popular with the baron's soldiers and other fighting men. The owner is a retired bard named **Rhasper** (NE male human bard 4) who settled in Piren's Bluff years ago after fleeing a foreign court he talks about only in vague references. Rhasper has thinning black hair slicked back with scented hair wax. He has a habit of overdressing in worn court garb that was once fashionable in Cheliox, but is now years out of date. He talks in a high nasal voice and is prone to making horrible puns and whistling old songs.

Rhasper charges standard PH prices for drinks and meals. The baron pays Rhasper a hefty sum of gold to report any suspicious activity, such as patrons who ask too many questions or do a lot of whispering. Rhasper promised his three greedy barmaids—Elka, Treesa, and Mairén (LN female human commoner 1)—a silver crown each for reporting such instances to him. They are careful not to pass along frivolous reports, since Rhasper has a tendency to thrash them for wasting his time.

**Creatures:** During the day there are usually 3d6 soldiers on the baron's payroll relaxing here, catching a break from defending the walls or guard duty. At night, Captain Blacklock (see area **K23**) usually shares a few pints with his men before retiring to his personal residence on the corner of Dawn Lane and Mine Cart Road at around 10 pm. Although the soldiers play cards, toss dice, and attempt to fraternize with the local women while they throw back pints of ale, the mood is nonetheless grim and anxious.



**KEEP GUARDS (3d6)**

**CR 1**

LN Human warrior 1

hp 12 each; see page 17

**TACTICS**

**During Combat** The keep guards attempt to subdue opponents if a fight breaks out in the Conqueror's Blade. Any opponents using lethal damage are grappled, shackled, and thrown in cells in the keep (area **K26**).

**Morale** If outnumbered, or if they appear to be losing, the guards prefer to withdraw to a more defensible position and send for help, hoping to bury their opponents with overwhelming numbers.

**Development:** A PC may join the soldiers' games with a DC 20 Diplomacy check. Buying the guards a round of drinks provides a +2 circumstance bonus on this check. If successful, a character can learn the shift change schedules for the watchtowers, and the names and guard duty schedules of the soldiers at the table. The PCs learn the same information with a DC 20 Gather Information or Listen check. A PC who attempts either, however, must succeed on an opposed Bluff check against the guards' Sense Motive check to avoid arousing suspicion, whether or not the initial check succeeds. If a PC fails by 5 or more, he is called out for being nosy. A DC 25 Diplomacy check calms the soldiers' suspicions, but thereafter, the soldiers are more restrained and the PCs are unable to learn any more rumors from the current patrons. They may try again the next night when different soldiers are off duty, but the DCs increase by 2 for each extra evening the PCs try to get information.

If a failed Diplomacy check results in a hostile attitude, chairs scrape across the floor as the off-duty fighting men get to their feet and close in on the suspicious PCs. Rhasper intervenes, however, and advises the PCs to leave (after all, he can't get paid for reporting them if they've already been captured). If the PCs ignore his advice, things could turn deadly. If they manage to get out of the situation at all, the PCs need to lie low, as Rhasper and the baron's men immediately report them to Baron Vendikon (see The Arrests Begin).

**Ad Hoc XP Award:** If the PCs successfully gather information without arousing suspicion, grant them a CR 5 experience award.

## 12. Pact Hall (EL 7)

*The entrance to this stone building is flanked by identical brass statues depicting a handsome man with small horns on his head and his arms crossed in front of him. The tall iron doors are marked with faintly glowing pentagrams.*

This temple to Asmodeus was built in recent years after the baron converted. Townfolk complained about his decision, but when Asmodeus himself failed to appear in a puff of smoke and carry the citizens of Piren's Bluff down to Hell, they eventually came to accept its presence

and even prosper by making small pacts with the temple's priestess, Shiyara the High Mediator.

Worship services are held at midnight every Wealday and Starday. The temple is otherwise open from dawn until dusk and the doors are locked most other times except when hosting special visitors.

If the PCs enter the temple, read or paraphrase the following text.

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*A wide stone stair descends five feet into a large open chamber dominated by a glowing pentagram with a tall red candle burning at each of its five points. Black tapestries with silver pentagrams stitched into them cover every wall. Numerous chairs perch atop a ledge encircling three sides of the chamber. A wooden podium with a silver pentagram sits at the far side of the larger symbol in the floor. A large iron door behind it is the only other exit.*

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The temple is under the effects of an *unhallow* spell centered on the infernal pentagram in the floor. The *unhallow* spell provides the effects of a *bless* spell to all Asmodeus worshipers in the temple (already figured into the stats below).

A private contemplation room and luxuriant living quarters lie beyond the iron door. Both the main temple doors and the inner sanctum door share the same statistics.

**Iron Door:** hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 30.

**Creatures:** Shiyara is a tiefling with the gentlest features of her parents, which helped her advance as far as she has in the church's hierarchy. Lacking the horns and hooves that mark most of her kind, her only exceptional features are pointed ears, a pattern of dark spots along her neck and shoulders, and overly large eyes of burnished gold. Some people wrongly assume she descends from elves, and she encourages the misconception.

Shiyara normally stays in the temple, calling upon Asmodeus to honor the pacts of the people of Piren's Bluff by delivering them from their enemies. Her imp companions Barseq and Mesrop are bound to the temple. They use the forms of ravens to hide their true nature and function as fiendish oracles for Shiyara when she needs to *commune* with her fiendish lord. They also aid in the ceremonial pacts she administers within the pentagram in the nave. During each ceremony, the petitioner receives a *suggestion* from one of the imps perched on Shiyara's shoulder; each suggestion is designed to further the church's interests. Unlike a normal *suggestion*, the petitioners voluntarily enter into a pact with Asmodeus, and thus receive no save.

**BARSEQ AND MESROP**

**CR 2**

Imps

hp 13; MM 56

## [ TOWER OF THE LAST BARON ]




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### TACTICS

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**Before Combat** The imps become invisible and change back to imp form.

**During Combat** Barseq and Mesrop haven't used *suggestion* for a couple days. The imps pick out well-armed fighters and try to turn them against their companions. The imps single out lightly armored foes to attack with their poisonous stings, using *invisibility* to gain a tactical advantage. Fighting in the temple grants them a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls, thanks to *bless*.

**Morale** The imps attack and retreat. They use *invisibility* after each sting attempt, and attack again a round later. They cannot leave the temple, and fight to the death to defend it.

### SHIYARA THE HIGH MEDIATOR

CR 5

Female tiefling cleric 5

LE Medium outsider (native)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +3, Spot +3

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### DEFENSE

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**AC** 20, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+9 armor, +1 deflection)

**hp** 26 (5d8)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +7

**Resist** cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

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### OFFENSE

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**Spd** 20 ft.

**Melee** +1 flaming heavy mace +5 (1d8+2 plus 1d6 fire)

**Special Attacks** rebuke fire creatures and undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+6),

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th):

1/day—darkness

**Spells Prepared** (CL 5th, +4 melee touch, +3 ranged touch):

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *cure serious wounds*, *resist energy*<sup>D</sup>

2nd—*cure moderate wounds* (2), *invisibility*<sup>D</sup>, *scare* (DC 15)

1st—*burning hands*<sup>D</sup> (DC 14), *cause fear* (DC 14), *cure light wounds* (3)

0—*cure minor wounds*, *create water* (2), *detect magic*, *detect poison*

**D** domain spell; **Domains** Fire, Trickery

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### TACTICS

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**Before Combat** Shiyara is a gifted diplomat. She uses her powers of diplomacy to defuse potential confrontations and build alliances that she can later exploit. If combat is imminent, she casts *invisibility* to catch enemies off guard.

**During Combat** Shiyara targets enemy spellcasters with *blindness* and warriors with *scare*. She then casts *burning hands* and uses her mace thereafter.

**Morale** If reduced to less than 12 hp, Shiyara flees through the iron door and locks it. She uses her potions to heal up to full hit points. If her enemies try to get through the door, she retrieves the pact papers and begins



activating them to call on soldiers that made pacts here to come to the temple and kill her assailants. If her opponents make it past the door, she fights to the death.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 12, **Dex** 10, **Con** 10, **Int** 16, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 13

**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +4

**Feats** Negotiator, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)

**Skills** Bluff +10, Concentration +3, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +5, Hide -2, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge (religion) +8, Knowledge (the planes) +5, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +2, Spellcraft +6

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven, Infernal

**SQ** spontaneous casting (inflict spells)

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds* (x3); **Other Gear** *ring of protection* +1, +1 *glamered full plate*, +1 *flaming heavy mace*, cleric's vestments (Asmodeus), ink (1 vial), ink pen, key to the temple doors, parchment (3), scroll case, silver unholy symbol, spell component pouch

**Treasure:** The five candles on the pentagram are under *continual flame* effects. There are also four silver candelabra

placed around the nave, and each is worth 100 gp. If the PCs infiltrate the private rooms, there is a collection of three untitled tomes bound in black leather. The first documents the tenets of Asmodeus worship and the complex hierarchy of Hell. The second details numerous ceremonial pacts, each one more powerful than the next. The third defines dozens of lesser devils and documents the names of several specific fiends that may be bound to perform various services. The set is worth 1,500 gp.

A DC 30 Search of Shiyara's living quarters reveals a loose flagstone under which she stores a coffer full of temple offerings—177 gp and 124 sp. (If she's retreated to this room, it's already open.) It also contains more than a dozen scrolls bound in black ribbon. Each scroll bears the name of a Piren's Bluff citizen written in that person's blood, with a black pentagram inscribed beneath it—these are the names of men and women who made pacts with the church. If *detect magic* is used, the scrolls radiate moderate enchantment. These pacts each bear a latent *suggestion* spell waiting to be triggered if the parchment is brought within a pentagram *unhallowed* to the worship of Asmodeus. Their names simply need to be spoken along with the suggestive commands, and they take effect on the specific individuals immediately (CL 5th) no matter the distance between parchment and victim.

**Development:** Shiyara is a cunning negotiator with a strong sense of self-preservation. She turns on the baron if the PCs offer her sufficient incentive or seriously threaten her. She knows about the secret tunnel into the keep at area 3 and tells the PCs where it is if given assurances they will spare her. She also knows some of the layout of the keep proper, as well as the password that allows entry into the keep (see area K1) and uses this information as an additional bargaining chip if necessary. If the PCs seem open to accepting Asmodeus's aid, she attempts to trick them into entering a pact and in order to gain the latent *suggestion* against them.

**Ad Hoc XP Award:** If the PCs destroy the pact papers hidden in Shiyara's chambers, grant them a CR 4 experience award.

### 13. Almir Estate

*A tall estate made of timber, red bricks, and silver-flecked granite, oddly out of place both in its elegance and design, rises into the air like an enormous needle. Narrow stained-glass windows depict mountains and dragons, and leering gargoyles peer down from perches over the eaves. Stone-shingled roofs rise one atop another, tapering to a stark peak surmounted by an iron spike ending in a horizontal crescent moon cradling a nine-pointed star.*

The ancient estate of House Almir, known as the House of the Crescent Star, stood at this spot long before



Piren's Bluff was chartered. From just a pair of buildings to house their servants, the town sprang up around it as House Almir began carving up the surrounding mountains in its numerous mining ventures. Several generations of Almirs have occupied the House of the Crescent Star, each one carrying on the tradition of mining-based commerce and growing ever more removed from the affairs of Cheliix.

**Dreyxor Almir** (CN male human sorcerer 8) is a middle-aged, reclusive man who rarely leaves the privacy of his estate and never involves himself with local politics unless they affect his business. A family of servants, the Hartlebys (NG male and female human commoner 1), lives on the estate and attends to his needs, leaving him free to study the hundreds of books his family has amassed.

**Development:** Dreyxor Almir is concerned about the siege, of course—it's interfering with his business. PCs can gain audience with him by succeeding on a DC 20 Diplomacy check to convince his servants to interrupt his study. If the PCs reveal their mission to him and succeed on a DC 15 Diplomacy check, Lord Almir informs them that his surveying of the region suggests that there may be some sort of tunnel running beneath the castle and the southeastern end of town.

### 14. Argith's Alchemy Shoppe (EL 5)

*The sign over this odoriferous shop reads "Argith's Alchemy Shoppe" and depicts a bottle full of bubbly liquid. Various hissing and fizzing sounds resonate from behind the shop door, and smoke wafts from the open windows.*

Argith toils in his shop each day to create simple alchemical devices such as smokesticks and tindertwigs. His true love, however, is volatile compounds. Ever since a spy warned the baron that General Dakovya was gathering Andoren forces to move against him, the baron has had Argith working feverishly at producing vast amounts of alchemist's fire. All manner of alchemical items are available here at a 10% markup from the normal prices.

**Creatures:** **Argith** (LE male human expert [alchemist] 3) is a pock-marked yet fresh-faced youngster who inherited the practice from his deceased father less than a year ago and is still attempting to learn the ropes via books and notes left by his predecessor. As far as he's concerned, the siege is the best thing to ever happen to him, as it's created both an extensive demand for his services and a chance to see some of his creations in action. He hurriedly makes batch after batch of alchemist's fire from dawn to dusk, rushing back and forth to each worktable. The baron sent three Chelish bodyguards to assist Argith and cart batches of clay urns full of the explosive chemicals into the keep. They also protect the alchemist's shop from saboteurs.

**CHELISH BODYGUARD (3) CR 2**  
hp 18; see page 28

**Traps:** Argith's lab equipment is spread out over two worktables. The chemicals in the vials and jars being mixed or heated can cause a deadly explosion if bumped, jostled or damaged. During a fight here, the tables provide cover. If an attack that would normally hit an opponent fails due to cover, the table is struck, triggering an explosion.

**EXPLOSIVE CHEMICALS (2) CR 2**

**Type** mechanical; **Search** DC 15;  
**Disable Device** DC 15

**EFFECTS**

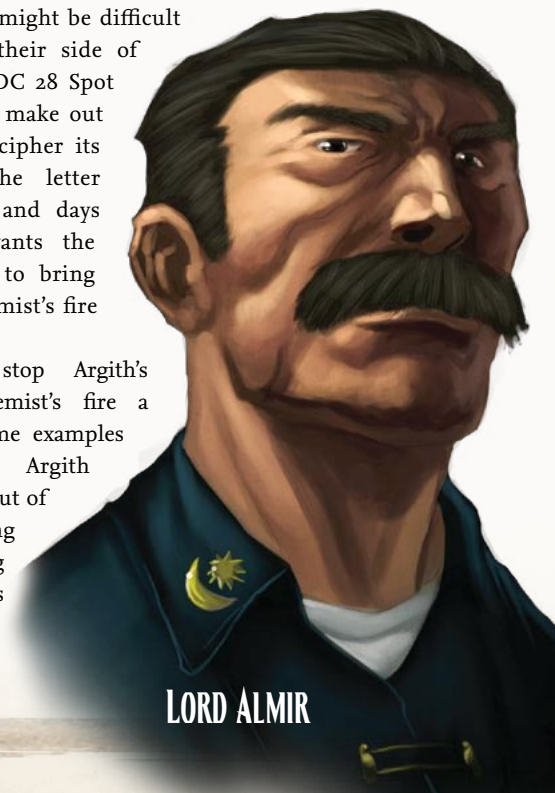
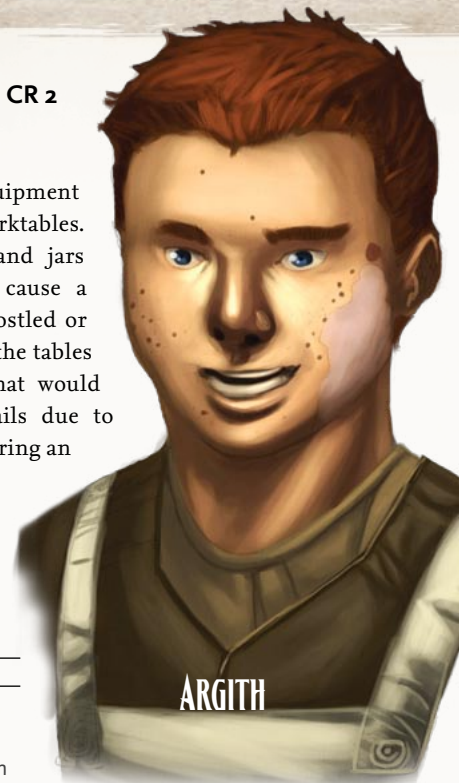
**Trigger** touch; **Reset** none

**Effect** jostling or damaging the alchemy lab causes an explosion (5d6, fire, 10-ft.-radius from worktable, Ref DC 25, half).

**Treasure:** Pilfering Argith's shop turns up two clay urns full of the equivalent of 10 flasks of alchemist's fire. Each urn weighs 35 pounds. There are also 2d4 of each other alchemical item listed in the PH. Argith keeps a locked box hidden in his armoire in the apartment above his shop (Open DC 30). It contains 200 gp and 55 sp. Argith keeps the key in his pocket.

**Development:** If the PCs enter Argith's, a DC 20 Spot check reveals a letter pinned to the wall near one of the worktables behind the counter. Although the writing is small and might be difficult to make out from their side of the counter, with a DC 28 Spot check characters can make out enough words to decipher its overall message. The letter provides the times and days when the baron wants the Chelish bodyguards to bring new batches of alchemist's fire to the keep.

The PCs can stop Argith's production of alchemist's fire a number of ways. Some examples include kidnapping Argith and smuggling him out of Piren's Bluff, charming him, or simply blowing up his shop (there's



plenty of alchemist's fire on hand to do it). Any of these actions, if successful, greatly aids the Andoren army.

**Ad-Hoc XP Award:** If the PCs successfully sabotage the production of alchemist's fire, grant them a CR 6 experience award.

### Town Events

The following is a series of town events arranged according to one possible timeline. Feel free to embellish, improvise, rearrange, or even ignore them altogether. These encounters are meant to give a sense of how Piren's Bluff reacts to the prolonged Andoren siege and offer the PCs inspiration for how to further their goals.

### The Baron Strikes Back

After the general has had the town surrounded for a day, Baron Vendikon answers with an attack to demonstrate his own power. The town alchemist, Argith, has worked around the clock to create copious amounts of alchemist's fire. The second morning of the siege, soldiers pull a trebuchet out into the town and a covered wagon loaded with large clay urns full of alchemist's fire is brought out from the keep. Several of the urns are placed in a net and loaded onto the trebuchet.

The baron patiently waits for some of the enemy soldiers to move up to taunt the Piren's Bluff defenders and then fires on them. Although some of the soldiers are quick enough to move out of the way, nearly a dozen others are incinerated as the clay urns shatter, creating a cacophonous explosion that leaves a shallow, charred crater in the ground in front of the enemy lines. The guards of Piren's Bluff cheer and shout while the enemy lines move back to a safe distance. A DC 15 Listen check is enough to hear people chattering excitedly in praise of Argith, and if the PCs have made contact with any of the Andoren sympathizers in town, the rebels are quick to point out that crippling the alchemist's production would strike a major blow to the baron's defenses.

### Traitors' Reward

During the second night of the siege, a pair of brothers named Zeke and Arol, who live in the mountains but had the misfortune of being in town buying supplies when the siege began, attempt to go over the wall. The baron's guards catch them and, after interrogating them for suspected treachery, Baron Vendikon decides to make an example of them. The morning of the third day of the siege, the town is abuzz with word of the two brothers hanging from a gibbet hastily erected during the night. Read or paraphrase the following.

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*A pair of young men in peasant woolens hang from a gibbet, their faces black and tongues lolling from gaping mouths. A stern-faced man with long, flowing hair and gleaming plate mail climbs atop a crate near the gibbet and the murmuring crowd grows silent.*

---

*He announces in a gravelly voice, "These men attempted to climb over the wall last night to flee their responsibility to aid in the defense of Piren's Bluff. For those of you who might also harbor such traitorous thoughts, know that Baron Vendikon has decreed that this same fate awaits any who try. That is all." He steps down from the crate and heads toward the keep.*

If the PCs specifically scan the crowd for reactions while Guard Captain Blacklock (see area **K23**) gives his speech, they may make a DC 20 Sense Motive check to notice that Smaar the Blacksmith and Viaren the Apothecary appear nervous and agitated, while Bumbo is watching the crowd with uncharacteristic shrewdness. The PCs can identify Blacklock with a DC 15 Knowledge (nobility and royalty) or Knowledge (local) check, or by simply asking around (no check required). The baron allows the gibbet and its gruesome trophies to remain in the town square indefinitely. The gibbet was intentionally built long enough to hold several more bodies—a detail not lost on any of the onlookers.

**Ad Hoc XP Award:** If the PCs succeed on their Sense Motive checks to notice Smaar and Viaren's reactions and haven't yet realized Smaar and Viaren are allied agents, grant the PCs a CR 2 experience award.

### The Arrests Begin (EL 8)

By the fourth day of the siege, if the PCs have not yet snuck into the keep and completed their mission, tensions and suspicions are at an all-time high. The baron correctly suspects the Andoren siege is a distraction and that Andoran has seeded the town with its agents. By this time, Bumbo has made a list of all of the people he suspects of treacherous activity and turned it over to Baron Vendikon.

As the sun rises, Guard Captain Blacklock and eight keep guards move out to apprehend all of the people on his list. Armed with a warrant signed by Baron Vendikon, he takes the suspects into custody and locks them in the keep's cells, where the baron and his men can interrogate them until they find the suspected Andoren agents.

Unfortunately for the PCs, strangers are the first to be offered up to the baron, and depending on how much suspicion they've raised, at least one of them is on that list, along with such notable malcontents as Tandifor Stroot. If they managed to gain allies in town, such as Smaar the blacksmith or Viaren the Apothecary (who aren't on the list), they can call on their friends to hide them before Blacklock's arrest squad reaches them. Alternatively, being escorted in for questioning is the easiest way to breach the keep's walls, for those daring PCs willing to brave torture and possible execution.

#### KEEP GUARDS (6)

hp 12 each; see page 17

CR 1

#### GUARD CAPTAIN BLACKLOCK

hp 35; see page 25

CR 5

# TOWER OF THE LAST BARON

**Development:** If the PCs are arrested, they are taken into the keep proper and thrown in cells (area **K26**) after the guards divest them of their gear. An enemy attack a short while later delays the painful interrogation, buying the PCs a full night in which they can attempt to escape.

## PART TWO: THE BARON'S KEEP

Though the baron hoped to keep news of his treachery away from the Andoren court until Chelish forces arrived, he was not unduly surprised by the arrival of General Dakovya. As a result, his keep is well defended, and his soldiers are alert and battle-ready. Below are a detailed overview of the castle grounds and the keep itself, along with stats for its defenders. While the town is defended primarily by the commoners' conscripted militia, within the stronghold well-trained keep guards are responsible for the baron's security.

### KEEP GUARD

CR 1

Male human elite warrior 1

LN Medium humanoid

**Init** +1; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16

(+5 armor, +1 Dex, +1 shield)

**hp** 12 (1d8+4)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

#### OFFENSE

**Spd** 20 ft.

**Melee** longsword +4 (1d8+2/19–20) or

spear +3 (1d8+2/×3)

**Ranged** light crossbow +2 (1d8/19–20) or

spear +2 (1d8+2/×3)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Used to dealing with commoners, the guards are alert but not expecting serious resistance. If they can tell in advance that a foe is particularly dangerous, they sound an alarm and gather reinforcements, with some of them moving in to engage while others stand back and cover them with their crossbows.

**During Combat** Guards prefer to use their swords indoors and spears outside or in large open areas. If a foe has used deadly force, they have no qualms about retreating to a defensive position and cutting him down with their crossbows. In all cases, a guard engaging in combat yells loudly to raise the alarm and bring reinforcements.

**Morale** Guards brought down to 5 hp or less flee to gather others, unless directly defending the baron, in which case they fight to the death.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +3

**Feats** Alertness, Weapon Focus (longsword)

**Skills** Climb –1, Handle Animal +2, Jump –1, Listen +3, Ride +2, Spot +3

**Languages** Common

**Combat Gear** breastplate, light wooden shield, light crossbow and 20 bolts, longsword, spear; **Other Gear** soldier's livery, trail rations, whetstone, wineskin, 1 gp, 15 sp.

## A. Baron Vendikon's Keep

*Sitting at the top of a craggy bluff, Vendikon Keep rises imperiously above its surroundings. The thick, two-story main building gives way to an octagonal tower with a slate-shingled roof that rises to a sharp point, from which flutters a standard bearing three crowns on a field of red and white.*

Built nearly three centuries ago, Vendikon Keep overlooks a series of cliffs descending 150 feet to a narrow portion of Aspodell Pass. The keep is made of granite blocks carved from the surrounding mountains and encircled by a thick curtain wall with tall parapets and fortified towers built to resist attacks from the giants and hostile humanoids that once lived in this area.

## B. Towers (EL 6)

These guard towers rise an additional fifteen feet above the high curtain wall. Arrow slits pierce the walls below machicolations, merlins, and crenellations. Guards peer down from the battlements, wary of the enemy army encamped around the town.

The keep towers are similar to the watchtowers at area 1, but only the baron's guards man them. There are six keep guards on duty here at all times. Magically treated iron-bound doors provide the only entrance.

**Magically Treated Strong Wooden Door:** hardness 10; hp 70; Break DC 30; Open Lock DC 30

### KEEP GUARD (6)

CR 1

hp 12; see page 17

## C. Storehouse (EL 6)

This large warehouse is used to store large quantities of rice, grain, and corn within small silos, as well as raw materials such as lumber, iron ore, and coal. There are also a variety of other things stored here, all in smaller quantities and vital for the long-term survival of the keep during the winter, when the Aspodell Pass frequently gets snowed in and the town's supplies run low.

**Creatures:** Since the start of the siege, six guards keep a sharp eye on the storehouse to protect it from sabotage by the enemy. Two of them patrol the inside of the building with a pair of mastiffs, while the rest keep vigil around its perimeter.

### KEEP GUARD (6)

CR 1

hp 12; see page 17



**MASTIFF (2)**

hp 13; MM 272 (riding dog)

CR 1

**D. Stables (EL 4)**

These stables are built to accommodate up to 25 horses, but currently only 16 are stabled here. One of the empty stalls contains a trap door under the straw (Search DC 25). A shaft under the trap door descends to a 10-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall tunnel that runs in straight line through the wall foundations and up to another hidden trap door in Shenk's Dog Yard (area 3). Dindler uses this secret tunnel to make his reports to the baron, and though as far as they know the tunnel's presence remains a secret, the baron keeps two guards posted at this end of the tunnel at all times, and a further two stationed outside the stables, supposedly to protect the horses. None of these guards expect attack so deep within the baron's defenses, and as such are lazy and unobservant. If the tunnel guards call for help, the guards stationed outside locate the trapdoor and join the fight in 3 rounds.

**KEEP GUARD (4)**

hp 12; see page 17

CR 1

**E. Barracks (EL Variable)**

The barracks is a single-story longhouse made of stone. Rows of bunks run north to south. At present, a total of 90 keep guards use the barracks. Along with the town militia and conscripts, the baron has approximately 200 men-at-arms with which to defend Piren's Bluff. Most of the soldiers who don't have family in town have been billeted with local "volunteers" in town, a practice which has done little to ingratiate the baron with the townsfolk of Piren's bluff.

**Creatures:** Sleep is a precious commodity for the baron's guards. When not on extended duty, they grab as much of it as they can. At any given time, there are 2d6 keep guards asleep in the barracks. If the keep is on alert, the barracks are empty.

**F. Gatehouse (EL 9)**

The gatehouse is composed of two squat towers capped by merlins and parapets flanking two sets of 6-inch-thick wood-and-iron gates. The two levels under the battlements are riddled with arrow slits facing the bailey between the stout gates—a killing field for the keep defenders, should enemies break through the first gate. The two gates are

## TOWER OF THE LAST BARON

held firmly in place with a mechanism of gears and bars that requires a DC 15 Strength check to operate.

**Keep Gate:** hardness 5; hp 120; Break DC 35; Climb DC 15

**Creatures:** There are a total of 16 keep guards on duty at the gatehouse at all times. If the keep is attacked, an additional 10 guards are sent to bolster the gatehouse detail.

### KEEP GUARD (16)

CR 1

hp 12; see page 17

### Inside the Keep

The baron's keep is made of reinforced masonry blocks carved out of the nearby mountains (hardness 8; hp 180; Break DC 45; Climb DC 15). Its exterior doors are made of magically treated oak reinforced with iron. The interior doors are of pine with iron banding (strong wooden doors, as per the DMG). Most doors within the keep cannot be locked, with the exception of sleeping quarters and private chambers, whose occupants normally carry the keys on their persons. Few rooms in the keep have any sort of window, but those that do have only shuttered casements that are little more than arrow slits. A Small creature could squeeze through them with a DC 30 Escape artist check.

### K1. Entry Hall (EL Variable)

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*Heavy pine doors fitted with brass moldings depicting ravens in flight give way to a T-shaped entry hall. Marble plinths in each of the four corners support claw-footed braziers holding cherry-red coals. Thick tapestries hang from the east and west walls, starting near the twenty-foot-high ceiling and reaching within inches of the gray flagstone floor. Each one depicts a murder of crows with sparkling black gemstones for eyes—one on a field of white, the other on a field of crimson.*

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This is the main entrance into the keep proper. The 4-inch-thick doors remain locked and barred at all times now that Piren's Bluff is under siege. A knock at the door followed by the password "red crow, white crow" is enough for the door guards to open them (this password is known to all of the keep guards and servants, as well as Lucky Ben in area 1, Dindler Magrak in area 3, and Shiyara in area 12). The door guards respond suspiciously to anyone without the password, and sound the alarm if any forceful attempt is made to get in.

**Magically Treated Pine Door:** hardness 10, hp 90, Break DC 45.

**Creatures:** The baron keeps six guards stationed here at all times. One of them rotates out every 4 hours, usually spending the next few hours patrolling the walls. Aside from demanding the password, the guards here don't challenge intruders, as guards and servants come and go frequently throughout the day.

### KEEP GUARD (6)

CR 1

Human warrior 2

hp 12; see page 17

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** At the first hint of trouble, one of the guards races to areas **K3** and **K12** to get reinforcements. If the guard isn't stopped, the entire keep goes on alert within 10 rounds (see the sidebar Sounding the Alarm).

**During Combat** The guards move back to the narrow portion of the entry hall where two of them form a shield wall using the full defense action, while the others use their spears to attack opponents over their allies. On the second round, the guards from area **K3** enter the corridor to help repel intruders using the same tactic. On the fourth round, additional guards from area **K12** arrive, stepping in to form a shield wall or use their spears as necessary. Throughout the following round, reinforcements arrive from areas **K13**, **K14**, and **K23**, with Captain Blacklock arriving with the last group.

**Morale** These men fight to the death.

**Trap:** The tapestries depict the Vendikon house emblem—three crows on a crest of red and white. The baron, ever paranoid of his possessions, had the tapestries magically trapped against theft. The servants and guards know better than to touch them, and guests are warned, "These crows have murderous dispositions. Don't touch them!"

### PHANTASMAL KILLER TRAP

CR 5

Type magical; Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** touch; **Reset** automatic

**Effect** Subject that touches tapestry is affected by a phantasmal killer spell (DC 16).

**Treasure:** Each of the magically trapped tapestries weighs 65 pounds. The ravens' eyes are made of small onyx gemstones. If removed from the tapestries, the total set of a dozen stones is worth 1,000 gp. Intact, each tapestry is worth 1,800 gp.

**Development:** If the PCs don't know the password, they can try and bluff their way past the door guards with the proper disguises. If the keep is on alert, though, the PCs have a -10 penalty on any bluff checks.

### K2. Audience Chamber

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*A long crimson carpet leads up to a black marble dais, upon which rests a thick wooden throne. The back of the throne rises to an extraordinary height, where a pair of stuffed ravens perch, each with claws clutching a small glass sphere that holds a magical flame. The walls are covered with shields interspersed with long narrow tapestries.*

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## SOUNDING THE ALARM

As the characters move about the keep, they will come in contact with guards, servants, and perhaps the baron himself. The Radliffe sisters (room K6) are the only servants who constantly move about the keep. Two of them are usually in the baron's kitchen preparing the daily meals between 7 am and 8 pm, leaving the other two wandering from room to room cleaning, gathering laundry, and running other errands. Each time the PCs enter a room there is a 10% chance that one of the Radliffe sisters is there. They know all of the servants with business in the keep by sight. Thus, PCs wearing servant disguises in their presence results in them shouting, "Intruders!" and fleeing.

If the PCs are disguised as keep guards, they stand a better chance of moving around the keep undetected, though they still need to do a lot of bluffing to make it past the other guards. If they fail, the guards shout, "Enemies in the keep!" and attack.

If at any point a general alarm is sounded, all guards on that floor and the baron's hell hounds immediately begin moving toward the source of the alarm, arriving over the course of the next 2 minutes. Guards on other floors immediately move to fortify their positions and protect the baron.

**Development:** Baron Vendikon (see page 27) gives audience to the people of Piren's Bluff from 10 am to 1 pm each day. This usually consists of listening to worried citizens and guards reporting on Andoren troop activity. The room is empty the rest of the time. If the baron is here, he is with Guard Captain Blacklock (see page 25), two bodyguards (see page 28), and a detail of two keep guards (see page 17). Should he be attacked, he immediately casts *dimension door*, taking Guard Captain Blacklock with him to area K23, and raises the alarm if it hasn't been already. The baron then ascends to area K27 and awaits news from his guards. Meanwhile, Guard Captain Blacklock gathers his men and returns to deal with the PCs in force 5 rounds later (see the Sounding the Alarm sidebar).

### K3. Guard Room (EL 4)

*A stout oak table with several matching chairs sits at the center of the room. A neatly arranged ledger, quill pen, and ink pot sit atop the table. A rack filled with spears and swords covers most of the north wall, with a nearby shelf holding several whetstones and polishing rags.*

Keep guards take breaks in this room to eat meals, sharpen and clean weapons, and report to the Sergeant of the Watch, who keeps a record of guard rotations and unusual activities reported to him that he feels the baron needs to know.

**Creatures:** Along with one of the Sergeants of the Watch, who is always present, there are normally 1d3 additional guards here, regardless of the hour (see page 17 for stats).

### SERGEANT OF THE WATCH

**CR 2**

hp 18; use the stats for the Chelish Bodyguards on page 28

**Development:** If the PCs read the Sergeant's ledger after they've aroused suspicion in Piren's Bluff via Bumbo or another baron loyalist, they notice their names and descriptions jotted down for acting suspiciously.

### K4. Guest Rooms

*A pair of luxurious beds with down mattresses and thick comforters occupy most of this chamber. Small wooden trunks sit at the foot of each bed. A pine table between the beds holds a washbasin and ceramic urn, and pegs on the wall hold nondescript wool cloaks. A few small paintings hang from the walls and a narrow window, little more than an arrow slit, looks out onto the bailey.*

**Development:** Each of these rooms is identical. They are currently being used by the five elite bodyguards (see page 28) the baron's Chelish contacts sent as gifts along with the flesh golem. None of them have used the rooms for more than sleeping and storing their gear, as several are with the baron at all times and the rest are kept busy watching the alchemist's shop. Between the hours of midnight and 6:00 am, there are three bodyguards asleep here, one in the north room and two in the south.

**Treasure:** A search of the trunks turns up heavy boots, backpacks, waterskins, and other mundane gear the Chelish guests don't need to carry around. One of the paintings depicts a sinister-looking ship with black sails on a blood-red ocean. Inscribed on the back is an artist's note in flowing script that reads, "Baron Vendikon, please accept my humble gift for your generous donations to my artistic pursuits. —I. Gauthfallow." A DC 25 Appraise check recognizes the painting as worth 200 gp.

### K5. Storage Room

*Crates and barrels stacked atop each other fill most of this crowded room. Shelves on the walls hold linens, tools, cleaning supplies, and a few cast-off bits of furniture.*

This carefully arranged mess holds what the servants need to tend to the keep and its occupants. With a little

time and digging, the PCs can find nearly any kind of mundane gear.

A successful DC 20 Search check turns up 2d4 sets of guard livery in need of mending which remain serviceable as disguises.

## K6. Servants' Quarters

This bedchamber belongs to Baron Vendikon's four live-in servants, the Radcliffe sisters. While other servants, such as the cook, scullions, and laundry staff, come and go from the keep each day, the Radcliffe sisters (LN female human expert 1) are the only ones trusted enough to reside within the keep itself.

While the Radcliffes have authority over the rest of the servants, Caira—the eldest—is the supreme authority of the four siblings. The sisters can be found here between the hours of midnight and 6 am, and are quick to raise a clamor over suspicious persons (see the Sounding the Alarm sidebar).

**Development:** Small trunks under the beds and pegs on the walls hold a variety of simple cloaks, smocks, and aprons if the PCs need to resort to disguising themselves as serving women.

## K7. Guest Dining Hall

*Thick red-and-black curtains of velvet completely cover the walls here, except where doors to the north and southwest exit the chamber. A mahogany table polished to a mirrored sheen and six leather-upholstered chairs sit at the center of the chamber. An iron statuette in the table's center depicts a satyr holding a mirrored sphere above its ram-horned head, and small magical flames from each fingertip reflect off the sphere to light the room.*

**Development:** Guard Captain Blacklock (see page 25) takes his midday meals here, often accompanied by one of the Chelish bodyguards or a Sergeant of the Watch, with whom he can discuss famous sieges and the merits of various fighting styles.

**Treasure:** The satyr statuette is of exquisite workmanship and is easily worth 800 gp. It stands 18 inches tall and weighs 30 pounds.

## K8. Servants' Kitchen (EL 5)

*A hearth of soot-covered river stones centered in the southern wall holds a variety of kettles, pots, and tin sheets cleverly suspended over a split-log fire from hooks and slots in the stonework. A variety of pleasant scents fill the air. At the center of the kitchen, a preparation table is covered in knives and bottles of herbs and spices. A rack suspended over the table holds various pots, pans, and mixing utensils. Multi-tiered shelves in the southwest corner hold stacks of plates, bowls, and tankards.*

The servants prepare meals for guests dining in area K7 in this adjacent kitchen and take their own meals here throughout the day as they can. The northwest and southeast doors swing in and out of the room—they have no latches or locking mechanisms.

**Creatures:** From about 5 am to 8 pm, Undercook **Aerill Ruus** (NG male human commoner 2) prepares meals for the keep's lesser residents with the assistance of his teenage sons **Owein** and **Lucus** (NG male human commoner 1). When the baron is awake (see area K19), the hell hounds enjoy spending time here intimidating the boys into tossing them scraps of meat and bones or simply napping near the hearth. When the kitchen is vacant, the hell hounds spend their time in area K19.

## HELL HOUND (2)

CR 3

hp 22; MM 151

**Development:** Aerill and his sons are easily cowed into cooperating with the PCs. If the characters kill the hell hounds without raising the alarm, Aerill gratefully provides detailed information about the ground floor. Ever since the baron allowed the hell hounds into the keep and ignored Aerill's repeated complaints about them, he has been ready to abandon Piren's Bluff.

The hell hounds are overly confident and bullying creatures, and fight to the death. If the PCs don't keep this fight quiet, 1d4 keep guards from area K12 come to investigate through the northwest door 2 rounds after combat begins.

## K9. Pantry

Kegs, crates, barrels and sacks are bunched together in the middle of this oblong chamber. Meat hangs from hooks along the north wall, and shelves hold additional stores of food, cooking supplies, and wine.

## K10. Stairs to the Second Level

**Development:** These stairs wind upward to area K15. If the keep is on alert, two keep guards (see page 17) stand at attention in front of this door while the guards from area K15 block the stairs with spears at the ready.

## K11. Storage Room

This room contains more than a dozen winter cloaks and thick boots. A large crate in the corner is filled with coal. There are two barrels along the south wall. One is filled with water, while the other is a quarter full of the chemicals the baron's soldiers use to clean their armor and weapons. A warning painted on the side of the barrel in Common reads, "Warning: Do not drink or breathe." Inhaling the fumes or ingesting the liquid can cause immediate unconsciousness and a nagging headache (ingested or inhaled Fortitude DC 13; initial unconsciousness for 1 minute, secondary



unconsciousness for 2d4 hours). A wadded-up sack wedged between the barrel and the wall contains several dirty rags saturated with the cleaning compound—a perfect tool for knocking out unwary guards, should the PCs think of it. Effectively using the solution on a resisting character requires a successful grapple attempt.

## K12. Guard Room (EL 5)

*Two tall, slender stone pillars at opposite ends of this long chamber are carved to depict armored warriors holding shields and spears. A set of large iron doors engraved with ravens occupies the center of the west wall, while a stout wooden door exits the room to the northeast. Antique swords and shields are fastened to walls between slender red and gray curtains, while more mundane implements of war lie scattered around on tables and weapon racks. Strong-smelling rags and tools used for basic armor repair sit jumbled in a short barrel in the corner.*

The baron's personal guards use this chamber as a meeting room and also guard this access point to the tower.

**Iron Doors:** hardness 10, hp 60; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 30

**Creatures:** Five keep guards are stationed here at all times, usually swapping stories, gossiping, or cleaning their weapons with the chemicals from room **K11**. In

general, only guards, servants, and other recognized people are allowed up into the tower, but these guards aren't overly suspicious and can be bluffed with the right story, particularly if the PCs are disguised as members of the castle staff.

**Development:** If the alarm is sounded, these guards alert the others in areas **K13** and **K14** and go to reinforce their allies wherever they are needed. In such a situation, two of them stay behind to guard the double doors in the west wall, which are locked by the guards on the other side.

**KEEP GUARD (5)**  
hp 12; see page 17

**CR 1**

## K13. Upper Tower Stairs (EL 2)

*A set of tall iron doors stand to the east, while smaller wooden doors exit to the south and west. Stairs in the north end of the corridor ascend to a landing, turn, and continue up to the next level of the tower.*

**Creatures:** A detail of two keep guards stand watch here at all times.

**KEEP GUARD (2)**  
hp 12; see page 17

**CR 1**



## K14. Baron's Guard Chambers (EL 2)

*This large room is furnished with three beds, two pine tables that hold washbasins and ceramic urns, and a large wooden chest. Pegs on the wall hold cloaks.*

These rooms are occupied by the Sergeants of the Watch. Other than their weapons, armor, and a few mundane personal items, there isn't much of interest to the PCs here.

**Creatures:** If the keep is on alert, these rooms are unoccupied. Otherwise, one sergeant is always sleeping here while the other mans area **K3**.

### SERGEANT OF THE WATCH

**CR 2**

hp 18; use the stats for the Chelish Bodyguards on page 28

## K15. Guarded Hallway (EL 8)

*A wide hallway runs the length of the keep's second floor, ending in stairs at one end and doors out to a balcony at the other. Five other doors exit the hallway into adjacent chambers. Paintings, tapestries, and narrow pedestals supporting ivory busts decorate the walls of the hallway.*

**Creatures:** A total of eight keep guards stand vigil along this important hallway—two at each end and the others spaced out between them, all of them holding spears at the ready.

### KEEP GUARD (8)

**CR 1**

hp 12; see page 17

## K16. Baron's Kitchen

*A long preparation table dominates the center of this kitchen. Pots and pans and other cooking implements hang from a rack suspended over it. A hearth along the southern wall glows with banked coals. A long shelf and cabinet combination full of food, seasoning, and crockery completely covers the west wall.*

**Development:** Two of the Radliffe sisters do the baron's cooking. One or both of them are usually here between 6 am and 8 pm. The baron's kitchen is usually empty otherwise.

## K17. Grand Dining Hall

*A large, U-shaped table fills most of the space of this carpeted room. Eight upholstered, high-backed chairs surround the table, while a ninth—which looks more like a throne—sits at the center of the southern end. Tall, narrow windows of stained glass are flanked by thick burgundy curtains with golden crows stitched into them.*

**Development:** Baron Vendikon (see page 27) takes his morning and midday meals in his study. He is punctilious about having his dinner in this dining hall with Captain Blacklock (see page 25), his bodyguards (see page 28), and his two hell hounds (see page 21). The Grand Dining Hall is empty at all other times of the day, except when servants clean the room for 30 minutes after dinner concludes.

If the PCs have the poor timing and luck of interrupting the baron's dinner between 6 and 7 pm, this combination is likely far more than they can handle.

## K18. Second Floor Balcony

*A balcony surrounded by a decorative railing supported by thin columns carved to resemble nymphs looks out over the eastern bailey and Aspodell Pass below the keep.*

The double doors from the hallway (area **K15**) that open out onto the balcony are made of magically treated oak with numerous squares of magically transparent iron in a lattice pattern. The baron also wards the doors with an *alarm* each morning, which is triggered if anyone other than the baron touches the doors without first speaking, "Baron, allow your servant to pass." Only the baron, Captain Blacklock, and the Sergeants of the Watch know this password. The doors are always locked, although the key hangs from a nail at the northeastern corner of area **K15**. The baron has a second key.

**Magically Treated Oak and Iron Door:** hardness 10; hp 70; Break DC 45; Open Lock DC 30; *alarm* (CL 5th)

## K19. Baron's Chamber

*A huge four-poster bed covered in thick blankets and feather pillows dominates the eastern half of this palatial sleeping chamber. A thick rug of crimson and gold with ravens in flight running along its tasseled edges covers the floor in the center of the room. A massive fireplace of gold-flecked black marble protrudes from the northern wall, banked coals perfectly warming the chamber. Paintings depicting various members of the Vendikon family adorn the walls between narrow, wood-shuttered arrow-slits. A narrow table along the southeast wall holds additional blankets and a hooded lantern.*

**Development:** The baron (see page 27) doesn't usually get to sleep until well after midnight, once Dindler has concluded his report in this chamber. When he does retire for the night, he keeps his hell hounds (see page 21) in the room with him while his two bodyguards (see page 28) take turns guarding the door and sleeping.

**Treasure:** The hooded lantern on the table contains a *continual flame*. While many of the furnishings in this room are quite expensive, all are heavy and difficult to move. The baron keeps most of his prized possessions on his person.

## K20. Wardrobe

*This wide closet is choked with expensive-looking clothing, much of it trimmed in fur or embroidered with gold piping.*

**Treasure:** This huge closet contains dozens of noble's outfits and other changes of clothes. A coffer on one of the shelves contains assorted rings, cuff links, pins, and necklaces worth 1,800 gp in total, many of them dating back to the first Baron Vendikon.

## K21. Bath

*A long copper tub sits atop a white and gold rug. A brazier and buckets sit in one corner. A stool and shelves full of towels, soap, and scrub brushes occupy the other.*

**Development:** Baron Vendikon (see page 27) normally bathes here at about 8 am each morning and is finished by 8:30 am. His two Chelish bodyguards (see page 28) wait just outside the bathroom door. If the PCs manage to corner the baron here, he is not wearing his gear and is significantly easier to defeat.

## K22. Library

*Floor-to-ceiling bookcases cover the walls of this well-stocked study. A thick chair with a table and small candelabra next to it face a wide hearth of gold-flecked black marble. The shelves lining the walls are covered with hundreds of tomes and scrolls, decorative figurines and curios, and a lap desk with quills and ink pots.*

**Treasure:** The books in this study cover a broad range of topics, many of them devoted to history, geography, and arcana. The collection is easily worth 2,000 gp, but would prove difficult to transport. Five rare volumes are worth 100 gp each, but none of the others are worth more than 10 gp each.

A DC 25 Search check on the bookcase along the eastern wall reveals a spellbook tucked behind the other books. It contains all

of Baron Vendikon's prepared spells, plus *continual flame*, *dimension door*, and any others you feel appropriate for your campaign.

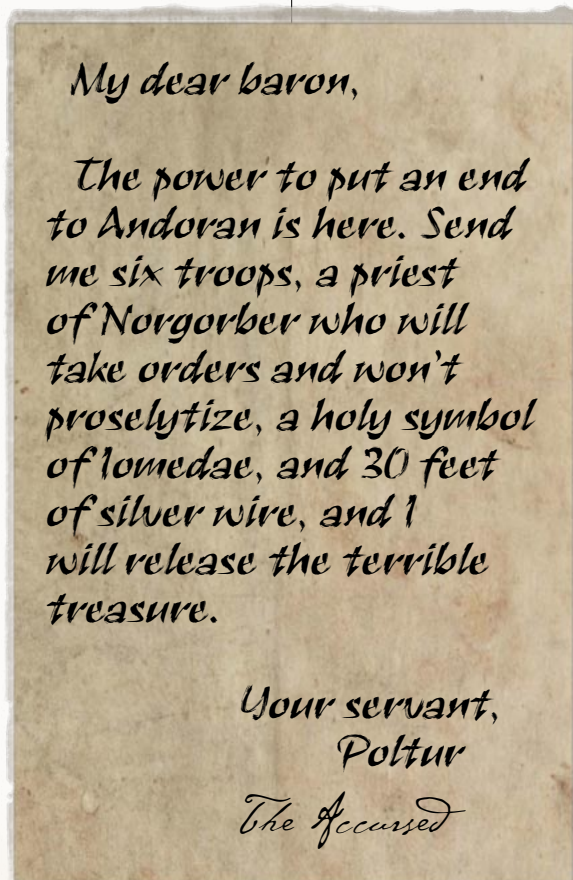
**Development:** The baron (see page 27) takes his breakfast here from 8:30 am to 10 am while studying his spellbook. He then reads reports and sees a few of his officers to relay orders for the day. His two bodyguards (see page 28) take their breakfast here with him.

A folded map sits on the table next to the chair. If examined, the map depicts Andoran and Chelixa and a part of the Inner Sea touching their shores. A circle is drawn around an area along the Andoren coast labeled Chimera Cove. A notation in the baron's handwriting next to the circled area reads "Poltur's Expedition." Tucked into the map is a folded note reproduced as Player Handout 1. This note serves as a lead-in to the next adventure in the Last Baron series, *LB2: Treasure of Chimera Cove*. If the PCs bypass the library or fail to find the map and the note here, they should find these items on the baron after they defeat him.

## K23. Guard Room (EL 7)

*A table with a pair of chairs occupies the southern half of this room. Tapestries depicting devils tearing each other apart with spears and claws cover the eastern wall. Beneath it, a long wooden rack holds a number of different weapons.*

**Creatures:** Guard Captain Blacklock normally spends most of his mornings and late afternoons here going through reports, assigning watches, and studying maps of Piren's Bluff to formulate battle plans. He accompanies the baron in the audience chamber (area K2) from 10 am to 1 pm, has lunch in the guest dining hall (area K7) shortly thereafter, returns here for a couple hours, then goes out to survey the enemy from the walls before reporting to the grand dining hall (area K17) to sup with the baron. He returns here one last time around 9 pm to write down a few notes and check for new reports left for him before heading down to the Conqueror's



## [ TOWER OF THE LAST BARON ]

Blade for drinks, eventually turning in at his residence on the corner of Dawn Lane and Mine Cart Road.

In addition to Guard Captain Blacklock, five keep guards are always on duty here.

### GUARD CAPTAIN BLACKLOCK

CR 5

Male human fighter 5

LN Medium humanoid

**Init** +3; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20

(+9 armor, -1 Dex, +2 shield)

**hp** 35 (5d10+8)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

**Defensive Abilities** Dodge

#### OFFENSE

**Spd** 20 ft.

**Melee** +1 *longsword* +9 (1d8+6/19–20) or

**Ranged** *mwk longbow* +6 (1d8/×3)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Blacklock sounds the alarm and gathers the closest detachment of guards before charging into battle.

**During Combat** The captain is a straightforward fighter, attempting to flank with his guardsmen whenever possible.

**Morale** If brought below 10 hit points, Blacklock flees and attempts to gather reinforcements, unless he's defending the baron, in which case he fights to the death. If the baron dies, Blacklock is willing to surrender to the Andoren general, but doesn't trust the actual assassins to honor the terms of surrender.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 16, **Dex** 8, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +8

**Feats** Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (*longsword*), Weapon Specialization (*longsword*)

**Skills** Climb +8, Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +8, Jump +8, Listen +4, Ride +4, Spot +4

**Languages** Common

**Combat Gear** +1 *longsword*, +1 *full plate*, masterwork *longbow* and 20 arrows, *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), heavy steel shield; **Other Gear** black tabard trimmed in thread of gold with Baron Vendikon's murder of ravens coat of arms, keys to all doors in the keep

### KEEP GUARD (5)

CR 1

**hp** 12; see page 17

**Treasure:** In addition to Blacklock's personal weapons, which he carries on him at all times, the weapons rack in this room contains a battleaxe, a short sword, a mace, and a spear, all of masterwork quality.

### K24. Landing (EL 3)

*A stuffed brown bear sits on its haunches in the corner of this room, fangs bared and glaring at the top of the stairs.*

**Creature:** The door in the east wall is unlocked, but if anyone approaches within 5 feet of it without saying "Corvis," the bear animates and attacks all creatures in the room until they leave. Anyone who spends a reasonable amount of time in the keep, including all servants and guards, knows this password. Creatures entering from room K23 don't cause the bear to attack.



GUARD CAPTAIN BLACKLOCK

**STUFFED BEAR**

Large animated object  
hp 52; hardness 5; MM 14

CR 3

**Development:** Sounds of fighting in this room alert the occupants of room **K23** to intruders.

**K25. Ballroom Staircase**

*A pair of bronze gargoyles with spiral horns and heavy protruding lower jaws squat atop large marble plinths in alcoves in the southeast and southwest corners. Two doors in the north wall exit the wide chamber and two short staircases ascend to a landing where a single staircase between them continues to the next level. Narrow windows on the staircase landing look out onto the bailey below.*

The door to area **K26** is sealed with an *arcane lock* and has held the same dweomer for three generations. Speaking the name “Nelvon” (the second baron of Piren’s Bluff) allows characters to enter through the portal. Only the baron, his bodyguards, Captain Blacklock, the Radcliffe sisters, and the sergeants of the watch know this password.

If there are any prisoners in area **K26**, a single keep guard stands guard near the door.

**Arcane Locked Door:** hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 43.

**K26. Prison Cells**

*Five small prison cells line this short corridor. The putrescent stench of unwashed bodies and offal fills the air.*

The unwholesome stench comes from the body of an Andoren loyalist in the middle cell on the west side. He was imprisoned after attempting to incite the people of Piren’s Bluff to rebel 2 weeks ago. Since then, the prison guards have taken to beating and torturing him unmercifully, until a particularly brutal assault finally killed him 2 days ago.

Prisoners brought here are stripped of weapons and armor before being placed in one of the cells, their hands manacled in front of them. Their gear is locked in the strong room in the northeast corner. Only Baron Vendikon and Guard Captain Blacklock have the keys to the strong room and the prison cell doors. A good Sleight of Hand roll or taking 20 ahead of time can hide small items, such as lock picks, well enough on a character’s body to ensure that the baron’s men don’t find it.

**Prison Cell Door:** hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 25.

**Strong Room Door:** hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 23; Open Lock DC 25.

**Treasure:** The strong room contains 10 sets of manacles hanging on hooks on the wall, with a key that opens all of them on another hook. The room also contains a masterwork chain shirt, a masterwork cold iron short sword, and a dagger, all of which belonged to the dead prisoner.

**Development:** If the PCs are captured, they are manacled and locked in separate cells. They can look forward to torture and beatings until they confess their reason for being in Piren’s Bluff, at which time the baron hangs them. If the PCs can escape, the prison cells aren’t well guarded, since most of the keep guards are busy manning the walls or towers.

**K27. Ballroom (EL 7)**

*Wide steps ascend to a large, opulent chamber. To the east, a breathtaking image of the Aspodell Mountains stretches the length of the chamber, its peaks apparently lit by the rising sun. To the west, a similar image stretches from one end of the room to the other like*



**BARON VENDIKON**

## [ TOWER OF THE LAST BARON ]

a colossal window, depicting more mountains deep in the violets and purples of twilight. A long crimson rug edged in gold tassels leads up to a black marble dais, upon which sits a statue of a man in spiked plate armor with a sword in one hand and a crow perched atop the other. More silver ravens engraved in the wall behind it appear to fly in an arc starting to either side of the statue and meeting at a point above it. Four slender black marble columns near the corners of the room rise to a fifteen-foot-high ceiling covered in a huge mural of hundreds of ravens with bloodstained beaks taking down a mountain lion covered in dozens of small bleeding wounds.

This is the ballroom where the Vendikons entertain guests. The statue is of the first baron of House Vendikon. The images to either side of the room are the effects of *permanent image* spells (Will DC 19) placed on the curtains running the length of the chamber. Anyone approaching the curtains to the east smells pine trees and hears wind rustling tree branches. Similarly, anyone near the western curtains hears the sound of crickets and owls and the occasional howling of wolves.

A DC 25 Search of the northeastern wall uncovers a section that may be pushed inward to reveal a hidden staircase.

**Creatures:** Assuming the PCs made it this far without raising the alarm, the ballroom is empty. If the baron hears any hint of trouble, however, he comes here with his two bodyguards to await news of the intruders.

### BARON GALDUR VENDIKON

CR 6

Male human aristocrat 2/wizard 5

LE Medium humanoid

**Init** +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 19

(+4 armor, +1 deflection, +1 Dex, +4 shield)

**hp** 28 (2d8+5d4+7)

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

#### OFFENSE

**Spd** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 rapier +6 (1d6/18–20) or

touch +5 (spell)

**Ranged** touch +5 (spell)

**Spells Prepared** (CL 5th):

3rd—*lightning bolt* (DC 15)

2nd—*protection from arrows*, *scare* (DC 14), *scorching ray*

1st—*enlarge person*, *mage armor*\*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*\*

0—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *ray of frost*

\*Already cast

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** If aware of intruders, the baron casts *protection from arrows*, *mage armor*, and *shield* (already figured into his stats). He then uses his *wand of fox's cunning* on himself to increase the DC of his spells. If attacked anywhere other than area **K27**, the baron uses his scroll of *dimension door* to retreat here and raise the alarm.

**During Combat** Baron Vendikon casts *lightning bolt*, followed

### HELLFIRE INFUSION

The magical concoction known as *hellfire infusion* is popular among nobles and the better-paid mercenaries of Cheliax, both for its actual effects and its value in intimidating opponents.

#### HELLFIRE INFUSION

**Aura** Moderate enchantment; **CL** 5th

**Slot** none; **Price** 1,900 gp per dose

#### DESCRIPTION

This bubbling red liquid is stored within a glass and iron syringe of diabolical craftsmanship that is warm to the touch. When injected into a living creature (a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity), the fiery liquid surges through the subject's veins, filling it with hellish ferocity and an outwardly fiendish appearance. While under the effects of a *hellfire infusion*, the subject creature gains a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls, saves, and skill checks. Its skin turns crimson, its eyes change to burnished yellow, and short horns sprout from its head. By all appearances, the subject transforms into a fiendish creature, although the alteration is only superficial. These effects last for 50 minutes.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Brew Potion, *alter self*, *heroism*; **Cost** 950 gp, 38 XP

by *enlarge person* on an ally. He then seeks a place of cover from which to use his *wand of magic missile* on his enemies while his minions keep them busy in combat. He uses his *scroll of acid arrow* on enemy spellcasters and casts *scare* if enemies close in on him.

**Morale** The baron flees to area **K28** using a scroll of *dimension door* if he drops to 10 hit points or less. There he activates his flesh golem, drinks his potions, and searches out the PCs for the construct to destroy. Only if cornered does the baron fight to the death.

**Base Statistics:** **AC** 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; **Int** 16.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 20, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +2

**Feats** Alertness, Craft Wand, Negotiator, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Appraise +7, Bluff +7, Concentration +6, Craft (alchemy) +10, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +14, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Listen +5, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +2, Spellcraft +10, Spot +5

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Infernal

**SQ** summon familiar

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *scroll of acid arrow*, *scroll of dimension door* (2), *wand of magic missile* (3rd, 25 charges), *wand of fox's cunning* (18 charges); **Other Gear** *cloak of resistance* +2, *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *ring of protection* +1, keys to all the doors in the keep, noble's outfit, map and note (see area **K22**), signet ring with an onyx raven (300 gp), spell component pouch

### CHELISH BODYGUARD

**CR 2**

Male human fighter 2

LE Medium humanoid

**Init** +1; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +6

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

(+4 armor, +1 Dex)

**hp** 18 (2d10+7)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

#### OFFENSE

**Spd** 30 ft.

**Melee** masterwork falchion +8 (2d4+3/18–20 plus poison)

**Ranged** light crossbow +5 (1d8/19–20 plus poison)

**Special Attacks** poison

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The bodyguards coat their falchions and crossbow bolts with poison. They then prepare to use their *hellfire infusions* at the first sight of the enemy (effects included in stats).

**During Combat** The bodyguards use their crossbows first then close with opponents, using their falchions and shrieking like fiends.

**Morale** If reduced to half their hit points, the Chelish bodyguards drink their potions. They fight to the death in defense of the baron, but if he's killed they attempt to escape.

**Base Statistics:** **Fort** +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1; **Melee** masterwork falchion +6 (2d4+3/18–20); **Ranged** light crossbow +3 (1d8/19–20); **Skills** Climb +3, Jump +4, Listen +3, Spot +4, Swim +1

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +4

**Feats** Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (falchion), Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion)

**Skills** Climb +5, Jump +6, Listen +5, Spot +6, Swim +3

**Languages** Common

**Combat Gear** black adder venom (2 doses), *hellfire infusion*, light crossbow and 10 bolts, masterwork falchion, chain shirt, *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** black and gray tabards with the Chelish coat of arms, 54 gp, 10 sp

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison:** Black adder venom (injury Fort DC 11; initial and secondary 1d6 Con).

## K28. Secret Laboratory (EL 8)

Four slender black marble columns near the corners of this large octagonal chamber support a twenty-foot-high ceiling. Lanterns affixed to a chain running the length of the ceiling bathe the chamber in harsh red light. Long bookshelves occupy the east and west walls and a pair of large wooden chests sit against the southern wall. Two worktables hold a variety of glassware, knives, tubes, clamps, bloody rags, and scraps of parchment.

A large pentagram of chalk occupies a spot on the floor between the two worktables. A strange figure apparently stitched together from numerous corpses and covered in metal plates and spikes lies across the pentagram, with tubes connecting the it to various beakers and alembics. Several human corpses lie piled against the southeast wall.

Inspired by Chelish ambassadors, Baron Vendikon has conducted secret experiments upon living subjects in this chamber for the last few years, careful to cull his victims from foreign slaves lest the townsfolk grow wise. Several of the books filling the bookshelves are journals documenting his studies of the human body and mind. The rest of the books are historical treatises, monstrous codices, philosophical tomes exploring the afterlife and other planes, banned texts on necromancy, and various spell scrolls (see *Treasure*).

**Creatures:** The mutilated body lying across the pentagram was a recent gift from Chelixa. The patchwork construct is a flesh golem, a fearsome fighting machine stitched together from the bodies of men, ogres, and other beasts and given to Baron Vendikon to aid him in fighting the Andoren army. The creature was mostly ready for use when it arrived in a covered wagon a week before the siege began. The baron needed only follow a specific set of instructions to awaken it.

If not encountered elsewhere, the baron (see page 27) is here perusing his books while the crepitus (another gift from his new Chelish allies) makes minor adjustments to the golem. If the baron is not here when the PCs arrive, the crepitus kicks the fully-prepared golem to life and sends it barreling toward intruders. If the baron is present, he follows much the same tactics as in area **K27**, attempting to keep his awakened golem between himself and any invaders while blasting away with his spells. This time, however, he does not retreat, preferring to die rather than cede his family fortress to the enemy.

### CREPITUS

**CR 5**

**hp** 28; see page 30

### CHELISH FLESH GOLEM

**CR 7**

**hp** 79; MM 135

**AC** 20 (touch 8, flat-footed 20), **Spd** 20 ft., **Melee** 2 hooks +10 (2d8+5)

## 【 TOWER OF THE LAST BARON 】

**Treasure:** The collection of scrolls stored here include *deep slumber* (2), *gentle repose* (3), *hold person* (2), *summon monster I*, *summon monster II*, *summon monster III*, *touch of idiocy* (2), and *vampiric touch*. Looking through the parchment scraps on the tables turns up a few arcane formulae for finishing the process of creating a flesh golem, but without the complete formula, they are worthless.

### CONCLUSION

If the PCs are successful in thwarting the baron's plans and capturing or eliminating him, his soldiers quickly abandon their posts and surrender to the Andoren army. Guard Captain Blacklock, if still alive, contacts the invading force and offers to take command of the town and restore order in the name of Andoran—though he fights to the death to defend the baron and apprehend assassins, his loyalty is to Piren's Bluff, regardless of its ruler, and he sees little need for the town to be burned to the ground in memory of one man's hubris. The gates open to General Dakovya, and his army, and though the families and friends of fallen combatants still harbor some residual anger, for the most part the townsfolk and soldiers join together in celebrating the end of a war neither side wanted.

Once the PCs make it back to General Dakovya they are lauded as the true heroes of the campaign and showered with gifts and praise. The general even offers to send word of their deeds to the People's Council in Almas and recommend the PCs for honorary titles. Yet even as his men rejoice, Dakovya moves quickly to fortify the town against the Chelish incursions through the Aspodell Pass which are undoubtedly already in motion.

If the PCs fail in their attempt to neutralize the baron, the Andoren army is forced to directly attack Piron's Bluff. While the baron's troops put up a terrific fight, they are no match for the superior numbers and training of the Andoren army, and the matter is decided quickly and bloodily. Unfortunately, little of the town survives intact, and many of the former townspeople are forced to relocate to the nearby towns of Olfden and Falcon's Hollow.

If the PCs recovered the note from Poltur, General Dakovya is greatly concerned. (Even if the PCs didn't take it, the missive is uncovered by Andoren soldiers sifting through the baron's effects.) Though he doesn't know what threat the baron's agents are plotting in Chimera Cove, he's troubled enough to desire further investigation. Fortunately for him, he knows just who to send. More adventure awaits the PCs in Pathfinder Module LB2: *Treasure of Chimera Cove*.





## CREPITUS

A small, gaunt humanoid creature possessing an oversized saurian head and a thick, powerful tail hovers in the air, its tiny wings a blur. The creature's smooth reddish skin is covered in a maze of glowing golden runes. Its fingers and toes end in razor-sharp claws, and a wide mouth beneath incongruously intelligent eyes bristles with rows of tiny needle teeth.

### CREPITUS

LE Small outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 24, touch 18, flat-footed 17  
(+7 Dex, +6 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 28 (5d8+5); fast healing 3

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +11, **Will** +2

**Defensive Abilities** spell turning; **DR** 5/good or silver;  
**Immune** poison; **Resist** fire 5; **SR** 15

**CR** 5

#### OFFENSE

**Spd** 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect)

**Melee** 2 claws (1d4–1 plus 1d6 fire plus poison)

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

**Special Attacks** rune fire (DC 13)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th)

At will—*detect good*, *detect magic*, *invisibility* (self only),  
*read magic*

3/day—*dispel magic*

1/week—*analyze dweomer*

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** A crepitus prepares for a fight by turning invisible. It then uses *detect magic* to pinpoint enemies with active magical effects or items on them.

**During Combat** A crepitus starts most fights with an area *dispel magic* to get rid of its opponents' active spell effects. If it senses spellcasters, it becomes visible and attempts to goad enemies into targeting it with spells of their own in order to reflect the effects back on them. It then makes claw attacks and burns creatures with its rune fire. If enemy spellcasters are using spells that ignore its SR, it readies itself to counterspell until it has no more uses of *dispel magic* for the day. It then uses *invisibility* to make hit-and-run attacks, relying on its poison to weaken and befuddle enemies, especially wizards (whom it prefers to attack).

**Morale** Although crepituses are highly intelligent, they aren't wise enough to know when to back away from a fight, usually sticking around long enough to get themselves killed.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 25, **Con** 12, **Int** 17, **Wis** 6, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +0

**Feats** Skill Focus (Knowledge [arcana]), Skill Focus (Knowledge [the planes])

**Skills** Bluff +8, Decipher Script +8, Diplomacy +8, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Search +8, Spellcraft +8, Spot +8

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Infernal

**SQ** spell turning

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex)** injury Fortitude DC 13; initial 1d4 Int, secondary 2d4 Int.

**Rune Fire (Su)** At will, a crepitus can cause the runes covering its body to radiate intense heat. Creatures within 5 feet of the crepitus take 1d6 points of fire damage (DC 13 Reflex save for half). Creatures struck by the crepitus's claws or that hit the crepitus with melee weapons take automatic fire damage, with no save allowed. Creatures that attack and are not adjacent are immune to this effect.

**Spell Turning (Su)** Spells that specifically target a crepitus devil that fail to get past its spell resistance are turned back on the caster. This effect is identical to a *spell turning* spell, except that a crepitus can only affect a number of



spell levels each round equal to its Hit Dice. This ability functions as if the crepitus were a 9th-level caster.

**ECOLOGY**

**Environment** Hell

**Organization** solitary

**Treasure** none

**Alignment** lawful evil

**Advancement** 6–10 HD (Small)

**Level Adjustment** —

It is speculated that Asmodeus spawned the first crepitus devils, sometimes called magewretches, to tempt and corrupt mortal wizards into damning their souls. Yet while it is true that the crepitus is a highly intelligent creature with a gift for spellcraft and all things arcane, its great intellect is countered by its foolishness and inability to competently lure mortals to Asmodeus's will. As a result, specimens seen on the Material Plane are more often slaves than fiendish tempters.

**Ecology**

A crepitus stands 3 to 4 feet tall, with bright eyes in a saurian head that appears too large for its gaunt, rune-covered body. Its shoulders sprout bat-like wings that allow it to fly with ease, and its sharp talons are surprisingly nimble and capable of fine adjustments when conducting magical rituals. A typical crepitus weighs 30 pounds.

Though, like other devils, crepituses don't require food, they take particular joy in consuming wizards' familiars (and sometimes the wizards themselves.) Crepitus devils are native to Hell, and many lurk around Asmodeus's infernal palace, often serving as messengers.

**Habitat & Society**

Left to their own devices, crepitus devils are cunning, malicious pranksters, content to while away their days flitting about Hell and tormenting lost souls and devils alike. Yet crepituses are rarely left alone for long, and it is likely from this fact that their long-standing racial hatred of wizards stems. Highly valued for their spell-like abilities and intuitive knowledge of magic, crepituses are frequently bound into contracts or enslaved outright by mortal wizards and other fiends, a situation the intelligent devils find extremely demeaning. This situation is not helped by the fact that crepituses are frequently the first gifts handed out by higher-ranking demons attempting to seduce mortal magic users. If given an opportunity, a crepitus goes well out of its way to destroy a wizard and burn his precious spellbooks to ashes (not necessarily in that order). Chelish wizards regularly bind crepitus devils as servants, and view having an enslaved crepitus as a mark of prestige.

Crepituses enjoy lording their power over their significantly weaker impish cousins, and referring to a crepitus as an imp is the gravest possible insult.

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**Valeros**  
MALE HUMAN FIGHTER 5

ALIGN NG INIT +7 SPEED 20 ft.

**ABILITIES**

14	STR
16	DEX
12	CON
13	INT
8	WIS
10	CHA

**DEFENSE**

HP 37
AC 20
touch 13, flat-footed 17
Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +0

**OFFENSE**

Melee +1 longsword +9 (1d8+3/19–20)  
Melee +1 longsword +7 (1d8+3/19–20)  
+1 shortsword +6 (1d6+2/19–20)  
Ranged mwk shortbow +9 (1d6/x3)

**SKILLS**

Climb	+7
Intimidate	+8
Ride	+11
Swim	+4

**FEATS**

Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword)



Combat Gear alchemist's fire (2), elixir of fire breath, potion of cure moderate wounds (2); Other Gear backpack, +1 breastplate, +1 longsword, mwk shortbow with 20 arrows, rations (6), silk rope, silver dagger, +1 shortsword, 157 gp



**Seoni**  
FEMALE HUMAN SORCERER 5

ALIGN LN INIT +2 SPEED 30 ft.

**ABILITIES**

8	STR
14	DEX
12	CON
10	INT
13	WIS
16	CHA

**DEFENSE**

HP 19
AC 15
touch 13, flat-footed 13
Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5

**OFFENSE**

Melee quarterstaff +1 (1d6–1)  
Ranged mwk dagger +5 (1d4–1/19–20)  
Spells Known (CL 5th +4 ranged touch):  
2nd (5/day)—invisibility, scorching ray  
1st (7/day)—burning hands (DC 16), enlarge person, magic missile, shield  
0 (6/day)—acid splash, detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic

**SKILLS**

Bluff	+11
Concentration	+12
Spellcraft	+8

**FEATS**

Dodge, Skill Focus (Concentration), Spell Focus (evocation)



Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds, tanglefoot bag, wand of magic missile (CL 3rd, 25 charges); Other Gear backpack, bracers of armor +2, everburning torch, mwk dagger, quarterstaff, rations (4), ring of protection +1, 243 gp



**Kyra**  
FEMALE HUMAN CLERIC 5

ALIGN NG INIT –1 SPEED 20 ft.

**ABILITIES**

13	STR
8	DEX
14	CON
10	INT
16	WIS
12	CHA

**DEFENSE**

HP 36
AC 18
touch 9, flat-footed 18
Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +10

**OFFENSE**

Melee +1 scimitar +6 (1d6+2/18–20)  
Ranged mwk lt crossbow +3 (1d8/19–20)  
Special Attacks greater turning 1/day, turn undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+6)  
Spells Prepared (CL 5th, +2 ranged touch):  
3rd—prayer, remove curse, searing light\*  
2nd—bull's strength, heat metal\* (DC 15), lesser restoration, spiritual weapon  
1st—bless, command (DC 14), cure light wounds\*, remove fear, shield of faith  
0—detect magic (2), light (2), read magic  
\* domain spell (healing, sun)

**SKILLS**

Concentration	+10
Heal	+11
Knowledge (religion)	+8

**FEATS**

Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scimitar), Weapon Focus (scimitar)



Combat Gear holy water (3), wand of cure moderate wounds (15 charges); Other Gear backpack, +1 chainmail, cloak of resistance +1, healer's kit, +1 heavy steel shield, mwk lt crossbow with 10 bolts, +1 scimitar, silver holy symbol (everburning torch), 96 gp



**Merisiel**  
FEMALE ELF ROGUE 5

ALIGN CN INIT +4 SPEED 30 ft.

**ABILITIES**

12	STR
18	DEX
12	CON
8	INT
13	WIS
10	CHA

**DEFENSE**

HP 25
AC 19
touch 14, flat-footed 15
Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +3 (+2 vs enchantment)
Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny dodge; Immune sleep

**OFFENSE**

Melee +1 rapier +8 (1d6+2/18–20)  
Ranged dagger +7 (1d4+1/19–20)  
Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

**SKILLS**

Climb	+6
Disable Device	+7
Hide	+10
Jump	+8
Listen	+7
Move Silently	+10
Open Lock	+8
Search	+7
Spot	+7
Tumble	+14

**FEATS**

Dodge, Weapon Finesse



Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of invisibility, thunderstone; Other Gear amulet of natural armor +1, backpack, cloak of resistance +1, daggers (6), grappling hook, +1 rapier, silk rope, +1 studded leather armor, thieves tools, 131 gp

# Vendikon Keep

Second Floor



Third Floor



First Floor



Fourth Floor



one square = 5 feet

# STOP A WAR BEFORE IT STARTS

**Pathfinder Module**

## **LB1: Tower of the Last Baron**

After years of neutrality, the honeyed tongues and diabolical gifts of devil-worshipping ambassadors from Cheliah have finally convinced Baron Vendikon of Andoran to pledge his allegiance to the enemy. Now, as the baron's conflicted subjects hastily fortify his position and a reluctant Andoren general marches on the tiny town of Piren's Bluff, a few brave souls must infiltrate the tyrant's stronghold and put an end to his treason before one man's arrogance costs hundreds of innocent lives.

*Tower of the Last Baron* is an infiltration adventure for 5th-level characters compatible with the world's most popular roleplaying game. Within you'll find information on the lively and strategically important town of Piren's Bluff, Baron Vendikon's keep, and the strange beasts and loyal minions that aid the turncoat noble, as well as notes governing the town's many spies and dissidents.

This adventure is set on the border between two nations in the *Pathfinder Chronicles* campaign setting, but can easily be set in any game world. It can be used on its own or combined with its sequel, *Treasure of Chimera Cove*, to create an even greater campaign arc.

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