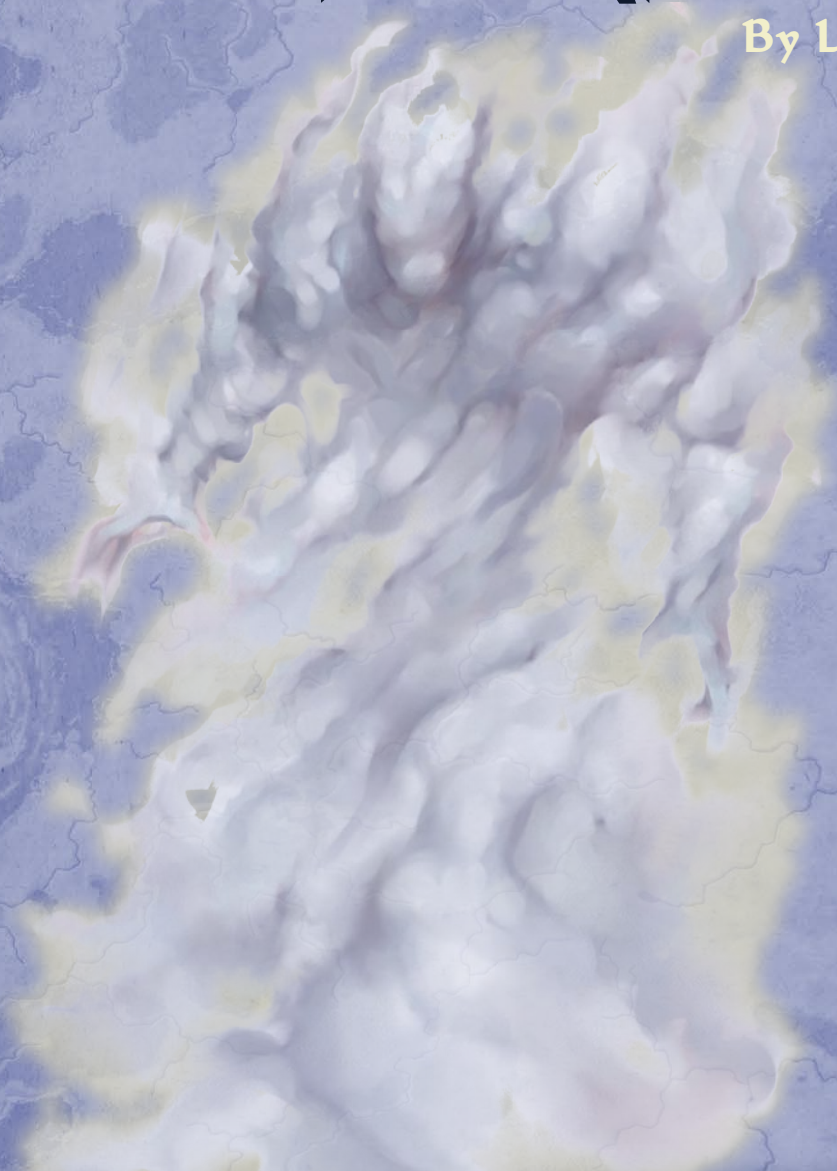


A PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO



SHADOWS FALL ON ABSALOM™

By Larry Wilhelm



SHADOWS FALL ON ABSALOM

PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO 2–04

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This product makes use of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* and *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*. These rules can be found online as part of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document* at paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd.

Pathfinder Society Scenario 2–04: Shadows Fall on Absalom is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 7th- to 11th-level characters (Tiers: 7–8 and 10–11). This scenario is designed for play in Pathfinder Society Organized Play, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. This scenario is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. The OGL can be found on page XX of this product.

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SHADOWS FALL ON ABSALOM

BY LARRY WILHELM



For several years, a splinter group of Pathfinders known as the Shadow Lodge sought to secure the esoteric lore and eldritch artifacts within the vaults of the Grand Lodge of Absalom and use them, not to help Golarion, but to rule her. Nordris Kalm, a high-ranking Shadow Lodge member, set in motion a plan to steal the Prospectus of Artifacts. This catalogue detailed not only the powers and locations of the Grand Lodge's most valuable discoveries, but also each vault's defense mechanisms. With this prospectus, the Shadow Lodge could locate and take the artifacts they desired, and possessing them would be among the first strikes in initiating their larger plans.

Nordris pursued this catalogue unsuccessfully for many years until he learned it lay hidden in the personal vaults of an Absalom venture-captain named Drandle Dreng. Quivering with excitement, Nordris attempted to steal the prospectus, but his ecstasy soon bowed to frustration. Unable to penetrate the magical wards on Dreng's personal vault, Nordris sought the help of his former associates within the cult of Norgorber.

In his many years of servitude to the Reaper of Reputations, Nordris met one individual with the skills he needed. Istraxis Xis, a doppelganger and master spy, agreed to replace Dreng while Nordris captured the real venture-captain and pressed him for answers.

At first, Nordris's plan seemed to progress splendidly. Then, a sudden rash of clumsy assassination attempts targeted Istraxis (masquerading as Dreng). Nordris grew concerned and knew that once the assassination attempts became more brazen, the authorities would soon get involved and perhaps stumble onto his plan. Nordris paid countless sums of money to uncover the leak in his organization only to find that the assassin trying to kill the false Dreng was none other than this son, Sidri. Having to choose between his son, and the Prospectus of Artifacts was easy—Sidri would have to die.

Nordris found a simple solution to silencing his son. He would use Istraxis to lure an unsuspecting group of Pathfinders to hunt down his son before the truth got out. Forging several documents, and using many contacts within the Society, Nordris arranged

WHERE ON GOLARION?

Shadows Fall on Absalom takes place in the City at the Center of the World—also known simply as Absalom. Situated in the heart of the Inner Sea, Absalom is the region's hub for culture, trade, exploration, and politics. Also the home of the Pathfinder Society, Absalom is one of the more important cities on Golarion. To learn more about Absalom, check out the Pathfinder Campaign Setting book, *Guide to Absalom*, available at your local bookstore or hobby store, and online at paizo.com.



a meeting between Istraxis (in Dreng's form) and the PCs in hopes of sending the unwitting Pathfinders to kill his son and plug the leak. Nordris assumes the PCs involvement will have no impact on his plan to raid Dreng's office, but what he doesn't expect is that his son knows a lot more about the plan than Nordris thinks and that very soon, Sidri's knowledge is likely to bring his father's life to a close.

SUMMARY

After shedding their blindfolds at a clandestine meeting, the PCs meet with the doppelganger Istraxis (assuming Drandle Dreng's form). Unknown to the PCs at this time, the meeting takes place in a makeshift hideout secretly in the back of the Black Mask costume shop. Istraxis secures the PCs' help, and informs them of the recent

attempts on his life. Begging for help under the pretense that he cannot trust the Pathfinders at the Grand Lodge, he provides the PCs with the would-be killer's identity (Sidri) and his residence within the confines of the Grand Lodge's outbuildings. "Dreng" warns the PCs to use caution, for the assassin is the son of a very influential Pathfinder, and he asks the PCs to bring this assassin back to him alive, if possible.

Next, the false Dreng re-blindfolds the PCs and drops them off in front of the Grand Lodge, asking the PCs to immediately progress toward the alleged assassin's hideout. However, Sidri left only a few hours before the PCs arrived, after gaining the location of the real Dreng's whereabouts inside the Black Mask costume shop—the same shop the PCs have just left. As the PCs enter Sidri's home, they uncover many clues that seem to identify him as the culprit in Dreng's assassination attempts; however, these clues expose the real perpetrators. More importantly, the clues lead the PCs back to the Black Mask, where the real Dreng waits in captivity. Knowing that his father's minions hunt him, Sidri has asked his trusted friends to watch his home and accost any miscreants who might dare to come for him. As the PCs leave Sidri's dwelling, Sidri's cohorts mistake the PCs for the thugs who are stalking Sidri and attack.

Equipped with the address of Sidri's next location, the PCs venture to the costume shop known as the Black Mask. Entering the shop, the PCs find Dreng there, quite surprised to see the PCs. As Dreng (the false one) chats up the PCs, he moves to flank them and then attacks with his animated object minions, convinced the PCs are on to him and have foiled his plans.

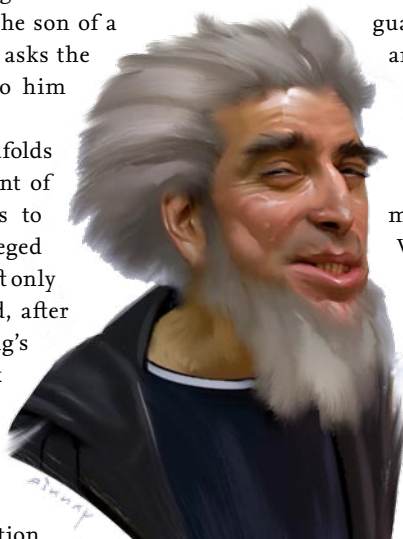
Progressing beyond an oaken counter to another shopping area flooded with fabric, the PCs notice an oversized masquerade costume suspended from the ceiling. Within this garish costume, Sidri and a badly beaten Dreng wait, bound in wire. Ornate hooks and costume racks elsewhere in the room hold countless masquerade outfits. As the PCs wade through this cramped room, Nordris's Norgorber-worshipping thugs leap out and attack them.

The PCs discover that they were pawns as they enter the Black Mask's office—the exact room where they initially met the false Dreng. Searching the office reveals Nordris's plot to abduct and replace Dreng so he could access the venture-captain's vault. Dreng asks the PCs to hurry and stop Nordris.

Racing to Drandle Dreng's personal vault within the Grand Lodge, the PCs arrive just in time to face the now-opened vault's guardians. Nordris, ill equipped to battle the guardians (one or more invisible stalkers), quickly used magic to escape. Once the PCs fight off the guardians, they enter the vault only to be ambushed from behind by Nordris.

GETTING STARTED

The adventure begins during a clandestine meeting with a man the PCs assume to be Venture-Captain Drandle Dreng. Read the following to get the adventure underway:



Drandle Dreng

A finely decorated room is revealed as a calloused hand removes a smooth, black velvet hood. "I am sorry for all the secrecy, but unfortunately, someone is trying to kill me." A figure stands in the room, his unkempt gray hair and bushy eyebrows framing milky-white eyes that suggest the onset of cataracts—it is Venture-Captain Drandle Dreng. He walks past several covered easels to a plush, zebra-patterned chair, where

he painfully creaks into an awkward sitting position. As he straightens his spine, a series of loud pops protest, and he looks up and pleads, "Pathfinders, I need your help."

If the PCs suspect something is foul, allow them a Sense Motive check versus Istraxis's Bluff check. Refer to Istraxis's stats on page 10 for the tier-appropriate ranks. If the PCs should discover something is wrong, roleplay Istraxis as simply stating he is nervous about the several attempts on his life; remember, Istraxis is telling the truth when he states Sidri is attempting to murder him. More likely, however, is that the PCs simply believe him—Dreng is a longtime friend and known venture-captain to most Pathfinders in Absalom and Istraxis has spent months studying Dreng's mannerisms to perfect his impersonation. There are two thugs here guarding the false Dreng—you can find their stats on page 12.

Assuming the PCs agree to help the man they think is Dreng, read the following aloud:

"While I know many individuals have designs on my life, I cannot figure out how this particular killer benefits from my passing." Dreng leans forward, looking suddenly more serious. "What I am going to ask of you may seem unorthodox, but I need you to capture this assassin and bring him to me. I need you to use caution, for the accused has a very powerful father in the Society. The killer's name is Sidri, and right now he's hiding behind his father's power in one of the Grand Lodge's outbuildings. Go there and accost Sidri with as little violence as

possible, and I shall contact you regarding what to do next.”

Dreng looks from side to side, as if someone might be listening in and whispers, “I needn’t tell you that all this Shadow Lodge business has everyone above me in quite a panic. Do nothing to attract attention to yourself—avoid being seen by locals and Pathfinders alike. Be careful, be stealthy, and bring me Sidri. I would know why he has designs on my life—it’s possible that his father has them and is instructing his son to kill me, but I can’t be too sure. Whatever you do, be cautious, Pathfinders.”

Dreng reaches in the folds of his black garment and pulls out an amulet. “Here take this—I can contact you easily as long as it’s in your possession. Any questions?”

The PCs may have questions for the false Dreng at this point. Below are some likely questions and their answers. The false Dreng answers them patiently, carefully, and spends a great deal of time thinking about an answer before he gives it, ensuring he sticks to his facade.

How and when will you contact us?

“The item I gave you helps me to scry on you. I have a contact that I trust, and he will update me regularly with your progress.”

Who is Sidri’s father? “His name is Nordris Kalm, and he works as a venture-captain in Diobel. He has many friends in the lodge—rumor holds that he has the most powerful of friends there, if you catch my meaning. Be careful not to alert him to your investigations.”

Why is Sidri trying to kill you? “Truth be told, I have no idea, but I am hoping that you can bring him to me, and with questioning, he shall enlighten us.”

Why not just get Sidri yourself? “He’s tried twice to kill me—I’m not going anywhere near him.”

Why not just go to the authorities, or the Decemvirate? “We Pathfinders take care of our own. And Nordris has powerful friends in the Lodge—I’d hate to go to those above me for help and simply warn Nordris of what I know.”

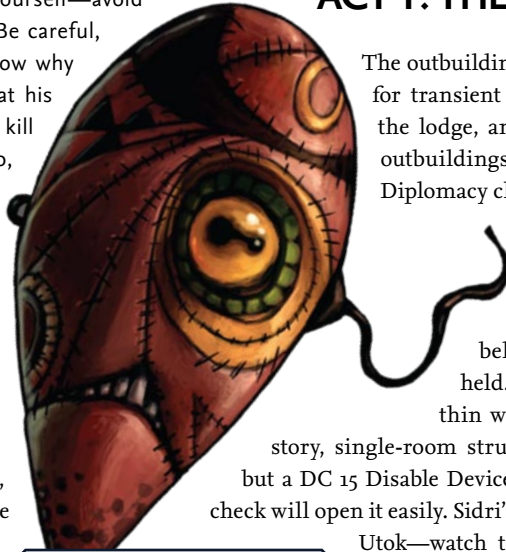
Mission Notes: Andoran faction PCs should be interested in reports of Dreng’s recent odd behavior. When asked about this, the false Dreng simply states he is worried about the attempts on his life, and finding the killer would ease his mind (this does not satisfy the Andoran mission).

When the PCs are ready to leave for the Grand Lodge, read the following aloud:

“Because of the dangers I face, I can’t let you see your way back out.” Dreng gestures to the burly men. “They’re going to put your masks back on and gently put you in a carriage, dropping

you off near the Grand Lodge. I will contact you in 48 hours to get a progress report. Good hunting and be safe, Pathfinders.”

ACT I: THE GRAND LODGE



Skinsaw Mask

The outbuildings act as temporary housing for transient Pathfinders and visitors to the lodge, and it is within one of these outbuildings that Sidri dwells. A DC 10 Diplomacy check allows the PCs to locate Sidri’s home. Currently, Sidri is near the Ascendant Court to investigate a costume shop where he believes the real Dreng is being held. The outbuilding is made of thin wood and it is a simple, one-story, single-room structure. The room is locked, but a DC 15 Disable Device check or a DC 18 Strength check will open it easily. Sidri’s friends—Darik, Sonta, and Utok—watch the PCs enter Sidri’s home, and once the PCs are inside, they move to ambush them as they leave.

A1. Sidri’s Outbuilding

Several yellowed pieces of parchment litter the creaking floorboards of this modest structure. Three large Absalom city maps dominate the north wall. A ratty leather chair offers the only place to sit, and a dusty blanket rests in the southeast corner.

The yellowed parchments on the floor are the beginnings of Sidri’s plan to paper the city in “Drandle Dreng is an imposter” posters. Several of them are crude, poorly drawn attempts to portray Dreng, but one of them seems to have captured his likeness quite well. Beneath that one are the words “the imposter must die” and “death to the imposter,” with question marks behind each phrase as if the author were trying to think of a good tag line. Each of the maps on the north wall details a district in Absalom. The westernmost details the Wise Quarter, where several “X-ed” out areas render the map useless. The middle map portrays the Puddles District and has the same treatment as the first. However, the last map, the one on the east side of the room, corresponds to the Ascendant Court, and a thick red circle highlights a tiny building. Scrawled below is one word: “Dreng.”

Searching the room further reveals the following: a DC 12 Perception check uncovers a grisly mask made from questionable leathers hidden in the ratty chair, and a DC 15 Perception check identifies a dark bluish-gray dye



that splatters the underside of the dusty blanket. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the mask honoring an aspect of Norgorber named Father Skinsaw. A DC 12 Craft (poison), DC 15 Craft (alchemy), or a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check identifies the dye as an arsenic compound.

Development: The clues allude to Istraxis’s goons, who are all Norgorber worshipers, and the circle on the Ascendant Court’s map identifies a small costume shop dubbed “The Black Mask.” A DC 12 Knowledge (local) check allows the PCs to identify the circled building, or they can simply follow the map.

A2. Alley Ambush (CR 8 or CR 11)

After the PCs leave Sidri’s house, several of his friends attack, mistaking the PCs for the Norgorber-worshipping thugs who’ve been stalking Sidri lately. Sidri asked his adventuring companions (Darik, Sonta, and Utok) to watch his back and the three have been spying on Sidri’s meager home all morning.

As the battle progresses, it should become apparent that Darik and his companions use nonlethal tactics (hold person, nets, and sleep arrows). Allow the PCs a DC 12 Sense Motive check to realize this. If the PCs are still hell-bent on fighting, a DC 20 Perception check causes the most observant PC to realize she’s fighting fellow Pathfinders.

If the PCs deny their association with Norgorber, and can make any one of Sidri’s companions friendly through Diplomacy (they’re currently hostile), Darik orders the others to stay their hands. For each round the PCs deny their affiliation with Norgorber, grant them a cumulative +5 bonus on their Diplomacy checks.

For Tier 10–11, Sonta is accompanied by her sister Ialysia, who shares the same stats.

Tier 7–8 (CR 8)

DARIK DUNSTIN	CR 5
Male human ranger 6	
NG Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +4; Senses Perception +10	
DEFENSE	
AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +4 Dex)	
hp 57 (6d10+24)	
Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +3	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee dagger +7/+2 (1d4+1/19-20)	
Ranged composite longbow (+1 Str) +11/+6 (1d8+1/x3)	
Special Attacks favored enemy (human +4, native outsiders +2), hunter’s bond (companions)	
Spells Prepared (CL 3th; concentration +4)	

SHADOWS FALL ON ABSALOM

1st—*alarm* (already cast)

TACTICS

During Combat Darik uses his *sleep arrows*, favoring human targets. If the fight presses on after exhausting his sleep arrows, he hesitates for 1 round, ordering his enemies to surrender; if they continue to fight, he turns to his regular arrows. Throughout the fight, he calls out insults like, “Filthy Norgorber dogs!” and “Murder gets you nowhere!”

Morale Darik flees once his hit points fall below 15.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21

Feats Endurance, Many Shot, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

Skills Climb +8, Heal+10, Intimidate +8, Perception +10, Spellcraft +9, Stealth +11, Swim +8

Languages Common

SQ favored terrain (urban +2), track +3, wild empathy

Combat Gear 12 *sleep arrows*; **Other Gear** chain shirt, dagger, composite longbow (+1 Str) with 20 arrows

SONTA RASK

CR 5

Female human cleric 5 rogue 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 37 (6d8+11)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +2 (1d6–1/19–20)

Ranged shortbow +6 (1d6–1/x3)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (5d6, DC 13, 4/day), sneak attack +1d6

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8)

6/day—dazing touch

6/day—copycat (5 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8)

3rd—*invisibility purge*, *prayer*, *suggestion*^D (DC 17)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *hold person* (2, DC DC 16), *invisibility*^D

1st—*bless*, *disguise self*^D, *doom* (2, DC 14), *sanctuary*

o (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *mending*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Charm, Trickery

TACTICS

During Combat Sonta casts *hold person*, and attempts to negate PCs with ranged attacks. She then casts *prayer* to boost her ally’s abilities. Sonta favors human targets to benefit from Darik’s hunter’s bond. If after 3 rounds of combat her enemies show no quarter, Sonta angers, and uses channel negative energy with her selective channel feat.

Morale Sonta flees when her hit points fall below 10.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 15

Feats Greater Spell Focus, Selective Channeling, Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +7, Bluff +7, Disable Device +10, Disguise +7, Perception +12, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +10

Languages Common, Dwarven

SQ aura, trapfinding

Gear chain shirt, whip, *phylactery of negative channeling*

UTOK CROW-EATER

CR 5

Male human barbarian 6

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 63 (6d12+24)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3; +3 vs. spells

Defensive Abilities trap sense +2, improved uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee light steel shield +8/+3 (1d3+1)

Ranged net +9 ranged touch (entangle, *Core Rulebook* 147)

Special Attacks rage (17 rounds per day), rage powers (guarded stance +2 [5 rounds], renewed vigor [1d8+3 hp], superstitious +3)

TACTICS

During Combat Utok throws his net on any obvious spell caster and keeps the trailing rope secure. He then fights defensively using shield bashes to ward off his enemies. Utok favors human targets to benefit from Darik’s hunter’s bond. If Utok takes 10 points of damage, he enters a rage.

Morale Utok fights to the death while raging. Otherwise, Utok flees when reduced to 15 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 17, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Improved Shield Bash, Weapon Focus (net), Weapon Focus (shield)

Skills Acrobatic +6, Climb +5, Intimidate + 5, Perception +7, Stealth +3, Survival +10

Languages Common

Gear breastplate, light steel shield, net

Tier 10–11 (CR 11)

DARIK DUNSTIN

CR 7

Male human ranger 8

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 dodge, +4 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 76 (8d10+32)

Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +10/+5 (1d4+2/19-20)

Ranged composite longbow (+2 Str) +13/+8 (1d8+2/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (human +4, native outsiders +2), hunter's bond (companions)

Spells Prepared (CL 3th; concentration +4)

2nd—*barkskin* (already cast)

1st—*alarm* (already cast)

TACTICS

During Combat Darik uses his sleep arrows favoring human targets, if the fight presses on after exhausting his sleep arrows, he hesitates for 1 round ordering his enemies to surrender, if they continue to fight, he turns to his regular arrows. Throughout the fight, he calls out insults like, "filthy Norgorber dogs", and "Murder gets you nowhere!"

Morale Darik flees once his hit points fall below 15.

Base Statistics AC 19

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +8; CMB +10; CMD 25

Feats Dodge, Endurance, Many Shot, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

Skills Climb +11, Heal +12, Intimidate +10, Perception +12, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +13, Swim +11

Languages Common

SQ favored terrain (urban +4, underground +2), track +4, wild empathy

Combat Gear 12 sleep arrows; Other Gear chain shirt, dagger, composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows

SONTA AND IALYSSIA RASK (2) CR 5

hp 37 each (use stats from Tier 7-8)

NOTES

Only Sonta has a *phylactery of negative channeling*.

UTOK CROW-EATER CR 7

Male human barbarian 8

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 84 (8d12+32)

Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3; +4 vs. spells

Defensive Abilities trap sense +2, improved uncanny dodge, DR 2/—

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 *bashing light steel shield* +12/+7 (1d6+3)

Ranged net +11 ranged touch (entangle, *Core Rulebook* 147)

Special Attacks rage (21 rounds per day), rage powers (guarded stance +2 [5 rounds], increased damage reduction, renewed vigor [2d8+4 hp], superstitious +4)

TACTICS

During Combat Utok throws his net on any obvious spellcaster and keeps the trailing rope secure. He then fights defensively using shield bashes to ward off his enemies. Utok favors human targets to benefit from Darik's hunter's bond. If Utok takes 10 points of damage, he enters a rage.

Morale Utok fights to the death while raging. Otherwise, Utok flees when reduced to 15 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +8; CMB +10; CMD 22

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Improved Shield Bash, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (net), Weapon Focus (shield)

Skills Acrobatic +8, Climb +8, Intimidate +5, Perception +9, Stealth +5, Survival +12

Languages Common

Gear breastplate, +1 *bashing light steel shield*, net

Development: If Darik and his fellow Pathfinders defeat the PCs, they tie them up in Sidri's house and question them. If the PCs provide evidence of their Pathfinder status (such as a *wayfinder*), Darik immediately unties them and apologizes for his actions. If this encounter results in the death of Darik, Sonta, or Utok, the PCs face serious consequences, and gain the status: Broken Reputation (see the chronicle sheet).

If Darik still lives, the PCs may have questions at this time. Below are some likely questions and their answers.

What is Sidri up to? "I am not sure; he just said he was in a lot of trouble. Said he had to stop someone."

Where is Sidri now and how can we find him? "I have no idea, but he talked about going to some costume shop."

Who are you guys? "Pathfinders like you. Sidri often joins us on delves."

Why did you attack us? "Because you broke into Sidri's home, and he told us to capture anyone who tried to do so. The better question is—why did *you* break into his house?"

Treasure: If the PCs convince Darik they have Sidri's best interests at heart, he pulls a small chest out from under Sidri's outbuilding, declaring Sidri needs the help more than the coins. Inside, the PCs find 186 gold pieces and a *phylactery of positive channeling* for Tier 7-8, and 532 gold pieces and a *phylactery of positive channeling* for Tier 10-11. The PCs cannot gain both rewards (Darik and his companion's gear and chest).

Mission Notes: Andoran faction PCs should be interested in slipping away to the wall of names to fix Trantomir Dolos's effigy. A DC 20 Craft or Profession check scribes the name properly. Alternatively, the PCs can hire a scribe for 750 gold pieces to complete the task.

① = Istraxis

Ⓜ = Animated Object



-The Black Mask-
COSTUME SHOP
One square = 5 feet

Qadira faction PCs should be interested in convincing the master of the menagerie, Aldus Soot, to sell the sphinx to the Pasha. A DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check convinces Soot the money far outweighs the risk of keeping a sphinx captive. Taldor faction PCs should be interested in going to the training arena to convince Olybrius the Ox to throw his next fight versus Malik Mustafa. A DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check convinces Olybrius to do so. If a PC can defeat the Olybrius in an arm wrestle (Strength check [Olybrius's strength is a 17]), grant the PCs a +2 bonus on their attempt to convince "the Ox" to lose.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Darik and his companions or receive Sidri's gold and items, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 7–8:

Give each player 1,103 gp.

Tier 10–11:

Give each player 1,449 gp.

ACT 2: THE BLACK MASK

This high-end costume shop nestled within the Ascendant Court provides those who worship the second ascendant a place to meet. It is an open secret that the Black Mask exalts Norgorber on certain dark nights, but for the majority of Absalom's populace, it offers a place to seek exotic attire. Reinforced masonry secures the Black Mask's outer walls, while within, wooden walls dominate.

B1a: Front Entrance

Elaborate store windows display masquerade costumes hanging from gilded wire mannequins. A wooden signpost swings in the wind offering a steady rustling of chains; its placard contains no words, but rather illustrates an elegant black mask draped over a dark gray glove. The slightly opened door butts gently against its jam. Beyond the door, a slim shaft of light slants into the otherwise dark shop.

B1b. Rear Entrance

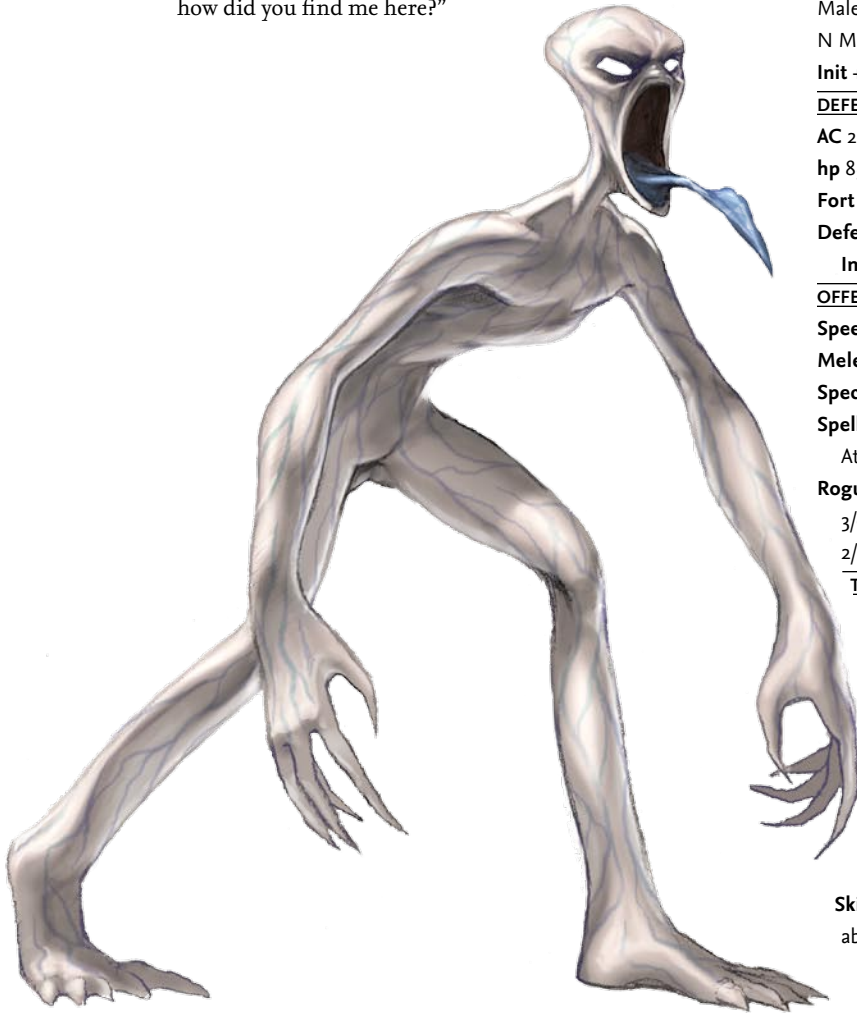
Dust and gravel churn in the blowing wind, leaving the slight tang of earth. A large, reinforced door bound in thick chains sits fixed in the center of a large brick wall.

A great steel sliding door bars the PCs' path. It is currently chained and locked with a superior quality lock (Disable Device DC 40, Break DC 28, hardness 10, 60 hit points).

B2. The Showroom Sadist (CR 9 or CR 12)

Textured costumes drape from cold, ornate hooks, splashing color throughout the scintillating shop. Several wire mannequins display exotic costumes throughout this room.

When the PCs enter, Istraxis, disguised still as Dreng, looks up from the oaken counter in surprise. He seems genuinely shocked to see the PCs for a moment (Sense Motive DC 15), but quickly recovers and says, "Where is Sidri? And how did you find me here?"



At this point, Istraxis is convinced the PCs are on to him. He keeps them talking, going on about Sidri and how the PCs finding him has jeopardized his safety and so on. What he's really doing is moving toward the PCs, keeping them occupied, while positioning himself to flank one of the PCs with a mannequin. Once he's done that, he immediately stops talking and lunges at the nearest PC, attacking with claws and sneak attack damage.

Creatures: Istraxis has animated object minions here disguised as wire mannequins. The moment he attacks, so do they.

Tier 7–8 (CR 9)

ANIMATED OBJECTS (WIRED MANNEQUINS) (2) CR 3

hp 36 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 14)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Construction Points The wire mannequins' 2 CPs are spent on metal. Their hardness increases to 10, and they gain a +2 bonus to natural armor.

ISTRAXIS XIS

CR 8

Male doppelganger rogue 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 89)

N Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)

Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 85 (9 HD; 4d10+5d8+41)

Fort +7, Ref +13, Will +7; +1 Ref vs. traps

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

Immune charm, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +11 (1d8+4)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +20)

At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 13)

Rogue Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +7)

3/day—*resistance*

2/day—*true strike*

TACTICS

During Combat Istraxis attacks the PCs while in Dreng's form, all the while screaming, "The mannequins make me do it, they control my actions."

Morale Istraxis fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 17

Base Atk +7; CMB +11; CMD 27

Feats Deceitful, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +13, Bluff +17 (+21 while using change shape ability), Climb +12, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +17 (+21 while

using change shape ability), Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Linguistics +10, Perception +10, Perform (oratory) +10, Profession (sketch artist) +10, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +13, Use Magic Device +11; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Bluff, +4 Disguise

Languages Abyssal, Aquan, Auran, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Ignan, Infernal

SQ change shape (alter self), mimicry, perfect copy, rogue talents (minor magic, major magic), trap sense +1, trapfinding

Gear belt of physical perfection +2

Tier 10–11 (CR 12)

ANIMATED OBJECTS (WIRE MANNEQUINS) (4) CR 5

Advanced animated object (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 14)

N Large construct

Init –1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low–light vision; Perception –5

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 8, flat-footed 15 (–1 Dex, +7 natural, –1 size)

hp 52 each

Fort +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** –4

Defensive Abilities hardness 10; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slam +9 (1d6+6)

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

TACTICS

Morale These mindless constructs fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 8, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +4 **CMB** +11; **CMD** 20

Skills Stealth +0

SQ construction points (metal 2 CP and additional attack 1 CP)

ISTRAXIS XIS CR 11

Male doppelganger rogue 8

N Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)

Init +9; **Senses** dark vision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 114 (12 HD; 4d10+8d8+56)

Fort +8, **Ref** +15, **Will** +10; +2 Ref vs. traps

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; **Immune** charm, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d8+4)

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +20)

At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 13)

Rogue Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +10)

3/day—*resistance*

2/day—*true strike*

TACTICS

During Combat Istraxis attacks the PCs while in Dreng's form, all the while screaming, "The mannequins make me do it, they control my actions."

Morale Istraxis fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 20, **Con** 16, **Int** 15, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 30

Feats Deceitful, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +16, Bluff +21 (+25 while using shape change ability), Climb +15, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +21 (+25 while using shape change ability), Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (nobility) +10, Linguistics +10, Perception +13, Perform (oratory) +11, Profession (sketch artist) +10, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +16, Use Magic Device +12; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Bluff, +4 Disguise

Languages Abyssal, Aquan, Auran, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Ignan, Infernal

SQ change shape (alter self), mimicry, perfect copy, rogue talents (bleeding attack, minor magic, major magic, surprise attack), trap sense +2, trapfinding

Gear belt of physical perfection +2

Development: If the PCs destroy Istraxis, he reverts to his doppelganger form. This should help the PCs piece together Sidri's behavior. A DC 25 Perception check alerts the PCs to a low whimpering emanating from area B3.

Mission Notes: Andoran PCs who uncover Istraxis as a doppelganger can explain Dreng's recent odd behavior.

Rewards: If the PCs manage to defeat Istraxis, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 7–8:
Give each player 1,333 gp.

Tier 10–11:
Give each player 1,333 gp.

B3. The Chamber of Mirrors (CR 10 or CR 13)

A sea of satin and suede floods across this room as several masquerade costumes cram racks surrounding a central platform. Above the platform, suspended from thin wire, dances a flamboyant, oversized masquerade costume complete with mask. Four curtained change rooms offer privacy, and several mirrors adorn the walls reflecting the meager light of this shadowy room.

Drandle and Sidri struggle to gain their freedom while bound within the oversized masquerade costume. Dim light fills this room. Inside the two northern change rooms, a secret door hides behind the mirrors (DC 20

Perception check to notice). Beyond these secret doors a clutter-free hallway runs the length of the room—from this hallway, one can spy on any aspect of area 3. Treat this room as difficult terrain due to the sea of fabric littering the floor.

Creatures: Six of Istraxis’s thugs, all worshipers of Norgorber, heard the fight with their master and gathered at the door from area 4 to area 3. The moment the PCs dispatch Istraxis, the thugs attack. Allow the PCs to make DC 15 Perception checks—those who succeed not only can act on the surprise round, but they recognized two of the thugs as the men who put the black bags on their heads in the introduction.

Tier 7–8 (CR 10)

NORDRIS’S THUGS (6) CR 5

Male or female human rogue 6
NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 51 (6d8+24)

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +9 (1d4+3/19–20)

Ranged mwk dagger +8 (1d4+3/19–20) or dagger +7 (1d4+3/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

During Combat The thugs attack in teams of two, with each team flanking a single PC whenever possible.

Morale The thugs fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Fleet, Improved Initiative, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (dagger)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Bluff +8, Climb +11, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +10, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +10, Linguistics +10, Perception +9, Stealth +10

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling, Kelish, Orc

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +3, combat trick, stand up), trapfinding +3, uncanny dodge

Gear daggers (3), masterwork chain shirt, masterwork dagger, 100 gp

Tier 10–11 (CR 13)

NORDRIS’S THUGS (6) CR 8

Male or female human rogue 9

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 76 (9d8+36)

Fort +6, **Ref** +10, **Will** +4

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

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +11/+6 (1d4+3/19–20)

Ranged mwk dagger +11/+6 (1d4+3/19–20) or dagger +10/+5 (1d4+3/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +5d6

TACTICS

During Combat The thugs attack in teams of two, with each team flanking a single PC whenever possible.

Morale The thugs fight to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 24

Feats Dodge, Fleet, Improved Initiative, Step Up, Throw Anything, Toughness, Weapon Focus (dagger)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +11, Climb +14, Disguise +11, Escape Artist +14, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (local) +13, Linguistics +10, Perception +12, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +14

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling, Kelish, Orc

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +5, combat trick, rogue crawl, stand up), trapfinding +4, improved uncanny dodge

Gear +1 chain shirt, daggers (3), masterwork dagger, cloak of resistance +1, 698 gp

Development: The real Dreng and Sidri hang from the ceiling within a gaudy costume suspended by wires. Once the PCs untangle Dreng and Sidri from the wires, the PCs may ask them questions. Below are some likely questions and their answers. Dreng takes the lead, and answers them graciously.

How can we be sure you are not another doppelganger? “Unfortunately you cannot, but I gladly offer my surrender... and my thanks.”

What is going on? “An old friend of mine, Nordris Kalm, revealed himself as a member of the Shadow Lodge. He had me abducted, and replaced by a filthy doppelganger. Luckily, Sidri discovered this and tried to rescue me. Sidri’s interference made Nordris sloppy, and thankfully led you here.”

What is the Shadow Lodge? “The Shadow Lodge is a splinter group that believes we should use the treasures we chronicle to rule Golarion, exalting us to near godhood. Only recently has the Decemvirate even acknowledged their existence publicly.”

HANDOUT #1

Istraxis,

Take these golden baubles and replace Dreng. Go into the light and have these fool Pathfinders see you masquerading as Dreng. Shroud their eyes, and let them go about their days ignorant of the creeping blackness that soon comes to devour them all. I am pleased with our progress, and once we penetrate Dreng's vault, we can kill that whimpering old fool. My master shall rain rewards down on us for our service to the Shadow Lodge. With the Prospectus secured, my master can unleash his plan and take what is his.

Patience, my old friend, stay the course, and to pass the time, turn your charcoal to canvas, for I believe it is Sidri's turn to meet your wrath. Silence my son, and the only threat to stepping the Shadow Lodge ends with him.

Nordris Kalm

What other threats can we expect to find in this shop?

"I don't know, but Nordris left to access my vault several hours ago. We need to stop him. I'll escort you to my office, but you need to take care of Nordris while I alert the Decemvirate members currently in Absalom."

Why did Nordris (the Shadow Lodge) kidnap you?

"They talked about my vault and a catalogue I keep there. This catalogue, the Prospectus of Artifacts, lists the entire inventory of the Grand Lodge's vaults. Worse, it reveals where each artifact is located, and how to bypass the vaults defenses. He magically persuaded me to tell him how to access the vault." Dreng smiles. "But he never asked about my guardians."

Mission Notes: Cheliox PCs should be interested in taking an exquisite ball gown here. A DC 20 Appraise check identifies a worthy specimen.

Rewards: If the PCs manage to defeat the thugs, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 7–8:

Give each player 293 gp.

Tier 10–11:

Give each player 1,974 gp.

B4. Shipping and Receiving

This 55-foot-by-50-foot room holds numerous bolts of fabric, several crates, and many barrels. A great steel sliding door provides access to an alleyway beyond, but it is currently chained and locked with a superior quality lock (Disable Device DC 40, Break DC 28, hardness 10, 60 hit points). This room receives and ships supplies to run the Black Mask's business. Three skylights cast light into this room.

Development: Several opened barrels hold a bluish-gray liquid. PCs who discovered the splatter stains on Sidri's flour sack (Act 1) notice a remarkable similarity. Otherwise, a DC 12 Craft (poison), DC 15 Craft (alchemy),

or DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check identifies the dye as an arsenic compound. The Black Mask seems to use this compound as a fabric dye. As it stands now, the dye is ineffective as a lethal poison. A ledger identifies methods of hiding certain poisons within textile dyes.

Mission Notes: Taldor faction PCs should be interested in the ledger. A DC 15 Perception check locates the ledger amid several papers.

B5. Déjà vu

A finely decorated room lush with exotic fabrics seems eerily familiar. Several covered easels dominate the room, giving it the appearance of a makeshift drawing studio. A lone plush chair rests at the far end of the room, its black and white leathers suggesting a hint of the Mwangi Expanse.

Istraxis used this exact same room for his initial meeting with the PCs. On the chair, several black velvet hoods lie discarded, and a silver serving plate displays coarse strands of hair. The easels, when uncovered, portray several hand-drawn sketches of Drandle in various poses.

Development: A DC 20 Perception check notices a slightly discolored wall panel—area 6 waits beyond the panel.

B6. Voyeur's Vantage

Beyond the panel, a hidden triangular room offers a peeping Tom's view into two changerooms through cleverly disguised peep holes. A foot locker rests open on the floor.

Inside the foot locker, a journal holds hundreds of portraits, but only one of Dreng. Next to the journal rests a black leather pouch and a letter addressed to Istraxis.

Development: The letter clearly shows a transaction between Istraxis and Nordris Kalm to kidnap and



replace Dreng (see **handout #1**). Finally, a detailed map shows the location of Dreng's vault under the Grand Lodge of Absalom.

Mission Notes: Osirion faction PCs should be interested in Istraxis's journal. On the page before Dreng's portrait, a swarthy man is drawn. Underneath are the words, "Atmun Ka-run, replaced and killed."

ACT 3: DRENG'S VAULT

This 75-foot-by-80-foot, three-chambered vault holds Drandle Dreng's most exotic possessions. The 5-foot-thick outer walls pose a formidable barrier, and the only entrance is a massive metal door. Overlapping

the inner walls by 1 foot, this door creates a hermetic seal when closed.

The first L-shaped chamber offers a pleasant atmosphere complete with deep and luxurious carpets, animal trophies, a stocked bar, and a hearth. The second chamber located on the room's northeastern corner holds a large table with chairs. Several maps adorn the walls showing the many corners of Avistan. The final chamber acts as an inner vault, its east and south walls an impressive 3-foot-thick reinforced masonry. An antechamber connects this area to the rest of the vault. Two sets of doors bar anyone from gaining entry. Dreng's vault has six vents (the windows on the map) that manually open and seal from the inside. These vents,

when opened, allow fresh air to waft into the complex (except the inner vault).

C1. The Outer Vault (CR 8 or CR 11)

Several wall-mounted beasts stare with dead, black eyes into this otherwise cozy room. A dire ape's gaping maw hangs opposite a snarling worg. Under the worg's scruff, a large, marbled hearth offers a promise of warmth, and many tables and chairs snuggle on top of Vudran rugs. Opposite the hearth, under the dire ape's glare, a dragon-motif bar slithers for 20 feet of exotic Tian Xia inlays and carvings. A soft, yellow glow emanates from decorative blown-glass hurricanes.

Nordris Kalm spent several hours here looking for a way to penetrate this secured inner sanctum. When Nordris finally pierced the sanctum, he was ill prepared to deal with its guardians. Now the vault's guardian(s) furiously roam the den of the Ape and Worg. Fortunately for Nordris, he used *meld into stone* to escape into the sanctum's southern walls and avoid the guardian. The door to area C2 is open.

Creatures: A bound invisible stalker (three at Tier 10–11) acts as the vault's guardian, and proved too much for Nordris. Ordinarily, the invisible stalker keeps to the inner vault, but after Nordris's attempts to penetrate the inner vault it remains in the outer vault, waiting for the Pathfinder to emerge from the south wall. The invisible stalker goes after the PCs the moment they enter.

Tier 7–8 (CR 8)

CR 8

hp 94 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 181, 294)

Tier 10–11 (CR 11)

ADVANCED INVISIBLE STALKERS (3) CR 8

hp 94 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 181, 294)

C2. Staging Room

This room holds seating for nine around a large table. Several maps suggest this room would make an ideal area for planning important missions and adventures. The door to area C3 is open.

C3. The Inner Vault (CR 9 or CR 12)

A collection of crates, bookshelves, and various sundries lies scattered throughout this cold vault. Stretched out on a table, several dog-eared papers strain to flutter under the weight of a heavy candelabra.

Hundreds of tiny sigils line the inner walls of this sanctum. The inner vault holds Dreng's most important

treasures and secrets, including the Prospectus that Nordris seeks.

Creatures: Nordris Kalm waits for the PCs to defeat the stalkers in area C1 and then enter this room. Once the PCs have done so, he attacks them from behind.

Tier 7–8 (CR 9)

NORDRIS KALM

CR 9

Male half-elf cleric of Norgorber 10

NE Medium humanoid (elf)

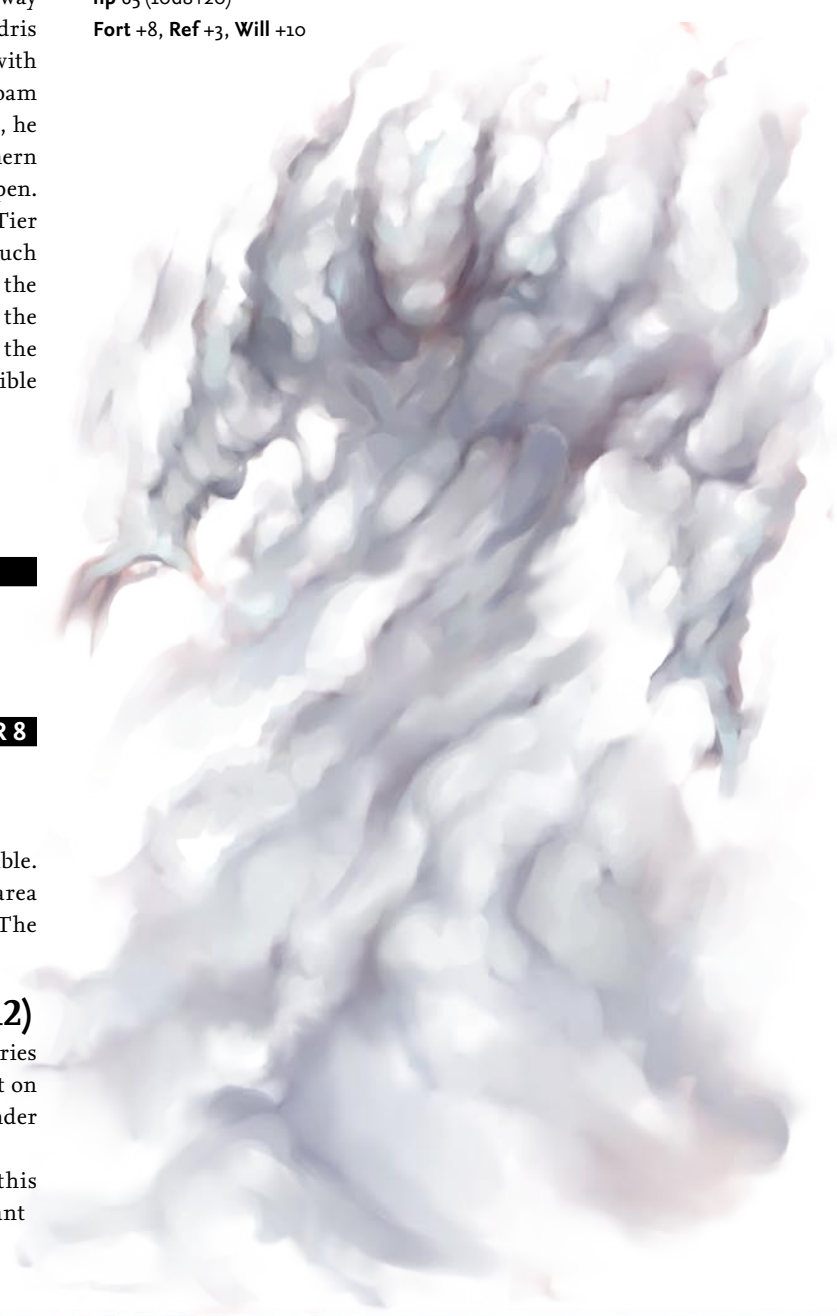
Init +0; Senses Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +2 natural, +1 shield)

hp 65 (10d8+20)

Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +10



OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee short sword +9/+4 (1d6+3/19–20), short sword +9 (1d6+1/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 5/day (DC 19, 5d6), scythe of evil (5 rounds, 1/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +13)

6/day—touch of evil (5 rounds)

At will—master's illusion (10 rounds/day)

6/day—copycat (10 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +13)

5th—*false vision*^P, *scrying* (2, DC 18)

4th—*confusion*^P (DC 17), *freedom of movement*, *divine power*, *greater magic weapon* (2)

3rd—*magic vestment*, *meld into stone* (2, already cast 1),

nondetection^P, *protection from energy*

2nd—*aid*, *bull's strength* (2), *invisibility*^P, *undetectable alignment* (2)

1st—*command* (2 DC 14), *disguise self*^P, *doom* (DC 14), *obscuring mist*, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *mending*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Evil, Trickery

TACTICS

Before Combat Nordris Kalm casts *scrying* to watch the PCs battle the invisible stalker. If he has time, he then uses his *metamagic rod* to cast the following spells on himself: *bull's strength*, *divine power*, and *shield of faith* (these spells are not figured into his stats).

During Combat Nordris prefers melee combat, using Channel Smite to power his multiple short swords. If he had time to buff up before assaulting the PCs, he just charges in after them. If he didn't have time, he casts *invisibility* and sneaks up on the weakest-looking PC, striking when the time is right.

Morale Nordris flees if reduced below 30 hit points.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 20

Feats Channel Smite, Improved Channel, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Bluff +10, Disguise +10, Heal +11, Knowledge (religion) +3, Stealth +4

Languages Common

SQ aura

Gear masterwork breastplate, short swords (2), *amulet of natural armor* +2, *metamagic rod* (extend)

Tier 10–11 (CR 12)

NORDRIS KALM

CR 12

Male half-elf cleric of Norgorber 13

NE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +2 natural, +1 shield)

hp 84 (13d8+26)

Fort +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +11

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee short sword +11/+6 (1d6+3/19–20), short sword +11 (1d6+1/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 9/day (DC 20, 7d6), scythe of evil (6 rounds, 2/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +16)

6/day—touch of evil (6 rounds)

At will—master's illusion (13 rounds/day)

6/day—copycat (13 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 13th; concentration +16)

7th—*blasphemy*^P (DC 19), *regenerate*

6th—*blade barrier* (DC 18), *harm* (DC 18), *mislead* (DC 18)



5th—*false vision*^P, *flame strike*, *scrying* (2, DC 17)
 4th—*confusion*^P (DC 16), *freedom of movement*, *divine power*,
greater magic weapon (2)
 3rd—*magic vestment*, *meld into stone* (2, already cast 1),
nondetection^P, *protection from energy* (2)
 2nd—*aid*, *bull's strength* (2), *invisibility*^P, *undetected alignment* (2)
 1st—*command* (2 DC 13), *disguise self*^P, *doom* (DC 13), *obscuring
 mist*, *shield of faith*
 o (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *mending*
 D Domain spell; **Domains** Evil, Trickery

TACTICS

Before Combat Nordris Kalm casts *scrying* to watch the PCs battle the invisible stalker. If he has time, he then uses his *metamagic rod* to cast the following spells on himself: *bull's strength*, *divine power*, and *shield of faith* (these spells are not figured into his stats).

During Combat Nordris prefers melee combat, using Channel Smite to power his multiple short swords. If he had time to buff up before assaulting the PCs, he just charges in after them. If he didn't have time, he casts *invisibility* and sneaks up on the weakest-looking PC, striking when the time is right.

Morale Nordris flees if reduced below 30 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 22

Feats Channel Smite, Extra Channel, Improved Channel, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Bluff +11, Disguise +11, Heal +12, Knowledge (religion) +4, Stealth +6

Languages Common

Gear mwk breastplate, short swords (2), *amulet of natural armor* +2, *metamagic rod (extend)*, *scabbard of keen edges*

Development: Whether the PCs kill Nordris or he escapes, Dreng thanks the PCs for their intervention and grants the PCs an entire day within his vault as a reward. If they wish, the PCs may spend the next 24 hours studying and researching all manner of Golarion lore. Fine drink and food keep them comfortable, and the soft rugs offer a welcome place to rest. More importantly, the lore available in Dreng's vault is quite immense, and every PC becomes empowered from pursuing the many books and relics. Grant each PC the **Time in Dreng's Vault** boon (see the chronicle sheet). If Nordris escaped, Dreng pulls out a large chest and tells the PCs it's theirs in payment for his rescue. (Either way, the reward is the same.)

Mission Notes: Cheliox faction PCs should be interested in inspecting the magic sigils etched into the vault's wall here (takes 2 hours). A DC 20 Linguistics check allows the PCs to understand the sigils. Osirion faction PCs should be interested in the yellow papers here. A DC 20 Perception check allows the PCs to identify the Prospectus of Artifacts, thus confirming Amenopheus's suspicions that a list

exists. Qadira faction PCs should also be interested in the yellow papers here. A DC 20 Perception check allows them to see the madrid's lantern listed in the catalogue.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Nordris Kalm or Dreng rewards them for saving him, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 7–8:

Give each player 1,614 gp.

Tier 10–11:

Give each player 2,948 gp.

CONCLUSION

With Nordris's defeat, or escape, the PCs successfully prevent either the Prospectus of Artifacts or portions of it from falling into the Shadow Lodge's hands. In addition, the PCs become aware of a splinter group of Pathfinders called the Shadow Lodge, who play a prominent role in future Pathfinder Society Scenarios.

Dreng personally takes an interest in the PCs, and during the next scenario within Absalom, they gain the Owed a Favor boon (see the chronicle sheet) as Dreng uses his personal resources to help the PCs prepare for their upcoming mission. If Nordris escaped, the PCs now have a major enemy to deal with in the future and gain the Stained by Shadow condition (see the chronicle sheet).

FACTION MISSIONS

Andoran Faction: PCs from the Andoran faction who scribe Trantimir Dolos's name properly in Act 1 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Andoran faction who also uncover Istraxis's replacement of Dreng in Act 2 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Cheliox Faction: PCs from the Cheliox faction who select an appropriate dress in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Cheliox faction who also understand the magic sigils in Act 3 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Osirion Faction: PCs from the Osirion faction who discover what happened to Atmun Ka-run in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Osirion faction who also identify the Prospectus of Artifacts in Act 3 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Qadira Faction: PCs from the Qadira faction who convince Aldus Soot to sell the sphinx to the Pasha in Act 1 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Qadira faction who also notice the madrid's lantern is on the Prospectus of Artifacts in Act 3 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Taldor Faction: PCs from the Taldor faction who convince Olybrius to throw his next match in Act 1 earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Taldor faction who also discover the ledger concerning textile dyes and poisons in Act 2 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Andoran Faction Handout

Child of Andoran,

I hear you travel to the Grand Lodge in Absalom—this works in our favor. There is a mild slight we should correct while you visit the lodge. Trantimic Dolos served us well in the field for many years, and on his death, the lodge honored him by inscribing his name on the Wall of Names. The engraver, a dirty Taldan, spelled it wrong. Go to the wall and fix this slight.

We hear you shall meet the famous Venture-Captain Drangle Dreng while in Absalom. He is a close friend of mine, and it seems he has not been himself lately. Please find out if something troubles Dreng, and what we can do to help.

Capt. Colson Maldris

Freedom Reigns,

Captain Colson Maldris



Chelixa Faction Handout

Tender Morsel,

Oh, how I wish I had the time to shop in Absalom—luckily you do. While on your visit, keep an eye out for a proper ball gown, as party season soon arrives and I shall need something magnificent to wear. Do not be cheap; I only wear the finest.

And if you happen to sneak a glimpse into one of the Grand Lodge's many vaults, be a dear and inspect any binding magic designed to keep nasty things at bay. I shall find this information useful in the future.

My Whip Awaits,

Zarta Draldeen

Paracountess Zarta Draldeen

Osirion Faction Handout

Scion of the Ruby Prince,

The sun finds you in Absalom; while you are there, please look into two matters for me. I heard whispered mutterings that hidden in the Grand Lodge exists a catalogue of every artifact, coin, and magic that the Society pulls from Golarion's bowels. Confirm the existence of this list for me.

I had an agent working for me in Absalom, and he disappeared without a trace. His name was Atmun Ka-run. If you can look into his disappearance, that would please me.



In Service to the Ancestors,

Amenopheus

Amenopheus, The Sapphire Sage

Qadira Faction Handout

Servant of the Satrap,

A great sphinx stalked the sandy dunes near Katheer until recently. A group of misguided Pathfinders captured the magical beast and now display the poor thing within the Grand Lodge's menagerie. Please convince these fools to sell the sphinx to me so I can free her back into the desert. The master of the menagerie's name is Aldus Soot.

Since you are going to the Grand Lodge anyway, my coin purse paid dear for the information I am going to share. There seems to be a great catalogue that details the Grand Lodge's inventory. If you happen to catch a glimpse of this list, determine whether the marid's lantern rests safely within the Grand Lodge's vaults.

Sincerely,

Pasha Muhlia Al-Jakri 

Taldor Faction Handout

Agents of the Empire,

I require your assistance on two matters. First, it seems Absalom has increased the tariffs on shipping dangerous goods. I have a very large shipment of poison to export, and going through Absalom's black markets cuts too deeply into my expected profits. Find a means for my agents to smuggle it in.



Second, I am in need of extra cash. There is a Taldan prize fighter named Olybrius the Ox in the Grand Lodge who fights at the training arena. Convince him to lose his next fight against that weakling Qadiran fighter "Malik Mustafa." I doubt he'll like my proposal, so it's up to you to convince him. If I lose this bet, I shall not be happy.

For Taldor!

BARON JACQUO
Baron Jacquo Dalsine

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SCENARIO #2-04: SHADOWS FALL ON ABSALOM

Scenario Chronicle #

TIER		
7-8		4,343
TIER		
10-11		7,703
TIER		

MAX GOLD

This Chronicle Certifies That

_____ A.K.A. _____

Player Name Character Name Pathfinder Society # Faction

_____ Has Completed This Scenario. _____

EXPERIENCE

Starting XP

+1 XP

Final XP Total

PRESTIGE AWARD

Starting PA

GM's Initial

PA Gained (GM ONLY)

Final PA Total

GOLD

Start GP

GM's Initial

+ GP Gained (GM ONLY)

+ Items Sold

= Subtotal

- Items Bought

= Subtotal

- Gold Spent

= Subtotal

Items Found During This Scenario

TIER

All

- Time in Dreng's Vaults:** You gain a permanent +2 circumstance bonus on any one Knowledge skill check.
- Owed a Favor:** You may gain a +4 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy skill checks during one future scenario set in Absalom. Using this bonus removes this boon from your chronicle sheet—line through it upon use.
- Broken Reputation:** For killing a fellow Pathfinder on the Grand Lodge's grounds, you must either spend 2 PA or 750 gold pieces to clear your name, or suffer a -4 penalty on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate skill checks when dealing with other Pathfinders in Absalom or beyond.
- Stained by Shadow:** Nordris informs the Shadow Lodge of your interference, and through the end of Season 2, the Shadow Lodge actively trails you, watching most of your daily movements. Until the end of Season 2, you suffer a -1 Initiative penalty versus any Shadow Lodge agent (you must inform your GM of this penalty prior to the beginning of each scenario).

TIER

7-8

- Amulet of natural armor +2 (8,000 gp)*
- Belt of physical perfection +2 (16,000 gp)*
- Metamagic rod of extend (11,000 gp)*
- Phylactery of negative channeling (11,000 gp)*
- Phylactery of positive channeling (11,000 gp)*
- Sleep arrow (Limit 12; 132 gp)*

TIER

10-11

- +1 bashing light steel shield (4,159 gp)*
- Scabbard of keen edges (16,000 gp)*

Items Sold / Conditions Gained

TOTAL VALUE OF ITEMS SOLD
Add 1/2 this value to the "Items Sold" Box

Items Bought / Conditions Cleared

TOTAL COST OF ITEMS BOUGHT

For GM Only

EVENT

EVENT CODE

DATE

Game Master's Signature

GM Pathfinder Society #