

PATHFINDER[®]

ADVENTURE PATH  PART 1 OF 6



Council of Thieves **THE BASTARDS OF EREBUS**

by Sean K Reynolds

THE CITY OF
WESTCROWN

Old Temple of Erastil

Jacovo's Stables

Vizio's Tavern

Shrine of Aroden (safe house)

N



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ADVENTURE PATH PART 1 of 6



Council of Thieves
**THE BASTARDS
OF EREBUS**

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What's Old is New

It's finally here! The first Adventure Path using the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game rules is just one page away. This month kicks off the Council of Thieves Adventure Path, a fiendish new all-urban campaign poised to expose the seedy underbelly of Westcrown, former capital of the Chelish Empire and would-be throne city of a dead god. But aside from starting off our newest intrigue, I suspect this volume might be many readers' first look at the just-released Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. So look around and see what you think! For the most part, things should be quite familiar—it's pretty much the same game you've been playing for years after all, but with a few new updates, patches, perks, and quirks. I'll resist going into about the differences between the Pathfinder RPG and 3.5 here again, but if you still have any questions, you can get all the answers in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core*

Rulebook, available at all finer game and book stores now. Or, just hit us up directly at paizo.com, where there's already tons of details and you can even have us answer your questions personally.

What does bear repeating, though, is that even though we've changed rules systems, that doesn't mean we're leaving you behind. Even if you're not sold on all the excitement about the new Pathfinder RPG quite yet, you've got nothing to worry about. If you know how to play 3.5, you know how to play the Pathfinder RPG, and all the rules, characters, and stories are still just as useful. If you run into anything you don't have the rules for, conversion is as simple as a quick swap here or a flip through the 3.5 PH there. Of course, we'd love to have everyone check out the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*, but times are tight and so we've worked really hard to make conversion

Foreword

a simple matter. And again, if you have any questions or want to learn more about the Pathfinder RPG, just hit us up online and we'll tell you everything you need to know!

Things might have changed a bit around here, but it's still your game, so play what you love! We'll keep putting out adventures for you regardless of your game system, and boy do we have a scheme for you this time around.

AN OFFER HE CAN'T REFUSE

We knew for some time that our fifth Adventure Path was going to have a rough birth, mainly because it needed to be written using the Pathfinder RPG rules while those rules were still, in many places, being developed. There was a time when we were thinking that the campaign that would become Council of Thieves might be an all Paizo staff Adventure Path, written totally by us here in house. That madness got shot down pretty quick, though, as it turns out that we're kind of our own worst enemies when it comes to getting freelance work done on time. So instead, we turned to a group of some of our best and most tested freelancers, setting them loose initially with just copies of the Pathfinder RPG Beta and our best wishes.

But we still needed someone to start off the Adventure Path, someone not just skilled with adventure design, but who could handle the endless notes and addendums to the still developing Pathfinder RPG. So we decided to stick close to home after all, knowing that it'd be far less stressful to have someone on hand to talk through the changes with than to spend endless hours emailing or revising. But who? Who would be blessed/cursed to get to write one of our behemoth-sized adventures in the midst of the busiest time in Pathfinder's history? It all came down to an impromptu meeting with Sean K Reynolds. I'd like to say that it took a few hours with the thumbscrews and James's leech collection to make him take the job, but the ever amenable Mr. Reynolds took up the burden like a pro and set—mostly—right to work.

A few months later we got our first look at Sean's opus, "Bastards of Erebus," an adventure that proved not just a great start to a new campaign, but served to highlight the features and flexibility of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. Not one to rest on the rules as written, though, Sean tackled some of the more daunting challenges of RPG design, presenting a new take on creating mazes and some clever options for handling a daring rescue operation. The adventure also does a fantastic job of setting the ground for the plots running throughout the entire campaign, such as the PCs involvement with the rebellious Children of Westcrown, sorties with the Hellknights, and the growing question of who or what is the Council of Thieves? Sean kicks it all off here this month, but if you can't wait to see exactly where things are headed just check out the Council of Thieves Outline at the end of this volume.

WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

A new system, a new campaign, a new adventure, but what else is there?

Something that's obvious with every new campaign but rarely gets much discussion is *Pathfinder's* constantly changing look. When we started *Pathfinder*, we never intended to change the appearance with each series. That insight came wholly from our invaluable and ever astonishing art director Sarah Robinson. Every six months, Sarah comes up with new ways to make our words look incredible. From the bloody reds and elaborate designs of *Curse of the Crimson Throne* to the exotic styles and sandy colors of *Legacy of Fire*, she undertakes the daunting task of creating a book that looks every bit as exciting as the adventures within, and every time we're more and more impressed. This time around, she's taken a more worn look, implying much of the rugged urban seediness coming up over the course of the next six months. So just a thanks to Sarah, for her endlessly awesome work!

In addition to new layout embellishments, you can also expect to see a number of new styles picked up directly from the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* and the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*. Statblocks have a few new elements, but probably what's most noticeable is the new layout and icons in the *Bestiary*—just a few little additions to help give you the gist of a creature at a glance. This serves as something of a preview of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, releasing next month, so take a look and see what you think!

Also, as the city of Westcrown serves as the setting of every volume of Council of Thieves, we've got a ton of details on the former capital of Cheliax—so much, in fact, that we couldn't fit it all into this one volume. Take a quick jaunt over to paizo.com and you'll find not just our free *Council of Thieves Player's Guide*, but also a wealth of additional details about Westcrown and its environs from the city's foremost architect, Steven Schend.

So lots of big changes! We know folks will have plenty to say and probably lots of questions, so as always, catch us on the Paizo message boards and tell us what you think. Until then, though, there's a conspiracy afoot in the city of Westcrown and it starts one page flip away.



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The Bastards of Erebus

Even before Aroden's death, the Council of Thieves had been an open secret in Westcrown. The city's first (and most successful) thieves' guild, the Council of Thieves was comprised of members from influential and often noble families in Westcrown. Subtle and content to rest upon the work of past generations, these rich and affluent criminals grew wealthier off of all manner of smuggling, gambling, prostitution, and more nefarious but increasingly white collar crimes. Yet now, insurrection boils within the Council's inner ranks, and if left to bloom, the resulting coup could engulf all of Westcrown.

The Bastards of Erebus

Advancement Track

Council of Thieves assumes your group uses the Medium advancement track for experience points. Characters should be 1st level when they begin “Bastards of Erebus,” and should reach 3rd level by the adventure’s end. By the time the PCs are moving against the Bastards themselves in Part Six, they should all be 2nd level.



ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In 4606 AR, Aroden, god of humanity, innovation, and history, died. No city in all of Golarion was wracked more fundamentally by this catastrophic event than Westcrown. The capital of Cheliah—an entire country sworn to the god of humanity’s worship at the time—Westcrown was the expected site of Aroden’s return and had spent decades preparing for the event. A massive plaza known as the Arodennama, complete with a towering statue of the god, stood ready to receive the deity, yet after his death, it took only a few short years for the church of Aroden to fall. The Arodennama was abandoned, and the entire country found itself in the grips of a civil war with fierce diabolists.

The rise of the Thrice-Damned House of Thrune saw Westcrown’s further descent. After a brutal 30-year civil war, the diabolical House of Thrune seized control of Cheliah. One of their first acts as the nation’s new government was to move the capital and royal court north to the city of Egorian, emptying Westcrown of much of its affluence and prestige. Those nobles who remained behind were largely old families rooted in their traditions and their pride, content to rot in their declining home. While still a vibrant and important port, the splendor that had typified Westcrown for centuries swiftly waned, and without the noble court many commoners and merchants who had previously made a living pandering to the country’s elite were forced to move on, leaving whole blocks abandoned. Westcrown faded to a pale shadow of its former glory and became a playground for vultures eager to pick the royal carcass.

THE DROVENGE SHAME

The Drovenges have always been the key family among the Council of Thieves. An incredibly wealthy and conservative family of moneylenders and property owners, the Drovenges weathered the fall of Aroden and the rise of the House of Thrune well. Led today by their patriarch, Vassindio Drovenge, the family has endured much in the years since Aroden’s death, but have kept a comfortable grip on their underworld holdings. Though not all the families that comprise the Council of Thieves can say the same, the Drovenges managed to retain a significant measure of their wealth, respect, and power.

Yet that was called into question by Vassindio’s son, Sidonai. Arrogant and manipulative, the Drovenge scion was incensed upon the birth of his first offspring, a weak

girl-child her mother named Chammady. Sidonai had wanted a son, a “true heir” to usher in a new era of power and prosperity for his family. In the weeks following Chammady’s birth, Sidonai schemed to sire a son with a divine mandate to flourish and rule amid the diabolical nobles of the country, who seemed only to respect their own. Although tieflings in Cheliah face a harsh life as second-class citizens, Sidonai sought a way where he might sire a son with one of the archdevils—despite Asmodeus’s eight lieutenants being male—an infernal son whom the land’s Hell-obsessed rulers would have no choice but to respect. To this end, Sidonai bargained for the aid of a hag coven living within the woods near Westcrown. These hags were known as the Flies, and consisted of a Mother, a Sister, and a Daughter. The Flies presented the nobleman with a coin from the depths of Erebus, the realm of the archdevil Mammon, telling Sidonai to swallow the gold piece before he next bedded his wife. Pleased with the witches’ cultic solution, he departed.

Doing as he was told, Sidonai ingested the coin, not realizing the truth of what the Flies had provided him. Mammon, the Lord of the Third, is in fact all the treasure that comes to lie within Hell’s vaults, being a creature of no forms and of many, a profane genus loci, an animating spirit. Thus, by swallowing the coin, Sidonai allowed Mammon to temporarily possess him and impart his foul immortal seed unto the criminal’s unsuspecting wife.

Nine months passed, with Sidonai attempting to hide his infernal plot and downplaying his wife’s growing complications with her second pregnancy. The child birthed was a boy, yet said birth left no question as to the father’s true parentage. Disfigured with horns, silver eyes, and golden skin, the half-fiend’s unholy origin was obvious to all, particularly the babe’s horrified mother and, soon enough, the furious family patriarch. Vassindio Drovenge, believing his son’s wife had cuckolded his heir and brought shame upon his family, murdered the woman as she recovered from her long and exhausting labor. The brazen murder drew the whole story from a panicked Sidonai, who confessed to his father what he had done. Disgusted by his son’s insane plot, Vassindio ordered the death of all involved, and by that evening the lives of Sidonai’s house staff, his wife’s midwives, and even two of the hags his son had consulted in the forest were all cut short. Only two

survived—the green hag known as the Mother of Flies (who was apart from her sisters when the murderous humans came), and Sidonai himself.

Yet Sidonai did not escape unscathed. Furious, shamed, and doubting his son's sanity, Vassindio gathered a generous stipend for his one-time heir and sent him to live among family members in distant Oparra, the capital city of Taldor. Enraged but fearful of his father's recent display of wrath, Sidonai departed for Taldor immediately, yet he never arrived in Oparra and has not been seen since.

Considering his son dead even before this disappearance, Vassindio mourned for the cruel fate that had come upon his family. No longer able to sire children of his own, Vassindio took it upon himself to raise his son's children. Even though the tiefling baby embodied the shame Sidonai had inflicted upon the family, he was now Vassindio's only male heir. After a long, dark night of the soul, Vassindio decided to let the tiefling live and named him Ecarrdian.

Chammady and Ecarrdian spent their youths together among servants and cold luxury. Theirs was a family of two, where each was parent and playmate to the other, and the devotion they formed for one another grew strong. Whereas Ecarrdian was all but ignored by the family, Chammady had some contact with her grandfather, receiving occasional gifts and boons from him that she secretly shared with her brother. See also heard the jabs and mockery the house staff heaped daily on her brother. Fiercely defensive, the noble girl once cut one of her first handmaids with a broken wine bottle when the servant offered her brother but a playful insult, the incident resulting in the handmaid's all-too-willing dismissal. Chammady grew resentful of the world and her grandfather and sought only to escape with her brother, yet the bars of their gilded cage proved far too thick, and the siblings turned to each other for their only comfort.

Ecarrdian's childhood proved even more painful than his sister's, mocked by servants when they thought he couldn't hear, scolded by tutors for the slightest mistake, and denied even the smallest overtures of familial love and respect. He came to loathe his grandfather and his army of servants—not just for their stuffy ways and slander, but for their race, developing a burning hatred for all humans save his beloved sister.

Even upon entering into their majority, Chammady and Ecarrdian found that escape from their family's ways would not prove as easy as expected. Their grandfather proved watchful and domineering, assigning the pair duties within his dusty mercantile and criminal empire. Well into his eighties, the old man remained vigorous and hateful, and the Drovege scions began to believe that the old man would never die and their freedom would never come. The plot was simple and obvious, but Chammady spoke it first. The siblings would kill their grandfather and

Ecarrdian would take control of the family. In fact, with their grandfather's power and prestige, why stop there? Why not lop the head from the hateful corpse that was Westcrown and claim the entire city as their own? Finally, they would be the ones to be obeyed—their grandfather's empire, an entire city, and more would be theirs to rule.

The siblings mulled the plot for years, but nothing came of their dark fantasies. Finally, though, old Vassindio decided to send Ecarrdian to Taldor to address the family's failing ventures there. The two Drovege men argued, as Ecarrdian had no wish to travel abroad and saw (rightfully) the assignment to Taldor as forced exile, but the patriarch would not be denied. In only a few months' time the tiefling would go to Taldor, to return when the family's holdings there were again secure—a sentence of years, if not a lifetime.

Chammady took the news hardest, but refused to mourn, for now was their time to act. Vassindio would die, Westcrown would be theirs, and if the pair had to shatter the criminal underworld, throw the entire city into chaos, and draw upon the power of Ecarrdian's true father to succeed, then so be it!

THE RELICS OF SHADOW AND SUN

In the months before Aroden's death and the fall of the Chelish way of life, two bedraggled Pathfinders returned to Westcrown with a harrowing tale. Pathfinder Donatalus Bisby and his erstwhile chronicler Ilnerik Sivanshin returned from a grueling 3-year expedition to the Mwangi Expanse, 2 years after the Pathfinders had given them up as lost. With tales of cannibals, simian demons, jungle rot, hideous monsters, and river madness, the pair's account of the grisly and varied fates of the other 45 porters, servants, and explorers (including several other relatively well-known Pathfinders) who had accompanied them into the jungle was hushed up by the Society. All the lone two survivors had to support their wild tales was a curious relic they'd managed to salvage and bring back from a strange and ancient jungle ruin. This relic consisted of two interlocking components—a golden bird's head and an obsidian bat's head. The bird head represented an ancient sun deity, while the bat's head depicted a foul demon of the night. These two deities were the foundation of the long-dead civilization whose ruins Donatalus and Ilnerik had gone to the Mwangi Expanse to explore, and the relic's recovery was an incredibly important find, for the Pathfinders had long sought more clues into the nature of this ancient and mysterious society.

Donatalus's return was much celebrated, and the Pathfinder's glory and acceptance into the Chronicles seemed assured, yet as Donatalus's star rose, Ilnerik grew increasingly jealous and bitter. Finally, consumed by this jealousy, he broke apart the relic and fled Westcrown with

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the bat head component. He suspected that on the markets of Nisroch in Nidal, the shadowy bat-head relic would fetch a fair price, yet what he hadn't known was that, together, the two relics symbolized a single dualistic concept—the balance of light and darkness. Separated from the sun idol, the bat idol had no counterbalance, and with each day of Ilnarik's journey toward Nidal, he grew more sickly—his flesh began to burn in the sun, his hunger grew but the thought of food nauseated him, and he was unable to sleep at night and barely able to function by day. He crossed the border into Nidal on the same day Aroden died and Cheliox erupted into chaos, and by that evening, Ilnarik had crawled into a cave and died—only to rise with the next moon as a vampire.

Ilnarik spent the next century in Nidal, becoming a master of the shadows of the night and learning of the true powers of the bat-head relic—such as the fact that the relic was sacred to a now-dead demon lord of bats and shadows named Vyriavaxus, and that it granted its owner all manner of power over various beasts of shadow, including the ability to call them up and bend them to servitude. His standing in Nidal grew yearly, and it was not without a delighted sense of irony that Ilnarik returned to Westcrown after being secretly contacted by the new government of Cheliox to provide a service—he and his shadow beasts would serve in Westcrown as the midnight guard, to ensure that after the fall of night, the city's citizens remained safely in doors, lest beasts of shadow take them down. Today, Ilnarik's allegiance has shifted away from the Arvanxi family and to the Council of Thieves—to Ecarrdian and Chammady Drovenge, in fact, with whom he shares the desire to claim Westcrown as his own.

THE STAGE IS SET

And so, with these three key figures in alliance—a vampiric spellcaster, a manipulative thief, and the unholy spawn of Mammon himself—control of Westcrown hangs in the balance. Yet Ecarrdian and Chammady cannot move against their grandfather and seize control of the Council of Thieves without preparation. Securing Ilnarik's allegiance and aid, and with him the support of the shadowbeasts of the city's night, was but an important first step. Now, the scheming pair turn their attention to the Mayor of Westcrown—or more accurately, to his manor: Aberian's Folly. Imprisoned deep under this eccentric's home is nothing less than a pit fiend named Liebdağa the Twin—a gift to the new leaders of Westcrown many decades ago

from the House of Thrune in return for allegiance and promises to keep the city under control. Aberian's Folly uses the imprisoned pit fiend's infernal energy and soul to power many of the manor's extravagances and decadences, as sure a sign of all that is wrong with Cheliox today as anything. Public knowledge of the imprisoned pit fiend is scanty, little more than whispered rumor, but Ecarrdian and Chammady know it to be fact.

In order to seize control of Westcrown and the Council of Thieves, they need powerful allies, and what could be more powerful than a pit fiend?

The brother and sister hope to infiltrate Aberian's Folly and contact Liebdağa so they can arrange for a trade—the pit fiend's freedom in return for a few days of work helping the two seize control of Westcrown. At the same time, they plot the death of their grandfather and set

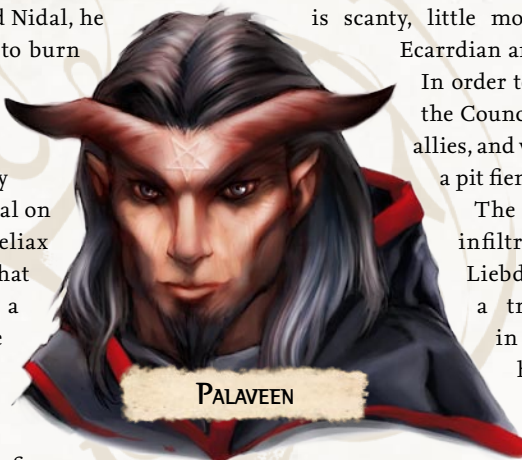
in play many of their agents (not the least of which is the vampire Ilnarik) so that when they strike, all the components of their coup are set.

As the time to begin the final steps of their plan arrives, though, they know that any unexpected interference by the city's government could ruin it all. If they are to succeed, the city, and in particular its mayor, must be distracted. Several weeks before this adventure begins, Chammady uses her influence in the Council of Thieves to finance several groups of bandits and brigands. In return for weapons and coin given by the council, these groups of brigands agree to increase their own particular brands of mayhem in the hinterlands. One group in particular, the all-tiefling Bastards of Erebus, is of considerable use. Led by a diabolic cleric named Palaveen, a man who already fancied himself an ally of the Council of Thieves, the Bastards have a base of operations inside of Westcrown's walls. With banditry and crime on a sudden upswing both in and out of the city walls, the government has its hands full with other matters.

Yet there's one thing that Ecarrdian and Chammady didn't count on—that the sudden upsurge of banditry would result in a parallel upsurge of heroics from the city's citizens. In short, by enabling the Bastards of Erebus to strike against Westcrown, they've created an even greater need for heroes to oppose them—heroes that may just be destined to save the city from its doom.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

This adventure begins as the PCs are gathered by a woman named Janiven who wants to invite them into a new and secret group of concerned citizens of Westcrown who seek



to return the city to a place of safety, justice, and honor after a century of strife and oppression. Their meeting is interrupted by the arrival of Hellknights bent on capturing the “rebels.” After a dangerous flight through the city sewers, the PCs reach an old Shrine of Aroden that Janiven’s group uses as a safe house, only to learn that Janiven’s mentor and the group’s leader, a cleric of Iomedae named Arael, has been captured by the Hellknights. The PCs take part in a daring rescue, humiliating the Hellknights and returning to Westcrown with Arael safe and sound.

Arael reports that just before his capture, he’d discovered the location of a secret hideout used by the Bastards of Erebus, a violent gang of tiefling bandits who have recently been raising hell in Westcrown. Using this information, the PCs seek out the base and confront the Bastards of Erebus—with the defeat of the bandits, the PCs and their allies take the first step toward becoming heroes of the city, and thus the first step toward Westcrown’s redemption. Unfortunately, the defeat of the Bastards also reveals that there may be a deeper problem facing Westcrown—the legendary thieves’ guild known as the Council of Thieves may be alive, well, and plotting something against the city.

THE COUNCIL OF THIEVES PLAYER’S GUIDE

Before you begin this Adventure Path, have your players head over to paizo.com/pathfinder and download the *Council of Thieves Player’s Guide*. This free PDF contains a player-friendly introduction to the city of Westcrown and gives valuable advice on what kinds of characters the PCs should think about creating for the campaign. In addition, this Player’s Guide contains several campaign traits for players to pick from. Character traits (of which campaign traits are a subset) are an optional system you can use to encourage players to build characters with more detailed histories and backgrounds—full rules for character traits, updated for use with the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, can also be downloaded at paizo.com/traits.

Here, you’ll also find the *Council of Thieves Gamemaster’s Guide*, a short PDF that provides additional advice and adventure hooks for expanding the adventures in Westcrown beyond the city’s walls and into the surrounding nation of Chelixa.

FAME POINTS

At various points in this Adventure Path, there are times when the PCs’ exploits are significant enough to gain them fame and admiration among the people of Westcrown. Defeating a group of notorious bandits, saving a child from a house fire, publicly slaying a rampaging monster, completing a supposedly impossible play—all of these things are worthy of Fame Points.

As this Adventure Path progresses, certain encounters will end in a “Fame Point Award” section that details

how many Fame Points to award to the PCs. While you should certainly keep track of the party’s Fame Points, you should not keep this total secret. Tell the PCs each time their group earns a Fame Point so they know that they’ve accomplished something important, and that their reputation in Westcrown is growing. Fame Points are merely an indication of the city’s growing awareness of their accomplishments in most adventures—but in the final adventure in this campaign, PCs will need to make Fame Checks in many encounters. A Fame Check is a level check modified by a character’s Charisma score and the number of Fame Points the group has accumulated over the course of the Adventure Path, and they’ll be used to determine how effective the PCs are when it comes to organizing the city’s defense against the events to come at the campaign’s climax.

PART ONE: THE WESTCROWN REBELS

Council of Thieves begins in the town of Westcrown, and for much of the campaign’s length, it never strays far from this city’s walls. You should take time to familiarize yourself with this large and complex city by studying “Westcrown: City of Twilight,” which begins on page 48 of this volume. Likewise, your players should be familiar with the city as well—if they’re using the *Council of Thieves Player’s Guide* to aid in generating their characters, this should already be taken care of. If not, take a few minutes to summarize the town and find out what each PC’s background and tie to Westcrown is. You should certainly inform the PCs that the majority of the campaign is set in this city, so that a player won’t accidentally create a character who’s entire life goal is to escape Westcrown and seek adventure elsewhere! Preferably, all of the PCs should be natives or citizens of the city, but visitors work perfectly fine as well, provided they have no reason to want to leave the city any time soon.

One large assumption that Council of Thieves makes about the PCs is that none of them should be particularly fond of the way the government in Westcrown currently operates. This isn’t to say that all PCs must be anarchists, but a PC who blindly follows the unfair edicts of the established government won’t really have a reason to join the Westcrown Rebels. This could be a problem for characters of lawful alignment or characters affiliated with one of the Hellknight orders. Advice for how to handle this requirement can be found in the *Council of Thieves Player’s Guide*, but the short version is this—being lawful doesn’t mean blindly accepting the current laws. A lawful good paladin might be seeking a way to fight against Chelixa’s evil without abandoning his devotion to order, and such a conflict could send him seeking

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the aid of Westcrown's more traditional (pre-Throne) values—values that exist today among the Westcrown Rebels. A lawful neutral monk might feel that Cheliox's current laws (particularly the covert use of shadow beasts to keep the streets “safe” at night) are too restrictive and cruel, and would be interested in seeking out those of a like mind who are looking for a better government. Even a lawful evil cleric of Asmodeus might have reason to be frustrated with the House of Thrune's attitude toward the infernal—for certainly while the church of Asmodeus is the official state religion of Cheliox, many of Asmodeus's faithful feel stifled by the fact that Thrune sees Hell not as a greater power but as a role model at best and a resource at worst.

The PCs don't need to begin play already knowing each other, since the first event in *Council of Thieves* is designed to pull the group together in one place and quickly force them to work together to survive. Once the players understand the basics of Westcrown and its corrupt government, go around the table and ask each player for an example of how his or her character has been stifled, annoyed, or hindered by the government. If your players are using the *Council of Thieves Player's Guide*, their campaign trait should give them precisely this information. Once you've established what each character's personal complaint with the government is, each character (or group of characters who already have existing ties to each other) is approached by an attractive woman who calls herself Janiven.

Janiven's introduction to each group of PCs differs depending on the nature of that PC's campaign trait (and the PC's resulting complaint with Westcrown's government). In truth, Janiven is the second-in-command of a swiftly growing group of concerned citizens who want to make Westcrown a safer place to live—a goal that is somewhat at odds with the way the House of Thrune governs the city from afar. The group has only recently formed, and as such doesn't even have a name yet. Founded by a charismatic half-elf cleric of Iomedae named Arael,

the group's goal is not to cause open rebellion or civil unrest—they are all children of Westcrown, after all, and a street war would only damage that which they hope to protect. Instead, free-thinkers like Arael and Janiven hope to organize a sort of “citizen's watch” that will take steps to protect the people of Westcrown and, some day, return the city to the splendor and glory it possessed before Aroden's death and the rise of the House of Thrune.

Yet although the group's goals are idealistic, they're also the types of ideas that threaten the current Chelish government. As a result, Arael and Janiven hoped to keep the true nature of their organization a secret from the government while building a strong relationship with the city's people, so that when the time comes to publicly declare themselves, they'll have the support of the city's citizens—something that surely the House of Thrune must respect. Arael has given Janiven the honor of organizing this first meeting while he organizes a few links to sympathetic groups elsewhere in the city, particularly with the Pathfinders (who are operating in Westcrown via a single undercover agent named Ailyn Ghontasavos).

Janiven and Arael have held meetings of this type several times, and have gathered a dozen or so followers already. The PCs are the latest recruits—Janiven has noted the way that the government has wronged them, and more importantly, she's recognized in each PC the potential to do great things in the future. A shrewd judge of character, Janiven also knows that, especially in Westcrown, it's unreasonable to expect trust in a stranger. She approaches each PC differently, based on his own particular personality and, more importantly, his particular complaint. She wants the PCs to join her group, and if that means bribing them with money, using flattery, or appealing to a sense of duty will get the job done, she'll do it. You should know a bit about each PC's personality by now, and as such should know what these characters want—don't be afraid to use this “insider knowledge” when roleplaying Janiven's first encounter with each PC in order to ensure the PCs attend the meeting.

Once Janiven has the PCs' attention and secures their interest in the meeting, she informs them that they should meet her at a place called



JANIVEN

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Vizio's Tavern that same afternoon for an early dinner (customarily about 4 o'clock), at which point she promises further information.

Janiven doesn't mention Arael's name in these initial interviews, but if a PC tries to find out more about Janiven, a DC 10 Knowledge (local) check or Diplomacy check made to gather information reveals that she's not unknown in Westcrown. She's worked for several guilds and mercantile interests, sometimes as a caravan guard but more often as a city guide and bodyguard for visiting merchants and business partners that the guilds want to keep out of trouble with local thugs or the shadow beasts that patrol the streets at night. Janiven has a reputation of being a bit rash (for example, she recently dragged her charge half-dressed out of a whorehouse when he refused to head back to a safer part of town before sundown) but quite trustworthy—everyone the PCs talk to has nothing but praise for the woman.

If the PCs investigate Vizio's Tavern, a DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy check reveals it to be named for the family that once ran the establishment. Vizio's was a place where merchant guards went to relax, gripe about their employers, and look for more work. Several months ago, however, the Vizio patriarch passed away, and the surviving family moved out of Westcrown to go live with kin in distant Corentyn. The tavern has stood empty since, but a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy check is enough to reveal that the place has new owners reputed to be a half-elf man and a human woman—although they seem to be taking their time getting the tavern off the ground and open for business. If a PC asks Janiven about this, she admits that she and a business partner recently purchased the tavern, and as such it's a perfect place for her and the PCs to talk.

Having lived her entire life in Westcrown's oppressive streets, Janiven was often depressed and moody, and tended to avoid making long-term friendships—at least until she met the half-elf Arael, a devotee of Iomedae who came upon Janiven at a low point in her life and offered her a long-term position at his side as a consultant and advisor. Arael has grand plans to bring honor and tradition back to Cheliox, and particularly to Westcrown. As a worshiper of Iomedae, he has long regretted how Cheliox fell from Aroden's teachings to the infernal, and wants nothing more than to see a reversal of that fate, but with Aroden's inheritor Iomedae installed as the city's guardian and patron deity instead. Arael recognized in Janiven the value of having a native Wiscrani on his side—her knowledge of the city's layout made her an ideal choice for a “second-in-command” to aid him in his goal.

Janiven is an attractive woman who downplays her beauty by wearing rough clothing and armor and adopting a generally stern and no-nonsense attitude. Yet when she

feels truly at ease with someone she calls a friend, her smile, sense of humor, and quick wit reveal her to be quite a charming and friendly woman. She's known Arael for almost a year now, and has come to think of him as an older brother, and while she respects him greatly and approves of his dream to see Cheliox fall under the guidance of Iomedae, her own faith in Desna has often resulted in lingering arguments about when it is appropriate to toss aside the law of the land in order to ensure the freedom and safety of the citizens.

JANIVEN

CR 2

XP 600

Female human ranger 3

CG Medium humanoid

Init +3 (+5 urban); **Senses** Perception +9 (+11 urban)

DEFENSES

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 24 (3d10+3)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +4 (1d8/19–20)

Ranged mwk longbow +7 (1d8/×3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (human +2)

TACTICS

Before Combat Janiven tries to find a place to where she can safely fire her bow at enemies, preferably somewhere with cover or higher ground.

During Combat Janiven prefers to fight at range and uses her great speed to keep out of reach of melee opponents for as long as she can, leading pursuers near her allies if possible.

Morale Janiven surrenders at 4 hp if she believes her opponents will spare her life, otherwise she flees.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Endurance, Fleet, Precise Shot

Skills Diplomacy +3, Handle Animal +6, Heal +4, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (history) +1, Knowledge (local) +3, Knowledge (nature) +4, Perception +9 (+11 urban), Ride +5, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +8 (+10 urban), Survival +7 (+11 urban), Swim +3

Languages Common

SQ favored terrain (urban +2), track +1, wild empathy +5

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*; **Other Gear** masterwork chain shirt, masterwork longsword, masterwork longbow with 20 arrows, sunrod, 35 gp

VIZIO'S TAVERN

Janiven spends the afternoon at Vizio's Tavern, preparing for her meeting with the PCs. If any of the PCs arrives early, they find her going about the business of preparing food and doing some minor repair work; she

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acknowledges their presence, invites them to be seated, and offers them some ale to pass the time, but politely refuses to answer any questions at that time until all of the PCs have arrived. As the PCs gather, give each player a chance to describe his character to the others. Dinner is satisfactory but not exceptional. Janiven joins them in the meal, during which she engages in idle chat with the PCs or simply watches as they get to know each other. She uses this time to evaluate the PCs again, for she plans to reveal a dangerous secret to them and doesn't want to risk this information on someone she can't trust. The PCs can make a DC 15 Sense Motive check to recognize that she's worried about something, but seems forthright in general, although she glances at the front window every few minutes.

The source of Janiven's nervousness is that her mentor Arael, who was supposed to aid her in running this meeting, has yet to arrive. Tardiness is unlike him, but she doesn't want to reveal that he's late. Instead, if asked about her nervousness and why she keeps looking to the front of the tavern, she looks momentarily agitated, then calms herself, explaining that "shadow beasts" stalk the unlit streets after dark. While everyone in the city has a different theory as to the nature and origin of the mysterious shadow beasts, Janiven subscribes to a little-credited conspiracy theory which holds that they were put into place by the House of Thrune to oppress the citizens of Westcrown and consolidate their infernal power. While she has no proof of this, she is in fact correct. The shadow beasts attack anyone they find out after dark—the city government keeps only a few key streets lit at night, and these streets are safe to travel once the sun sets (for the shadow beasts avoid the light). Other streets, including the one on which Vizio's Tavern is located, are kept dark—in theory, to prevent criminal activity from taking advantage of the streets after nightfall, since Westcrown's city watch isn't large enough to defend against both criminals and shadow beasts. She assures the PCs that the meeting will not keep them at Vizio's after dark, but should they wish to stay the night here, she promises to make arrangements as necessary.

Once dinner is over, and with still a few hours to go before sundown, Janiven locks the front door and shuts the windows, then takes a deep breath and thanks the PCs for attending the meeting. She again assures them that they'll be done in less than an hour, with plenty of time left over for everyone to get home before sunset. Her speech is short, but delivered with great passion.

"Again, thank you for agreeing to meet with me here. I have chosen each of you for a singular reason—everyone here, myself included, has suffered, whether we realize it or not. I have lived in Westcrown my whole life, and although I love

this city, I must admit, as must you, that despite our peace and prosperity, we continue to suffer. Fear should not be an expected part of life, and yet each night brings fear to our doorsteps. Yes, Westcrown has been safe from war and famine for nearly seventy years, and yes, our businesses have prospered—but this safety and prosperity has been bought in the coinage of fear and prayers to Hell. Other lands live free from tyranny. Other cities do not fear the night. Other governments do not cede the streets to monsters of the infernal shadows. Westcrown was once such a place, and she wants to be such a place again. Westcrown is not only her buildings and canals and docks and history—she is also her people. Westcrown is our friends and neighbors, our mothers and fathers, our siblings and cousins, our sons and daughters! With but a small group of supporters and dedicated brothers and sisters, we can earn the trust and admiration of those people. A Westcrown free of these shadowy beasts that stalk our streets is one step closer to a Westcrown free of the devil that is the Thrice-Damned House of Thrune!"

Janiven's words are, of course, treason—everyone in Westcrown knows a friend of a friend of a friend who was taken away by a Hellknight or executed after a swift trial for speaking less treasonous words than what Janiven has just uttered. Give the PCs the chance to react to her speech—they'll likely have plenty of questions and maybe even a few choice words to say. Janiven is patient and answers the questions as best she can, although Arael's continued absence increasingly disturbs her. She truly believes that she and a small group of like-minded friends can improve the lives of the people of Westcrown, but they must take care not to appear as rebels or rioters. They must form their own band of protectors, and must work to win the admiration and support of the citizens by doing good works and providing what aid they can. Key to this tactic is the fact that Westcrown is largely ignored by the rulers of Chelias as a home-in-exile for the old nobility. As long as they work to win the hearts of Westcrown's citizens by good deeds and avoid as many direct entanglements with the government as they can, the House of Thrune will continue to ignore what they'll interpret as "petty squabbling" in the old capital.

FLIGHT FROM VIZIO'S TAVERN

At some point not long after Janiven's speech, likely before the PCs have had a chance to really start to absorb the implications of what she's set before them, a sudden excited pounding at the front door disrupts the meeting. Immediately adopting a defensive posture, Janiven peers through a window at whoever's knocking, then swiftly moves to the door, unlocks it, and opens it. In stumbles an out-of-breath and frightened-looking teenager named **Morosino** (N male human child commoner 1). "They've got

Arael!” he calls out, then immediately doubles over in a fit of coughing brought on by his long run. Janiven’s face grows grim as she comforts Morosino and asks him to explain himself; in a moment the lad recovers enough to spurt out, “The dottari nabbed Arael, and the Hellknights of the Rack are trying to get custody of him! There’s a bunch of Hellknights on their way here now! I only just made it in here; they’ve already surrounded us!”

At that point, the sound of clanking armor advancing on the tavern becomes apparent. Anyone who glances out the window sees a large group of heavily armed and armored Hellknights advancing down the street, yet Janiven remains calm. She apologizes for involving the PCs in this matter, and as the Hellknights start hammering on the locked doors of the place and demanding in booming voices for those within to come out and give themselves up, she tells the PCs to follow her. She and Morosino swiftly move behind the tavern’s decrepit bar, where they lift up a heavy trap door in the floor. As the pounding on the door increases, she breathlessly says that this shaft drops down into the Westcrown sewers. By fleeing along this route, they should be able to lose the Hellknights quickly.

Whereas Westcrown’s city watch and government have little interest in tracking all possible seeds of rebellion, the same cannot be said of the Hellknight company known as the Order of the Rack. The oldest of the Hellknight orders, their greatest obsession is the prevention of rebellion, and while Janiven and Arael have been relatively subtle in their actions, Arael’s known affiliation with the church of Iomedae has unfortunately attracted the attention of the dottari (Westcrown’s city guard). They’ve been watching him with increasing vigilance, and when Arael met with a suspected rebel in northern Westcrown earlier this morning, they moved in and captured him. Arael now languishes in a city jail while the Hellknights and the city government argue over whose prisoner the half-elf really is. Arael’s assistant, young Morosino, escaped capture—or at least thought he did. In fact, the Hellknights let him flee, hoping that he would lead them to Arael’s hideout and his fellow conspirators. And unfortunately for Janiven and the PCs, Morosino did just that.

Yet Janiven, true to her kind soul, does not hold this against the lad. Instead, she realizes that she, he, and the PCs must flee the scene immediately. If Arael is to be rescued from his capture, then she and her new allies must evade the same.

There are six Hellknights and a dozen armigers (new inductees in the organization that serve the Hellknights as squires and porters) in the streets surrounding Vizio’s Tavern. They are numerous and heavily armed, and further bolstered by a reputation for ruthlessness and strict adherence to their own charter to strike down all suspected rebels. The Hellknights are intent on capturing everyone present in order to interrogate them, and if the

PCs seem to be making noises like they want to try to explain things to the Hellknights (or worse, stay and fight), Janiven’s eyes widen and she practically begs the PCs to accompany her into the sewers, warning them that the Hellknights are stubborn and single-minded, and have obviously already formed their opinion about the party’s guilt. As the Hellknights start bashing through doors and opening windows, she makes one last attempt to convince the PCs, but if they insist on staying, she flees into the sewers with Morosino and leaves them to their fate.

If the PCs decide to avoid allying with Janiven, and if they aren’t simply killed by the overwhelming number of Hellknights, they’ll be captured and taken away for interrogation at the Hellknights’ fortress, Citadel Rivad. This interrogation should be intimidating and scary, but unless the PCs are deliberately antagonistic or confess to crimes they didn’t really commit, the Hellknights find (after 2d4 hours of questioning) that the PCs had little to do with the suspected rebel movement, and are released with a warning. Allow the PCs to return to their daily lives, but since Janiven is still “at large” you can have her contact the PCs again a few days later. In this case, she’ll ask them once again to join her, this time to aid in rescuing Arael (see Part Four). If the PCs still resist joining the movement, you can still run Council of Thieves, but you’ll need to make adjustments periodically along the way to account for whatever group ends up being the PCs’ patron. The Hellknight Order of the Scourge is an excellent choice; this order often butts heads with the Order of the Rack, and they might see in the PCs a great group to shape and mold into an anti-organized-crime band. The Pathfinders themselves could be another excellent choice for patrons, as they want to recover much of the information hidden in their lost lodge, and doing so will naturally put them in conflict with the Council of Thieves as well.

If the PCs follow Janiven, they find her opening a small secret door in the back of a floor-level cupboard. Janiven directs Morosino and the first PC to crawl through the door and down the tunnel into the sewers, telling them that Morosino knows the way; she then tries to delay the Hellknights by closing the kitchen door, pulling down shelves to create obstacles, and using a tanglefoot bag to further complicate things, following the last PC through the secret tunnel.

Story Award: If the PCs choose to follow Janiven rather than trying to fight the Hellknights, award the party 1,200 XP.

PART TWO: INTO THE SEWERS

Westcrown’s sewer system is a marvel of ancient engineering, designed by the same geniuses who built the Arch of Aroden in Corentyn. Though Westcrown is barely above sea level, the

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cleverly designed sewer tunnels continue to carry Westcrown's filth away, and for the most part, citizens never think about the sanitation process that keeps the city relatively free of waste-borne illness. Individual tunnels are buttressed and rarely more than 5 feet high, forcing taller characters to stoop but not otherwise hindering most activity. Most tunnels are 10 feet wide, with a 3-foot-deep trench for sewage and water taking up half that width—even at peak flow the water level is an inch or more below the level of the walking side of the tunnel. Rainwater enters the sewers from tiny barred grates in the streets, most so small that an adult halfling couldn't squeeze through, and travels through an angled pipe that directs the runoff to the closest tunnel's drainage side, exiting about a foot above the peak flow-level of the sewer channel. Tide-powered wheels on the northwest and northeast coast draw water upward from the river and bay, causing a slow trickle into the sewers and keeping solid matter from building up over time, creating a slow current flowing toward the southern part of the city. Three points along the southern edge of the sewers bear similar tidewheels, each connected to a mechanical screw that slowly pumps waste downward into a mile-long underwater pipe that empties downriver, its length protected by check valves to prevent water from flowing upward into the sewage system. The sewer mechanics require very little maintenance and have hand-cranked for manual operation should an unforeseen circumstance render the automatic devices inoperable. The build of the sewers ensures that the tons of waste generated by the city never risk contaminating it.

Because the sewer is so efficient that law-abiding citizens forget about it, it makes an excellent means of moving about the city undetected, assuming the traveler doesn't mind smelling a little rank as a consequence. Janiven and Arael explored part of the sewers months ago and subtly marked the path to their secret lair on the off chance that they would be discovered. Unfortunately, since that time, some of their marks have succumbed to water, subterranean flora, and vandalism by things living in the sewers, and the route is no longer perfectly clear. Worse, the sewers are hardly safe—criminals, dangerous creatures and vermin, and worse lurk within the sewer system. And if the PCs tarry overlong and remain in the sewers after nightfall, the threat of encountering shadow beasts makes things even more nerve-wracking. This part of the adventure is a series of combat encounters, the threat of Hellknights on the heels of the PCs, and the sense of becoming lost as the PCs sometimes have to guess the right direction when their guiding markers are obscured or absent.

SEWER TRAPPINGS

In addition to the old, mortared-stone construction of the sewers, in the past few hundred years many individuals

have made their own alterations to the tunnels—goblins sneak into to the sewers and chisel out small side-tunnels to use as lairs, smugglers dig and shore up compartments for hiding contraband, and so on. Some of these side rooms are part of the original construction, intended for storing maintenance tools or used as living quarters for workers and slaves, but the more recent additions stand out as inferior construction and are prone to erosion and collapse. "Doors" in these additions are often little more than an old table propped over the opening or a tower shield wedged over a goblin-sized crawlspace. While overall the sewer should give a feeling of great age and durability, these modern alterations should give the PCs the sense that there are creatures living down here. The sewers have no permanent lights—even during the day most have dim illumination at best from light trickling in through the drainage grates. This fading light as the sun begins to set can further spur the PCs to get to the safe house Janiven's leading them to, but once night falls, unless all the PCs have darkvision, they're going to need a light source.

The sewer ledges are made of stone—any square that shares a sewage channel is also slippery (increase Acrobatics DCs by 5 for anyone standing in or crossing the channel as part of their movement) Though the runoff is mostly water, there is sewage and garbage in it as well, and anyone who drinks it or gets it in a wound, mouth, or eye risks contracting filth fever (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*). The sewage is murky enough that a creature hiding in it has concealment relative to any creature not in its square, allowing it to make Stealth checks.

Entrances to (and thus exits from) the sewers are relatively rare. Since the sewers are so well engineered, the need for cleaning and maintenance is lower than in most cities. Entrances consist of rusted metal ladders leading up from the sewer to rectangular iron trap doors 10 feet above—unfortunately for the PCs, the city of Westcrown keeps all sewer entrances securely locked in order to prevent undesirables from using the sewers to move through the city with ease. Each of these iron trap doors is hardness 10 and has 60 hp and a Break DC of 28. The locks can be picked with a DC 25 Disable Device check from above, but from below the locks can't be picked—it's a DC 35 Disable Device check to disable the door enough to open a locked one from below. Attempts to bash or hammer through one of these doors is likely to take a long time—and unfortunately, it only takes 2d6 rounds for a group of Hellknights or city guards to arrive above to prepare a greeting for the PCs.

FINDING THE PATH

The secret tunnel under Vizio's Tavern is rough-hewn and leads down along a 20-foot-long, 5-foot-wide hallway to a simple wooden door. The opposite side of the door

has a wooden bar; as the PCs and their guides pass through, Janiven bars the door to help slow the sure-to-be-following Hellknights. If the PCs need light, Janiven lights her sunrod. On the other side of the door is a sewer tunnel running to the left and right—Morosino or Janiven quickly points out the mark they left on their previous scouting of the tunnels, indicating they should flee to the left. They tell the PCs to look for these marks at every intersection, should they get separated from the group—the sword always points in the direction of the safe house.

Before Janiven and the PCs begin their flight through the sewers, she pushes aside a rock near the entrance to reveal a small hollow in the wall and sighs in relief. “Good,” she says, “They’re still here.” She stashed a small cache of healing potions here a few weeks ago in the event of an emergency just like this one. Janiven explains that they won’t have time to stop and rest as long as the Hellknights are after them, and splits the potions up among the PCs—there should be enough *potions of cure light wounds* so that each PC gets three.

While they walk, Janiven explains, “Arael and I made these marks a few months ago when we explored the sewers. We marked all the intersections so our people could find their way through the sewers to our hideout.” As they travel, the noise of the Hellknights back at Vizio’s Tavern diminishes, but Janiven is sure they’ll follow. “They might take a few minutes to search in the tavern, but some are going to follow us down here after they grab a lantern or make torches. They might even try to infiltrate the sewers ahead of us if they can guess our route. We need to keep moving.”

Light is an important issue in the sewers, since if the PCs are using light, the Hellknights have a greater chance of noticing them in the long, dark sewer tunnels, and Janiven wants to travel fast to get at least a couple of turns and zig-zags between themselves and Vizio’s to prevent this. Because she and Morosino can’t see in the dark, she’s hesitant to rely on characters with darkvision to navigate to a safer place (remember, characters without darkvision can only travel at half speed in dark conditions and need to remain in contact with the navigating character or follow a guide rope to avoid falling into the sewer). The need for light may also work in the PCs’ favor; a stealthy party or one relying on darkvision may detect nearby Hellknights and set up an ambush from a position of darkness, using ranged attacks against their illuminated opponents and retreating to force the Hellknights to charge forward or shoot into dimly-lit areas.

Janiven is against pauses to rest, even if the group is able to hide in an abandoned room to do so—she wants to get to the hideout as soon as possible, especially as she doesn’t know if the rest of the rebels know that Arael has

been captured by the Hellknights or if the Hellknights know anyone else involved. If the PCs insist on resting overnight, Janiven takes Morosino with her and says she’ll come looking for the PCs in the morning.

Splitting Janiven from the group has three positive effects: it keeps the PCs from relying on her, it puts the PCs in charge of their situation rather than following her orders, and it gives the GM the opportunity for her to show up later in the sewers if the PCs are on the verge of defeat. Because of these reasons, it is a good idea to get her away from the PCs fairly early, once they are comfortable taking a proactive role and able to recognize the sword-marks showing the way to the hideout.

This part of the adventure is a series of flexible encounters and encounter sites. Use the threat of Hellknight pursuit to push the PCs to move. Let them get lost or have to make a hard choice because of a smudged or missing rebel-symbol. The number of healing potions made available to the PCs (through Janiven’s stash and each Hellknight defeated) should help them to keep going. The point of the sewer encounters is to challenge the PCs and encourage them to move around, not force them to slog through hard battles until they’re ready to give up; reward their creativity and ingenuity in dealing with the situation. If the PCs reach a point where they simply can’t go on, that’s the point to let them reach the exit and the safe house beyond.

MAZE MAPS DON’T WORK

While mazes have an element of mystery and excitement and have been a tradition of storytelling going back at least to the time of the ancient Greeks, in a tabletop setting they aren’t nearly as effective. Certainly the PCs might get lost in a maze due to their first-person perspective, limited light, and repetitive environment, but if you use a battle mat in your game, the players are able to look at the map top-down and navigate the correct course faster than you can describe the PCs getting lost.

Yet mazes are still time-honored elements of the genre. Fortunately, there are easier ways to model being lost in a maze than painstakingly describing every twist and turn to your players. When running this part of the adventure, as the PCs and their NPC allies navigate the countless tunnels of the Westcrown sewer, it’s easiest to simply hand-wave the details of traveling and only map critical points, such as the current encounter location or place where the PCs have to choose a new direction of travel. This gives you control over the adventure’s pace as well. You can add or subtract encounters so the PCs have an easier or harder time as you need without having to worry about messing up a complex map. For example, you may decide to challenge the party with only four of the encounters presented later in this chapter, but if the

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PCs easily deal with the first three encounters (with big critical hits by PCs or poor saving throws by the monsters) and expend very few resources, you can easily add more encounters between the PCs and the sewer exit, giving them more opportunities for loot and XP. Conversely, a costly encounter early on might leave the PCs grievously injured after only two encounters instead of the originally proposed four. In this case, you can have the PCs reach the exit earlier than you intended. The players don't need to know if they are getting more or fewer encounters—as long as they're having fun, that helps set the pace. The goal of this chapter, after all, isn't to kill off the PCs—it's to give them some early battles, some treasure and XP, and a chance to get to know the first two key NPCs they've met in the Council of Thieves campaign.

It may help to prepare a rough “lines-and-boxes” references map that details the expected encounter maps and their orientation. This way, if the PCs backtrack to a previous encounter rather than continue to press onward, you can refer to this map to describe what they already covered. However, not using a reference map can add to the sense confusion of a fast-paced sewer chase; if the PCs return to what they thought was a four-way intersection and you draw a T-intersection, the best explanation is “maybe you took a wrong turn.” Just because the players know their characters arrived from the GM's side of the table map doesn't mean the PCs can't make a mistake choosing among four nearly identical hallways, or that the sewer tunnels line up nicely along the four cardinal directions.

Using this method, you don't need to track the distance the PCs travel, only time, and usually only for the purpose of short-duration spell effects. The second encounter might be 5 minutes after the first, or 10 minutes, with zero, one, or many stops along the way where the PCs reached an intersection and had a clear choice as to which way to go—the rebel marker was visible and pointed the way, they could hear the sound of Hellknight boots faintly down one hallway but not the other, and so on. The pacing of the PCs' travel (reinforced and encouraged by the threat of a Hellknight encounter if they linger too long) should make it difficult or even impossible for the PCs to map the tunnels, so you are justified in keeping the players in the dark as to actual directions.

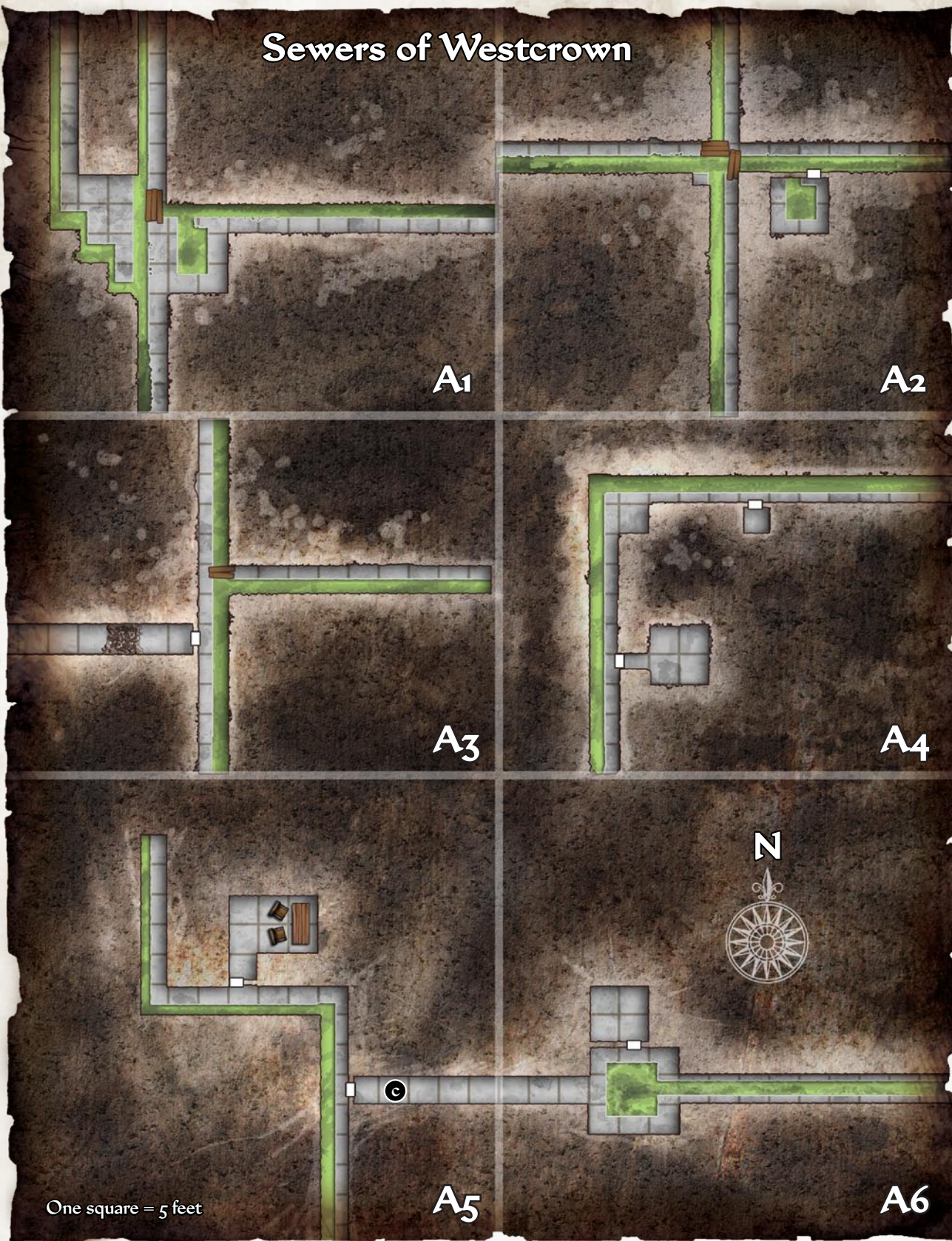
This adventure presents the Westcrown sewer in a simplified, site-based set of encounters using six small encounter maps. These maps are designed to be flexible and expandable. For example, the PCs may have an encounter at a four-way intersection with a small side room inhabited by some sewer goblins (area A2); later they may have an encounter at a similar site that doesn't have the side room. They may come to a T-intersection (area A3) where the location is oriented as presented, and later find another T-intersection (area A3 rotated 90 or 180 degrees, with or without the collapsed side tunnel). The encounter maps and the encounters themselves are designed to be flexible; rotate them, add a room, subtract a room, seal off a door, and so on, so the players don't recognize the repeating map elements.

When the PCs enter the sewer, determine the party's speed—twice that distance (what the group can cover with two move actions—typically 60 feet) sets the distance between checks for sewer



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routes. You can make these die rolls during play if you want, or you can generate a network of sewage tunnels beforehand for the PCs to follow. These tunnels don't account for the numerous twists and turns the sewers make—just because you go 60 feet without a junction doesn't mean that you travel that 60 feet in only one direction! It's not really necessary to track these movements, since the PCs are unlikely to escape the sewers until they reach the safe house. If the PCs do somehow manage to get out before then, you can have them emerge anywhere that seems logical to you into the city above.

d%	Sewer Feature
01–20	No Change
21–40	Junction
41–60	Intersection
61–80	Encounter
81–90	Blockage
91–100	Entrance (plus roll again, rerolling results of 91 or higher).

No Change: The tunnel does not have any unusual features along this length.

Junction: A side tunnel branches off from the current one—finding the waypoint marker requires a DC 12 Perception check. Randomly determine which of the exits is the correct one indicated by the marker. There's a 10% chance the marker is partially missing (rubbed out by a passerby or washed away)—in this case, a DC 20 Perception check finds the marker. If the PCs take a wrong turn, there's a cumulative 1% chance per junction or intersection that they reach of getting back on track and being able to find a marker—if they backtrack to the previous location to try to find the marker again, there's a flat 20% chance of encountering a band of pursuing Hellknights.

Intersection: This is like a junction, save that there are two or more additional choices of tunnels to take. Roll 1d3+1 to determine how many additional tunnels are available to choose from.

Encounter: The PCs reach an encounter area. Roll on the Sewer Encounter table on page 20 to determine which encounter the PCs have (or choose one of your preference). Each encounter is associated with one of the various sewer encounter maps.

Blockage: Only 30% of these blockages are dead ends. The remainder are piles of rubble, refuse, or even dead animals or bodies that must be cleared in order to continue. Clearing rubble takes a minute of work. There's a cumulative 10% chance at each blockage of a Hellknight patrol catching up to the PCs—this chance resets after each Hellknight encounter. Additionally, returning to a previous marker junction runs a flat 20% chance of encountering Hellknights.

Entrance: A single sewer entrance (locked and likely impassible by the PCs) is located here. Of these entrances, 20% are actually outflows into the harbor or sea, and are blocked by iron gratings that are effectively dead ends unless the PCs can bash through the bars.

The exit to the safe house is not something that can be randomly rolled; you should place this exit once the PCs have had enough encounters to reach 2nd level, or once their resources have run so critically low that going on for much longer becomes too difficult—when a PC is reduced to negative hit points or is otherwise helpless is a great point to have the exit be just around the corner. Since there are very few landmarks along the way, and since their NPC guides aren't all that familiar with the sewer layout, they depend completely upon their marks to retrace the route to the safe house.

SEWER LOCATIONS

The following six locations are used whenever the PCs have an encounter. When the PCs reach an encounter area, you can determine the orientation of north by rolling 1d4, rotating the map as needed to vary the area's layout.

A1) Cesspit: This large, oddly shaped room has four exit tunnels and multiple sewer channels. One part of a channel connects to a long cesspit. Several large wooden planks form a simple bridge over another section of the channel. The cesspit is only a few inches deeper than the main channel, as a deep cesspit would become clogged with waste and would have to be manually emptied; it mainly serves as an emergency overflow for the channel in times of heavy rain.

A2) Intersection: This four-way intersection has two small plank bridges allowing easy crossing of the sewer channels. One corner of the intersection has a larger area for the sewer channel with multiple pipes in the wall nearby. A door stands near a drainage channel in the wall, leading to a small side room that contains a cesspit similar to the one in area A1. An archway connecting the main channel to the cesspit is only 1 foot higher than the level of the walking area—enough that a human could get through, but it would require touching the sewage. A variant of this map might have the entire room be a cesspit, partly collapsed, or have several drainage pipes leading to the cesspit to encourage the flow of waste outward into the main channel.

A3) Door: The tunnel forms a T-intersection, with an old wooden tabletop serving as an improvised bridge over the sewer channel. A small, simple door nearby blocks a brick-lined doorway. If the marker indicates that the PCs must go through the door, they can use the small pile of rubble in the dry tunnel beyond to barricade it. The dry tunnel's far end is blocked by another door that opens into a randomly determined encounter area from areas A3 or A5.



A4) Storage Rooms: The tunnel makes a sharp turn, forming a small room with a large, dry walkable area. Each hallway leading out of the room has an old door set in a stone archway. Areas like this one were used as places for the workers to rest and eat during the construction of the tunnels. The large room has the remnants of old shelves, long since looted of their food stores and most of their wood scavenged for cooking fires by the intelligent inhabitants of the sewers. Both rooms and doors are from the original construction of the sewers and make good defensible positions for weary PCs—or lairs for creatures.

A5) Den: The sewer tunnel makes a pair of alternating turns near two small wooden doors set in well-built brick frames. Most of these zigzags were created to avoid an especially hard patch of stone (easier to circumvent than dig through) or a soft area that might not be stable (perhaps due to a large building overhead or flaws in the bedrock). The larger room contains furniture in a combination of desks, chairs, and sleeping pallets as you see fit; it may have been used by a crazed loner who wanted privacy, a noble family trying to escape the purges of the House of Throne, a criminal wanting a hideout, or a kidnapper wanting a safe place to keep his victim (in which case the door is locked). A sewer exit is located at the area indicated by a black circle with a “C”; unless this is the final encounter area (in which case the “C” leads to an alley near the safe house), this exit is locked.

A6) Cistern Den: The tunnel opens into a large room. Most of the floor is taken up by a cesspit. One of the walls has a short door set in it. Similar to the cesspit on map A1, this one is intended to handle overflow at peak times. The large side room contains buckets, long-handled shovels, picks, and other tools for building the tunnels or moving waste from a clogged channel.

WESTCROWN SEWER ENCOUNTERS

Every time the PCs reach an encounter area (or every time you decide they need an encounter to liven things up), roll d% and consult the table below to determine what sort of encounter occurs. Each encounter is only roughly detailed, since the denizens’ exact tactics depend on the nature of the map used to support the encounter. Determine which map is used by randomly rolling between the options available to each encounter.

d%	Encounter	Map Options
01–35	Hellknight Patrol	Any
36–45	Ooze bugs	Any
46–55	Goblin patrol	Area A1, A2, or A3
56–60	Goblin lair	Area A4, A5, or A6
61–75	Undead	Area A1 or A3
76–85	Hazard	Area A1, A2, A3, or A5
86–90	Cache	Area A2, A4, A5, or A6
91–100	Special	Any

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HELLKNIGHT PATROL (CR 1)

The Hellknights of the Order of the Rack have leapt at the chance to squash what they believe is a major rebellion in the throes of its birth. In addition, with a new recruitment of armigers in progress, command has decided to make quelling this suspected nascent uprising a major element of the training procedure. As a result, a large number of devoted and idealistic Hellknight armigers are sent out onto the streets of Westcrown to aid in finding and punishing these rebels. When the PCs flee into the sewers, several enthusiastic groups of these trainees decide to enter the sewers as well, locking the entrances behind them to prevent the rebels from escaping.

Creatures: Each Hellknight patrol consists of three armigers—the sense of competition among the trainees keeps their groups tiny, and they're hesitant to call for help from competing groups, giving the PCs an advantage in that they'll be unlikely to face more than a trio of Hellknight armigers at one time. When a patrol is encountered, there's a 25% chance that they're busy arguing among themselves about which way to go, and as such suffer a –4 penalty on Perception checks to notice the PCs' approach.

Note that while these Hellknights wear what appears to be the intimidating armor of the Order of the Rack, as armigers they have not yet earned the right to actually wear plate armor. Instead, the "plates" of their armor are actually boiled leather with chainmail reinforcements—the armor itself functions identically to chainmail.

HELLKNIGHT ARMIGERS (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

Female or male human warrior 1

LN Medium Humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +0

DEFENSES

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor)

hp 9 (1d10+4)

Fort +3, Ref +0, Will –1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee longsword +2 (1d8+1/19–20)

Ranged light crossbow +1 (1d8/19–20)

TACTICS

During Combat Hellknight armigers compete not only with other groups, but with each other. An armiger does not team up with others to focus attacks on single foes as a result, and if one drops a PC, he takes the next round to gloat and crow over his triumph unless there are other foes immediately adjacent to attack. He drinks a healing potion if reduced to 3 or fewer hit points.

Morale Hellknight armigers do not flee or surrender.

STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8

Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 12

Feats Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Climb +0, Intimidate +3, Perception +0

Languages Common

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*; Other Gear chainmail, longsword, light crossbow with 20 bolts

Ooze Bugs (CR 1)

Chelixa's sewers are remarkably free of rats, but not because there's nothing for rats to eat—instead, the sewers are infested with strange amorphous predators called ooze bugs. Since these creatures are content to dwell in the sewers and rarely venture up into the buildings above, and since rats are their favored meal, they have become the unofficial "mascot" of those who dwell in or work in the city sewers.

Creatures: In sufficient numbers, ooze bugs see larger creatures as prey. This encounter is with a small nest of them—they react to the presence of the PCs with a sudden attack, and fight until destroyed.

TORBLES (8)

CR 1/8

XP 50 each

hp 1 (page 84)



GOBLIN PATROL (CR 1/2)

Creatures: Although the number of goblins that live in Westcrown's sewers is larger than most folk think, they are still far too few to present any real threat to those who live above. Content to scavenge and live among the junk and refuse of humanity, the sewer goblins of Westcrown lead a rough life, and as such are slightly more dangerous than the standard goblin warrior. This encounter is with a single goblin scout—if he notices the party approaching, he attempts to hide (likely by hunkering under a piece of refuse, mostly concealed by the sewage), only to pop up and try to sneak attack the last person in line in the group. Once he delivers his blow, the goblin panics and flees down the tunnel. The sewer goblins of Westcrown fight with fragile dogslicers that are effectively already broken. A dogslicer is similar to a short sword, save that it deals slashing damage—this martial weapon is detailed in the *Pathfinder Chronicles Campaign Setting*.

SEWER GOBLIN CR 1/2

XP 200

Goblin rogue 1 (*Bestiary* 156)

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

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

DEFENSES

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 9 (1d8+1)

Fort +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 broken dogslicers -6 (1d4-1)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 13

Feats Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Acrobatics +7, Bluff +3, Climb +5, Escape Artist +7,

Perception +5, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +15, Swim +5; **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Ride, +4 Stealth

Languages Goblin

SQ trapfinding

Gear leather armor, two broken dogslicers

GOBLIN LAIR (CR 2)

Creatures: The sewer goblins live in relatively small groups, generally no more than three. Rumors of larger tribes that claim entire remote sections of forgotten sewers elsewhere under Westcrown persist, but in this adventure, the PCs only encounter smaller dens of goblins, each consisting of three of the craven menaces. These three goblins live in the small side room in the encounter—if they notice any PCs nearby, they rush out of their lair to attack, enraged that humans have dared

intrude on their territory. Their rage turns to fear as soon as any of the goblins drops below 5 hit points—a goblin so wounded runs in fear.

SEWER GOBLINS (3) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 9 each (see page 22)

Treasure: The goblins have amassed a small cache of treasure consisting of 20 gp in coins and clutter.

UNDEAD (CR 1)

Creatures: A less common but still very real threat in the sewers is undead. These encounters are with a group of skeletons 75% of the time, or a group of zombies the other 25% of the time. These undead are the remnants of an evil cult that operated in a hidden temple elsewhere in the sewers; after the cult was destroyed by adventurers, these few skeletons and zombies “leaked out” into the sewers. They now wander aimlessly, and attack the PCs on sight. Each encounter (one with skeletons, one with zombies) can occur only once—the second time you roll this encounter, it's automatically the other group (and they've just killed a group of three Hellknights without taking any damage in the fight—the Hellknights' gear lies on their bodies, ready for looting). If you roll it a third time, reroll until you generate a different encounter.

HUMAN SKELETONS (3) CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 4 each (*Bestiary* 250)

HUMAN ZOMBIES (2) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Bestiary* 288)

HAZARD (CR VARIABLE)

Not all dangerous encounters in the sewers are with monsters—patches of dangerous fungi grow in some areas down here as well. The first time this encounter occurs, it's with a patch of three shriekers—if they start to shriek, there's a 40% chance a goblin patrol hears and comes to investigate in 1d6 rounds, a 30% chance a Hellknight patrol comes to investigate in 1d6 rounds, and a 30% chance that both a goblin patrol and a Hellknight patrol come to investigate.

The second time this encounter occurs, there's a patch of brown mold growing amid the shriekers.

If this encounter occurs more often than twice, all additional encounters have a 35% chance to include brown mold—otherwise, the hazard consists of just shriekers.

Shriekers and brown mold are detailed on page 416 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*.

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CACHE

Treasure: The sewers are a popular place for the desperate and the criminal to hide stashes of loot. As the PCs pass through this area, a DC 20 Perception check is enough to notice a small chest hidden under some rubble against a wall. The chest contains 4d6 gp and 1d4 tiny pieces of jewelry worth 10 gp each, and has a 50% chance to contain either a pair of sunrods or 1d3 *potions of cure light wounds*. Feel free to alter the contents of these caches as you see fit if more than one is discovered.

SPECIAL

A special encounter is with something out of the ordinary, something the PCs probably can't defeat at 1st or even 2nd level. It's here to give the PCs a reason to come back to the sewer, whether in search of fame, to solve a mystery, or to find what the creature is guarding. Special encounters are reactive; if the creature is guarding something, it only attacks if the PCs try to pass it or steal what it is guarding, and doesn't pursue the PCs beyond the range of its post. Example special encounters include a mad hermit-priest of Ghlauder, a hungry otyugh the PCs could bribe with any offer of nice food (an extremely subjective term for an otyugh), a powerful shadow beast such as the shadowgarm detailed on page 80, a pair of imps, or even an obvious magical or mechanical trap barring progress down a particular tunnel. The point of the special encounter is not to humble or kill the PCs, but to make them realize that there are things in the campaign they're not ready to find out just yet and to encourage them to follow up on old leads, hints, and mysteries. Obviously deadly monsters or traps should be located in side rooms or near passageways that, if the PCs stick to the ones marked as leading to the safe house, can be avoided.

ESCAPING THE SEWERS

Eventually, the PCs should reach a variant of area A5, with a marker pointing upward to the sewer entrance trap door. This sewer access is located in an out-of-the-way alley behind a condemned Shrine of Aroden that now serves as a safe house. If Janiven is with the PCs, she explains that they've reached the end of their flight; she knocks on the door, and a few moments later it's opened from the opposite side by a nervous looking man with a lantern (this is Ermolos, one of the rebels—see "Children of Westcrown Roll Call" on page 24 for more details), who quickly ushers the group out of the sewers and leads them into the safe house through a back door that's cleverly disguised as if it were boarded up. If Janiven has split up from the PCs, Morosino tells the PCs to knock on the door (if he's gone or dead, the PCs will need to figure this out on their own); in this case, it is Janiven herself that opens the door and escorts them to safety.

Story Award: For running the sewer gauntlet and making it to the safe house, award the PCs 1,200 XP.

PART THREE: THE REBEL HIDEOUT

When Arael first came to Westcrown several years ago, he was distraught at the condition of the city's abandoned shrines to Aroden. Nowhere else, he thought, had the corruption and fall of the once proud empire of Cheliox more blatantly exposed its shame than here. The ascendancy of Asmodeus-worship (even if just lip service) has discouraged many people from public worship of other gods, leading to some temples closing as their followers stopped attending, prayed at home, or changed to other churches. This shrine to Aroden, like many others throughout Westcrown, isn't technically abandoned—it belongs to the church of Iomedae now, but no one has tended it for years. Westcrown's government has no interest in maintaining the building, and like so many other ancient structures (especially those this close to the ruined portions of the city) it is simply ignored.

Arael decided to use this old shrine as a safe house for his latest project for precisely these reasons. The combination of it being a sacred place to his religion and being a building the city government ignores makes it a perfect place to serve as a headquarters. Furthermore, long-standing laws that forbid secular groups from looting, rebuilding, or otherwise harming houses of worship work well to prevent too much Hellknight interest in the building. Yet just to be safe, Arael is careful to hide all indications that the shrine is now inhabited. Its facade is as old and filthy as it ever was, and he's covered all interior doors and windows with dark curtains to block light sources from within. Very few of Westcrown's citizens know that Arael has cleaned up the interior of the shrine—and most of those are now among his growing group of followers.

The shrine of Aroden is intended to serve as a base of operations for the PCs for the duration of this campaign; as long as they take care to not expose its location and purpose to anyone not of the group, that secret stays safe. It's important for PCs to have somewhere they can feel safe, and you shouldn't use this shrine as a place to ambush them or to force a siege—there'll be enough of that type of encounter throughout the rest of this Adventure Path. No map of the shrine is provided, since combat is unlikely to ever occur here, but if you find you need one, you should take the time to draw one up. *Flip-Mat: Cathedral* (available at paizo.com) works as the safe house as well.

When the PCs arrive, Janiven and the other rebels arrange to let them wash up, eat, and rest before making formal introductions to the others of the group that are present. Give the PCs time to get to know these other

NPCs, as they should recur throughout the Adventure Path and might come in handy in the final adventure in the campaign. The next section summarizes each of these NPCs. When Janiven introduces the PCs, the other “rebels” are in a heated argument about what they should call their group. Some see themselves as rebels and freedom fighters and push for names like “The Knights of Westcrown,” or “The Scions of Aroden.” Others see the group as something that should be gentler and more subtle in its attempt to win the hearts of the citizens (this is Janiven and Arael’s preference as well) and push for less antagonistic names like, “Guardians of Cheliar” or “Children of Westcrown.” This latter name is the one with the most traction, currently. During the remainder of this adventure, as the PCs interact with the others, feel free to have the NPCs ask the PCs for suggestions for naming the organization. If a player comes up with something that you and/or the other players think is particularly exciting, that name ends up winning over the rest—otherwise, as this adventure ends, the group decides to identify itself as the “Children of Westcrown.” The remainder of the Adventure Path refers to the group by this name.

Although none of the Children of Westcrown have made any overt moves toward winning the public’s heart, they do agree that when that time comes, they’ll need to do two things: hide their identities and give the public something by which to identify them—not as individuals, but as members of a group. The current plan is to wear hooded cloaks or full helms whenever a member of the group is performing a public service, but to also wear a red cloth armband on the right arm. This way, unless one of them is caught, they can keep their private lives (and in some cases, families) separate from their work as the Children of Westcrown. As with the name of their organization, the group looks to the PCs for advice and suggestions. If they come up with a better or more interesting idea, the group adopts that “uniform” instead, but otherwise, the rest of this Adventure Path assumes that the red armbands and hoods/helms are the official uniform.

If the PCs talk about their encounters in the sewers, the other members of the Children of Westcrown are fascinated and encouraged to have such brave and hardy folk on their side—that is, assuming the PCs still want to help them. None of the current members are what anyone would call “heroes,” at least not yet; in time, any of them could develop into a hero (or even a villain) depending on PC intervention. For now, impress upon the players how desperate the Children of Westcrown are. Janiven is competent, and their leader Arael is a cleric of some skill, but most of the dozen or so other rebels are young and idealistic, with no training in subterfuge, magic, or battle (they’re all 1st-level commoners or experts). While

some of them may have the potential to learn swordcraft, stealth, or magic, most of them are just regular folk who want better lives for themselves and the other people of Westcrown; they’re in no shape to go charging into battle with Hellknights, let alone eventually rally the common people for a change of government. They’re willing to die for their cause, but uncertain if that would accomplish anything significant. They need the PCs’ help.

CHILDREN OF WESTCROWN ROLL CALL

In real-world terms, most of the members of the Children of Westcrown are just like your rank-and-file college student or wage slave. They don’t have the charisma or know-how to inspire others, and don’t have the physical power to fight effectively against authority. Arael is an inspiring leader, but he and Janiven can’t do it alone. With Arael in the custody of the Hellknights, Janiven fears that she won’t be able to keep the group together, and without him the rebels are doomed to failure. With no leader, they’re just a mob; with a leader—and heroes to inspire them—they can be a force to be reckoned with. Janiven believes her group can make a difference in Westcrown, and makes recruiting the PCs to the cause her highest priority, appealing first to any good religious characters (particularly those who worship Cayden Cailean, Desna, Iomedae, or Sarenrae) if the group as a whole seems reluctant.

Currently the rebels consist of Arael (page 31), Janiven (page 12), Morosino, and a core group of devoted young men and women. Most of the NPCs listed are given a potential character class—it is this class that is most suited to the NPC in question, and that NPC should gravitate to a PC of that class, possibly looking up to him or her as a personal role model. A PC can encourage these rebels to live up to their potential, perhaps serving as mentors or even trainers as this campaign goes on. While these rebels may never be great world-shaking heroes, training them gives the group as a whole a better chance of success.

There are also anywhere from five to 10 other people on the fringe of the group (mainly friends or close family members of the following NPCs) who may or may not know of the existence of the Children of Westcrown, and who eventually might be convinced to join if the rebels stay together, avoid the law, and start to make positive changes in the city. For now, these non-member contacts are willing to help them with minor assistance such as lending items, relaying news, and other activities that aren’t illegal and won’t arouse suspicion—these NPCs are not listed below, but will appear now and then during the course of this campaign.

Amaya (CG female Tian human expert 1): Amaya is a well-mannered glassblower and an incredibly beautiful

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woman who's somewhat self-conscious about the effect her appearance has on others—she dresses plainly as a result. She hopes someday to visit her distant kin who still live in Magnimar and Sandpoint. (Potential: bard.)

Ermolos (NG male Chelish human expert 1): Ermolos is incredibly muscular, a physique the result of a long apprenticeship as a blacksmith. He walks with a slight limp—a lingering effect of a childhood illness. His father, Ermolos the Elder, was a relatively well-known adventurer who vanished on an ill-fated journey to Thuvia several years ago—Ermolos still clings to the hope to some day travel across the Inner Sea to find his missing parent. (Potential: fighter.)

Fiosa (LG female halfling expert 1): Fiosa is a house servant who is friends with many halfling slaves; she takes advantage of her freedom to help her kin as best she can. She has a very real respect for Janiven and Arael after they helped her smuggle several halfling slaves out of Westcrown (and out of a particularly heinous merchant's home), and her newfound faith in Iomedae is quite strong. (Potential: cleric.)

Gorvio (N male Chelish human expert 1): Gorvio works for his uncle Jacovo, a horse trader, but has increasingly grown curious about his ancestry—his vibrant amber eyes (among hints he's overheard from his uncle during the man's frequent drunken bouts) make him suspect that somewhere in his past lurks the blood of a tiefling or two. (Potential: sorcerer.)

Larko (N male Garundi human commoner 1): Larko lives a simple life as a dock worker, but daydreams of his childhood in the hills east of Westcrown and hopes some day to be able to afford to move out of the city and live a hunter's life. He's the strong, silent type, rarely speaking unless he has to. (Potential: ranger.)

Mathalen (LN female Chelish human commoner 1): Mathalen is a thin and wiry woman who worked as a porter but found the job dreadfully dull. She got through her days by making sure to take frequent breaks to meditate and purge her mind of "the poisons of menial labor." This attitude struck her employer as lazy, and she was recently fired from her job and thinks of the Children of Westcrown as her new calling. (Potential: monk.)

Rizzardo (CN male Varisian human commoner 1): After stowing away on a Chelish ship, Rizzardo found himself more or less stuck in Westcrown years ago. He earns his keep working at odd jobs as an unskilled laborer, but has to switch jobs frequently as a result of his temper and impatience at following orders from one person for too long. He only joined the Children of Westcrown because of a powerful attraction to Janiven, but has since grown to enjoy the company of the others, particularly Ermolos, who he insists sounds like his little brother. (Potential: barbarian.)

Hellknight PCs?

This part of the adventure assumes that no PC has an issue with rescuing a prisoner of the Order of the Rack. In some cases, though, particularly if there's a paladin, a lawful cleric, or a PC who has a desire to join the Hellknights, you might find the group hesitant to take part in Arael's rescue.

To try to avoid this problem, you should take pains to present the Order of the Rack in an unfavorable light—certainly, many of Westcrown's citizens, nobles, and politicians view the Order of the Rack Hellknights as too zealous and extreme in their actions. Near Egorian, the Order of the Rack might be more welcome and respected, but in this region they are more often seen as part of the reason things are so grim in Cheliox these days. Although the Order of the Rack has no direct ties to the House of Thrune, rumors to the contrary are common. Even other Hellknight orders, particularly the Order of the Scourge, sometimes find the Order of the Rack to be too extreme and rigid in their methods. The Order of the Rack has time, tradition, and the loyalty of its members on its side, but they are arrogant as well—that they don't see their poor reputation in Westcrown as a problem may eventually be their fatal flaw.

So in the end, as long as you discourage your PCs from having associations with the Order of the Rack (something the *Council of Thieves Player's Guide* makes clear), you should be safe with presenting these non-evil but non-friendly Hellknights as villains and foes to be opposed.

Sclavo (LG male Garundi human expert 1): A soft-spoken yet intractable (if secret) worshiper of Iomedae, Sclavo has long worked as a scribe for one of Westcrown's courts. He longs for a day when the laws of Cheliox can be reformed, and sees this group as a tool that, eventually, can be used to do just that. (Potential: paladin.)

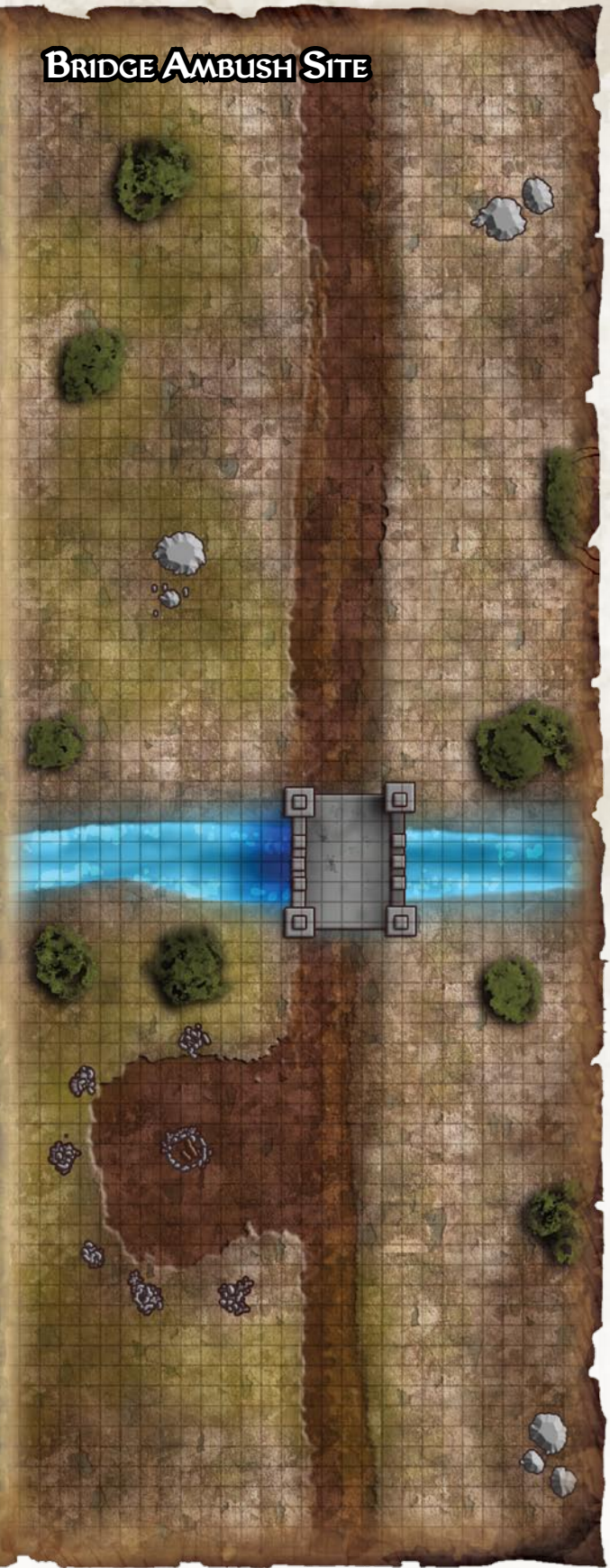
Tarvi (CG female Chelish human commoner 1): Tarvi's parents own a prosperous jewelry store in Westcrown—the "Glitter Palace." She's worked there for years, but is far too witty and intelligent to do the job well. In those years she has engineered the failure of no less than a dozen attempts by her parents to get her married into nobility. Her true passion is studying magic—she has little time for romance, and hopes some day to be able to create and sell magical jewelry. (Potential: wizard.)

Vitti (N male Chelish human expert 1): Vitti is a strange, eccentric man who dyes his hair green and refuses to eat any food he doesn't grow or catch himself. A talented woodcarver whose works earn him a modest income, he prides himself on the fact that he only carves wood that's

ROAD AMBUSH SITE



BRIDGE AMBUSH SITE



The Bastards of Erebus

been harvested from deadfalls and other trees that died of natural causes. (Potential: druid.)

Yakopulio (CN female gnome expert 1): Of all the Children of Westcrown, noisy and irreverent Yakopulio is the least religious—she wears her atheism proudly, and her eagerness to contradict often sparks arguments among the others in the group. She works as a bartender (and moonlights as a pimp) at a tavern called the Bruised Eel, and many of the others in the Children of Westcrown don't understand what Arael sees in the offensive gnome. (Potential: rogue.)

PART FOUR: A DRAMATIC RESCUE

The event that brought Morosino to Vizio's Tavern was the news that Arael had been captured. Regardless of how much time has passed since this announcement (in other words, the time it took the PCs to travel through the sewers and get to the rebel hideout), shortly after the PCs arrive at the shrine, meet the other Children of Westcrown, and rest up, news comes in via the grapevine that the Hellknights have finally secured control over Arael, the bureaucratic complications of what jurisdiction the prisoner fell into finally having been resolved in the Order of the Rack's favor. The Hellknights are preparing to move Arael from the city jail to Citadel Rivad, the order's stronghold outside the city walls. Once he's there, he's as good as lost—Janiven knows there's no way she and the other rebels can rescue him then, even with the PCs' help. Without Arael, the rebel group is likely to fall apart—worse, she's afraid that the Hellknights will use magic or other extreme interrogation methods once they get him into their custody in the citadel, using them to extract the identities of all the Children of Westcrown.

Janiven wants to rescue Arael while the Hellknights are transporting him on the road outside of Westcrown; there won't be any witnesses to see them attacking the Hellknights, nor any civilians around to get hurt, and there will be fewer guards than at the prison or the citadel. Even more importantly, by rescuing him beyond Westcrown's walls, they aren't technically breaking city laws. Many in Westcrown (including a significant portion of the nobility) bristle at the Hellknights and see them as little more than mercenaries, and won't take issue if they lose a prisoner on the way to the citadel. Best of all, since Arael is now in Hellknight custody, Westcrown is no longer interested in his supposed crimes, and if he escapes, the city won't be bound to turn him back over to the Hellknights unless enough government officials want to do the Order of the Rack a favor. Janiven knows such a favor is unlikely to be granted, especially since handing the prisoner over to the zealous Order of the Rack is

already just such a favor—she's confident that if they can get Arael back to Westcrown alive (preferably without the death of any Hellknights), he'll be safe.

But she and her team of untrained rebels can't pull off his rescue alone.

PLANNING THE RESCUE

Citadel Rivad lies northwest of the city of Westcrown—a fortress and training ground for the Order of the Rack, the oldest (and most zealous) of the Hellknight orders. It is essentially impregnable, at least for PCs at this point in their careers. The road to the citadel is an offshoot from the main road that winds off to the southwest—the land along the route to the citadel is mostly open plain, with a few scattered groves of trees (some of which are cut back every few years to make it harder for bandits to hide) and one stone bridge crossing a stream. With rare exceptions, the only people who use the road are Hellknights or those providing services for them (food, messages, and so on), and on a typical day only three or four groups travel the road in either direction. Because of the low traffic and the proximity to the Hellknights, banditry is unheard of on this minor road, and while the forces of Citadel Rivad aren't careless about the possibility of being attacked in this area, they certainly don't expect it. This all makes the road the best point to attempt a rescue of the imprisoned half-elf.

Another factor works to the advantage of the daring plan—the Order of the Rack's arrogance. This Hellknight order is the oldest, and they've faced very few failures over their long history. As a result, the escort for Arael's transport is relatively light. As the entire operation to capture Arael was, basically, a training exercise (Janiven bitterly comments on how the Children of Westcrown should receive a payment from the Order of the Rack in thanks for providing such a convenient opportunity), the honor of escorting Arael back to Citadel Rivad has been granted to the group of armigers most directly responsible for his capture. Word on the street is that the other armigers' failure to catch any other supposed "rebels" has resulted in quite a bit of shame and mockery, and much of this current crop of trainees' remaining pride rests solely on Arael's imminent imprisonment in Citadel Rivad.

According to various reports, Arael's trip to the Citadel will be escorted by a total of 10 Hellknight armigers, led by their sponsor, a young and gifted (but low-ranking) Hellknight Signifier named Shanwen. Even given the PCs' successes in the sewers, this is probably too many foes to handle at once—particularly since Janiven wants to avoid any Hellknight fatalities if possible. The more Hellknight armigers who live, the less brutal the Children of Westcrown look and the more humiliation and shame they inflict on the Order of the Rack.

Janiven has a plan to even the odds even further. While the PCs make the primary attack on the armored wagon transporting Arael and mount his rescue, she'll lead several of the other Children of Westcrown in a feint-ambush against the Hellknights. Given the absence of bandit attacks on that road, the Hellknights are sure to interpret any attack as an attempt to rescue their prisoner, and the likely response to sighting a group of what appear to be bandits stepping into the road ahead will be to split their forces, sending their mounted troops forward to handle the supposed highwaymen while the prisoner and his guards hang back and perhaps begin to turn around to make a retreat back to Westcrown so they don't lose their prize. This would give the main force—meaning the PCs—fewer opponents to fight and making it much easier to free Arael—especially if the mounted Hellknights fall for the plan and ride their horses into a section of the road the secondary group prepares with caltrops.

The real question is where to stage the ambush of the transport. Janiven sketches a map of the road to the citadel, pointing out the small stone bridge that crosses the swift but relatively narrow stream called the Athua, which might make a good place for an ambush. She also indicates a few locations before and after the bridge where there's much more tree cover to allow a hit-and-run attack and to complicate pursuit via horseback. The choice is up to the PCs, since they'll be the ones in greatest peril. Tactical maps for both locations are provided.

Of course, the PCs may have their own plan, but Janiven refuses any proposal that requires the main force of the rebels to battle the Hellknights head-to-head; they're neither trained nor equipped for it (and don't have time to get gear and move into position ahead of the Hellknights). However, if the PCs want her to fight alongside them (either as part of the double-ambush or some other strategy of the PCs) she agrees; if the PCs like the double-ambush plan, Janiven chooses Sclavo to lead the faux-ambush in this case.

Once the rebels hear about Arael being sent to the citadel, time is of the essence. The heroes only have about an hour to prepare before they must leave along the northwest road. If the PCs don't have horses and don't want to buy their own, Janiven arranges to have fellow rebel Gorvio talk to his uncle Jacovo to lend them horses or ponies, with the understanding that the horses aren't hers and she really needs them back in one piece.

THE AMBUSH (CR 4 OR 7)

Where this encounter plays out depends on how the PCs want to set up the attack on the Hellknights. The map depicts a long, straight piece of road through a wooded

area as well as a similar stretch with a bridge over a stream; the knights approach the PCs on whatever map they decide to set up their ambush. Regardless of what map is used, the start of the encounter is essentially the same: the PCs position themselves on the map, and the Hellknights enter from the east side of the map and proceed westward. This encounter assumes the PCs go with Janiven's plan to draw off some of the Hellknights and leave the PCs to deal with the rest. If the PCs elect to attack the entire group of nearly a dozen Hellknights (four of whom are mounted on warhorses), the encounter's CR jumps from 4 to 7—likely an impossible fight for just the PCs, but perhaps less so if they have Janiven and some of the braver Children of Westcrown to aid them.

The Prison Carriage: Arael is being transported in an enclosed carriage built to hold and transport prisoners. The carriage has a locked door (average lock, Disable Device DC 25 to pick) and is made of iron-reinforced wood (hardness 5, 40 hp). It is approximately 7 feet square and 5 feet high, riding about 2 feet off the ground, with a running board on the sides and rear for easy climbing to the roof and interior. A team of two horses (hitched in series) pulls it, and the driver sits on a small bench attached to the front of the roof. The carriage hitch allows the horses to share a single 10-foot space, and they are strong enough to pull it at their normal speed (50 feet), but it slows them enough that if they use a run action they only move four times their normal speed instead of five (for having the Run feat).

Mounted on top of the carriage roof is a Large heavy crossbow (essentially a small ballista); it can turn to fire in all directions, but cannot fire at a target on or adjacent to the wagon. The crossbow deals 2d8 damage on a hit, but its size means that Medium creatures must use two hands to fire it and they have a -2 attack penalty when using it. Reloading the crossbow is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity; one bolt is kept loaded in the crossbow during travel, and a quiver of nine more bolts is affixed to its side. If expecting battle, the knights bring an archer to control the ballista while the driver steers the carriage; given the assumed safety of the road to Citadel Rivad, this group has foregone additional archers.

The Battlefield: Moving through a square with a tree stump counts as difficult terrain, and a stump is tall enough (3 feet) that a creature standing on one gets the benefit of higher terrain. A Small creature can crouch behind a stump or a Medium one can lie prone and have total concealment from creatures on the opposite side.

Small boulders have the same game effect as the tree stumps. The large boulders are 5 feet high, and creatures cannot enter or pass through them without climbing; Small creatures can easily hide behind them, and Medium creatures can do so with a slight crouch.

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Most of the smaller stones near the bridge were used to build the bridge or small cairns near the camping area on the north side.

The stream isn't particularly cold, but it quickly reaches a depth of 4 feet. The water flows fast; any swimming creature not actively moving against the current travels with it at a rate of 20 feet per round (wading creatures are unaffected). Standing up from lying prone in the stream is a standard action, or a full-round action if the creature carries a heavy load.

The bridge is made of mortared stone and is a single-arc span across the stream, cresting about 2 feet above the water level at its highest point. It is quite sturdy and counts as a masonry wall, with the top equivalent to a flagstone floor. If the PCs talk of destroying the bridge to aid their ambush plans, Janiven (if present) asks them not to—the destruction of the bridge would only give the Order of the Rack more leverage to sway the government against the Children of Westcrown. However, the bridge does make a nice choke-point for an attack on the prison carriage, as the horses cannot ford the stream while hitched to the carriage.

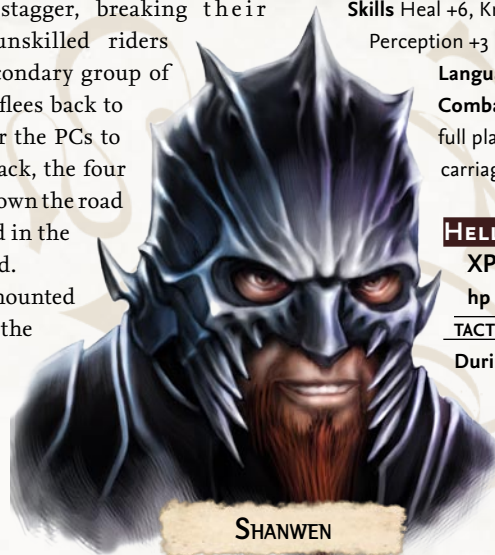
Creatures: The initial team escorting Arael to the citadel consists of 10 Hellknight armigers and their sponsor Shanwen. Four of the Hellknights ride on warhorses, while the other six ride on the carriage (one atop manning the crossbow, two on each side clinging to the running boards, and one in front with Shanwen, driving the carriage). None of them are particularly skilled in riding (they make Ride checks untrained) but the horses do not panic in battle, allowing the Hellknights to pursue fleeing opponents, though they dismount to dispatch foes on foot.

The entire group of Hellknights is a CR 7 encounter. If the PCs follow Janiven's plan, though, the ambush goes flawlessly. Once the PCs are in position, ready to ambush the wagon, Janiven (or the NPC leading the second group if the PCs convinced Janiven to fight with them) leads a group of other rebels out of the tree cover a few hundred yards west of the PCs' actual ambush point, down the road ahead of the Hellknights. This secondary group has taken the time to prepare the road with caltrops; they move into a position at the far side of the caltrops and wave weapons in a threatening manner. As they do so, the Hellknights immediately stop; mocking laughter

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and shouts of delighted challenge reveal their arrogance as the four mounted Hellknights gallop forward, leaving only six of their fellows to guard the carriage. As the riders hit the caltrops, two things happen at once: the horses shriek in pain and stagger, breaking their charge and bucking their unskilled riders from their saddles, and the secondary group of rebels breaks for the trees and flees back to Westcrown. Now is the time for the PCs to strike—if they launch their attack, the four armigers several hundred feet down the road are likely unable to return to aid in the battle before the fight is resolved.

When things go bad for the mounted Hellknights, those back at the prison carriage begin the laborious task of turning the carriage around—with the road ahead suddenly unclear and dangerous, Shanwen gives the order to retreat back to Westcrown for a “real” escort. It’ll take a full minute for the cumbersome carriage to effect its about-face, giving the PCs a great chance to launch their portion of the ambush.



SHANWEN

SHANWEN SHANWEN

CR 1/2

XP 200

Male human cleric of Asmodeus 1

LE Medium humanoid

Init -1; Senses Perception +3

DEFENSES

AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (+9 armor, -1 Dex)

hp 14 (1d8+6)

Fort +4, Ref -1, Will +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee heavy mace +1 (1d8+1)

Ranged Large heavy crossbow -3 (2d6/19-20) or fire bolt -1 (1d6 fire)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 3/day (1d6, DC 10)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities

5/day—fire bolt, touch of law

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 1st)

1st—*command* (DC 13), *cure light wounds*, *burning hands*^D (DC 13)

0—*light*, *mending*, *stabilize*

D domain spell (Fire, Law)

TACTICS

During Combat Shanwen clambers up to use the Large crossbow, but if a PC makes it to his carriage, he uses *burning hands* against the largest group of foes. He only channels negative energy if he’s surrounded by enemies and no Hellknights are in the area.

Morale Shanwen is too proud to surrender, and fights until defeated.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +0; CMB +1; CMD 10

Feats Heavy Armor Proficiency, Toughness

Skills Heal +6, Knowledge (planes) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perception +3

Languages Common, Infernal

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*; **Other Gear** full plate, heavy mace, wooden holy symbol, prison carriage key

HELLKNIGHT ARMIGERS (6)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 9 each (see page 21)

TACTICS

During Combat These armigers do their best to defeat their attackers, clambering off the carriage or firing crossbows at ranged targets. They use the carriage as cover if possible.

Morale Although they are arrogant, the bravery of these Hellknights-in-training is still in development. An armiger brought below 4 hit points panics and flees west toward Citadel Rivad, but won’t surrender.

Treasure: Other than what the Hellknights carry, there is no additional “treasure” here, though Shanwen carries a letter from mayor Aberian Arvanxi to the captain of the guard of Citadel Rivad asking for help dealing with a group of bandits called the “Bastards of Erebus.” Specifically, the letter seems to be repeating the request, and asks for a response to an earlier request for help in dealing with the bandits. A storage compartment under the prisoner’s seat holds a large woolen sack containing Arael’s gear.

RESCUING ARAEL

Once the Hellknights are dealt with, the PCs can free Arael. The half-elf cleric is locked inside the carriage and his wrists are manacled (average lock, Disable Device DC 25). The keys to the carriage and his manacles are carried by Shanwen. Arael has been beaten and is currently at 1 hp; he was unconscious when the group left town but wakes up shortly before the PCs ambush the Hellknights. During the battle he may ask what’s going on; if he believes the Hellknights are under attack, he calls out for someone to free him.

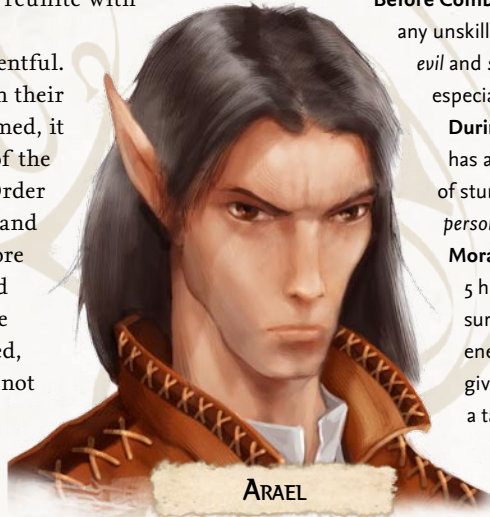
Arael is very thankful for the PCs’ help. If Janiven is present, he is glad to see her; otherwise he asks the PCs what motivated them to attack the Hellknights—this gives the PCs the opportunity to say they’re helping the rebels without Arael revealing the rebels exist or that he is one of them. If over the course of this conversation

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Arael doesn't learn that the PCs are helping the rebels, he thanks them again, tells them his name, suggests they leave before other Hellknights arrive, and bids the PCs farewell, returning to the city by a different route. If he does know the PCs are helping the rebels, he urges them to head back to Westcrown and reunite with the rest of the team.

The trip back to the city is uneventful. With any surviving Hellknights well on their way back to the Citadel and likely shamed, it will be at least an hour before news of the ambush reaches the attention of the Order of the Rack—plenty of time for the PCs and their allies to return to Westcrown. Before they enter the city, Arael pauses to find some way to conceal his face with a large hat or hooded cloak—though bruised, he still may be recognizable, and he is not sure if his description is known to the Hellknights or the dottari.

Arael is a handsome man whose family has long lived in Westcrown. He wants nothing more than to see the House of Thruene toppled, but knows that this is a long-term goal at best, and has set his sights, for now, on what he feels is a much more realistic goal—making Westcrown a nicer place to live. His frustrations with the government of Westcrown aren't that they are pawns of the House of Thruene, but that they don't do more to make their city a better place to live at the same time. He hopes that by founding a group of do-gooders, if not outright "people's heroes" (he's loath to actually use the word "rebel" since that has negative connotations in his mind), he can show the city's rulers a better way.



ARAEI

ARAEI	CR 2
XP 600	
Male half-elf cleric of Iomedae 3	
LG Medium humanoid	
Init +1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +4	
DEFENSES	
AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +1 Dex)	
hp 20 (3d8+3)	
Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +5	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft.	
Melee mwk longsword +3 (1d8/19–20)	
Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8/19–20)	
Special Attacks channel positive energy 5/day (2d6, DC 13)	
Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd)	
5/day—battle rage, touch of good	
Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 3rd)	

2nd—*hold person* (DC 14), *sound burst* (already cast), *spiritual weapon*^P
 1st—*bless* (2), *protection from evil*^P, *shield of faith* (already cast)
 o—*guidance*, *light*, *stabilize*, *virtue*
 D domain spell (Good, War)

TACTICS

Before Combat Arael casts *guidance* and *virtue* on any unskilled rebels present and *protection from evil* and *shield of faith* on anyone he believes is especially vulnerable.

During Combat Arael casts *bless* if he has allies, uses *sound burst* in the hopes of stunning multiple opponents, and *hold person* to disable a dangerous adversary.

Morale Arael surrenders when he reaches 5 hp if he believes his foe will accept a surrender. He is willing to hold off an enemy even at great risk to himself if it gives his allies more time to succeed at a task or escape, but prefers to make a tactical retreat rather than dying needlessly.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

Feats Alignment Channel, Pick Alignment, Brew Potion, Skill Focus (Knowledge [local])

Skills Diplomacy +8, Heal +6, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Knowledge (planes) +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Sense Motive +6

Languages Common, Elven

SQ elf blood, elven immunities

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of bull's strength*;

Other Gear breastplate, masterwork longsword, dagger, light crossbow, 20 bolts, 60 gp

Story Award: 1,200 XP for freeing Arael from the Hellknights.

Fame Point Award: The PCs earn 1 Fame Point for rescuing Arael. If they do so without killing any Hellknights, they earn 1 additional Fame Point.

PART FIVE: LYING LOW

Once reunited at the rebel hideout, the rebels formally introduce Arael to the PCs, trade stories with the PCs about the ambushes, and listen to Arael's tale of being captured. Fortunately, despite being beaten by his Hellknight captors after they secured custody of him from the Westcrown city watch, his will remained strong and he did not reveal the location of the hideout or the identities of anyone else in the group. He is very relieved,

however, that he won't be imprisoned in Citadel Rivad, and once again thanks the PCs for their help in rescuing him. Before long, his ordeal takes its toll and he excuses himself to rest.

At this point, the PCs should be well on their way into 2nd level. After the daring escape from the Hellknights, both Arael and Janiven suggest that all of the Children of Westcrown spend the next several days lying low. The Order of the Rack will doubtless be incensed at the ambush, but there's little they can do now but file petitions with the city and otherwise get entangled by bureaucracy—if there's one thing about Chelixa's government that can be depended upon, it's bureaucracy. Even if some of the Hellknights were killed, the Order of the Rack finds Westcrown hesitant to aid them in tracking down the supposed "rebels." The government points out that no actual rebellious activity has occurred in the city, and indeed, with the Order of the Rack spending so much effort chasing phantom rebels, actual banditry is on the rise. The actions of the tiefling brigand group known as the "Bastards of Erebus" are only the most recent of these groups of thugs to make themselves known—perhaps if the Order of the Rack were more diligent at handling these highwaymen and thieves, the roads themselves would be safer. The implication that the Hellknights were ambushed and humiliated by brigands quickly gains traction in Westcrown's rumor mills, and before long the Order of the Rack is forced (publicly, at least) to turn their attentions to this greater problem of growing banditry.

Yet while the Hellknights are publicly no longer hunting them, the Children of Westcrown would do well to lie low for a while to let things simmer down. During this time, though, both Janiven and Arael remain in contact with the PCs, as do several other members of the group. They are all quite impressed with the characters' heroics, after all, and want to ensure they remain a part of their group.

You should take advantage of this lull to let the PCs get to know their new friends. In addition, you can run them on additional encounters and minor adventures of your own devising. One sample encounter is presented below—even if you send the PCs on no other side quests, you should run the "Horse Drama" encounter (or at least a variant of it), as it foreshadows an important NPC in the next adventure.

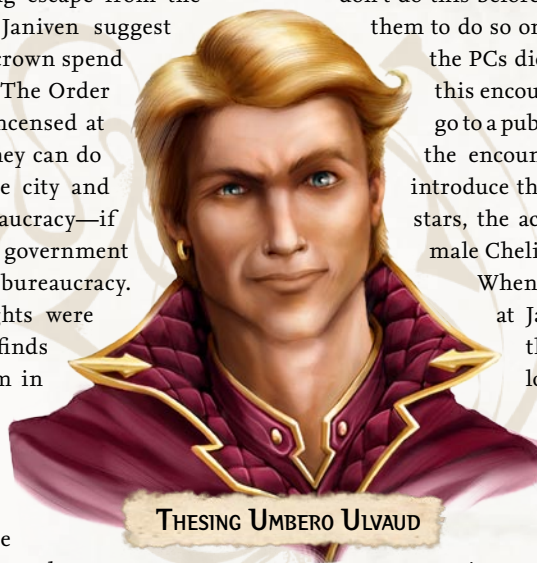
HORSE DRAMA

If the PCs borrowed horses from Gorvio's uncle Jacovo, they'll find that returning them isn't quite the simple

matter they might expect. This encounter can take place before or after the PCs return to the rebel hideout (though if Janiven is present, she suggests doing it beforehand, as multiple people on horseback arriving at the old Iomedaean church is bound to draw unwanted attention). If the PCs don't do this before reaching the hideout, Gorvio asks them to do so once the PCs arrive at the hideout. If the PCs didn't borrow horses, you can change this encounter to take place whenever the PCs go to a public location in Westcrown, adjusting the encounter as necessary. The point is to introduce the PCs to one of Westcrown's rising stars, the actor **Thesing Umbero Ulvauno** (CE male Chelish human expert 3).

When the PCs go to return the horses at Jacovo's stables near the city gate, they find a handsome but arrogant-looking man berating Jacovo for not having a certain kind of horse available. This man is Thesing Umbero Ulvauno, a local actor and opera singer of some repute who has let his growing reputation feed his ego to a ridiculous level. He's a very melodramatic man with a habit of cursing out anyone he sees as an underling, exaggerating how important he is and implying that not immediately acceding to his wishes is a personal affront intended to threaten his career. As it turns out, the horses the PCs borrowed are exactly the sort he needs for his impromptu performance this evening of *The Elopement of the Dowager Princess*, which features a scene wherein "the princess and her handsome lover—played by me, of course—flee the city pursued by the king's horsemen." A DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Perform (act or sing) check lets a PC recognize his name even if they've never attended one of his performances.

Ulvauno believes the PCs took the horses to vex him, perhaps to aid a rival actor, and is only satisfied with excessive apologies from the PCs and Jacovo. His initial attitude toward Jacovo and the PCs is unfriendly. If the PCs express ignorance as to his identity, he says, "Don't you know who I am? I am Thesing Umbero Ulvauno, one of the greatest tenors in the city!" He grows angry and abusive if the PCs ignore him or are unimpressed with who he is, shifting his attitude to hostile. (Opera is a popular art in Westcrown, and he truly is a minor celebrity, so PCs who pretend not to know him are actually being very rude, regardless of his attitude). If the PCs leave while he is still hostile, he takes out his anger by verbally abusing Jacovo (which gets back to Gorvio, who is unhappy that the PCs left his uncle there to take the blame). Thesing eventually finds out who the PCs are and plots petty acts



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of vengeance such as sending them boxes of dead flowers, offering free tickets to someone else's performance of a terrible opera, spreading rumors that one of the PCs is a *castrati*, and so on.

Fawning, praise, and flattery are the best way to improve Thesing's attitude; all other attempts have a -5 penalty to the Diplomacy check, though an especially attractive female PC might be able to put him in a better mood with some flirtatious words and complements on his appearance and talent (no penalty to the check). He is a conceited man who considers himself quite a ladykiller, yet he only sees women as conquests or temporary trophies. While he can be very charming, to an experienced eye he is rather transparent in his lack of sincerity. He may even resort to verbal or physical coercion to have his way with a woman if nobody else is around. Appeals to his ego; offers to provide alternate horses or attend his next performance, and cheer especially loud (and perhaps boo all the other male leads); or even aid him somehow with magic may also work.

If the PCs manage to shift his attitude to indifferent, he accepts their apology and makes arrangements for the groomed horses to be sent to one of the outdoor theaters in town for his performance. If they shift his attitude to friendly, he is arrogant but pleasantly so—offering minor complements that in retrospect are condescending or insulting (“that shirt makes your face seem more attractive”), comparing them to lovers he's discarded or servants he's fired for minor failings, and so on. If a female PC is responsible for his friendly attitude, he tries to seduce her; if she accepts, she's just “the latest distraction,” but if she refuses, she “should be honored that a woman so unattractive gets any attention at all.” Thesing is not a pleasant man, and gets what he wants because of his talent (though he is not as good as he claims to be) and ability to manipulate people with his looks and charisma.

Unfortunately, Thesing's performance later that evening doesn't go as well as he'd hoped (one of the horses kicks one of the other actors), and he blames the PCs, both for tiring the horses beforehand and for forcing him to exert his voice too much before the opera, causing a slight tremor when he sings. (Though probably only a few people in attendance could hear it, he knew it was there.) This shifts his attitude one step toward hostile, and over time it just gets worse. Ulvauno appears in later volumes of the Council of Thieves Adventure Path and is a potential rival for the PCs; he remembers their actions and behavior in this encounter, perhaps even referring to them as “the horse thieves” depending on the outcome of this encounter.

Story Award: If the PCs leave Jacovo's stables after shifting Thesing to an indifferent attitude, award them 900 XP. If his attitude is friendly when they leave, award

them 1,200 XP. His later slide into hostility has no effect on this XP award.

MORE HEROICS

If the PCs need to practice a bit more before taking on the Bastards of Erebus, or want to be productive while Janiven and Arael plot the Children's next move, here are some other things the PCs can do to gain XP and fame points. No matter how many additional heroics the PCs undertake during this adventure, though, you shouldn't award them more than 3 additional Fame Points.

Capture Bandits: The Bastards of Erebus are but one of several groups of bandits that have been funded by Ecarrdian Drovenge and his sister Chammady in order to distract Westcrown's defenses while they set their plans in motion—the Bastards are merely the only bandits who ply their mayhem inside the city walls. Other bandits hound and harass travelers in the Westcrown hinterlands, and the PCs could track down and eliminate any of these bands as well if they wish. Though the mayor cannot give the PCs any official reward for this extralegal service, he privately thanks them and surreptitiously lets the guilds know the PCs dealt with the problem, earning them 1 Fame Point the first (and only) time they defeat a band of these highwaymen.

Defeat Whitechin the Goblin King: A crafty white-bearded goblin named Whitechin living in the ruined part of the city, near the north wall, has staked out a small territory for himself and attracted a number of followers. If left unchecked, his minions and their goblin dogs could start raiding the city or harassing merchant traffic. The goblin king may be a wererat or know of an entrance to the city sewers that lets his people sneak about undetected. Defeating Whitechin earns 1 Fame Point.

Slay a Shadow Beast: Westcrown's common folk now fear going out at night, for everyone in the city has heard the strange cries of—or lost a pet or loved one to—the creatures of pure darkness that hunt the streets after sundown. However, a masked woman calling herself “Bluehood” offers a reward for any shadow beast killed if the slayers drop its corpse on the garbage stoop outside the tavern across from the old Leroung estate. Anyone doing so finds a bag of 100 gp left for them at their home or inn, and through the rumor mill the news gets out who was responsible, earning the PCs 1 Fame Point. Additional kills bring additional monetary awards, but for now, the PCs earn their 1 Fame Point only for their first kill. See “Westcrown: City of Twilight” for more information about the shadow beasts, or the shadowgarm entry on page 80 for a good low-level shadow beast.

DOWN WITH THE BASTARDS!

Eventually, Arael and Janiven ask the PCs to return to the Shrine of Aroden to discuss an important matter.



After the PCs arrive, Arael and Janiven sit down to talk with them alone. The priest explains that in the past few weeks, a group of thieves calling themselves the Bastards of Erebus have committed a spree of robberies near the old city, with at least one incident resulting in a double murder. The Bastards are reputed to be a gang of tieflings living in the ruined part of the city; their name implies a connection to Hell, though he doesn't know if the bandits are using it just to evoke fear, if their tiefling heritage actually stems from a fiend of Erebus, or if they have some greater connection. Regardless, they always leave behind a wooden token showing a devil's head in profile, and have become more brazen about their nighttime crimes. For whatever reason (Arael suspects corruption and Janiven suspects incompetence), the city guards have as of yet done little about the Bastards—which is probably why the mayor turned to the Hellknights for help. The people of the city are growing worried; it's bad enough that they can't go out at night except for a few key streets, but at least they were safe in their homes during the dark hours. Now even that safety seems to be vanishing. However, Arael believes he has accurate information from a vagrant

living in the ruined part of town (a man who comes to the active city to beg for copper coins, but sleeps in an abandoned house across the wall) as to the location and nature of the tieflings' lair. In fact, it was after returning from a visit to this contact that Arael was captured by the dottari under suspicion of rebellion.

Arael reiterates the goals of the Children of Westcrown: to increase the quality of life of the people of Westcrown and eventually inspire Chelias to rid itself of House Thrune and its evil taint. He believes that eliminating the Bastards of Erebus will show Westcrown that there are people who care about justice and protecting the innocent—and if someone other than the Hellknights does this, it shows the people that there is strength that has nothing to do with Hell. As the PCs have already established themselves as competent, not particularly fond of the Hellknights, and willing to take risks to protect others, he asks them if they would help defeat this tiefling menace. He can promise them no reward but justice, whatever loot the Bastards have on them, and the gratitude of tens of thousands of Westcrown citizens. If the PCs demand some kind of payment, Arael tells them he has only a little money but has a knack for making

The Bastards of Erebus

potions, and promises them that for the next month he will make them whatever potions he can if they provide the necessary materials (this means they're getting potions at half the sale price).

Assuming the PCs agree to help, Arael says that he hasn't had a chance to verify the beggar's story because he (Arael) was captured by the Hellknights less than an hour after getting the information. He was going to ask Janiven to sneak out and investigate the location the Bastards are supposedly using as a headquarters (an old temple of Erastil in the ruined part of the city) during the daytime when the tieflings' darkvision wouldn't stack the odds in their favor. Janiven has since agreed to do so and has just returned from her mission with confirmation—there are an awful lot of tieflings in the area of the old church.

Before the PCs rush off to fight the Bastards of Erebus, Arael and Janiven have some more information to share with them about the bandits. The PCs learn that the bandits always attack at night. They never attack two nights in a row, and most attacks are anywhere from 3 to 7 days apart (the last attack was the same night that the PCs went into the sewers at the start of this adventure). Eight attacks have taken place in the past 3 weeks—mostly places with small, portable valuables such as a gemcutter, but one was a moneylender and another a crafter of fine weapons. It was the weaponsmith who was killed, presumably because he heard noises downstairs and went to investigate; the tieflings killed him, then went upstairs and killed his wife, probably so there would be no witnesses. They always leave a wooden token or coin with their mark in the shop they've robbed and on the bodies of those they've killed, and twice they've scrawled their name on the building's front door with a sharp object. Obviously they're sneaky (and the way Arael says this indicates he feels this way about most tieflings) and skilled at picking locks, for none of the robberies resulted in broken doors or windows, and they even relock the door after leaving. Given the small size of the shops, the number of tieflings involved in a single break-in is probably very few—more than about four and they wouldn't have much room to move around inside the place they were robbing. However, he suspects it's more than just a group of four tieflings involved, though he has no evidence for this—"they just tend to gather in large groups for protection when not working for normal people" (again, showing a bit of his prejudice against tieflings).

Janiven's scouting mission brings some more information to the table. She knows the Bastards keep a lookout in the old church's bell tower, but she didn't spot any patrols during the 3 hours she spent watching the location (though a new tiefling eventually replaced

the one in the bell tower). Near the temple are a bunch of two-story buildings, probably a shop of some kind on the bottom with a small residence above. She didn't risk getting close enough to see what was in any of them, but she did see that the one with windows on the ground level had them boarded up. Other buildings farther out (on the order of 200 feet or more) were either ransacked or had sturdy, locked doors to thwart looters. She also noticed a barn-like structure nearby, little more than a hitching post with a roof, which had a lot of loose rock piled within it, but she couldn't figure out what the point of that was. She can sketch out a map of the area and point out a path by which even clumsy people can approach unseen to within about 50 feet of the church; any closer and they risk being spotted by the bell tower lookout.

THE ATTACK PLAN

The PCs have far more strength at their disposal than Arael does, so he defers to how they want to manage the fight. His only concerns are making sure all of the Bastards of Erebus are eliminated, and that nobody on his side (meaning the PCs and the rebels) gets killed. The Bastards are dangerous foes, so Arael rejects any plan that involves the unskilled members of his group fighting directly against the tieflings; he's willing to bring them along to chase down any stragglers fleeing the temple, but he doesn't want them to be part of a direct assault where a stray enemy spell could easily kill one of them.

Arael and Janiven are willing to accompany the PCs, and some of the rebels will help if asked, particularly if the PCs showed an interest in mentoring them and if they can stay near Arael or Janiven. The leaders may accompany the PCs into the lair, but that means the rest of the rebels won't be coming along. The PCs may bring Arael or Janiven, with whichever leader isn't selected directing the semi-skilled rebels to watch the temple for escaping tieflings—armed with crossbows, even five commoners and experts should be able to take out anyone trying to get away—or help kill a lookout in a bell tower with a concerted attack, should someone suggest it.

What the PCs and rebels don't know is the tieflings have dug escape tunnels under the temple to four of the nearby buildings, and these four buildings are guarded either by a very bored tiefling or by two uncontrolled and undead skeletal wolves. If the rebel leaders and any of the semi-skilled rebels are sent to secure one of the nearby buildings to watch for fleeing tieflings, the NPCs may have a fight on their hands. However, if the NPCs defeat the guard and the PCs poke their heads up through the escape tunnel, that gives them all an opportunity to rest a bit and update their tactics.

Whether or not the PCs want him involved in the actual attack, Arael has a stockpile of potions he gives to the PCs before they leave. He withdraws a small chest from a secret space under the floorboards of the Iomedean temple hideout and presents it to the PC with whom he feels closest or most comfortable. The chest contains eight *potions of cure light wounds*, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of shield of faith*. He doesn't care which PC ends up with which potion or if they have to use all of them to defeat the Bastards of Erebus, he just wants to make sure all the PCs come back alive.

PART SIX: TEMPLE OF BASTARDS

Once the PCs figure out their plan, they must enter the ruined portion of the city. When they decide to make this trip has its own share of hazards, whether day or night. If the PCs decide to enter by day, they're likely to attract attention to themselves—after all, a large group of armed folk isn't exactly normal, and the Chelish people have gotten used to the idea of reporting anything unusual to the authorities. Bribes to the city watch of 50 gp per person entering the ruins or disguises as porters (carrying large bags containing their own adventuring gear) can work to

stem suspicion, and the PCs should hope to not run into any Hellknights or city guards while acting suspiciously. If the PCs opt to travel at night, they're not going to have to deal with nosy observers, but getting to the wall that divides the old city from the inhabited part requires travel on the darker streets, which means they risk encountering a shadow beast on the prowl.

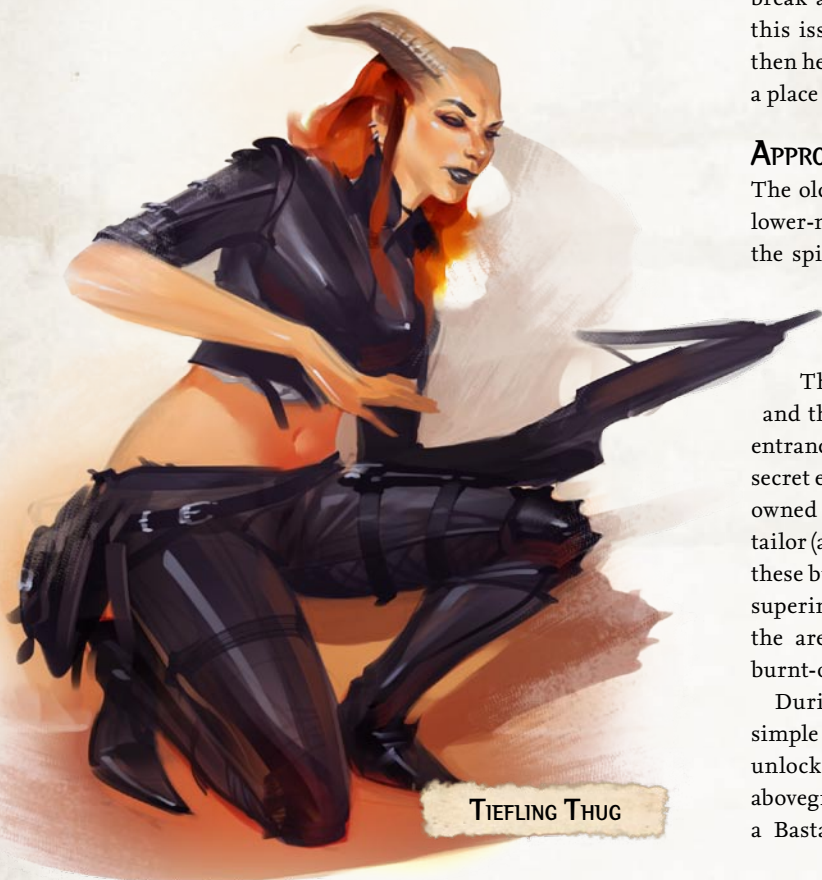
Where the PCs decide to cross the wall also affects what obstacles they face. While the wall is only 10 feet high in most parts of the city, climbing the wall that's intended to be a barrier against vagrants, gangs, sewer goblins, and (most recently) murderous tieflings tends to draw the eye. There's also a large gate that connects to the old city, but it has been barred since the great fire; while the city watch makes sure that nobody sets up tents or carts in front of it (just in case they ever need the gate for official city business), nobody actually uses the gate, and trying to open it might start a panic. Fortunately, the PCs can make a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Perception check to find a place where an out-of-the-way alley meets the wall, giving them privacy to scale it without being bothered. Alternatively, they could find an abandoned two-story building that is adjacent to the wall or shares its back wall with the city wall; then it's a matter of climbing out a second-story window into the old city or taking the time and effort to break a hole through the wall itself. The PCs may avoid this issue entirely by exiting the city by the public gate, then heading northeast along the city wall until they reach a place where the wall is breached.

APPROACHING THE TEMPLE

The old church of Erastil (area B) is in what used to be a lower-middle-class part of the city. The church served the spiritual needs of the conservative folk who lived in the neighborhood, most of whom lived within a few hundred feet of the church and ran small shops out of the bottom floor of their homes.

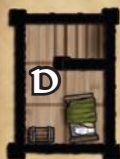
The places were long ago looted of anything of value, and the Bastards have converted some of them to secret entrances to their lair. The buildings that now function as secret exits are all to the north of the temple and were once owned by a chair-carpenter (area C), shoemaker (area D), tailor (area E), and woodcarver (area F). The relationship of these buildings and the church is indicated in the outlines superimposed over the underground portion of the lair—the area between all five buildings consists of several burnt-out ruins that hold nothing of interest.

During the day, all doors in the area are secured with simple locks (Disable Device DC 20 to pick). The Bastards unlock the underground doors at night, and all doors aboveground can be easily opened from the inside—if a Bastard needs to enter a building from outside, he



TIEFLING THUG

Bastards of Erebus Lair



One square = 5 feet



generally either knocks or uses Disable Device, since the keys to these doors are all long gone.

If the PCs approach during the day, half the tieflings in areas **G10–G11** are sleeping and only awaken early if their allies, battle noise, or the alarm bell disturbs them. In daylight, the bell tower lookout (see area **4**) isn't limited by the range of his darkvision and may spot careless PCs well before they're within charging range of the temple. If the PCs attack at night, all of the tieflings are awake, but the bell tower lookout has a much harder time spotting them, even with darkvision (as it has a limited range and he is high off the ground).

PAWNS OF MAMMON

The Bastards of Erebus are a recent addition to the various problems that face Westcrown—only the latest in a long string of petty, minor groups of brigands that use the lightly patrolled surrounding wilds as convenient locations for their secret hideouts. Westcrown's corrupt city watch doesn't do much to oppose these bandit groups, and since most of the bandits are generally lazy cowards who only stage raids when forced to, the citizens of Westcrown have more or less accepted their presence as yet another thing that must simply be endured.

The Bastards of Erebus are different, though, and their brazen raids, combined with the fact that they've chosen the ruined quarter itself as a lair, makes them more dangerous than most of these groups. Worse, the tiefling who founded the Bastards, a cleric named Palaveen who claims to be the great-grandson of the arch-devil Mammon, has a tie to Westcrown's secretive and powerful Council of Thieves. As Ecardian and Chammady Droveng prepare for their coup of the thieves' guild, they've sent support in the form of money and weapons out to several minor bandit groups like the Bastards of Erebus, hoping to increase the general feel of chaos and danger in Westcrown to create a smokescreen that will give them time to set their plans in motion without being noticed too early by both the city government and their grandfather's loyal agents. Palaveen himself had petitioned to join the Council of Thieves just the previous year, and while he was rejected, he views this as a new chance to impress the group. That his over-exuberance might backfire and draw undue attention to the group he hopes to join has never crossed the tiefling's mind.

Each of the Bastards carries at least one wooden coin carved with a devil's face in profile. This is the symbol of Mammon, lord of Erebus, and the Bastards have adopted it as their own. The coins have no value, though the Bastards like to leave one or more of them behind as their "calling card" when they rob or murder someone. If the PCs find the chest in area **G11** containing several dozen of these coins, it is sufficient proof to the people of Westcrown that the PCs defeated the Bastards of Erebus.

THE TEMPLE

The old temple has a small bell tower jutting from the southeast corner—the large (but very weathered) bow-and-arrow symbol on the bell tower clearly indicates that this used to be a temple of Erastil. Windows are 4 feet off the ground, 2 feet wide, and 4 feet tall, and are far too grimy on the inside to look through. The bottom 3 feet of the walls are mortared stone, the rest is old wood, with a clay tile roof.

It is possible to set the building on fire, but lawful and good characters should be hesitant to burn down a temple of Erastil, even one that's been abandoned, and especially when a fire could get out of control and spread throughout the city's ruins. If the PCs do resort to this tactic, the Bastards retreat into the crypt level of the temple, make their way through the tunnels to the outlying buildings, come back to the surface, then surround and attack any hostiles in the area.

B1. FRONT DOOR

This sturdy wooden door is carved with scenes of elk, hunters, and farmhouses. It is in good condition except for a spot near the center where a piece is chipped off, as if someone had struck it with an axe. The door has a large keyhole.

If the PCs make any noise outside, the tieflings and guard dog in area **B2** and the lookout in area **B3** get to make Perception checks to avoid being surprised when the PCs open the door; those in area **B2** treat the PCs' Stealth DC as +5 higher because of the door and walls.

B2. GAMBLING IN CHURCH (CR 2)

Two wooden tables set up for playing simple card and dice games sit in this large room. Four chairs are set up near each table. In the northeast corner is a stack of small wooden crates, to the north is a pair of water barrels, and on the far west side of the room is a small table. A hallway to the northwest turns out of view, and the interior wall of the temple's belltower takes a corner out of the southeast part of the room. The place smells of sweat, beer, and dog.

This was once the temple's main worship room, with a wooden altar and podium in the southwest corner and several rows of chairs, but the tieflings disassembled the podium and altar to use the wood for various things downstairs. The eight chairs are simply built and are decorated with carvings of elk and hunters. The door to area **B3** is plain and propped open with a brick.

Creatures: Four tiefling thugs are on guard in this room at all times. Since the Bastards of Erebus are, to a certain extent, protected from backlash from the city

The Bastards of Erebus



guard thanks to their ties to the Council of Thieves, they have grown complacent. They certainly don't expect an attack in this part of town and leave most of the guard work to the lookout in area 3 or the mangy one-eared guard dog they keep here. The tieflings spend most of their time here sleeping (during the day) or gambling (at night when they're not part of a burglary). The dog, a foul-smelling cur named Scabby, prefers to sleep under one of the two tables as often as possible, but perks up angrily as soon as it notices intruders.

TIEFLING THUGS (4)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

Tiefling expert 1

NE Medium outsider (native)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSES

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +2

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee light mace +2 (1d6–1)

Ranged light crossbow +2 (1d8/19–20)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st)

1/day—*darkness*

TACTICS

Before Combat If the tieflings are aware of the PCs, they line up far from the door and load their crossbows. If it is night and they can see the intruders are bringing light, one of them uses *darkness* on the west end of the room (this means that if the PCs' light source would normally provide dim light in that area, it becomes darkness, which the tieflings can see through with their darkvision).

During Combat The tieflings fight at range for as long as possible, then draw their maces and try to flank for the remainder of the battle. They try to make as much noise as possible, hoping to get the attention of the lookout in area B3c. If the PCs carry light, one of the tieflings uses *darkness* to lower the light level so they can make ranged attacks out of the darkness.

Morale If two tieflings are killed, the other two try to head for the northwest stairs to warn the others in area G2. They specifically call out, "Get the mummies! We need help!"

Council of Thieves Part 1 of 6

STATISTICS

Str 8, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 7

Base Atk +0; CMB -1; CMD 11

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +5, Bluff +4, Disable Device +5, Escape Artist +5, Perception +4, Sense Motive +4, Stealth +7

Languages Common, Halfling, Infernal

Gear studded leather armor, light mace, 20 bolts, dagger, simple thieves' tools (-2 penalty on checks), 20 gp

SCABBY

CR 1/3

XP 135

Guard dog

hp 6 (*Bestiary* 87)

TACTICS

During Combat Scabby automatically attacks intruders who enter the temple. He is trained to flank opponents fighting his tiefling masters. Because he needs light to see, he moves into lighted areas to fight, or relies on scent if the entire room is dark.

Morale Scabby fights to the death as long as there are tieflings present, but covers and exposes his belly if he is the last one standing.

B3. THE BELL TOWER (CR 1/3)

A flight of wooden spiral stairs winds up to a belfry above that still holds a large bronze bell.

The door to the bell tower has no lock. Light filters in from the large windows upstairs during the day, making this area dimly lit, but otherwise it is dark. The stair winds up to a mid-level landing 20 feet up (area B3b), and then another 20 feet to the belfry itself (area B3c). The large windows in the belfry are designed to let sound out, not keep intruders out, and a Medium creature can pass through them easily. They give an excellent view of the nearby streets and buildings within 50 feet, including the roofs of all buildings within 150 feet. The bell, when rung, can be heard throughout the area—the Bastards use it as an alarm, so if it rings, all of the tieflings (including those downstairs) immediately prepare for battle.

Creatures: One tiefling is on watch here at all times. If he spots anything unusual, he rings the bell two or three times, then yells down to his allies in area B2 what he's seen. If attacked from outside the tower, he ducks down (gaining total cover against anyone on the ground or buildings outside) and rings the bell. Because his darkvision has a limited range and he is two stories above the ground, on dark nights he can't use his darkvision to see anything more than about 30 feet from the temple and has to rely on moonlight or starlight (or whatever lights the PCs are using). If he hears fighting in area 2, he rings the bell if he hasn't done so already and heads downstairs to help.

TIEFLING THUG

CR 1/3

XP 135

hp 5 (see page 39)

C. CARPENTER'S HOUSE (CR 3)

This two-story building is unusual for the miniature chairs hanging above the doorway from large hooks; odds are good this was a carpenter's shop, probably one specializing in chairs. The ground-floor window is boarded up, but the boards are of quality wood and cut very evenly.

The Bastards keep this door locked (simple lock, DC 20) to prevent easy access to their secret entrance, and guard it with creatures that never sleep. The first floor has a large table, scarred with many nail-holes, gouges from carving tools, and similar wear. A small, square inverted table is used to cover a hole chopped in the floorboards that leads to area G6. Tiny nails, a finishing hammer, and several incomplete wooden chairs clutter the corners. The upstairs level has a well-crafted bed (slept in no later than a month ago), chair, and small table.

Creatures: To avoid the hassle of having tiefling guards watching this entrance and changing shifts throughout the day, their leader Palaveen placed two animated wolf skeletons on the ground level of this building; he has since relinquished control of them, and now they automatically attack any creature they see. If the Bastards need to use this exit, the cleric uses his Command Undead feat to dominate them.

WOLF SKELETONS (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 9 each (*Bestiary* 251)

D. SHOEMAKER'S HOUSE (CR 3)

This two-story building is a typical example of Westcrown architecture. The windows and door are boarded up tight, but a small sign hanging above the door depicts a sturdy shoe and a long needle and thread, indicating this once was a shoemaker or cobbler's place of business.

On the ground floor inside is an overturned table, a stairway leading to the second floor, and an old door on the floor that covers a roughly sawed hole in the floorboards above a tunnel leading to area G5 of the underground part of the Bastards' lair.

Creature: As the Bastards' notoriety in Westcrown grows, their leader Palaveen has grown more nervous that, eventually, someone will come to challenge them—a fear that his short-sighted Bastards don't share yet (and won't until after the PCs come knocking on their doors).

The Bastards of Erebus

Recently, Palaveen decided that having five different entrances into the complex was too much to manage—yet he didn't want to completely close off an entrance by destroying it. His solution was to use several dead dogs to lure a giant grub thing from one of the ruins' more dangerous areas into this building. The Bastards boarded up the house above and below, and now periodically feed the creature within with carrion they find (or make) in the ruins, dropping the dead flesh in through a hole in the roof to area **D1b**. The monster is dangerous enough to serve as an effective guardian for this entrance, but dumb enough not to want to leave (or ask for payment) as long as it's kept fed. And it's a lot cheaper than animating skeletons. In any event, the giant grub hungrily attacks anything that enters this building.

GIANT ROT GRUB

CR 3

XP 800

hp 34 (page 78)

Treasure: The Bastards didn't make a thorough search of the latest body they tossed into this room—the half-eaten unfortunate thief hid a small chipped emerald in his left shoe, and it remains there still. It can be found with a DC 20 Perception check, and is worth 350 gp.

E. TAILOR'S HOUSE (CR 1)

The sign above the door of this shop depicts a shirt and a spool of thread. Curtains or drapes hang in the upstairs windows.

On the ground floor of this building, scraps of cloth are pinned to a slab of cork on the wall with needles, and tailoring items such as small scissors and spools of fine thread are hidden under the dust. A tower shield bearing the symbol of Cheliox covers a narrow set of stairs in the floor that connects to area **G7** below. Upstairs is a bed with filthy linens, a small chair and sewing table, and a closet containing a large bolt of linen cloth (partially eaten by moths).

Creatures: Unlike the shoemaker's and carpenter's shops, the interior of this place is much more roomy and comfortable, and the Bastards tend to leave a trio of tiefling thugs on guard here around the clock rather than leaving it to undead or trapped vermin. Generally, a tiefling stands guard on each floor while a third rests in the bed, but sometimes all three are awake at the same time on the upper floor, gambling, arguing, or otherwise finding ways to entertain themselves.

TIEFLING THUGS (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 5 (see page 39)

F. WOODCARVER'S HOUSE

CR 1

This door is finely made and built of a rich red-brown wood. Carved onto the surface is a nearly full-size picture of a man holding a piece of wood in one hand and a carving tool in the other; the end of the piece of wood is starting to resemble the front part of a horse. Also cut into the door is a young child looking up eagerly at the emerging horse the man is carving.

Like area **E**, the interior of this building is kept relatively clean and livable. The ground floor has two large wooden tables and two chairs. A hole in the floor is covered with boards that have been pulled from the wall; the hole opens into a narrow flight of stairs that leads down to area **G9**. Upstairs is a chair, a table, and a bed with a headboard carved with a spring scene (perhaps a wedding gift).

Creatures: This building is occupied by a pair of Bastard lieutenants—tiefling rogues who are responsible for overseeing the security of the aboveground portion of the lair. When the two were first posted here, back when the Bastards first started making their raids, they were quite diligent about patrolling the area and making sure the various tiefling thugs were alert. Recently, though, the two have become lovers, and they're now more interested in each other than patrolling the grounds—if the PCs hit the complex but retreat without defeating these two, the rogues return to their more diligent and shadowy patrols of the area for a week.

TIEFLING ROGUES (2)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 11 each (*Bestiary* 264)

G1. CRYPT ENTRANCE

At the bottom of the stairs, the hallway turns left and ends in a simple wooden door. A short message has been artfully carved on the door, but someone seems to have marred the message with slashes from a sharp instrument.

The stairs leading down to this area are the last place that any natural light from outside can reach; from here on, the PCs must bring their own light or rely on darkvision.

The door carving reads, "Praise and thanks to those who spent their lives in service to Erastil—their work strengthens us all." This underground level was originally built as a storage cellar, then expanded for use as a crypt for the priests who worked here (as well as the occasional devout layperson). The Bastards have since dug out more of this level and use it as their secret base.

If none of the tieflings in area **B2** escaped down here and the lookout in area **B3c** never rang the bell, the rest of the

Council of Thieves Part 1 of 6

Bastards are unaware that the PCs are here and this door is open. Otherwise, the door is closed (but not locked).

G2. ANCIENT CRYPT CR 3

Twelve brick-lined crypts take up most of the wall space in this room, yet strangely, a number of large cushions are strewn about the floor. A door on the north end is open.

Each brick-lined crypt is narrow and deep—just large enough to hold a stone sarcophagus capable of containing an adult human body. Each of these in turn contains the shrouded, desiccated corpse of an Erastilian priest buried here decades ago. They are not undead and no valuables are buried with them, as disposing of valuable items that could help the community is an idea contrary to the church of Erastil. Each body was wrapped in herb-soaked linens before being bound in shrouds and placed here; the resulting bodies look much like mummies under a broad layer of linen. A brass plaque at the front of each crypt lists the name and dates of birth and death for the deceased. If any PCs are natives of Westcrown, there is a chance they may be related to one of the people interred here (especially if the PC worships Erastil), or recognize that one of the bodies shares a name with one of the young rebels.

Creatures: A group of four tieflings stands guard here; the cushions on the floor are for their comfort, since these relatively new recruits have yet to earn the right to sleep in the main barracks. If the alarm's been raised, these tieflings are arrayed at the northern end of the room, ready to attack via spells and ranged weapons any foes who enter from the south. If somehow the PCs arrive here undetected, the defenders are lounging on the cushions and talking with each other.

Note that any Bastards who managed to escape area B2 above have joined the ranks here to defend the lair.

The tiefling thugs stationed here are led by one of the Bastards' two sorcerers—a cruel man named Ostengo. He and his brother Vethamer both inherited a similar fiendish taint—their skin appears withered and hard, almost as if it had dried to a leathery-like shell after being preserved in a tomb. The two sorcerers use this eerie trait to their advantage for a bit of psychological warfare—they dress in cloth wrappings and affect a jerky, shambling gait in an attempt to trick foes into thinking they're animated mummies. So effective are these disguises that most of the tiefling thugs actually believe that Ostengo and Vethamer are mummies, and their fear and eagerness to follow their orders is genuine.

OSTENGO

CR 1

XP 400

Male tiefling sorcerer 2

NE Medium outsider (native)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSES

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +1 natural, +1 Dex)

hp 15 (2d6+6)

Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +4

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +0 (1d4–1/19–20)

RANGED

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd)

5/day—corrupting touch (melee touch +0, target shaken for 1 round)

Spells Known (CL 2nd; 15% spell failure)

1st (5/day)—*charm person* (DC 15), *magic missile*

0—*acid splash*, *bleed*, *daze* (DC 12), *mage hand*, *open/close*

Bloodline infernal

TACTICS

During Combat Ostengo does his best to play up his disturbing appearance; if he can trick enemies into a panic by convincing them they face a mummy, he'll play the part. Further, attempts to use fire against him are unlikely to do much damage at this low level due to his resistance. He uses *charm person* to take weak-willed creatures out of the fight (suggesting that the charmed person go home for more potions or try to convince his friends to stop fighting) and *magic missile* to damage hard-to-hit targets. When he runs out of 1st-level spells he relies on *acid splash* and *daze* in the same manner, and uses *bleed* on fallen opponents that any PC healers try to stabilize.

Morale If reduced to 5 hp or fewer (or if only two of his thug guards are still alive), Ostengo flees into area G4 and closes the door behind him. On his next turn he uses a tanglefoot bag to seal the door behind him for 2d4 rounds (it's a DC 17 Strength check to break open the sealed door) even if this means he traps his allies on the same side of the door as the PCs. He then flees to warn the other Bastards and join his brother in defending the lair.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +1; CMB +0; CMD 11

Feats Eschew Materials, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Bluff +7, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Perception +2, Spellcraft +6, Stealth +8

Languages Common, Halfling, Infernal

SQ cantrips, infernal sorcery

Combat Gear tanglefoot bag, *potion of cure light wounds*; Other

Gear masterwork studded leather armor, dagger, 50 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Variant Tiefling Ability (Ex) Ostengo has a +1 natural armor bonus to his Armor Class. This replaces the normal tiefling *darkness* spell-like ability.

The Bastards of Erebus

TIEFLING THUGS (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 5 (see page 39)

TACTICS

Before Combat If they have at least a round or two to prepare for the PCs, one of the thugs uses *darkness* in the north part of the room. All of them draw and load their crossbows and (if possible) take readied actions to shoot the first PC who comes into view.

During Combat The thugs fire crossbows at anyone not in melee, and use their maces if forced into close combat. They take advantage of their darkvision if at all possible.

Melee Inspired by the presence of the “mummy,” these tieflings fight to the death.

G3. OLD CRYPT (CR 5)

This small, square room has six small, brick-lined alcoves built into the walls.

The door to this room is a simple wooden door with no lock; it is kept closed except when Palaveen, leader of the Bastards of Erebus, needs to “tame” another skeleton wolf. The small crypts are the same as those in area G2, but older by a few decades—this area was filled first, and the chambers in area G2 were created once these started to fill up.

Creatures: Four skeleton wolves linger in this room, all that remain of several given to Palaveen by the Council of Thieves to aid them in protecting their secret base. The wolves are uncontrolled and attack anyone they see, even tieflings. When Palaveen needs more undead wolves, he comes down here, opens the door and uses his Command Undead feat to control two of them, orders the commanded ones out of the room, and closes the door on the remaining (still hostile) ones. Thereafter he can move his controlled undead to where he needs them, then relinquishes control of them so they revert to their default behavior of attacking whatever they see—useful for guarding the shop-house entrances to the Bastards’ lair when he doesn’t want to have some of his tieflings on duty.

WOLF SKELETONS (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 9 each (*Bestiary* 251)

G4. BAD DOGS (CR 2)

The mortared stone walls of this room give way to roughly chiseled rock walls to the west, where a narrow corridor turns to the north.

The original builders of the temple had started to expand the underground level here, but the project was unfinished when Aroden died and Cheliox fell into chaos. What survives of their original construction is the long mortared stone wall separating this area from area G11 and a well-built secret door connecting the two rooms.

The rest has been hollowed out by Dravano, a tiefling with incredibly strong claws that allow him to burrow through stone. The Bastards used his ability to create a large, secret lair for themselves, hiding the extra stone in the nearby buildings. Anyone can see that the walls and floor change from carefully mortared stone to roughly carved stone, but a DC 15 Craft (stonemasonry), Knowledge (engineering), Perception, or Profession (miner) check reveals that whatever carved these tunnels was more like an animal’s claws than a manufactured tool.

Creatures: The Bastards have been feeding their trained dogs a steady diet of tiefling blood and sinister alchemical supplements provided to them by the Council of Thieves. Several of these dogs have already begun a slow transformation into hell hounds as a result. These “Hell dogs” look like evil, rabid hounds with glowing eyes and reddish fur. Now possessing darkvision, the Hell dogs guard this hallway against intruders and attack anyone not escorted by someone they know.

HELL DOGS (3)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Fiendish Riding Dog (*Bestiary* 87)

hp 13 each

TACTICS

During Combat The Hell dogs concentrate on the same opponent, trying to drag it to the ground with trip attacks and then tear it apart.

Morale The Hell dogs love the taste of blood and fight until slain.

G5. BARRICADED EXIT

Steep stairs lead up to a crude door set loosely in a brick frame. The door is boarded over with stout oak planks.

Beyond this door, a hole in the ceiling leads up to area D1a. Since luring a giant rot grub into the building above, Palaveen has boarded over the door—the Bastards no longer use this route into and out of their lair.



HELL DOG

G6. CARPENTER'S ENTRANCE

This narrow flight of stairs leads up to area C.

G7. TAILOR'S ENTRANCE

This narrow flight of stairs leads up to area E.

G8. BASTARD AMBUSH (CR 4)

The wide hallway turns south and runs straight for a while before swerving slightly east.

Creatures: The Bastards use this wide passageway to stage ambushes on intruders. If the complex is on alert, the four tiefling rogues and the sorcerer Vethamer from area G11 wait in the dark at the south end of this long corridor, crossbows and magic ready to fire upon the PCs as soon as they come into view. Because of the tieflings' darkvision, they can easily see all the way to the narrow hallway leading to area G7.

TIEFLING ROGUES (4)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Tiefling rogue 1

hp 11 each (*Bestiary* 264)

TACTICS

Before Combat The rogues fire their crossbows as soon as they can see the PCs. This means they are too far away to add sneak attack damage to their shots, but they would rather strike early than wait for the PCs to get closer.

During Combat The tieflings fire crossbows until the PCs are in melee range, then they switch to their short swords and try to flank enemies to make sneak attacks. If any opponents remain at range, one tiefling continues to fire at that target (as long as he's not in melee with another tiefling). If the tieflings are in dim light from the PCs' light source, one of them uses *darkness* to reduce the light level by one step (to darkness) and allow them to take advantage of their darkvision.

Morale The tieflings realize that anyone who's penetrated their lair this far intends to kill them, and that it is time to make a last stand; they fight to the death.

VETHAMER

CR 1

XP 400

hp 15 (see "Ostengo" on page 42)

TACTICS

During Combat Vethamer uses *magic missile* against enemies in melee combat with his allies, *daze* to hinder weak-willed characters, and *charm person* to convince opponents not to attack him. He may use his tanglefoot bag to hold an opponent in place and give his allies extra time to shoot at range.

Morale Vethamer isn't quite as heroically fatalistic as the rogues; if brought to 5 hp, he flees to area G10, drinks his *potion of cure light wounds*, and then prepares a last stand with the denizens there.

G9. WOODCARVER'S ENTRANCE

This narrow flight of stairs leads up to area F.

G10. BASTARD BARRACKS (CR 3)

This looks to be some kind of barracks; several simple bunk beds take up space in the corners of the room. A wooden door similar to the one outside the crypt stands shut on the west wall.

This is the sleeping area for the main force of the Bastards of Erebus, including several tiefling rogues and a tiefling named Dravano whose claws carved most of the new tunnels under the temple.

Creatures: If the Bastards were alerted to the presence of the PCs earlier, four of the tiefling rogues and Vethamer prepare an ambush in area G8, while the remaining three tieflings



DRAVANO THE DIGGER

The Bastards of Erebus

and Dravano wait in this room with a similar ambush from darkness ready to go. If Ostengo escaped the PCs earlier, he is also here. If the PCs somehow reached this area undetected, they face a total of eight tiefling rogues, Vethamer, and Dravano all at once—a CR 5 encounter, and one that most 2nd-level parties will likely need to flee from if they're not lucky.

DRAVANO THE DIGGER

CR 1

XP 400

Male tiefling fighter 2

NE Medium outsider (native)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSES

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 24 (2d10+9)

Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1; +1 against fear

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., burrow 5 ft.

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d4+2)

TACTICS

During Combat Dravano likes to display his strength by tearing apart his weakest opponent. If he cannot reach that target, he challenges the strongest-looking enemy.

Morale Dravano doesn't want to be imprisoned or enslaved, and fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

Feats Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Climb +3, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (engineering) +5, Perception +2, Profession (miner) +5, Stealth +2

Languages Common, Infernal

SQ bravery (+1)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** masterwork breastplate, 50 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Variant Tiefling Ability (Ex) Dravano has claws on both hands, giving him two claw attacks each round. These claws afford him a burrowing speed through soil, sand, and gravel—he can dig through solid rock at a much reduced rate (about 5 feet per hour). This replaces the normal tiefling *darkness* spell-like ability.

TIEFLING ROGUES (3)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 11 each (*Bestiary* 264)

GII. LEADER'S ROOM (CR 5)

This large, open room has a bed, desk, and chair. Papers are scattered across the desk, and a large chest sits against the wall

to the north. Two heavy chains are spiked to the wall in the northwest corner.

This is the bedroom and office of Palaveen, leader of the Bastards of Erebus. The heavy chains are used to restrain any skeletal wolves he keeps here—as he can only control a limited number, when he has to command the ones guarding the secret exits, he chains up the controlled ones here, then relinquishes control of them, and the chains keep them from attacking anyone else. Palaveen sleeps on the bed around the corner to the north, while the two tiefling sorcerers sleep on the southwestern bunk bed.

Creatures: Palaveen himself waits in this room, expecting that his underlings will take care of any problems. If there is a battle in area **G8** or **G10**, he hears it and prepares for combat. He keeps a pair of skeletal wolves under his command here, and depending on the outcome of the fights in the previous room, one or both of sorcerers may be here as well; if they are injured and out of curing potions, and there is time, Palaveen uses his *wand of cure light wounds* to heal them.

Palaveen's tiefling heritage is more apparent than most; his horns are large and branch from his brow, and his ears are pointed—this, combined with his facial hair, gives him a goatish look. His right foot is a cloven hoof, and his orange blood glows and flickers as if it were on fire. A scar in the shape of the symbol of Asmodeus decorates his forehead. He alone among the Bastards of Erebus knows much of anything about the group's link to the Council of Thieves—and even that isn't much more than the fact that he's met several times with shadowy figures in various parts of the city to receive payments and advice—he doesn't actually know the identity of his contact, but acts as if he does in front of his Bastards. They don't all believe him, as Palaveen's not the most inspiring of leaders, but they certainly respected his gold enough to become Bastards. All he really knows is that the Council paid him handsomely (including giving him a gift of the magic breastplate he wears) to fund the establishment of his group of brigands, and that despite his numerous efforts, they've refused to meet with him again to talk about his desires to officially join the organization.

PALAVEEN

CR 3

XP 800

Male tiefling cleric of Asmodeus 4

NE Medium outsider (native)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSES

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 33 (4d8+12)

Council of Thieves Part 1 of 6

Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +7

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 morningstar +4 (1d8+1)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 2/day (2d6, DC 11)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th, +4 ranged touch)

6/day—copycat, fire bolt

Racial Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th)

1/day—darkness

Spells Prepared (CL 4th)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *hold person* (DC 15), *invisibility*^D, *spiritual weapon*

1st—*burning hands*^D (DC 14), *cause fear* (2, DC 14), *cure light wounds* (2)

0—*bleed*, *detect magic*, *mending*, *stabilize*

D domain spell (Fire, Trickery)

TACTICS

Before Combat Palaveen casts *invisibility* on himself if he suspects battle is about to start.

During Combat While invisible, Palaveen casts *spiritual weapon* and directs it to attack a lightly armored character. He uses his wand to heal allies and casts *stabilize* on any who fall beyond the range of his touch. If forced to attack he uses *burning hands* on a group of enemies (even if he catches another tiefling in the area, as he expects their fire resistance will protect them), fire bolt at wounded targets, and *cause fear* or *hold person* on weak-willed opponents. If he is visible and has a spare turn, he uses copycat to confuse opponents. If he wants reinforcements, he calls to the Hell dog in area 16, or moves to that area if that is a better tactical option.

Morale If reduced to 10 hp and unable to heal himself, Palaveen

tries to escape, using copycat if possible and his *potion of disguise self* to blend it with the human population of Westcrown. He may surrender if he thinks the PCs won't kill him.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +3; CMB +3; CMD 14

Feats Command Undead, Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +5, Diplomacy +3, Heal +8, Intimidate +1, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perception +6, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +6, Stealth +5

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal

Combat Gear *potion of disguise self*, *wand of cure light wounds* (11 charges); Other Gear +1 *breastplate*, +1 *morningstar*, iron unholy symbol, treasure chest key, 330 gp

WOLF SKELETONS (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 9 each (*Bestiary* 251)

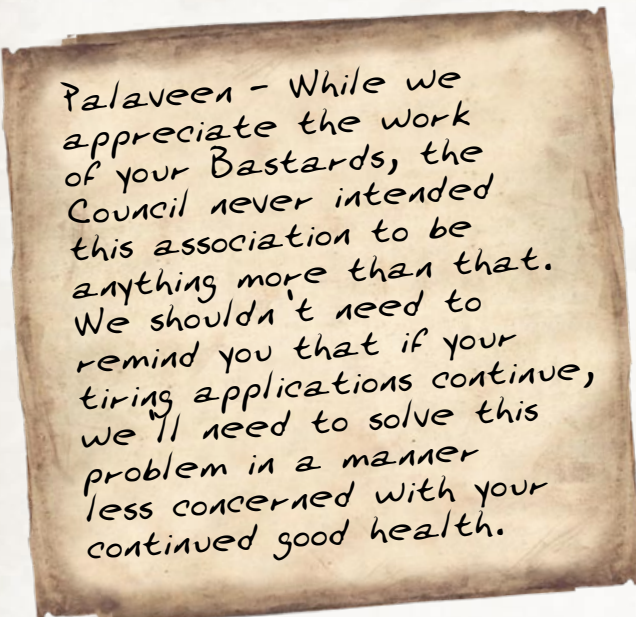
Treasure: The large chest to the north is locked. Palaveen carries the key, or it can be picked with a DC 30 Disable Device check. The chest contains all of the non-coin loot from the Bastards' string of burglaries, along with a leather sack that contains 50 of the wooden Mammon coins the Bastards use to mark the places they've robbed and people they've killed. The stolen treasures include 600 gp worth of small gems (including one 100 gp pearl), jewelry worth 800 gp, a masterwork dagger, a masterwork rapier, and a jeweled non-masterwork short sword worth 150 gp. The weapons were stolen from the weaponsmith, who was murdered along with his family, and as he has no heirs, the PCs can keep those items guilt-free, as there is nobody to whom to return them.

The notes on the table contain itemized lists of things the Bastards have stolen as well as some cryptic notes written in Infernal. Among these notes is a request for more skeletal wolves to help protect their base and a half-finished angry letter in which the writer seems to be frustrated at not being granted further audience with something called "the Council."

Palaveen's latest rejection note from the Council lies in a crumpled heap at the foot of his bed, where a DC 15 Perception check (automatic if a player says he's searching Palaveen's bed) notices it. The letter is short and reproduced as the nearby handout.

Story Award: If the PCs take steps to return the stolen goods (turning the loot over to the city watch is sufficient), award them 1,200 XP. If they discover the connection between the Bastards of Erebus and the Council of Thieves, award them another 2,400 XP.

Fame Points: Returning the stolen goods earns the PCs 1 Fame Point. Defeating the Bastards of Erebus earns an additional 1 Fame Point.



Palaveen - While we appreciate the work of your Bastards, the Council never intended this association to be anything more than that. We shouldn't need to remind you that if your tiring applications continue, we'll need to solve this problem in a manner less concerned with your continued good health.

The Bastards of Erebus



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The easiest way to defeat the Bastards of Erebus is to slay Palaveen. If the PCs capture him alive, charm him, or otherwise secure his compliance, he's as good as dead anyway—a Council assassin (perhaps Sian Daemodus from the next adventure) attempts to engineer his execution (an act borne more of vengeance and punishment than of a desire to prevent him from telling secrets, since he really doesn't have many secrets to tell).

As a thank-you for their invaluable work in helping the rebels, Arael promises the PCs free spellcasting (such as healing) whenever they need it, including spells like *lesser restoration* that he can cast (although he may need help in securing expensive components). Furthermore, he tells them that if they provide the necessary materials, he will craft for them any potion he can make, at no charge, for as long as he lives (this reward still applies if he had to offer this service for a limited time to encourage reluctant or greedy PCs).

The PCs are unlikely to receive any official recognition from the city of Westcrown for their work in defeating

the Bastards of Erebus. Yet in the eyes of Westcrown's citizens, the PCs have already started to build their reputation as heroes of the city.

The next adventure can begin immediately after this one ends if you wish. Alternatively, you might want to consider giving the PCs a chance to rest and recover from their adventures. They can spend this time exploring Westcrown, getting to know their new friends, or following up on loose ends from this adventure. Weeks, months, or even years can pass during this interlude, as you wish. Since the PCs should be well into 3rd level when the next adventure begins, you can use this time to send them on additional side quests (perhaps some of those mentioned on page 33) until they've amassed enough experience to begin the next part of the campaign.

When you're ready to begin "The Sixfold Trial," the PCs should get a message from Janiven or Arael—an important friend from a powerful organization has contacted them with what might be a method to rid Westcrown of its shadow beasts. This woman is Ailyn Ghontasavos, an undercover agent of the Pathfinders who has a singularly unusual plan for the PCs—she wants to put them on a stage and make them stars!



Westcrown: City of Twilight

For eight centuries, Westcrown was a bastion of civilization and a symbol of national strength in Chelish eyes. As the city served as the center of Aroden's faith, all Cheliox deemed the City of Nine Stars to be Aroden's next home in the mortal world. Westcrown rivaled Absalom as a destination of pilgrimages during the Age of Enthronement. Yet, with Aroden's unexpected death, the once shining City of Nine Stars became the City of Twilight as Chelish citizens lost hope. Decades of bloody strife followed, and the only direction out of the chaos seemed to be the orderly tenets of diabolism. A city that once symbolized a people's power now projects a people's disappointment and despair. Hope has dimmed in the city, and shadow beasts walk the streets instead of Aroden's clergy. Westcrown remains influential in

its mercantile and military might, but also humbled by its lost faith and tarnished reputation.

One of the most varied and sophisticated cities of the Inner Sea, Westcrown is an enigma. By day, this city reminds many of any city or country they know, either because of the varied architecture or because people from all across Avistan and Garund now call Westcrown home. The many religious sites, whether active or debased, continue to draw the pious, the curious, and the devious. Even the ruins of the northern city draw interest among those looking for less-than-legal materials or rare treasures amid the dangerous rubble. But once the sun sets, only the foolish walk out of doors in Westcrown, for the shadow beasts prowl every darkened lane and waterway.

Westcrown: City of Twilight

Before the Age of Lost Omens, Westcrown dubbed itself “the shining light of Aroden’s civilization.” Now, others taunt us and say, “You can find anything, civilized or not, in Westcrown—except for Aroden.” Ignore outsiders—we know the truth. We did not fail Aroden—he failed us, though we Wiscrani held the faith! We embraced that adversity and replaced his betrayal with strength and order. The Hellknights paved our way and House Thruve walked it to greatness. I don’t blame them at all for moving the capital—this place only reminds you of past failures. Besides, better for a Wiscrani to make a living without so many priests or imperials around, and easier for those of us who deserve it to ascend to higher stations without them in our way.

—Alcini Vitaron of Alcini’s Apothecary



WESTCROWN

Metropolis nonstandard (titular mayor with multiple crime lords [“Council of Thieves”]) **AL** LE

GP Limit 16,000 gp

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 114,700

Type cosmopolitan (88% human, 7% halfling, 5% other races)

AUTHORITY FIGURES

Lictor Richemar Almanson, commander of Citadel Rivad and leader of the Order of the Rack Hellknights (LE human male fighter 7/hellknight 7); **Lord Mayor Aberian Arvanxi**, mayor of Westcrown and House Arvanxi patriarch (NE human male rogue 7); **Vassindio Drovenge**, House Drovenge patriarch (LE human male aristocrat 14); **Asad Grulios**, House Grulios patriarch (CG human male aristocrat 5/wizard 5); **Ocatav Julistarc**, House Julistarc patriarch (LE human male aristocrat 3/rogue 3/cleric of Asmodeus 3); **Bartolo Mezinias**, House Mezinias patriarch (LN human male monk 5); **Duxotar Iltus Mhartis**, commander of Westcrown’s dottari (NE human male aristocrat 3/rogue 3); **Eirtein Oberigo**, House Oberigo patriarch (LE human male rogue 6); **Marcus Phandros**, House Phandros patriarch (N human male aristocrat 3/bard 2); **Kajen Tilernos**, House Tilernos patriarch (LG human male aristocrat 4/paladin of Iomedae 4); **Casarus Vitallain**, Harbormaster (LN human male fighter 4); **General Vourne**, commander of the Gemcrown Bay imperial fleets (LE human male aristocrat 5/fighter 10)

CITY GEOGRAPHY

The City of Twilight carves itself up into three distinct Paregos (“great regions”) used and understood by all the city’s residents: the Regicona (“the Floating Palace”), or Westcrown Island; the Spera (“Hope’s Altar”), the still-occupied sections of the city; and the Dospera (“Despair’s Altar”), or the ruined northern regions of Westcrown. When locals provide directions in the city, though, they split it up into regos (regions or sectors). The five on the western shores are Rego Cader, Rego Crua, Rego Scripa,

Rego Pena, and Rego Sacero. The three island sectors in the river are Rego Corna, Rego Laina, and Rego Aerum. Some folk add on two more sectors: Rego Funda (“Farm Sector”) encompasses the hills and dales between the city and the Adivian Bridge and includes the city’s farms and food supplies. The Pripatra (or Rego Patra to the sycophantic) generally covers all the manor houses and noble estates bordering the Dhaenflow.

GOVERNMENT, POLITICS, & ORDER

There are broad layers of power, politics, and government in Westcrown, and while many are obvious, many more remain obscure until one runs afoul of them. In terms of common knowledge, the powers of the city start with the blades of its soldiers and flow upward into the vast pockets of the mayor and local nobility, though the true end lies with the shadowed coffers of the fabled Council of Thieves.

The Dottari

The first forces of law and order encountered in Westcrown are often the dottari, the city’s guards or wardens. Regardless of where their posts lie, dottari all wear the city’s mark—Aroden’s Eye—stenciled in black over a red field on a shield or tabard. Dottari officers wear a reversed mark (red on black field) on their left arms, their rank rising as the mark moves from the shoulder (for lesser officers), to the forearm, to a ring for the duxotar or warden-major in command of the guards who answer only to the mayor. Dottari, regardless of postings, always travel in squads of seven—six soldiers and one lieutenant. Five squads report to each captain and at least three captains report to each major. There are at least two majors per rego or sector reporting to each of the four durotasi, or “rank wardens.”

On paper, the dottari are one singular order under the control of the mayor’s appointed “high warden”—his young, oft-drunken nephew, **Duxotar Iltus Mhartis** (NE human male aristocrat 3/rogue 3). As Iltus “prefers

Westcrown Glossary

Natives of Westcrown—along with several other major Chelish cities—possess a wide vocabulary referring to titles, places, and specifics relating to their home.

Adel: A small, personal barge

Dottari: The Chelish city guard

Durotas: A captain of the city guard

Duxotar: The commander of the city guard

Haloran: A lantern-bearing staff

Pyrahje: Man-sized torches that light major areas of Westcrown by night

Parego: “Great region,” one of the three major districts of Westcrown

Rego: A region or neighborhood of Westcrown

Vaneo: A Chelish manor house

Vira: A Chelish estate

Wiscrani: A resident or something from Westcrown

More Westcrown

As an ancient and vibrant city, there’s more to Westcrown than these pages can contain. While you can expect to see more details and dozens of other locations throughout the following volumes of *Pathfinder*, you can find out about the history of Westcrown, its surrounding region, and more in the *Council of Thieves Player’s Guide*, available as a free download at paizo.com/pathfinder.

to apportion his command to focus on the broader defenses of the city,” his subordinates more often handle his abandoned responsibilities. Thus, personal vendettas and politics divide the dottari into four nearly independent forces.

Dottari: **Durotas Saria Roccin** (CG human female fighter 6) controls the common dottari who man the gates and patrol the streets of the Spera, and she commands the most troops of any civic leader in the city. Privately, Saria holds the Hellknights in contempt, and only works with them as much as necessary while not giving them reason to find her guilty of any charges (as they did her aunt in her youth).

Condottari: With at least two adels and a sail barge at official docks on each floating marina, **Durotas Scasi Bolvona** (NE human male sorcerer 5) commands the condottari, or “canal wardens,” who patrol the Westchannel, the Dhaenflow, and the canals of the Regicona. A passionate native of the city, Scasi has almost as many friends and political connections as the duxotar, and his ambition drives him to ever-bolder moves among the nobles of the Regicona. His rise in influence has been curtailed in the past 14 years, though, as he seeks to hide the existence of his half-elven daughter Casisara, sent to live with family in Ostenso.

Rundottari: Based out of Keep Dotar in the northeastern Rego Cader, the rundottari, or “ruin wardens,” operate under the authority of **Durotas Arik Tuornos** (N human male ranger 8). Arik is a cynical but fair man who assumed this rank only to prevent **Eccobar Drumanis** (CE tiefling male fighter 6), a long-time family enemy, from assuming command and wasting the lives of friends or good soldiers. Arik knows his command is a posting of low prestige and social punishment, but he and his men take pride in their responsibility to man the walls of Rego Cader and keep the threats and dangers of the ruins contained and out of the city.

Regidottari: The regidottari (“palace wardens”) operate under the authority of **Durotas Lhiana Strikis** (CE human female fighter 3/wizard 2). Lhiana treats her troops like her personal slaves, often berating them publicly for minor offenses. She maintains control of her forces only by offering higher pay than other dottari and the prestige they gain both in working on the Regicondan Walls and in their potential ability to craft alliances with the city’s rich and powerful. Lhiana herself has been a pawn and lover to at least three members of the city’s nobility since her arrival in Westcrown more than 7 years ago, though she is unaware she is considered a plaything rather than an asset to those with influence among the Council of Thieves.

The Mayor

Under Chelish law and tradition, the Mayor of Westcrown (or lord mayor, as its current officeholder insists upon) controls the Dottari and the tax coffers that maintain city stability (by fostering order, infrastructure, and payments to extortionists). While the royal seat of power, Westcrown had imperial forces ready to put down dissent, collect taxes, and help build grand displays of wealth for the nobility’s gratification. Over seven decades, three mayors watched taxes dwindle to a fraction of their original sums, forcing many cutbacks in services (and funding indulgences for said mayors). When matters began impeding commerce, other influences stepped in.

In 4689 AR, Aberian Arvanxi was made lord mayor of Westcrown by Her Infernal Magestrix, Queen Abrogail II. The appointment amounted to political exile from the imperial court in Egorian for Arvanxi’s long history of inept scheming and embarrassing dalliances. Even in the face of his political embarrassment, Aberian Arvanxi’s family name still proved influential among Wiscrani. He finagled political support for himself while slandering and undermining the allies of the former administration, and many suggested he had a hand in the sudden death of his deposed predecessor Mayor Arthan Challas. While untrue, Aberian saw no reason to correct people’s impressions, as fear helped keep many from speaking against him in his early days before he solidified his

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grasp on power. In the years since, Lord Mayor Arvanxi's affectations for Chelish opera have seen him pump a large amount of public money into maintaining and rebuilding various opera houses and entertainment halls. He sees this as "the betterment of public diversions to raise the hearts and minds of all Wiscrani"; most citizens (especially those who lack the money to travel to the island opera houses or enter the few in the Spera) see this as the mayor using public funds for his own enjoyment rather than the improvement of Westcrown. Such likely proves the case, but as these pastimes keep the spiteful and largely incompetent mayor from meddling in the affairs of most common Wiscrani, the public quietly puts up with such decadences.

The Council of Thieves

Said to have assembled in 4286 AR as a uniting of seven of the most powerful gangs and thieves' guilds in Westcrown, the Council of Thieves has maintained dominance over the city's underworld for centuries. Created in the wake of a brutal criminal war, the council's founders grew rich off the spoils of the capital's criminal element, with many of the amalgamated guild's leaders becoming wealthy enough to purchase land and noble titles. With wealth affording them the opportunity to manage their concerns more as businessmen than street thugs, the leaders of the Council of Thieves won a measure of respectability as they gradually bartered and blackmailed for influence within Westcrown.

By 4340, rumor was that half of Westcrown's noble families held ties to the Council of Thieves, which had become the only sizable criminal operation in the city. In 4469, in the face of growing concerns over banditry, kidnapping, and racketeering inside the capital, tales say Queen Koradinnia herself parlayed with representatives of the council, paying the thieves a hefty sum in return for their increased subtlety. What followed was a largely staged hunt for members of the guild and several overstated executions of low-ranking criminals. In the end, the dottari proclaimed the Council of Thieves eradicated, while the thieves themselves refocused their efforts on smuggling and weapons trafficking, loan sharking, and similar illicit dealings, leaving more blatant crimes to be conducted through puppet gangs outside the city. Thus, the Council of Thieves became an open secret that slowly faded into legend.

In the centuries since, the Council of Thieves has endured well, surviving waning and waxing fortunes, internal coups, and national rebellion, with a reliance on

discretion and an honored tradition of gentlemanly crime. Most Wiscrani know nothing of the council, believing them to be bogeymen of the past and the ravings of poor businessmen. In truth, the thieves largely ignore the local citizenry, their targets trending toward larger moneyed establishments, merchant guilds, organized religions, and foreign traders. They might even be considered a benevolent element, as the thieves root out all potential rivals, no matter how paltry, going out of their way to crush any upstart gangs or other criminal operations that arise in Westcrown. The guild also largely ignores the local aristocracy, primarily because members of the city's most influential houses sit on the council. These leaders hold nearly all the reins in Westcrown, manipulating matters behind every scene.

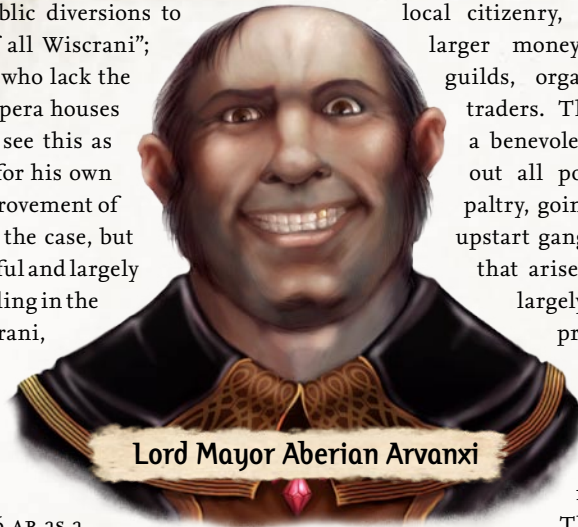
The council has only the most nominal relationship with Lord Mayor

Arvanxi, giving him much leeway and more than enough rope with which to hang himself, should he ever find the temerity to cross them. For now, he seems a useful pawn who keeps the dottari mostly out of the council's way, and they reward him for such favors.

Nobles & the Politically Powerful

The City of Twilight is not the shining city it once was. A city formerly filled to bursting with pilgrims from nearly every faith now hosts those more eager to worship coins and wealth. Its shift to a trade-driven city has made it a more cosmopolitan port, but many lament that it has lost its soul. Aroden's death stripped Westcrown of much sacred significance, and the civil wars among the noble houses nearly destroyed the city's remaining will to survive. House Thrune's moving of the capital stole political influence from Westcrown's power players. Of more than 50 dominant Wiscrani families in 4606 AR, more than a third were destroyed financially or literally within 12 years of Aroden's death. Over the following decades, 19 houses moved north to Egorian as House Thrune rose to prominence and took control of Chelias. Their Wiscrani holdings remained in the hands of beholden families or outcast lesser relatives whose presence would embarrass the house in the eyes of House Thrune. Today, 12 major noble houses remain as the powers-that-be in Westcrown, retaining their power either openly in trade and commerce or covertly through the Council of Thieves.

The Wiscrani Noble Families sidebar lists each house in order of true social and political prominence within and around Westcrown. A house's monetary worth and



Lord Mayor Aberian Arvanxi

Council of Thieves

Wiscrani Noble Families

The following are the 12 most powerful families of the Westcrown aristocracy, listed in order of influence and wealth, along with those families they hold influence over.

House	Ethnicity	Beholden Families
Drovenge	Taldan	Imvius, Lorialn, Xerysis
Oberigo	Chelish	Aulamaxa, Ghival
Salisfer	Chelish	Chillarath, Rustachas
Grulios	Chelish	Mironeth, Ici
Arvanxi	Chelish	Mhartis, Ciucci, Rasdovain,
Julistarc	Taldan	Seidraith, Cemaine
Dioso	Chelish	Jhaltero, Ucarlaar
Tilernos	Taldan	Starnon, Etrovain
Phandros	Chelish	Chard, Nolmon,
Khollarix	Chelish	Nymmis, Rufano
Rosala	Taldan	Ulvauno, Atenaar
Mezinas	Taldan	Vitaron, Missepe

liquid wealth varies with trade, the fortunes of allies and friends, and any overt or covert criminal enterprises. Each of the 12 major houses, regardless of cash flow, has more wealth and influence than any family under their thumbs (though often the major houses' wealth depends upon subsidiary fortunes within their sphere of influence).

WESTCROWN BY NIGHT

It all began in Rova of 4676 AR. What started as stories of strange creatures slinking through the shadows became a citywide panic as Wiscrani began disappearing off the darkened streets. Rumors spread quickly of a return of the White Plague or a resurrection of the infamous Council of Thieves, but these tales were soon replaced by reports of a shadowy calamity at Delvehaven, the local Pathfinder lodge, and sightings of dark and insubstantial beings hunting the streets. After months of ignoring or dismissing the problem, the government eventually launched a campaign to seek out and put an end to what they downplayed as an infestation of giant rats, goblins, and goblin dogs. Yet the dottari proved ill equipped for these midnight hunts, and the office of the mayor offered only empty promises. Growing fear and anger led to scapegoating and suspicions of insurrectionists from Nidal, which culminated in a mob's daylight burning of twin Nidalese coasters. Finally, for the populace's protection, a curfew was enacted throughout the city while a small army of dottari and experienced mercenaries were commissioned to deal with the shadowy curse that had afflicted the Wiscrani night. Numerous raids and hunts were conducted in the Dospera and ancient city sewers, only to result in the loss of many hunters with little apparent gain. Thus, the nightly curfew remained

in effect for more than 30 years, with the unwary risking their very lives.

Today, with the dying of every day's light, businesses hurriedly close and respectable homes light lanterns outside their doors. Members of the dotarri light pyrahjes, man-sized torches, throughout the Parego Regicona and in the major plazas of the Parego Spera, patrolling between such islands of light in groups of seven. Taverns, festhalls, and similar establishments maintain sleeping rolls for those who stay after dark, collecting a customary 2 sp fee for boarders soon after twilight. Those forced onto the street after dark typically carry halorans, 7-foot-tall hooked staves hung with bright lanterns, made publicly available along the city's most traveled avenues.

Despite the city's adaptation to the nightly scourge, specifics of what the creatures are, where they came from, and their intentions remain the stuff of rumors, with every Wiscrani having his own wildly varying theory. Most residents have accepted and adapted to the deadly curfew, which is frequently broken in the Spera and even more often on Westcrown Island, where few attacks take place. Dottari who catch residents out after curfew can enforce up to a 5 gp fine, but more commonly hurry such scofflaws along their way. Weekly, though, new tales arise of deadly attacks on curfew breakers, assuring that the nightly ban is widely maintained. Several times a year the lord mayor makes a show of decrying the plague of mysterious hunters stalking the city's streets, promising renewed efforts to put an end to the menace, but little has changed in the three decades since the creatures' mysterious appearance.

WESTCROWN AT A GLANCE

One's location in Westcrown determines the size, height, and opulence of the surrounding buildings. Every building, however, begins with a stone foundation, most often the light stone quarried from the surrounding hills or along the Adivian River. The richer areas of town contain all-stone construction, if not rarer or more specialized materials. Most places add three or more levels made from wood, either light varieties of local trees or the dark barroak felled in the Barrowood and brought downriver. Buildings lean upon each other at the higher levels where necessary, with the sight of freestanding buildings usually denoting the money and influence of nobility.

Streets and walkways in Westcrown almost undulate in places, evidence of the random nature of the building spaces. Stone paves every surface within the city walls, and while main avenues in richer areas have stone slabs, mirror-slick in the rain, cobblestones fill other areas. All runoff gets channeled to sewer grates or back toward the

Westcrown: City of Twilight

river, and keeping grates clear of blockages becomes an informal task for dottari during the rainy seasons. While there are hire-sweeps to tend to the streets and keep them clear of offal, few folks beyond the rich can afford them, and garbage piles up in the alleys of poorer sections of town until cleared by locals or benevolent priests.

The city's pride and arrogance has dimmed over the decades along with its lost influence as the failed "Home of Aroden." As a result, many Wiscrani no longer take as much pride in keeping their neighborhoods clean or in the best repair. Structures exposed to the elements remain unmended, garbage chokes some alleys, and things change only by the influence of dottari spears or coins. While the faith of many people crumbled with Aroden, his priests and worshipers of his founders (see page 59) continue to watch out for Westcrown and its people, shoring up and repairing temples and common buildings alike.

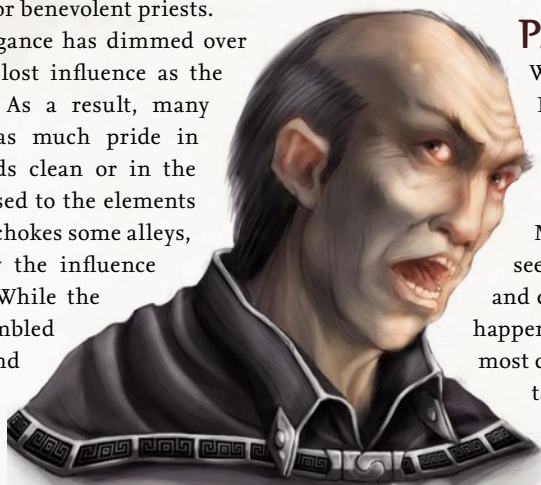
The city's paregos, or "Great Sectors," provide the broad breakdown of the city, while its eight subdivisions provide finer distinctions. The following numbered locations correspond to the map on page 56.

The Upper Adivian/The Dhaenflow: Less than a mile north of Westcrown's northernmost wall, the Upper Adivian branches off the main flow and wends its way west among the hills. This waterway remains a strong, defensible river beneath the Adivian Bridge but slowly shrinks and splinters among the shallow creeks, pools, and marshes of the Dhaenfens. The Dhaenflow is the waterway's local name, dubbed for a noble who deprived his enemies of their spoils by fleeing into the swamps with the last treasures of his failing house.

The Westchannel: Within 200 yards of where the Dhaenflow branches off the main course, the river splits sharply again into the Westchannel. This is the main waterway of Westcrown, where the current slows by the natural shelter of the island and coastlands. Many once believed Aroden blessed Westcrown, as garbage only rarely flowed into the Westchannel or the island's canals. The dumps littering the eastern shores often formed naturally with each spring flood, and Wiscrani used those lands for the same purpose. Now, a century after Aroden's passing, more and more wood, ship wrack, and other flotsam drifts into the Westchannel or the canals, sometimes enough to damage or deter trade traffic until it can be cleared by the harbormaster's crews.

The Southrun: The Southrun is the name for the South Adivian as it continues past Westcrown, often depositing

flotsam and other waste against the eastern shores. Unlike the placid currents of the Westchannel, the South Adivian alongside Westcrown Island bears a stronger current that drags any unmoored or uncontrolled boats against the eastern shores or south to the bay.



Vassindio Drovence

PAREGO REGICONA

Wiscrani call Westcrown Island Regicona. Encircling the 8 canal-riddled islands are the Regiconan Walls, the Chained Arches spanning each of the canals piercing them.

Most of the city's population never sees inside the walls built by their efforts and coins, so rumors run rampant of what happens within the Regicona. All they and most city visitors see are the grandeur of the tallest buildings rising above the walls, like the former royal palaces and a grand opera house.

Each of the 8 islands of the Regicona holds no less than two major vaneos (manor houses) or full viras (estates) occupied by noble or influential Wiscrani families. Socially, if not legally, 10 noble families each lay claim to "rulership" of the island on which their vaneos lie, and their control can often subsume that of the Regidottari by bribes if not the blades of each family's mercenary troops. Many families have lost influence and lives by assuming they had the Regidottari's protection, only to find their protectors already bought by their enemies. The oldest adage taught to every child here is, "An island's water can defend or detain—only trust the tides."

While life on Westcrown's shores has returned to one of prosperity through trade, the Regicona clings to the opulence of times past. Where modern-style buildings replaced uninhabitable ruins on the mainland city, much of the Regiconan architecture reflects older styles from the imperial glory days of both Cheliox and Taldor, with balustrade-lined tile roofs, needle-like towers for single archers or vocari ("voice guards"), and smooth polished archways. All paved with smooth stone, the roads are flanked by gutters along the edges of buildings, allowing water and waste to drain out from underfoot and into sewer grates or the canals.

Regiconan Walls: These massive defensive walls encircle the entirety of Westcrown Island, and are constantly manned by the regidottari, with each tower or adjacent section of wall billeting at least a score of soldiers. Every tower acts as an armory and storehouse for food and supplies. In general, each island has a complement of 30 regidottari per tower.

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Chain Arches: Towers flanking a canal also connect via the Chain Arches, massive stone arches containing the winches for the chain gates. These massive curtains of barbed chains descend into the canal at times of unrest or emergency, or at the whims of the duxotar or Durotas Bolvona. Most often, they lower the chains only enough to display the latest traitors' bodies impaled upon the barbs as warnings to others.

Canals: The condottari control the canals, where upon occasion they clash with nobles' forces pursuing vendettas. Like the regidottari, military troops in their reinforced adels and skiffs can be bought. Canal walls rise at least 10 feet above the waters of the canal, and the last flood to overflow the canals and engulf the Regicona happened more than 400 years ago. Seven-foot-wide stone roads line the canals at the water's common level, forming foundations for 5-foot-square slab stairs that ascend to street level. In drier seasons, these roads also serve as free market space for those rising early enough to set up here (though the areas submerge during spring and early summer floods). Adels pull up to stairposts near the walls

and unload passengers onto the stairs or allow booms and pulleys to remove goods (or noble-laden divans). The only docks on the canals nestle beneath property lining the canals. Once a craft broaches an entry arch, landowners control all dock territory, not the condottari.

Canal Bridges: Drawbridges (one on each side) cross each canal at least once every 200 feet, and slaves winch them up when necessary to allow the passage of any craft within a canal. Regidottari control the bridges, regardless of who owns the land on which the abutment rests, though many bribe them when they need to hamper foot pursuit or prevent someone's escape from a particular isle. Regardless, all soldiers obey the River Edicts and move bridges if they are impediments to watercraft.

Rego Corna

"Crown Sector" encompasses the former stronghold of power in Cheliox—the Imperial Court of Cheliox and its attendant holdings and homes. Once the most desired land in the country, the islands of Impriax, Dlaratha, and Siraon recovered only some prestige in the past three decades.

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1. The Korradath: Once the great royal castle and seat of Imperial Cheliox, this massive fortified castle remains an impressive sight marred only by poor upkeep. Today, it is still used for offices, temporary lodgings, or neutral meeting places for nobles, rich traders, and ambassadors from far-off ports who need to be impressed or protected from exposure to “the common rabble on shore.” Rumors persist of secret, monster haunted dungeons below that haven’t been fully explored since Aroden’s Fall.

2. Vaneo Drovege: While the main vira remains west of the city along the Dhaenflow, Vaneo Drovege still represents the influence and wealth of the city’s most powerful house. This massive three-storied manor, unlike many buildings in Westcrown, gets scrubbed clean by its slaves every Fireday, so its green marble arches and black slate shingles glisten compared to its surroundings. House Drovege is the de facto social leader of Impriax.

3. Vira Oberigo: This walled estate has been the primary holding of House Oberigo ever since the end of the Four Families Siege. House Oberigo controls nearly all activities of any stripe on Siraon.

4. Sostarlannex: This annex cuts into Siraon’s southern edge where the Canal Wisxar meets the Canal Thrachi. Its northern walls, while grime-covered and stained, retain the friezes carved there by Sostarl more than two centuries ago during the Great Drought. The four scenes showcasing Chelish military strength pleased then-king Vriilar, who commissioned Sostarl and his students to sculpt the scores of statues and wall carvings that still dot the streets and parks all over Westcrown.

5. The Dorjanala: This secondary palace of the Chelish royal family had a three-story solarium—a massive wing of the palace whose walls were made of metal-framed glass. Built for Queen Dorjana in 4436 AR as a shrine to Aroden, the solarium allowed her an unobstructed view of the Arodenama (as her husband King Ariox II also razed any obstructing buildings in her way). Locals say the cries of Dorjana’s ghost cracked all the glass when a servant spoke of Aroden’s death in the shrine. This palace briefly fell victim to pillaging during the decades of unrest after the deaths of King Gaspodar and his family. When the court moved to Egorian, the faithful of Iomedae claimed the Dorjanala, maintaining it as a holy site to Aroden, Iomedae, and related founders. Their first ceremony was to declare Dorjana a founder in the Inheritor’s faith as well—and many say the glass walls weep with her thankful tears every vernal equinox from sunup to sundown.

6. Vira Julistarc: On Dlaratha, the Vira Julistarc is an estate of multiple buildings under one massive roof of gray stone shingles and crystalline skylights, a method of Taldan defense from ancient times married with more modern defensive walls around the perimeter.

Rego Laina

Triam and Islatra comprise the large central pair of islands in “Blade Sector.” These are the last of the original islands, and none today remember the origins of their names. The name of the sector stems from the many famous battles, smithies, and armories situated therein.

7. Vira Grulios: This estate dominates the landscape of western Triam, its red-capped towers looming more than two stories over the Regiconan Walls.

8. Staviancara: This remains the oldest occupied building in Westcrown, its walls built by Taldan slaves at the order of Emperor Stavian I upon his conquering of the city. Over the centuries since, its walls gained the carved and plastered façade that makes this appear as a two-story Taldan military tent. This building, with its well-hidden tunnels leading to the nearest city wall, serves as the home for the regidottari’s commander.

9. Vira Salisfer: This black-shingled and barbican-defended estate is the center of power for House Salisfer and the social core of Islatra.

10. Trivardum: This large slate-shingled building, as the seat of the Triumvirate, was the heart of power for Westcrown until the coming of the Chelish Court. Trivardum even served as the personal headquarters of the Houses Oberigo, Drovege, and Julistarc until they built their viras or other estates. Merchants operate out of the Trivardum’s former ground floor courtrooms and administrative offices. The Tricalista (one of Westcrown’s more popular inns for those with moderate coin) fills the second floor with five common rooms (for sleeping), five private apartments (for the staff or well-to-do renters), and the three large taprooms. The third floor and its roof gardens comprise the opulent penthouse residence of Taldan ambassador Vors Kyniar of Oppara, a paladin of Iomedae whose family wealth bought his position and whose distaste for House Thrune kept him from moving his residence to Egorian.

11. Vaneo Dioso: The grandest building on Triam, this vaneo became the home of the Dioso clan after their eradication of its builders, House Krafanis.

12. Miratanza: “The Floating Market” allows island-bound servants to shop for food and goods for their noble masters. Anchored in place, the numerous platforms allow vendors to rent spaces or simply sell directly from their own craft. The condottari keep all transactions and business within the Miratanza, taking a commission on all goods sold inside the four red-and-black marble arches that vault over the canals leading to it.

Rego Aerum

“Treasure Sector” is the home of true rarities for sale in Westcrown. The youngest territory in the city, the southern half of Westcrown Island only grew beyond

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mud flats in the past millennium. The three islands of Rego Aerum include Siar, Ghiam, and Karhal. The park at the south end of Karhal formed due to the mysterious inability of any building built there to be completed, due to a long history of strange accidents. The lands became a city park for the rich and idle in 4040 AR.

PAREGO DOSPERA

The Parego Dospera (“Despair’s Altar”) refers to the abandoned ruins and downtrodden slums of the northern shores of Westcrown. The roads are often in disrepair, and running in the Dospera invites a twisted ankle or a broken leg, leaving one fair game to the many threats in its shadows. While the northern sector is entirely a ruin, only kept in vague control by the sureshots of the rundottari on the walls around it, the southern rego acts as the buffer zone between it and “civilized” Westcrown.

Rego Cader

“Dead Sector” refers to the northern ruins, though older Wiscrani can tell you this used to be Rego Plea (formerly home to house slaves, servants, and lesser trades) before Aroden’s Fall. Inside this sector are the “low trades” the nobles wished not to see, including many forges or smithies still useful, if not in good repair. The bulk of the abandoned or ruined buildings were once taverns, inns, rooming houses, and stables. Now, most are either squats and partial homes for barbaric humans, dens of thieves, or even the lairs of monsters from leucrotta to goblins and tieflings strong enough to survive. There may even be gargoyles still bound to guard areas that have long since fallen to ruin around their perches.

The Dusk Market: The ruins of Westcrown serve as home of the infamous Dusk Market, a wandering bazaar that sets up within the shells of formerly opulent temples, viras, theaters, and other grandiose ruins. Here the daring and foolish might come to buy all manner of contraband, often under the eyes of bribed rundottari. The Dusk Market is a semi-secret marketplace, where drugs, exotic poisons, strange creatures, kidnapped slaves, and nearly any other vice one can imagine are traded freely. It takes its name from the fact that it only operates in the two hours before sundown. Nearly any ne’er-do-well or crooked rundottari can tell would be visitors where the market is going to set up on any given night—for a price.

The Ramble Gardens: Without continuous tending, the parks and gardens of former viras either died off or grew out of control. While many are now weed-choked brambles, some other now-wild plants draw folk into the Dospera. These ruins shelter a number of herbs and plants quite rare west of the Arthfell Forest, as well as several deadly plants like assassin vines and even a few giant flytraps.

Rego Crua

“Blood Sector” once held all slave trade and a wide array of low-end or less-desirable businesses, from tanneries to slaughterhouses. As a result of the stench and filth, this sector also contained the northern slums of Westcrown, nestled up against the walls of Rego Cader (which sometimes makes them safer due to the near-constant presence of rundottari above them). The farther south one travels, the more buildings rise in height and cleanliness until you cross the eastern Pegasi Bridge into Parego Spera.

13. Obrigan Gate: Built in the early years of Westcrown, House Oberigo sponsored the building of this gate (and retained plans and hidden secrets about it), leading to its griffon seals on the keystones and continued name. The heavily reinforced gate stands more than three stories tall and twice as deep as the walls it pierces between Rego Crua and Rego Cader. Its four doors, two portcullises, and obligatory squad of 12 rundottari keep all threats out of the Dospera. The doors and portcullises are opened only one at a time when dottari receive orders to exile convicted prisoners into the ruins or let fleeing rundottari retreat into the relative safety of the gatehouse.

14. The Pleatra: One of the largest building complexes in this sector, the Pleatra is a massive slave market complete with sizable common cells for unsold slaves.

15. Walcourt: Once a center of worship for followers of Founder Crucisal, the assembly lodge fell into disuse and disrepair shortly after the death of Aroden. Since then it has been deemed a haunted place, rife with stories of shadowy figures and ghostly apparitions. Attempts to set flophouses and orphanages on the grounds have ended abruptly through the years, adding to tales of unquiet, lingering residents.

PAREGO SPERA

The Spera (“Hope’s Altar”) contains the still-thriving sections of the city, once looked down upon by the city’s elite and now recognized as its money-making lifeblood. The western city still holds many nobles, but unlike the Regicona, trade and coin rule here more than politics. The three sectors of the Spera are Rego Scripa (“Scribe Sector”), the commercial hub and mercantile class sector that was the site of the empire’s scribes and printers; Rego Pena (“Coin Sector”), the fine trades, high-quality goods, and “new money” class sector; and Rego Sacero (“Priest Sector”), the temple and “old money” sector.

16. The Pegasi Bridges: Two great bridges remain of the 8 built during the time of Aroden, the others having been destroyed or buried over time. Called the Pegasi Bridges for the motif of winged horses carved on the sides and undersides, each bridge also has its own name and design: the Bladewing Bridge has pegasi with swords in place of

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their wing feathers, many of which are etched with the names of past Westcrani heroes; and the wings of the pegasi on the easternmost span, known as the Truemount (named for a holy pegasus that acted for a time as Aroden's mount), hide many Eyes of Aroden.

17. Canaroden: This is the longest canal in Westcrown and the least changed since its creation. Running beneath the Pegasi Bridges that arch more than 30 feet overhead, the Canaroden is twice as deep as the canals of the Regicona. Its walls on both sides of the channel retain the great 15-foot-tall friezes of Ulatir, the priest of Aroden who carved them between 4291 and 4324. A line of Aroden's founders walks on the southern walls, 20 figures facing the canal, their holy deeds shown behind them; the northern wall holds the 12 guises of Aroden in which he walked the mortal worlds unrecognized, as beggar, thief, fisherman, hunter, shepherd, farmer, soldier, merchant, tailor, craftsman, artist, and scholar. In the past century, individuals or mobs defaced or marred the carvings at times, especially during the Battle of a Thousand Kings and after the rise of House Thrune, but much of the damage has mysteriously vanished over time.

Rego Scripa

"Scribe Sector" was once the center for the bureaucratic work of the Chelish empire, the area dominated by ink- and paper-makers, printers, binders, scribes, and messengers. Now, precious few such businesses remain beyond cartographers; trade warehouses and ship-related businesses (rope- and sail-makers, navigators, and shipwrights) now populate this sector.

18. Taranik House: The Order of the Rack rotates a new complement of 12 Hellknights to the local Paralicor here every other Fireday. Taranik House always retains at least eight Hellknights on the premises and at least 15 Hellknights in Westcrown at all times. A liberal philosopher and scholar, Misirnis Taranik built her fortune with her scriptora and binding houses, though she secretly spread the White Plague across Westcrown in the 4570s through her cult of Sifkesh, the Path of Grace. Her home and workhouse, along with herself and the last of her cult, were put to the torch in 4577 by the first of the Hellknights, Daidian Rhul. The discovery of Taranik's woodblock printing press motivated Rhul's doctrine of "low philosophy," from which arose this Hellknight faction, the Order of the Rack. Reconstructed from the

ruins of the Hellknight's first conquest, Taranik House (its name indelibly carved into the keystone of the main gate) has served as the city's garrison for Hellknights. If the city experiences an outbreak of violence or disturbances beyond the capability of the dottari to quell, the Hellknights of Taranik House aid in quelling the lawlessness, dispatching requests for aid from Citadel Rivad if need be. The official commander of Taranik House is **Paralicor Gonville Chard** (LN male human ranger 7/hellknight 2), although his corrupt arms-maralicor (armory commander, and fifth in the command structure) **Aritil Sevarn** (NE male human fighter 5) often suborns Chard's command through his links to Lord Mayor Arvanxi and House Drovege.

Rego Pena

"Coin Sector" houses the more lucrative trades and many houses of dubious standing, politically or monetarily. This also acts as home to a rising class

of rich merchants who, by choice or fate, lack the political clout or connections to gain noble status or the notice of the Imperial Court.

19. Delvehaven: One of the only lodges of the Pathfinder Society to remain openly active in Chelixa after the ascension of House Thrune, this walled vira was abandoned under mysterious circumstances in 4676 AR. Its gates permanently barred and chained by the dottari, the manor molders under a pall of mystery and rumor. None can say what brought such a curse down upon the lodge, what happened to the Pathfinders who once maintained the house or to the exotic treasures that once lay within, but few believe Delvehaven's fall and the rise of the shadowy beasts that nightly stalk the streets are unconnected.

Rego Sacero

"Priest Sector" contains more shrines and ecclesiastical real estate (extant or ruined) than five other Chelish cities combined. For centuries, priests and nobles alike kept all land east of the Arodenname (on and beneath the Rise) vacant for Aroden's personal gardens. That land became a flashpoint of land grabs and assassination among many nobles, officials, and priesthoods after the Last Azlanti's death. By 4614, various faiths and houses had bought up much of the land.

20. Sanqatada Cinqarda: The six-story "Cathedral of the Five Founders" predates all Andoren and Chelish memory. Like the Arodenname, the white marble building remains unstained and shining despite centuries of attempted



defacing or the soot of nearby chimneys. The 30-foot limestone statues that flank each door, standing atop two-story columns of Turanian greenstone, depict the five founders of the cathedral: Founders Dotara, Palmor, Rixana, Adel, and Crucisal.

21. Vaneo Arvanxi: The lord mayor's manor has always rested in Rego Sacero, though its current titleholder has expanded the building considerably in terms of size and defenses. Widely called Aberian's Folly, both for the vast sums the lord mayor has poured into his estate's seemingly endless renovation and for its uniquely lavish—some say diabolical—amenities, the manor hosts frequent feasts and balls for the diversion of the city's elite. A local stink was briefly raised in 4705 when Mayor Arvanxi openly considered the usefulness of binding powerful fiends for petty entertainments, but such was local outcry that he seemingly abandoned that fancy. Nevertheless, rumors that a powerful fiend imprisoned under the Folly is used to provide a source of infernal energy to the manor persist.

22. Aroden's Rise: Priests, pious artisans, and the hands and feet of countless pilgrims shaped this large hill into the double plateau that rises more than 200 feet above the rest of the surrounding city. Many in the city refer to the uppermost plateau as the Vacant Throne, as Cheliox's former god never came to this home. The lower plateau remains a trading area for ecclesiastical supplies, religious icons, and various goods made in Wiscrani temples. Up on the Vacant Throne, the derelict temples around the feet of the statue are among the few obvious remnants of Aroden's worship in Westcrown.

23. Uralt's Walk: Alongside the long northern ramp up Aroden's Rise, priests long ago built a series of steps specifically for pilgrims to ascend the hill both physically and spiritually. Aroden's winged eye appears twice on each riser, flanking a single word. Pilgrims who climb the 166 steps and read aloud each word per step recite Founder Uralt's Dawn Liturgy to Aroden.

24. The Arodennama: Standing 90 feet tall from its base atop Aroden's Rise and shaped from massive blocks of white marble, the statue predates any known Avistani history and all other extant structures in Westcrown. Clergy in Absalom claim 12 of Aroden's founders built the Arodennama with their prayers, their sweat, and their magic. The statue of Aroden faces the river and the island, his chest oriented to catch the rays of the rising and setting sun. Covering his chest is a massive silver-inlaid winged-eye symbol, its wings spreading across his draped sleeves and beneath his arms. In the age since Westcrown's founding, a variety of shrines, pilgrim shelters, congregation halls, small temples, and even a sizable amphitheater have grown up around the statue in expectation of Aroden's arrival. Most now lie neglected, populated only by the downtrodden and deluded. Despite the loss of the god of humanity and

Founders of Aroden

The river delta was once sacred and holy land for Aroden and his allied priests and helpers, especially the founders and demigods of his faith. Even though the Last Azlanti died, his founders continue aiding their followers and working to keep all those who once revered this city from totally losing faith in it or themselves. Founders of Aroden's church have numerous individual or collective temples all across Westcrown, though the largest and best-preserved remains the Sanqatada Cinqarda. Most faithful maintain personal shrines to their founders in their homes or businesses, and not a few chapels or altars exist below ground in hidden cellars, or the ruins of now-buried temples. The six most revered Aroden founders in Westcrown are, in order of prominence:

Founder Dotara, "She Who Watches and Waits," spirit of guardians; patron of the dottari

Founder Palmor, spirit of rivers and renewal; patron of fishermen and midwives

Founder Rixana, spirit of the bounty of deep waters, patron of pearl divers and shellfishermen

Founder Adel, spirit of woodcraft, patron of shipwrights and boatbuilders

Founder Crucisal, spirit of water travel and navigation; patron of ferrymen and adeliers

Founder Vadrus, spirit of crystals and artistry, patron of glassmakers and artists

the grime of a century's neglect staining the statue's feet and lower legs, the Arodennama still inspires awe in all who travel to see it. No birds, let alone vengeful wizards or flying monsters, ever manage to stain the upper portions of the statue, and no tarnish darkens the silver Eye of Aroden gleaming upon its breast.

25. Qatada Nessudidia: The largest temple to Asmodeus in Westcrown, this four-story cathedral dominates the promontory as the tallest building east of the Arodennama. House Thrune, House Jeggare, and their allies financed its construction between 4639 and 4677 AR after the Faithless Fires ended Houses Drovenga's, Salisfer's, and Julistarc's plans to replace the Sanqatada Cinqarda with a five-sided cathedral to Asmodeus. The great crystalline skylight glows a sinister red at all times, drawing the most attention of all Westcrown's holy (or unholy) sites at night.

26. The Imperial Marina: In 4641 AR, the Imperial Court invoked a lien on the Vira Roalmo and its shipbuilding fortunes, confiscating the lands and docks of the traitorous house. By fiat, the majestrix then established the Imperial Marina on the easternmost promontory on the river, reinstating a strong imperial troop presence within Westcrown for the first time since 4634.



Tieflings of Golarion

Despised as half-breeds at best, hunted down as irredeemable fiends at worst, tieflings bear the taint of the Lower Planes and an unmistakable ancestry of evil. The scions of polluted bloodlines, tieflings are as much a curse as a race, not for any unified evil that their blood compels them to, but for the corrupted forms that forever set them apart from the rest of mortal kind, driving them toward acts of desperation, viciousness, and despair. The spawn of fiends and humans, tieflings are monsters not by nature or by any possession of their heritage, but by the hatred and prejudices of a fearful world. Theirs is a corrupt existence, but not one without choice, and the light that rises from darkness shines even stronger than those that glow during the day.

Tieflings might hail from any region and innumerable circumstances, and as such have little in the way of a unified culture. Although their physical characteristics

and similarly tainted ancestry define them as a race, they have no creation myth, no shared origin, no larger identity, and no true sense of unity or companionship. Yet what they do share is the scorn of others and lives that both unify and separate them as a strange, unnatural race, seemingly never intended for existence.

What follows is an investigation into the origins, lives, and experience of tieflings. Two massive tables also allow PCs and GMs to customize their tiefling characters, assuring that each of these fiend-blooded creatures prove as varied and unusual as the lower planar realms that spawned them.

TIEFLING HERITAGE

As descendants of mortals and evil outsiders, tieflings have no unique racial origin. They come from all walks of life, all geographical areas, and all shades of evil.

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"Some of my kind go years without realizing they are different." Trezzen felt power radiating off the summoning circle and from the feather-winged beauty standing within. He flexed one taloned hand. "When I turned twelve my skin darkened and my claws came, and then there was no hiding it. She told her friends she'd never suspected what I really was. I'd thought things were bad before, but they got worse. No one would speak to me unless it was to order me around." He gazed steadily at the devil in the circle. "I'm tired of it. It's time for me to claim my heritage. Time to go to my real home."

For a minute, the erinyes stared at him wordlessly. Then she laughed—a low, malicious chuckle that echoed in the room. "Oh, honey," she whispered. "What makes you think we want you either?"

—From *A Murder in Hell*, by Ciracina Dioso



The commonly imagined origin of these half-breeds involves a fundamentally evil creature fraternizing with a depraved human. That scenario raises an important point, though: why are tieflings ever born?

This complex question has many answers. The simplest reason is that a great many tieflings are born to women expecting normal, human children. Fiends are masters of deception, and don't always appear to mortals in their true form, and not every mortal carrying fiendish blood is a tiefling. Just as two brunettes might occasionally parent a redheaded child, fiendish blood can hide for generations before revealing itself in the flesh, the result of fiendish dalliances far back in the family tree.

Women who suspect they might be carrying a tiefling can have a difficult time determining the truth. Divination magic is notoriously unreliable when it comes to those who have not yet been born; results are cloudy and indeterminate in the best of circumstances. In some cases, divinations have even indicated the unborn child is human, only to see the mother give birth to a tiefling months later.

Tiefling babes, even unborn, possess other resistances as well. Traditional contraceptives seem less effective against outsiders. Herbs and drugs used to induce miscarriages often fail to work. Spells require an experienced and powerful cleric in order to take effect, and many women lack the resources to find such a caster. Expectant mothers also rarely survive more drastic methods of inducing a miscarriage when a tiefling is involved.

Any preventive measure might prove moot if the mortal parent is the father and the tiefling is born to a fiendish mother who then drops the child on the father's doorstep. In truth, fiends have no more desire to bear tiefling children than mortal women do. Gestation periods tend to be quicker for fiends, however, and they sometimes see the utility in having a tiefling child in the mortal world to act as a spy and informant. As fiends

Half-Fiends and Tieflings

Common wisdom has it that a fiend who mates with a mortal produces a half-fiend, and a half-fiend who mates with a mortal produces a tiefling. Tiefling conception is not quite so rigid, however. "Tiefling" merely implies a creature bearing less than half fiendish blood. This does not mean they are all necessarily third generation fiends, though. While many tieflings have half-fiend parents, their connection to the lower planes might be hidden deeper in their heritage. Thus, a family with a long-forgotten fiendish ancestor might occasionally spawn a tiefling. Two tieflings also produce tiefling young, though the pairing of a tiefling and a mortal is just as likely to produce a human as another tiefling. Even a full fiend and a mortal do not necessarily produce a half-fiend, as the fiend's dark seed may not fully take—the unfathomable and often chaotic laws of the lower planes prove difficult to predict, and nothing is ever certain where such magic is involved.

have little maternal instinct, they generally give birth to tieflings and then send them to live with their human parent—or any man willing to believe he might have once lain with a fiend.

Birthing a tiefling baby is unexpected for some women, and traumatic for almost all. Soon after birth, however, a mother realizes that bearing this child was the easiest part. The real challenge lies ahead.

TIEFLING PHYSIOLOGY

Tieflings lack even a common appearance to draw them together as a race. It is said that no two tieflings look exactly alike; like fingerprints, each tiefling's unique appearance marks him indelibly.

Most tieflings display all their unusual traits at birth, but some are born resembling their mortal parents only to develop their fiendish qualities months, even years,

Concealing Tiedling Traits

Tiedlings of all walks face prejudice on a regular basis, from the scorn of passersby to the pitchforks of fearful mobs. To protect themselves, many tiedlings become quite adept at hiding their fiendish racial features, though some find it more difficult than others. With their racial penalty to Charisma, tiedlings already face difficulties when it comes to disguising themselves. At the GM's prerogative, a tiedling with exceptionally outlandish traits—such as extra or missing limbs, an inhuman face, or obviously fiendish markings—might even take an additional –2 penalty on Disguise checks (in addition to the standard –2 penalty on disguising himself as a different race). Fortunately, tiedlings are exceptionally adept at hiding their accursed features. Illusion magic proves perhaps the most reliable method, especially *alter self*, with lesser magics like *disguise self* and *hats of disguise* proving insufficient. Some might even go to the extremes of performing self-surgery, filing down cruel horns and claws, amputating tails and vestigial limbs, and burning off stranger features—scars often being a small price to pay for normalcy. Unfortunately, most tiedling traits refuse to be suppressed, healing or even growing back with frustrating speed.

In the end, most tiedlings without access to magical alternatives who seek to pass as humans spend frustrating amount of time and money on objects like disguise kits or training to increase their skills in Disguise and Stealth, ever hoping not to be revealed for what they truly are.

Tiedlings in Cheliox

In Cheliox, tiedlings are seen as the lowest of the low. Devils epitomize a lawful, ordered society, and many of Cheliox's elite pay great sums to summon, bind, and control devils to execute even their most fleeting plans. A tiedling, however, represents a loss of that control—either in using one's power to satisfy pointless desires or an instance of the slave becoming the master. Tiedlings in Cheliox bear the brunt of this societal snubbing. While tiedlings are not attacked or harassed out of fear or loathing, they encounter obvious discrimination everywhere they go. Shopkeepers raise prices for tiedling customers or refuse them service altogether. Some taverns do not admit tiedlings. Such ostracization wounds even deeper as tiedlings realize that devils look down on them exactly the same way humans do. Devils have no use for their tiedling offspring, except very occasionally as pawns. Thus, tiedlings in Cheliox live with the knowledge that they are seen as worthless, shameful, and expendable. To this end, most Cheliox tiedlings either flee their homeland or seek work in the service of influential groups or personages, relying on their position to grant them the respect their heritage did not.

after their births. In other sad cases, an unborn tiedling develops characteristics so demanding on its developing system that it dies in utero, or survives only a short, horrific time after birth. In many regions, the appearance of a fiend-tainted child is reason enough to put the creature to death—and often the mother as well. In lands where the origins of tiedlings are better understood, such births are mourned but don't always end in murder. Human parents are not the only ones who shun tiedling children, though, as even hopeful tiedlings, daring to wish for "normal" offspring, might condemn their newborns to terrible fates—abandonment, sale into slavery, or worse. The grim circumstances of tiedling births mean that many, even most, tiedlings don't survive their earliest days, a sorry condition that many pessimistic tiedlings consider a blessing.

By the time they have grown to adolescence, all tiedlings display at least one physical reflection of their fiendish ancestry. For the lucky, such traits prove so minor as to allow the tiedling to pass as a human or member of another exotic race. Most, though, are so clearly marked it is impossible to hide their nature without the help of elaborate disguises or magic. Fortunately, most tiedlings develop supernatural abilities to aid them in their difficult lives. Many gain the ability to create areas of darkness—as if the spheres themselves were encouraging these beings to hide—but not all, with others expressing powers as strange and unusual as their nefarious ancestors. Once a tiedling develops his physical and magical abilities, they remain static for life, and tiedlings never spontaneously develop new characteristics later in life. The dramatic changes a tiedling undergoes are almost secondary, however, to the mental stress such a transformation brings.

TIEDLING PSYCHOLOGY

Tiedlings are typically strangers within their families, their cities, their societies—even their race, for many tiedlings never encounter another of their own kind. Tiedling siblings are almost unheard of, as fiend-mortal couplings tend to occur only once. When tiedlings appear in a family seemingly spontaneously, they are generally the only child to do so in their generation.

As a result, tiedlings suffer from intense bouts of loneliness, self-loathing, and isolation. They are acutely aware that there are no others just like them, even among their own kind. Still, some seek out other tiedlings, making it their life's purpose to establish that they are not unique in the world. Even if such quests result in success, though, they rarely have happy endings: tiedlings do not naturally bond. More aware than any others, perhaps, of just how strange and twisted they can be, they are slow to trust their own kind.

Tieflings of Golarion

The isolation a tiefling feels grows as he realizes his own family—assuming they remain part of his life—are ashamed or even frightened of him. Some tieflings suffer childhoods of horrific abuse, relegated to tiny rooms, hidden completely from the outside world, bearing the brunt of the anger and fear of their unprepared family. Little wonder most view everyone but themselves with intense mistrust.

Some tieflings blame their dark nature on the difficulties of their childhood. Even those rare few who grew up relatively unscarred suspect an unpleasant fundamental truth: that they naturally possess shadowed souls. A tiefling might work her whole life to throw off the shame of her heritage, yet still occasionally hear the seductive whisper of the power that could be hers if she embraced the darkness. While some might claim that all sentient beings face such temptations, for tieflings, that prove almost a magnetic pull, like the hungers of an addict ever reeling from the depths of withdrawal. Even the most disciplined and virtuous tieflings find evil acts easy, natural—even enjoyable. Consciously embracing good proves difficult for tieflings, and no matter how long they travel such a path, the darkness remains like an infection they are unable to cure.

The level of this darkness and the tieflings' power to control such whims seems to vary from individual to individual. Some tieflings find it easy to ignore the temptation of their fiendish blood, while others find it nearly impossible. Many, of course, don't even try, becoming creatures more akin to fiends than mortals. Such tieflings seem unable to go more than a few days without engaging in evil behavior, drawing perverse pleasure, even strength, from acts of deception, cruelty, or violence, seeking out opportunities to indulge their foul natures. For these depraved few, championing the cause of good is not even an option.

For those who prefer not to wantonly embrace their fiendish nature, life is an endless struggle, their internal world proving just as tumultuous as the world without.

TIEFLING SOCIETY

To assume tieflings have a single society is misguided, as most seek nothing more than to meld into the human communities that surround yet typically shun them. In the rare instances when groups of tieflings congregate, they tend to adopt an unusual structure. Tieflings accept that the most human-looking individuals among them get the best treatment in cities and towns, and take it as no surprise that shopkeepers and guards treat obviously fiendish individuals with suspicion and hostility. Yet what tieflings rarely admit is that even those of their own kind treat “normal”-looking tieflings better than freakish ones.

To a creature told time after time that his appearance is his greatest drawback, it's no wonder he would idolize a more highly valued appearance. On a more practical note, extremely conspicuous tieflings have a much harder life than others, and such experiences can warp their natures. Tieflings know that monstrous-looking tieflings quite likely act monstrous, a sad development arising from the way others treat them. Consequently, tieflings have an unofficial pecking order based on appearance—especially in civilized lands, where they often go to great lengths to appear human.



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Due to their inherent mistrust of others, tieflings tend to have trouble with romance. Many consider it a source of personal pride to avoid entanglements of any sort; others take advantage of their natural, taboo exoticism and bounce from one superficial (and frequently abusive) relationship to the next, futilely seeking affirmation and acceptance. When tieflings do trust, they tend to do so with fierce loyalty. While a committed tiefling lover can prove the world's most faithful companion, that devotion comes with a price, and tieflings rarely take the end of a relationship well. Unreasonable jealousy and feelings of betrayal boil quickly to the surface, turning passionate love into seething resentment.

CUSTOM TIEFLINGS

Spawned from innumerable types of fiends throughout the Lower Planes, all tieflings bear the mark of the damned.

How their fiendish traits and abilities exhibit themselves, however, varies wildly from individual to individual, based on the potency and origin of their fiendish blood.

The following tables present traits and abilities to aid in the customization of tieflings.



Variant Tiefling Heritages

Most tieflings possess a fixed variety of ability scores to reflect their fiendish heritages, regardless of the actual source of their foul traits. GMs might grant their tiefling NPCs or players variant ability modifiers based on their foul ancestries. At the GM's choice, such heritages might be determined deliberately or randomly, and may come with their own distinctive abilities or traits selected from the following charts. PCs who wish to have greater control over these modifiers may take the Fiendish Heritage feat (see page 66).

1d10 Heritage

- 1 **Asura-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom, -2 Intelligence. The scions of the exotic and mysterious asuras are swift and wise, but often favor traditional ways over cunning.
- 2 **Daemon-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Dexterity, +2 Intelligence, -2 Wisdom. Daemon-blooded bringers of devastation are shrewd and swift, but their plans frequently exhibit exploitable flaws.
- 3 **Demodand-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Constitution, +2 Wisdom, -2 Intelligence. The burly spawn of the demodand race possess bizarre cunning, but favor brawn to planning.
- 4 **Demon-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Strength, +2 Charisma, -2 Intelligence. Savage and monstrous, the terrifying spawn of demons know the chaotic fury of their Abyssal ancestors.
- 5 **Devil-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Constitution, +2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma. Stalwart and conniving, diabolical tieflings know the discipline and might of Hell's legions.
- 6 **Div-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Dexterity, +2 Charisma, -2 Intelligence. Scouring life like a desert wind, these tieflings possess the precision and exoticism of their div ancestors.
- 7 **Kyton-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Constitution, +2 Charisma, -2 Wisdom. The black-hearted spawn of shadow and pain know the sadistic vices of their suffering-obsessed forebearers.
- 8 **Oni-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Strength, +2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma. The spawn of oni know the ways of their ancestral fiends and master the arts of trickery and cruelty.
- 9 **Qlippoth-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Strength, +2 Wisdom, -2 Intelligence. Rare in the extreme, the warped scions of the eldritch qlippoths retain the tenacity and insidiousness of their horrific forebearers.
- 10 **Rakshasa-Spawn Tiefling:** +2 Dexterity, +2 Charisma, -2 Wisdom. Deft and charming, these bestial tieflings inherit much of the subtlety and guile of their proud rakshasa progenitors.

Tieflings of Golarion

Variant Tiefling Abilities

Some tieflings are blessed or cursed with unusual abilities. A GM may customize his tiefling NPCs or allow PCs to do so by rolling on the following chart. PCs who wish to have greater control over these tiefling traits may take the Fiendish Heritage feat (see page 66).

The abilities presented here replace a tiefling's darkness spell-like ability, with a caster level equals to its class level.

d%	Ability
1	You can animate a 1 HD skeleton, as per <i>animate dead</i> , once per day as a spell-like ability.
2	You possess some type of extra sensory organ, granting you all-around vision.
3	You enjoy being cut. The first time each day you take slashing damage, you gain a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls for the following round.
4	You can use <i>mage hand</i> 3 times per day as a spell-like ability.
5	Inherited memories grant you a +2 racial bonus on one Knowledge skill of your choice.
6	You can levitate yourself plus 10 pounds at will, as per the spell <i>levitate</i> . This is a supernatural ability.
7	You can eat and gain nourishment from ash, cinders, dust, and sand.
8	You gain a +1 bonus on all attack and damage rolls against good-aligned outsiders.
9	You gain an additional +2 racial bonus on your Charisma.
10	You possess a bite that is treated as a natural weapon and deals 1d4 damage.
11	Once per day you can exhibit a burst of speed, moving as if your base land speed were 50 for one move action.
12	You do not need to sleep. You are not immune to sleep effects.
13	You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against disease.
14	Your base land speed increases by 5 feet.
15	You possess a fiendishly cunning tongue, granting you a +2 racial bonus on all Diplomacy checks.
16	You have oversized limbs, allowing you to use Large weapons without penalty.
17	You possess claws that are treated as natural weapons and deal 1d4 damage.
18	You gain DR 2/bludgeoning.
19	You gain a Swim speed of 30 feet.
20	You gain a +2 bonus on your CMB.
21	You possess fiendish luck. Once per day you can reroll one die. You must take the result of this second roll.
22	You can detect evil, as per the spell, three times per day.
23	You never need to drink to survive.
24	You can produce a barb from your body once per day. This barb is removable and is treated as a dagger.
25	You gain acid resistance 5.
26	Your body produces searing heat. Any creature that grapples you takes 1d4 points of fire damage per round.
27	You can speak two additional languages spoken by extraplanar beings.
28	Any evil creature you call via <i>summon monster</i> remains for 3 rounds longer than usual.
29	You gain a +1 bonus on all Reflex saving throws.
30	You can alter your shadow to make it appear as any creature or object of your size or smaller.
31	You can burrow through dirt, sand, and loose ground at a rate of 5 feet per round.
32	You can sense weakness, granting you a +1 bonus on all rolls to confirm critical hits.
33	You gain DR 2/silver.
34	You do not lose consciousness until you reach -5 hit points.
35	You possess long limbs and a powerful grip, features that grant you a +2 racial bonus on all Climb checks.
36	You can communicate telepathically with any sentient creature with which you are in contact.
37	You can use <i>death knell</i> once per day as a spell-like ability.
38	At will, you can spend a full-round action concentrating to receive the benefits of tremorsense 60 feet for 1 round.
39	Once per day you can benefit from a burst of speed, moving at double your normal speed for 1 round.
40	As a full-round action, you can bleed and collect 5 sp worth of precious blood per day.
41	You possess spell resistance equal to 10 + half your Hit Dice.
42	The spell <i>animate dead</i> can return you to life as per the spell <i>raise dead</i> 1d4 times.
43	Your fiendish sorcery ability treats your Charisma as if it were 3 points higher.
44	You are unusually short, granting you all the traits of a Small creature.
45	Your features are subtly malleable, granting you a +2 racial bonus on all Disguise checks.
46	You gain an additional +2 racial bonus on your Intelligence.
47	You can use <i>curse water</i> 3 times per day as a spell-like ability.
48	You are invisible to all unintelligent undead. This is a supernatural ability.
49	You are healed by both positive and negative energy.
50	Your skin is unnaturally tough, granting you a +1 natural bonus to your AC.
51	You can speak to all birds.
52	You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against poison.
53	You possess the scent special ability.
54	You gain DR 2/piercing.
55	You are unnaturally sly, granting you a +2 racial bonus on all Sleight of Hands checks.
56	Once per day you can spit acid. This glob deals 1d4 points of acid damage and has a range increment of 5 feet.
57	Your body exudes freezing cold. Any creature that grapples you takes 1d4 points of cold damage per round.
58	You heal double the normal amount of damage by resting.
59	You gain a +1 bonus on all Will saving throws.
60	You gain a +2 bonus to your initiative at night.

Tiefling Feats

Tieflings might exhibit any number of unique qualities to distinguish them further from others of their kind. These feats present a variety of ways tieflings might benefit from their Lower Planar ancestries.

Fiendish Facade

You are easily mistaken for a member of another race. Your fiendish physical traits are normally hidden by clothing or appear to be markings of another race.

Prerequisites: Tiefling, must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: You get a +5 racial bonus on Disguise checks when attempting to impersonate a particular race. You must select the race you are able to impersonate when you select this feat, and cannot change it thereafter. That race must be Medium size.

Monstrous Mask

Your fiendish physical traits give you a twisted and fearsome appearance that strikes fear into the hearts of the unsuspecting.

Prerequisites: Tiefling, must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: You get a +5 racial bonus on Intimidate checks made against all creatures of the humanoid type.

Fiendish Heritage

You possess a strong tie to your fiendish ancestors, granting you favorable abilities.

Prerequisite: Tiefling, must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: Your fiendish bloodline proves particularly strong, being tied to a specific race of fiends. Rather than taking a tiefling's usual racial ability modifiers, choose one of the tiefling heritage modifiers presented on page 64. In addition, you may roll on the Variant Tiefling Abilities table three times and choose the most favorable ability.

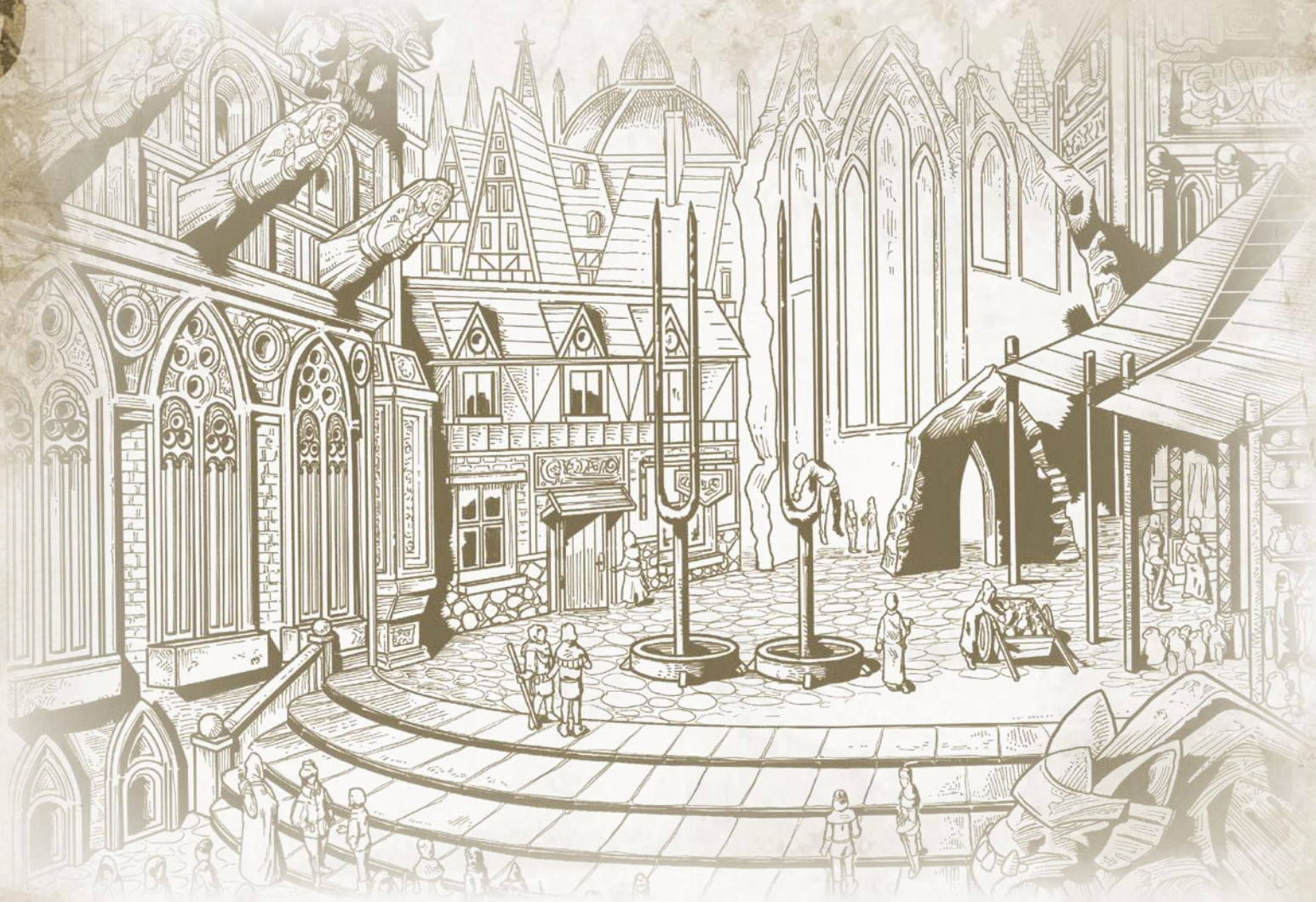
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| <p>61 You can manipulate any armor, gauntlets, or shield you wield, causing them to grow spikes. These spikes last only as long as you wear your armor.</p> <p>62 You can use <i>deathwatch</i> 3 times per day as a spell-like ability.</p> <p>63 You have some manner of inhuman sensory organ. You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against gaze attacks.</p> <p>64 Once per day, for 1 round, you may see through any substance less than 5 feet thick—except for lead—as if it were glass. This is a supernatural ability.</p> <p>65 Your strange physiology grants you a +2 racial bonus on all Acrobatics checks.</p> <p>66 You can drink and gain nourishment from ash, cinders, dust, and sand.</p> <p>67 Your eyes glow fiendishly and you possess the see in darkness ability as if you were a devil.</p> | <p>68 You gain damage reduction 2/cold iron.</p> <p>69 You can use fog cloud once per day as a spell-like ability.</p> <p>70 You are aware of and can choose the result of any attempt to detect your alignment.</p> <p>71 You can spend a full-round action once per day eating from a corpse to regain 1d6+1 hit points.</p> <p>72 You can communicate telepathically with any evil creature within 50 feet.</p> <p>73 You can use <i>minor image</i> 3 times per day as a spell-like ability.</p> <p>74 Once per day, as a spell-like ability, you can animate a Small or smaller object for a number of rounds equal to your level. Treat this object as an animated object.</p> <p>75 You gain sonic resistance 5.</p> <p>76 You can hold your breath for 3 rounds longer than normal.</p> <p>77 You can speak to insects.</p> <p>78 Your skin is spiky. Any creature that attempts to grapple you takes 1d4 points of damage.</p> <p>79 You receive a +1 bonus on all Fortitude saving throws.</p> <p>80 You gain a +2 bonus on your CMD.</p> <p>81 You can use <i>rage</i> on yourself once per day as a spell-like ability.</p> <p>82 You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against mind-affecting effects.</p> <p>83 Once per day exposure to fire heals you 1d6 hit points. This does not negate fire damage.</p> <p>84 You are immune to magic sleep and paralysis effects.</p> <p>85 Supernatural awareness grants you a +2 racial bonus on all Perception checks.</p> <p>86 Your anatomy is slightly unusual, giving you a 15% chance to ignore any critical hit.</p> <p>87 You can survive on one-quarter the amount of food and water a human requires.</p> <p>88 Any damage you deal with a melee weapon is treated as evil for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.</p> <p>89 You can use <i>inflict light wounds</i> once per day as a spell-like ability.</p> <p>90 You gain an additional +2 racial bonus on your Wisdom.</p> <p>91 You gain damage reduction 2/slashing.</p> <p>92 You can see creatures on the Ethereal Plane.</p> <p>93 Once per day you may ask a corpse one yes-or-no question, as per the spell <i>speak with dead</i>. This is a spell-like ability.</p> <p>94 You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against nausea.</p> <p>95 You are flexible and slightly slimy, possessing a +2 racial bonus on all Escape Artist checks.</p> <p>96 You can use <i>ventriloquism</i> at will as a spell-like ability.</p> <p>97 As a standard action, once per day, you may suppress your unusual tiefling physical features for a number of minutes equal to your Con modifier, thus appearing human.</p> <p>98 You receive +1 bonus hit point per level.</p> <p>99 Once per week you may mentally contact a fiendish ancestor to gain information, as per the spell <i>commune</i>. This is a spell-like ability.</p> <p>100 Roll on this table twice, ignoring any further rolls of 100.</p> |
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Tieflings of Golarion

Random Tiefling Features

Presented here are dozens of features tieflings might possess. None of the following features grant characters any special powers in excess of their usual abilities.

d%	Feature
1	Arms: Elbow spurs
2	Arms: Oversized limb
3	Arms: Stony forearms
4	Arms: Tentacle-like
5	Arms: Undersized limb
6	Build: Emaciated
7	Build: Hunchback
8	Build: Obese
9	Build: Unnaturally light
10	Build: Unnaturally heavy
11	Digits: Abnormally long
12	Digits: Extra digits
13	Digits: Extra joints
14	Digits: No nails
15	Digits: Odd number
16	Ears: Bat-like
17	Ears: Missing
18	Ears: Pig-like
19	Ears: Pointed
20	Ears: Other
21	Eyes: Cyclopic
22	Eyes: Goat-like
23	Eyes: Glowing
24	Eyes: Smoking
25	Eyes: Other
26	Face: Canine muzzle
27	Face: Insectile mandibles
28	Face: Missing nose
29	Face: Underdeveloped features
30	Face: Other
31	Hands: Backward-bending fingers
32	Hands: Extra thumbs
33	Hands: Pincers
34	Hands: Suckered
35	Hands: Other
36	Head: Animalistic
37	Head: Animate hair
38	Head: Bald
39	Head: Malformed
40	Head: Other
41	Horns: Draconic
42	Horns: Metallic
43	Horns: Ram-like
44	Horns: Vestigial
45	Horns: Other
46	Legs: Backward-bending
47	Legs: Cloven feet
48	Legs: Frog-like
49	Legs: Bird-like
50	Legs: Other
51	Skin: Feathered
52	Skin: Loose
53	Skin: Patterned
54	Skin: Rotting
55	Skin: Scaled
56	Skin: Slimy
57	Skin: Strangely colored
58	Skin: Translucent
59	Skin: Variable color
60	Skin: Other
61	Tail: Aquatic
62	Tail: Fiendish
63	Tail: Mammalian
64	Tail: Reptilian
65	Tail: Other
66	Teeth: Blunt
67	Teeth: Fanged
68	Teeth: Metallic
69	Teeth: Needle-like
70	Teeth: Other
71	Other: Forked tongue
72	Other: Eyestalks
73	Other: Vestigial limb
74	Other: Extraneous nipple
75	Other: Inhuman voice
76	Other: Profane birthmark
77	Other: Strange smell
78	Other: Emits strange noises
79	Other: Fungal/leafy growths
80	Other: Incontrollable twitch
81	Other: Bleeding pores
82	Other: Androgynous
83	Other: External organ
84	Other: Whistling umbilicus
85	Other: No shadow
86	Other: Missing joint
87	Other: Unnatural temperature
88	Other: Avian snood
89	Other: Infested
90	Other: Bony ridges
91	Other: Hermaphroditic
92	Other: Spinneret
93	Other: Antennae
94	Other: Exoskeleton
95	Other: Incongruous footprints
96	Other: No reflection
97	Other: Internal glow
98	Other: Smoking breath
99	Roll twice, ignore any result of 99 or higher.
100	Roll three times, ignore any result of 99 or higher.



The Plaza of Flowers

The boss says the Plaza of Flowers is an ironic name, proving even he can be wrong.

He tells me that a century ago blossoms spilled over every windowsill, but now the black-and-crimson banners of Asmodeus trail down from the upper balconies. And where he remembers flowerbeds encircling a fountain, eight viewing stands now surround a scaffold. Those stands teem with the gowns of the merchant daughters who hope to attract the eyes of the noble bachelors buzzing just beyond the picket of house guards. Matrons and spinsters clad in earthen tones sit to either side of each blossom while their lords and brothers mingle with the unmarried men, smoking cigars and nosing sachets to smother the stench of so many commoners.

A hawker shoves past me and cries, "Skewered pork, sizzling hot!" I barely stop myself from giving him the

elbow before one of the other groundlings filling the space between stands and scaffold beckons him away before the smell can make me sick. I don't understand those who can eat on Judgment Day.

The sun reaches its zenith, but the canvas drape still conceals the central scaffold. The delay can mean only the Palace wishes to view the proceeding, and I say a little prayer of thanks to Desna—silently, of course. Waiting for the Royal Carriage to arrive is a boon to the vendors, and it gives the working class a little more time away from their labors. The benefit to me is that the royal interest reverses the usual order of events. Paralictor Ivo Elliendo likes to build suspense, so the most spectacular event is usually reserved for last.

On the scaffold, a knobby-kneed herald emerges from behind the canvas. He looks to either side,

The Plaza of Flowers

shuddering with exaggerated fear when the guards eye him up and down. The groundlings laugh, recognizing him as one of the Fools of Thrune, a jester from House Sarini sent out to amuse them while they wait. I lose interest the moment he raises a trumpet to his lips and blows out a length of crimson silk and a pair of sagging pillows meant to suggest he's blown his lungs out through the horn.

I see plenty of familiar mugs among the groundlings: stevedores, stable hands, street sweepers, barmaids, a seamstress I once gave a memorable night on the Bunyip Dock. A pickpocket I know tips me a wink as he pats a mark on the shoulder while his adolescent accomplice dips his hand in on the other side. A few others touch their chins or smile when they see me. I nod back.

No one from the stands throws me a greeting, but more than a few know me better than they'd admit. I know several of them better than I'd like their husbands to know, but to most I am only the silent bodyguard of Count Varian Jeggare. The only one among them bold enough to return my gaze is Ivo Elliendo.

The Paralictor glides out of the stands where he has been receiving the compliments of the ladies. His tall figure stands out like a plow cutting through a garden. The sharp red scourges on the ribs of his black leather jack give him a gaunt silhouette.

He squints when he spots me, and I can feel his scorn hot on my face. What else can I do but shoot him my toothiest smile? All around him, ladies who had followed his gaze snap up their fans to shield themselves from the sight of a mouth that I'm told looks like a drawer full of knives. The commotion distracts Elliendo, and when he sees he is surrounded by a halo of fluttering fans, his lined face darkens.

Elliendo stalks away from the stands and mounts the stairs, followed as usual by two hulking Hellknights. I begin to frame a prayer for rotting steps before deciding that's too much to ask, even on Judgment Day. On the scaffold, Elliendo peers north at the approach of the golden Royal Carriage down the Imperial Promenade. He snaps his fingers, and the clown retreats behind the canvas to a clatter of applause. Once the carriage halts and the window shades rise just enough for the occupant—no doubt some minor Palace official, rather than the Queen herself—to peer out, the canvas on the scaffold falls away to reveal the Instruments of Judgment.

In the center is a blazing furnace in the shape of a three-faced devil. From each of its gaping jaws juts a bramble of iron implements: knives, spears, chains, rods, brands, and most conspicuous of all the Tines of Cheliox. Each is a two-pronged fork sized for a stone giant, and today there are two of them.

Arrayed between the furnaces are racks of torture devices retrieved from every civilized nation on Golarion, and several not so civilized. The spiked cages of Geb are a crowd favorite, and two of them already hold prisoners. One is a fat man who begins screaming the moment he is revealed, while the other is pock-faced Gellius Bonner, the Butcher of Merrow Lane.

I fell into the Bonner case when the boss sent me to nose around the tannery across the river. I was supposed to catch a stable master selling the carcasses of his lady's mysteriously sickened horses. That went nowhere, but I spied the tanner sneaking out of his own home well past midnight. Curious, I followed him into town, expecting to discover nothing more than a mistress in some Cheapside flat. Instead, he led me to Bonner's shop, where he joined six men wearing crude robes. Bonner greeted them with some fiendish phrase, though I could understand only a few words before he led them downstairs. I let myself in for a peek. When I saw the yak-headed thing Bonner conjured and what they intended to offer it, I ran to Greensteeples and beat on the boss's door until his sleepy halfling butler woke him. With a few questions, Jeggare confirmed that the cult was demonic, not diabolic, so he sent a message directly to the Temple of Asmodeus, who in turn asked the Hellknights to capture the cultists, minus a few who resisted arrest. They even recovered two boys who had not yet been devoured.

The discovery broke the cases of more than a dozen missing children, disappearances that Elliendo had publicly sworn to solve. As he was not on duty that night, he was surprised to hear the criers' announcement of another mystery solved by the celebrated Varian Jeggare.

If it were for the murders alone, Bonner might have met his Judgment at the edge of an axe or, if it were only one or two killings, in hard labor for a decade. The devil-worshipping lords of Cheliox, however, do not suffer the denizens of the Abyss in the city. For consorting with demons, Bonner earned his special voyage to Hell.

While not an admirer of the spectacle, I make a point of witnessing the Judgment of anyone convicted on one of our cases. This time, the boss insisted that I bring something to confirm it was Bonner and not some magic-masked substitute who did the dance of the Tines. He sent me to the Plaza of Flowers with a couple of sakava leaves plucked fresh from a plant in his greenhouse.

Once the Instruments are unveiled, four proper heralds stand on the corners of the scaffold and announce the list of Judgments. Behind them, brawny shirtless men in red hoods prepare the braces for the Tines.

When a couple of the big men unlock Bonner's cage, I slip the sakava leaves from a sleeve pocket. The size of my thumbs, they are thick green ovals with tiny white hairs

glistening with oil. Just before I crush them, someone calls my name.

She is taller than me, which is not too uncommon, but most of that height comes from a pair of legs snugged in black calfskin trousers with tiny stars and suns cut out along the outer seam to reveal bare skin. Her blouse hangs loose except in just the right places to make a celibate throw himself off the roof. Her big hazel eyes are too far apart with heavy eyebrows, but they look fine above a long nose pierced above one nostril with a tiny ruby. The stone sets off a hint of late-summer red in her brown hair.

I'm staring at her over the little green leaves.

"Are you Radovan?" she asks again. I could listen to her say my name all day, but then she ruins it by adding, "Count Jeggare's servant?"

"His bodyguard." Immediately I think of three or four suave answers.

"My messages to Greensteeples have gone unanswered, and I require the count's assistance," she says. "And naturally his utmost discretion."

"Naturally," I say, but before I can give her the pitch, I feel a sharp poke just below my shoulder blade.

"Say goodbye to the girly, copper-tongue," reeks a voice inches beneath my ear. I know who it is from the stench of garlic and boiled eggs.

"Not now, Ursio." I try to sound casual, but the scratch he gave me starts to itch. Out of the corners of my eyes I see a couple of shapes that must be his backup. "I'll stay in this very public place while you and your playmates go climb your thumbs."

"These bolts are tipped with black lotus venom," says Ursio, and I know it's his treasured hand crossbow with its steel "fangs" jammed into my back. "You'll be dead before your body hits the street."

It seems unlikely that Ursio has acquired the deadly and expensive poison, but on the scaffold I see the hooded men dragging Bonner to a table, where a third man awaits with a pair of curved knives held high for the crowd's acclaim.

I crush the leaves and wipe their oily surfaces over my eyes. It stings at first, and then my vision blurs

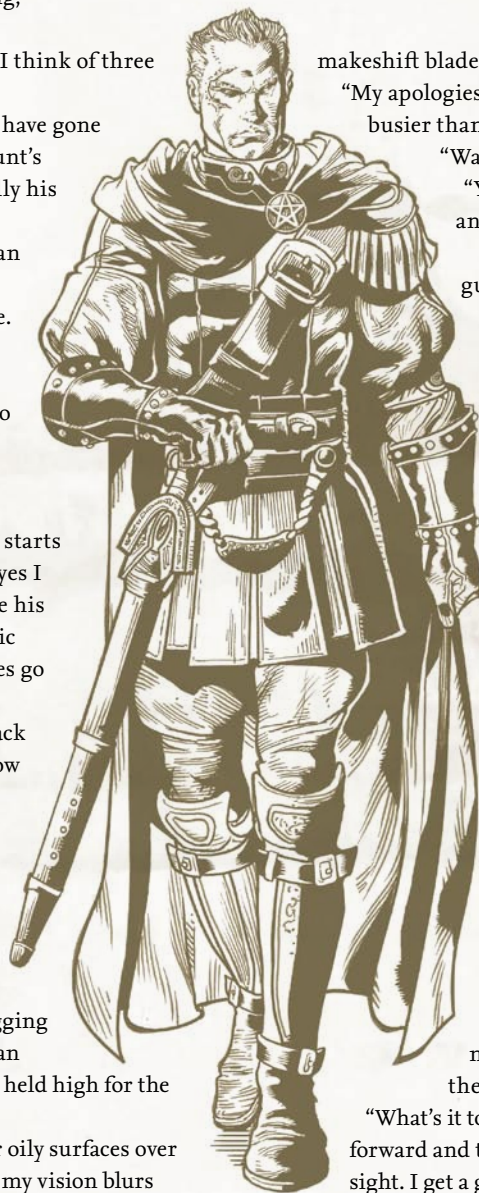
and snaps back to vivid clarity, better than my usual vision but with an unreal heightening of every hue. Bonner looks the same, although his fervid muttering breaks into a panicked gobble. I'm not sure the sakava leaves have done their magic, but then I notice a fiery halo around one of the hooded men. Behind him, huge leathery wings twitch as his fellows hold Bonner screaming to the table.

"Now," says Ursio. He shoves hard enough to make me drop the leaves.

"Zandros said to bring him back in one—" One of the figures behind me has a boy's voice with a country drawl, cut off by a smart crack to the head.

"Quiet," says a third voice just behind my elbow. He snuffles back a load of phlegm, and I know it is Rennie the Quick, a halfling notorious for the instant conjuration of

"ELLIENDO ISN'T EXACTLY FOND OF ME. OR ANYONE."



makeshift blades.

"My apologies," I say to the woman. "My schedule is busier than I thought."

"Wait," she says. "Where will I meet you?"

"You won't," says Ursio. He pulls my arm and shoves his weapon into my back.

Rennie grabs the other arm, and they guide me away from the crowd. Behind us, Bonner screams like a damned soul, which soon won't be a simile. I know what the torturers are doing to him, but I'm glad I don't have to watch as they slice open his skin to sew in packets of writhing scarabs imported from the dank crypts of Katapesh.

Ursio and his henchmen guide me into the narrow alley just north of Mercy Street. We thread our way through a platoon of cooks grilling skewered meat over coals. Whenever one notices the crossbow pressed against my back, Ursio growls a threat that stifles all curiosity.

Eventually we turn off the main alley into a cul-de-sac containing a sewer grate. While I know Ursio has gotten his hands wet for Zandros more than once, I remember what the boy said. No one knows the sewers better than Rennie, so he is the one usually sent to deliver messages or escort those summoned to the Goat Pen unseen.

"What's it to be, boys?" I take a couple of big steps forward and turn around with my hands in clear sight. I get a good look at them.

The Plaza of Flowers

The boy is pale as harvest straw, and he weighs about as much as two handfuls of the stuff. The way he keeps glancing at Rennie and Ursio for direction, he must be a raw recruit. He holds a broken chair leg close to his hip, afraid someone will spot him with the weapon.

Ursio looks the same as when I first met him, as if someone had taken a proper dwarf and dragged him through a garbage dump. The beads and fetishes tied in his tangled beard look more like the detritus of last week's suppers, and he has more brown teeth than yellow. The last two fingers of his right hand once fed a shark, or a crocodile, or a bunyip, depending on which story you hear. I like to think he lost them in a bet.

Rennie, on the other hand, looks nothing like I remember. The halfling's always been known as "the Quick" among the Goatherds, a gang so mean and ugly that I had to leave on account of my good looks. Now I see that "Ratface" would suit him better, because in the weirdly sharp vision of the sakava leaves, I see his usually pocked face smoothed over with brown-black fur, his prominent nose elongated into the pointed snout of a halfling-sized rodent.

I gape at Rennie, maybe a little too obviously, but the boy buys it and takes a step back. Ursio ignores my mugging, but he spares Rennie a glance before fixing his tiny black eyes on me. "Zandros wants a word."

Obviously they see a halfling, not a wererat.

"They have no idea, do they, Rennie?"

The halfling scowls, confused but with a dawning realization hardening his jaw.

The boy takes another step back. Ursio jabs his crossbow at me. "None of your tricks, Hell-spawn."

"The trick is on you," I say. "Or have you always known why Rennie knows the sewers so well?"

"I'll cut you," hisses Rennie. A blade fashioned out of a blacksmith's rule appears in his furry grip. Even as I tense for an attack, the sakava vision wavers, and I see Rennie as the others do. The rat was cuter.

"Those leaves I rubbed on my eyes show me things the way they are," I say. "You're still ass-ugly, and the kid is a kid, but Rennie here is one of those wererats Zandros thought we wiped out last—"

I leap back just in time to avoid a slash across the belly, but Rennie nicks my favorite jacket. My back hits the alley wall, and I kick Rennie in the chest, forcing him back.

"Stop it!" shouts Ursio. The point of his crossbow drifts away from me, but I'm not close enough to make it work. I stagger a few steps closer to him, pretending to move away from Rennie.

"He's tricking you," cries Rennie. He turns toward Ursio, losing his halfling appearance along with his temper. "You halfwit!"

Ursio's face twists up as he retreats. Rennie should know better than to insult the sensitive dwarf.

"Don't you talk to me that way, you sniveling slip!" He points his bow directly at Rennie, whose mutton-chop whiskers have spread over half his elongating face.

Rennie hisses, and the boy falls over himself trying to get away. He knocks his head against a box of coals and lies stunned on the street. The diversion is enough for me to reach Ursio.

I grab the crossbow just as he starts to turn it toward me. He pulls the trigger, but the string snaps over my hand, flipping the bolt harmlessly against the alley wall. I kick him behind the knees and he falls, still gripping his weapon. I bring my elbow down on his arm and hear a satisfying crack as my spur splits the bone.

Ursio screams as I spin away. Rennie is no fool. Seeing Ursio crippled, he leaps toward me.

His whole body transforms, claws tearing through his soft leather shoes to let his black nails clatter on the cobblestones. He is even bigger than before, swelled with blood as he scrabbles toward me. I carry no weapon potent enough to slay a lycanthrope, and Rennie knows it.

Just then, a thunderous roar fills the alley. Rennie freezes, his ruff standing out from his neck, whiskers twitching. The roar becomes a rumbling growl moving closer to our sewer niche. It is unmistakably the sound of a great cat.

Rennie squeals and leaps past me, wrenching the sewer grate away and vanishing into the stinking hole. I consider following him, but then a shadow falls upon me.

The woman from the plaza peers around the corner cautiously, a thin scroll dangling from her hand. The glittering mist from the expended magic trails off the parchment. She glances at the sewer entrance, then down the alley where I see Ursio staggering away, cradling his broken arm. Not far away, the boy moans and clutches his head. I offer him my hand.

"You all right, kid?"

He hesitates, eyes wide.

"I'm not going to hurt you," I say. "What's your name?"

He takes my hand and I pull him to his feet. "Gruck," he says.

"What about you?" The woman touches my arm. "Are you all right?"

"Never better," I tell her. "Thanks to your little trick."

"Oh, that was nothing," she says. "Just a little exercise I'd been copying."

She sees me looking past her shoulder and turns to see Ivo Elliendo flanked by his Hellknights. Beside me, the kid gulps, and I lay a heavy hand on his shoulder to keep him calm and still.

"What is this commotion?" demands Elliendo. His eyes have already lit upon Ursio's dropped crossbow, and he idly smacks his folded gloves against his left palm.

"My friend Gruck here was just delivering a piece of evidence," I say. "This crossbow might have been used in some Cheapside robberies last year. Gruck found it in a pawn shop and thought of me."

Elliendo steps closer, and his Hellknights step behind us to cut off escape. They bring a whiff of brimstone into the alley.

"I heard a loud noise," says Elliendo. He slaps my hand away from Gruck's shoulder with his gloves and chucks the boy under the chin to get a good look at his face. The scrapes are obvious. "Has this half-breed assaulted you, boy?"

The kid doesn't even flick his eyes toward me as he says, "No, I fell."

"Ah," says Elliendo. "How did you fall, boy? What precisely caused your fall?"

"It was—I saw a rat run out at me. A big rat."

"Indeed," says Elliendo. "That does not explain the sound."

"Biggest alley cat you ever saw," I say, holding my hands about three feet apart.

"I asked the boy, tiefling. When I desire your—"

"It's true, Paralictor," says the woman.

Elliendo peers down at her. "And who might you be, Miss...?"

"Henderthane," she says. "Pavanna Henderthane."

Elliendo's stern countenance melts into a gentler expression. "My condolences. Einmarch Henderthane was a loyal servant of the crown." He seems ready to say something more, but he glances at me and the kid before deciding against it. "I trust whatever business you have with this person is nothing to do with—"

"It is a personal matter, Paralictor," she says. "I know you understand."

His curt frown says he may understand, but he doesn't like it. "Very well," he says. "I see no reason to delay you further. Good day, Miss Henderthane." Ignoring Gruck and me, he clicks his heels and nods a bow toward her before pivoting on his heel and striding away with his Hellknights in tow. I like the way his half-cloak swirls when he does that. He must spend hours in front of the mirror practicing.

"Nice job, kid." I turn toward Gruck, but he is already trotting down the alley. I shrug and collect Ursio's crossbow and the misfired bolt. Sniffing it, I am relieved to detect the stench of sewer moss, not a proper poison. My scratch will itch for a while, but I won't need to spend my savings on a magical cure. I look at Pavanna and say, "I owe you one."

"Then get me an interview with Count Jeggare." She smiles, as pleased by the game as by her success at it.

"It doesn't work like that," I tell her. Before she can protest, I add, "But I'll see what I can do. Let's discuss it over a couple of ales."

"You're buying," she says. That's all right by me.

Three hours later I hop over the wall behind the boss's gardens, wave to the groundskeeper, and let myself in through the kitchen door. Inside, I bump into Malla, a plump human almost as short as her lone slip assistant. The place smells of fresh rye, and I make a show of craning my neck to spot a loaf to filch while snaking a hand in to pinch her bottom. She shakes a rolling pin at me. Our daily pantomime.

"How is the weather upstairs?" I ask.

"Gloomy," she says. "His lordship was asking after you."

I wind my way through the labyrinth of the servants' area and up the stairs to the foyer, where I glance up. The enormous portrait of Pontia Jeggare stares down with an expression of stern benevolence. I never met the boss's mother, of course, but even eighty years after her funeral, she remains the lady of the house. I tip her a wink, because I think she'd have liked me.

The butler intercepts me at the top of the steps. His arms are full of parcels and letters, an overwhelming load for a halfling.

"Make yourself useful," he says, thrusting his burden toward me. He nods in the direction of the library.

The boss still calls it the library even though the two floors of ceiling-high bookshelves are hidden by a calamity of bric-a-brac. On three long tables filling half the lower floor is an array of stuffed and mounted creatures. Among the dead menagerie are jars of dried plants, bones, rocks, muddy fluids, and a few nasty-looking creatures preserved in dark liquids. There are weapons and parts of weapons, costumes from far countries, paintings and carvings, shards of pottery, animal skins, nautical devices, dwarven measuring tools, brushes, clamps, magnifying glasses, and terrariums. The place looks like a warehouse full of all the confiscated belongings of a legion of crackpots and packrats.

The other half of the room contains several globes of the world, and models of the nearby worlds in a gnome-built contraption the boss calls an orrery. More than anything else, on easels and tables and podiums, the boss has maps. A few are the grand inked and illustrated maps agreed upon by sages and ministers of states, but most are hand-drawn, some of them so recently or so long ago that charcoal dust rises from the parchment at a touch.

The boss slumps in a stuffed leather chair by the fire, one knee hooked over the arm. A fine crystal glass full of a concoction he calls Faerie Fire dangles from his long fingers. That's a bad sign, because the potent liquor puts him in a darker mood when he's been brooding, as he has ever since the Bonner case.

"I know what will cheer you up," I say, setting the parcels down on another chair. "We have a new challenge." The boss doesn't like "cases," "jobs,"

The Plaza of Flowers

or “missions.” He likes “problems,” “puzzles,” and “conundrums.”

He sighs and runs a hand through his black hair, thick and long as a horse’s tail. His dark violet eyes are half-lidded, and I would almost swear his tapered, half-elven ears are drooping just before he leaps out of the chair.

“They’re here!” He tears open one of the parcels and sets aside a stack of journals. The second is a small crate that he fumbles over for a moment before letting me pry off the lid. He reaches in and from the packing straw withdraws a mask of painted mahogany. It is the face of a Mwangi spirit. This I know because of some of the boss’s previous acquisitions, all of them sent by the so-called Pathfinders who report their excursions to him.

Realizing I’ve lost his attention until he has revealed each of the new treasures and the accompanying reports, I take a seat. When he isn’t looking, I pour the remaining Faerie Fire into a potted Qadiran olive tree. As he reads the letters from his Pathfinders, I light one of those pungent Taldan cigars he detests. At first he is oblivious to the distraction, but then one of my smoke rings passes between his face and the vellum he is reading. He carefully refolds the letter and turns toward me, waving the fumes away until I stub out the cigar on the back of my hand and tuck the butt into a sleeve pocket.

“Out with it.”

I tell him Pavanna’s story.

“She believes her father was murdered despite the ruling of natural death.”

“Which it couldn’t have been,” I say, “because the cleric she hired to contact her father’s spirit can’t reach it.”

“That does not prove murder,” says Jeggare, “but it is an anomaly.”

“The real puzzle is why her brother would inherit the entire estate, after her father announced publicly that his will included a generous legacy for her.”

“It is not unusual for disinherited nobles to make such claims,” he says. “And the executor of Henderthane’s estate is reputable.”

“THE BOSS IS RELENTLESS IN HIS PURSUIT OF JUSTICE... WHEN HE FEELS LIKE IT.”

“But there was no bad blood between father and daughter, or even between brother and sister,” I say. “It’s a mystery.”

“No,” says Jeggare. He spots his empty glass and shoots me a suspicious glance. “It is a tedious family squabble.”

“What about the mother?” I say. “In the event of his death, she was to have received an annuity. It is common knowledge.”

“Yes,” says Jeggare, “it is common, tawdry, and completely devoid of gravity.”

He is in a particularly foul mood, and I don’t want to make it worse, but more than that I don’t want to tell Pavanna that I can’t return her favor.

“I suppose you’re right, boss,” I say. “Elliendo said you’d never take up this one.”

Sometimes that ploy works, but not this time.

With a bored sigh, Jeggare turns back to pluck at his Pathfinder reports.

“What could interest Jeggare about a disinherited opera singer?” he said. “I think I capture Elliendo’s sneering tone, even if perfect mimicry is not foremost among my talents. While he hasn’t been to the opera for months, it is one of Jeggare’s cyclical passions. “To him, the disgrace of Drulia Henderthane is far too sentimental an affair for him to risk his—”

“Drulia Henderthane?” says the boss.

“You neglected to mention that name.”

“She’s the mother.”

“I was there the night she performed.” His voice takes on a wistful tone, and for a moment I think I’m in for a story. Instead, he stares across the library, forgetting about the Pathfinder reports as his mind drifts back in time. I know better than to interrupt his reverie. It means he is reaching a decision. I

thrust my thumbs between my middle fingers for luck.

“Very well,” he says, striding to the wall where he pulls the cord to summon his butler. “I shall send a message to House Henderthane. While we await a reply, wash yourself. You smell of sulfur and the sewers, and also of an expensive Andoren perfume.”

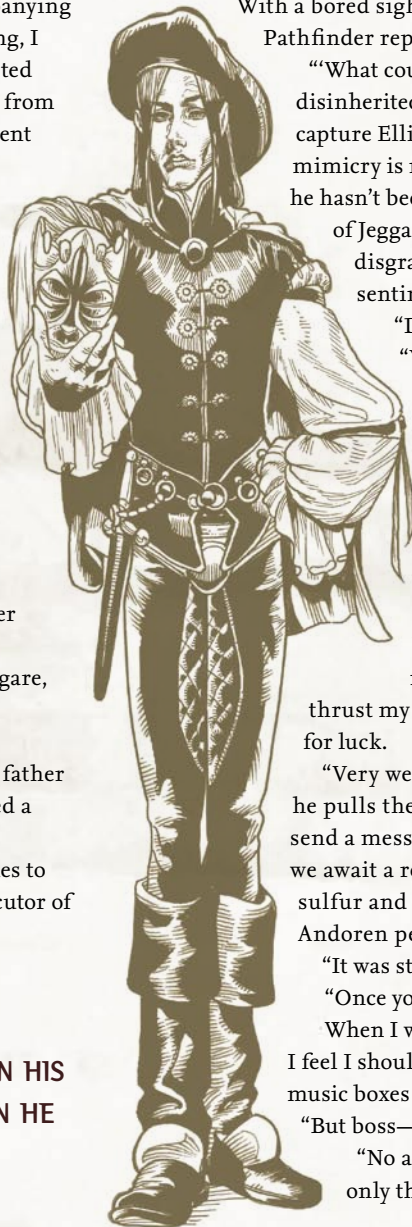
“It was strictly business, boss.”

“Once you are clean, fetch your livery.”

When I wear that ridiculous footman’s costume, I feel I should be grinding one of those dwarven music boxes and capering for coppers in the street.

“But boss—”

“No arguments,” he says, and I know this is only the beginning of his revenge.









BESTIARY SYMBOLS

Creature Type

-  Aberration
-  Animal
-  Construct
-  Dragon
-  Fey
-  Humanoid
-  Magical Beasts
-  Monstrous Humanoid
-  Plant
-  Ooze
-  Outsider
-  Undead
-  Vermin

Climate

-  Extraplanar
-  Temperate
-  Cold
-  Tropical

Environment

-  Forest/Jungle
-  Desert
-  Hill
-  Mountain
-  Plain
-  Ruins
-  Swamp
-  Sky
-  Underground
-  Urban
-  Water

Bestiary

Abandoned and wanting on that blackened shore I waited, alone with my enemy, the vicious, patient sea. Eighty-four days of starvation and scorn, eighty-four days of battling the unwearying beast. Here was my crucible, here was my Hell—yet I refused to burn. My travail had brought transformation, my rod become a crooked lance, my salt-soaked hat a helm, the arms of a victory I would not be refused. I lasted the death of a hundred thousand waves. I gritted through the freezing breath that had claimed so many men. No trick of this endless beast would cow me, no death would force my defeat.

But on the eighty-fifth, the harlot deep choked up her spawn—her needle-teeth, her gibbering revenge—and on saffron wings they stole my sanity away.

—From *The Madness of Lostmast*, by Actino Manolin

Menaces inhabiting the streets and sewers of Westcrown, as well as beings haunting the shadows of Chelias, come together in this installment of the Pathfinder Bestiary. Within the dark and forgotten reaches of Westcrown creep the disgusting torble, the amorphous shadowgarm, and countless forms of repulsive parasites. The wild coasts of the infernal empire also serve as the home and hunting ground of the irritating gremlins known as hanivers and the sinister winged strix of Devil's Perch. The denizens of Hell also begin their march this month, with the least of their number, the blazing ukobach, bringing burning death to all who would oppose the whims of the archdevils. Chelias is a dangerous place, and those who fall here risk losing much more than just their lives.

COUNCIL OF MONSTERS

The Council of Thieves Adventure Path brings with it a host of new monsters, both to supplement each volume's adventure and to aid GMs in exploring Chelias and Golarion far beyond the walls of Westcrown. Over the course of this series, readers can expect a wide range of beings tied to each month's plots and themes. In addition, as the infernal themes of Council of Thieves draw upon many of the fiendish elements of the Pathfinder Chronicles product *Princes of Darkness: Book of the Damned Volume 1*, this and the next five Bestiaries each feature a new devil, continuing that tome's work of detailing and further swelling the ranks of Hell.

To aid in preparing GMs for what's coming in subsequent installments, here's a sneak peak at the monsters lurking just around the corner.

Pathfinder #25: Denizens of Chelias, a host of beasts from Westcrown and elsewhere in the infernal empire.

Pathfinder #26: Terrors of Nobility, creatures of assassination, honor, and ambition.

Pathfinder #27: Monsters of Treasure and Antiquity, exotic beasts and the bane of explorers.

Pathfinder #28: Hellspawn, Hellish natives beyond the infernal.

Pathfinder #29: Beings Beyond Shadow, the dooms that come from darkness.

Pathfinder #30: Masterminds and World-Ending Evils, high-level embodiments of the apocalypse.

WANDERING MONSTERS

Westcrown serves as both home and war zone for thousands of Chelaxians, as its abandoned northern reaches have given way to ruin, violence, and the worst humanity has to offer. In this urban wasteland lurk beasts and brigands, the scavengers of a splendid past and the terrors that would prey on such rabble. Presented here and in the random encounters sidebar

Westcrown Ruins Random Encounters

d%	Encounter	Avg. CR	Source
1–3	1d6 dire rats	1/3	<i>Bestiary</i> 232
4–7	1 giant centipede	1/2	<i>Bestiary</i> 43
8–10	1 guard dog	1/2	see page 40
11–15	1d6 dottari	1	see text
16–19	1d6 guard dogs	1	see page 40
20–22	1d4 sewer goblins	1	see page 22
23–24	1d6 skeletons	1	<i>Bestiary</i> 250
25–29	1 spider swarm	1	<i>Bestiary</i> 258
30–32	2d8 torbles	1	<i>Pathfinder</i> #25
33–34	1 tiefling fighter 2	1	see page 35
34–35	1d6 hanivers	2	<i>Pathfinder</i> #25
36–39	1 imp	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 78
40–42	1 rat swarm	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 232
43–46	1 shadowgarm	2	<i>Pathfinder</i> #25
47–51	1d10 skeletons	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 245
52–55	1d6 stirges	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 260
56–61	1d10 tiefling thugs	2	see page 39
62–64	1d6 thieves	2	see text
65–68	1 torble swarm	2	<i>Pathfinder</i> #25
69–73	1d6 zombies	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 288
74–76	1 allip	3	<i>Bonus Bestiary</i> 4
77–78	1 assassin vine	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 22
79–82	1 giant rot grub	3	<i>Pathfinder</i> #25
83–85	1 shadow	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 245
86–89	1d10 thieves	3	see text
90–91	1d4 venomous snakes	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 255
92–94	1 gargoye	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 137
95–96	1 otyugh	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 223
97–99	rot grub hazard	4	<i>Pathfinder</i> #25
100	1 shadow mastiff	5	<i>Bonus Bestiary</i> 16

* See paizo.com for the *Pathfinder RPG Bonus Bestiary*.

are just a few of the dangers PCs might encounter as they explore the walled-off northern reaches of the Wiscrani Dospera.

Dotarri: The dotarri are the Westcrown city guard. While many are upstanding peacekeepers, others—especially those who might be wandering the Dospera—are corrupt and likely up to some mischief or criminal venture. To approximate a typical dotarri, use the stats for a Hellknight armiger, presented on page 21.

Thieves: Characters might encounter a wide variety of scavengers, criminals, miscreants, and other ne'er-dowells in their exploration of Westcrown's ruins. These might be disorganized brigands, thugs, con men, or even members of the Bastards of Erebus. Such thieves might use the statistics for tiefling rogues, present on page 264 of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*. An encounter with 1d6 CR 1/2 thieves is a CR 2 encounter, while an encounter with 1d10 CR 1/2 thieves is a CR 3 encounter.

Council of Thieves

GREMLIN, HANIVER

This small, bizarre humanoid creature has strange yellow skin and tiny black eyes that burn with malevolence. It grins at its prey with a mouth filled with sharp, needle-like teeth. Its long tail and fins flap around wildly whether it flies through the air or swims through the water.

HANIVER

CR 1/2



XP 200

N Tiny fey (aquatic)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+1 Dex, +2 size)

hp 4 (1d6+1)

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2

DR 2/cold iron; **SR** 8

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., fly 20 ft. (average), swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +1 (1d3-1)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks misplacement

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st)

At will—*prestidigitation*, *ventriloquism* (DC 12)

1/day—*scare* (DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +0; **CMB** -3; **CMD** 8

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Disguise +7, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +13,

Swim +11; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Disguise, +2 Sleight of Hand

Language Common, Sylvan

SQ amphibious

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate coasts

Organization solitary, pair, or swarm (4-12)

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Misplacement (Su) Hanivers are swift and curious, possessing an uncanny ability to meddle with the possessions of any character whose square they enter. Any time a haniver makes a Sleight of Hand check against a creature, it also rearranges its possessions. The next time that creature attempts to produce a weapon or item it finds its possessions misplaced or disarranged, thus requiring a standard action instead of a move action to retrieve a stored item or draw a weapon (unless the haniver has stolen the item in question). After spending this standard action, the character takes mental inventory and is no longer affected by this ability.

Occasionally, hanivers replace items they've stolen or leave their old treasures—seashells, old fish, clumps of sand—in containers or clothing they have rooted through. They do this without any added difficulty to their Sleight of Hand checks.

Haniver gremlins haunt the stories of sailors and fishing communities, featuring prominently in parables told to naughty children by disapproving parents. A thousand such tales exist, each a variation on a common theme—the gremlins flap up from the sea, startle nasty fishermen or disobedient youths, and make off with their trinkets. Yet as is rarely the case with such tales, nearly every word of these stories—no matter how unlikely or comic—proves near to the truth.

Strange fey creatures that enjoy skimming whitecaps, flipping horseshoe crabs, and fatalistically teasing dolphins and sharks, hanivers endlessly indulge a mad racial curiosity. Such is their obsession that every haniver must know what is under every rock, in every basket, and beneath every hat. Should they like what they find, they typically attempt to make off with it, clinging to their prize like a beloved heirloom until the next curiosity or shiny treasure catches their attention. Hanivers have no concept of worth, though they know much of desirability, and might hang onto an item they would otherwise discard in moments if another creature—or former owner—expresses desire for it. The gremlins don't steal out of any sense of maliciousness, but merely out of curiosity and selfishness. The most intelligent occasionally even believe that they're trading, leaving behind old "treasures"—often strange or natural items that barely fit the description—in place of things they've claimed. Regardless, folklore advises those who have something stolen by a haniver to simply abandon it rather than face the frustration of attempting to rescue it—hence the tendency of fishermen to blame the hanivers whenever something goes missing.

Hanivers possess flat, leathery bodies with only a few thin bones. Most stand little more than a foot tall and 1-1/2 feet across, and weigh less than 5 pounds.

Ecology

Strange beings, even for fey, haniver gremlins bear similarities to both sprites and some breeds of coastal fish. Their fin-like wings grant them great mobility, both above and below the waves, aiding in their odd habit of flitting in and out of rolling waves. Sets of tiny gills and lungs alike allow them to survive in both environments, making them strangely oblivious to the quandaries of those that cannot. If forced to the ground, a haniver moving along land is a pitiful sight, as it scrabbles its way across the earth with its feeble claws and flops like a fish at the bottom of a boat.

Habitat & Society

Hanivers rarely travel far from the ocean, preferring the coast both for the comfort of salt water and for the strange things they often find washed up on beaches.

Bestiary

Even though they don't require water to live, their leathery bodies dry out over time, becoming chafed and stiff. Thus, few hanivers spend more than an hour out of the water. These gremlins rarely keep lairs or places they call theirs, though most favor small flat underwater crevices or gaps in sea cliffs on those rare occasions when they feel like sleeping. Some hanivers keep small troves for their treasures, and such nooks might be numerous and any place a gremlin deems safe.

Often seeming oblivious to others of their kind, or even avoiding them—fleeing from those who might also take a fancy to objects that fascinate them—hanivers occasionally travel together in small mobs. Banding together for safety as they flit across and below coastal waves, these gremlins can prove incredibly frustrating, even dangerous, should they notice something of interest en masse. Ships at sea, lone fishermen, and even whales and some other forms of large marine life go out of their way to avoid swarms of hanivers. Those that don't risk finding themselves captured amid a storm of inexplicably terrifying, flapping pests, their every possession pilfered by the quick-fingered gremlins.

Treasure

With no real care for the treasures they collect or interest in items of value, hanivers swipe things based wholly on whether an object strikes their curiosity. Certain objects are guaranteed haniver bait, most specifically any object with a lid or flap or anything that shines. As such, chests, packs, boxes, and tents prove irresistible to these gremlins, as do metal arms and armor, coins, gems, lanterns, fishing lures, buttons, sea shells, and the like—the shinier, the better. Additionally, every haniver has its own favorite treasures, and while one might need to claim every new feather it sees, another might obsess over objects that look like they'd make an entertaining noise when dropped from a height. Such fascinations are never malicious, but occasionally lead hanivers to imperil delicate objects or small creatures. On the other hand, hanivers' fixations can sometime prove their undoing, as these thieves' curiosity about closed spaces make these unsuspecting gremlins notoriously easy to capture, and other curiosities might directly lead to messy ends as they attempt to steal from animals, working machinery, or—most commonly—angry humanoids.

Hanivers occasionally collect items that prove durable and particularly pleasing. Such treasures they place in out-

of-the-way hidey-holes, such as underwater crevices, high tree hollows, and gaps underneath loose shingles. While such collections usually prove worthless, containing only bits of glass, pieces of paper, bent nails, or children's toys, some fishermen tell of the fortunate costermonger whose chimney rained gold—the result of a coin-collecting haniver's poor choice in hiding spots.

As Hanivers are widely reviled by sailors and any who dwell along the coast, many town constabularies or old timers hold to an age-old tradition of paying a copper for the body of a haniver. Legends say that the gremlins fear the bodies of their own kind and will avoid any house that nails a dead haniver above its door, or the fisherman who carries a haniver corpse amid his tackle. The only problem is that, unless properly prepared and dried (requiring a DC 11 Craft [leather] or Profession [fisherman] check), haniver flesh begins to reek terribly about an hour after death, much like the smell of week-old fish. To approximate such gruesome talismans, children in many coastal communities enjoy “candied gremlins”—haniver-shaped dried fish or ray covered in salt and sticky sugar.



Council of Thieves

ROT GRUB

A nauseating carpet of wriggling white grubs erupts from the corpse's flank, undulating outward in a wave of pallid hunger.

ROT GRUB SWARM

CR 7



XP 3,200

N Fine vermin (swarm)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 20, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +8 size)

hp 85 (10d8+40)

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; **Immune** mind-affecting effects, weapon damage

Weakness swarm traits

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee swarm (2d6 plus distraction and infestation)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 19), infestation

STATISTICS

Str 1, **Dex** 15, **Con** 18, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 1

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

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Infestation (Ex) Any living creature that takes damage from a rot grub swarm becomes infested unless he makes a DC 19 Reflex save. An infested creature takes 1d6 points of Constitution damage per round as the rot grubs inside him consume his flesh—this damage continues even if the victim escapes the swarm's square. If the victim is targeted with any area-effect fire attack before he suffers his second round of infestation, the grubs in his body are slain and the infestation ends, but the sheer number of grubs makes cutting them out impossible. Any effect that cures disease (such as *remove disease* or *heal*) also halts the infestation and kills the grubs, but immunity to disease offers no defense against infestation. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rot grubs are nauseating parasites that feed on flesh and use corpses as nests in which to grow. While a rot grub can derive nourishment from dead flesh, its true hunger is for the flesh of the living—live flesh greatly accelerates a rot grub's growth to adulthood. A grub with only a corpse to feed on can take weeks to complete its transformation into the short-lived, skittering, yellow-orange arachnid that is its adult form, but a grub that finds living prey gnaws its way through the body and gorges on live flesh, then nests in the resulting corpse and grows to adulthood in a matter of hours. An adult rot grub lives for only a few

hours—long enough for it to lay dozens of eggs within the body of its old host before it dies. The new grubs that hatch grow slowly unless a new host wanders by.

Thankfully, rot grub swarms occur only rarely, as they require the infested carcass of a Huge or larger creature and many weeks to build up in the amounts necessary to constitute a swarm. When this occurs—after the grubs have finally skeletonized their host—they erupt and seethe across the ground, a hideous carpet of pale flesh that, unlike smaller groups of rot grubs, actively seeks out living flesh to consume. Once formed, a rot grub swarm is self-sustaining; the vermin quickly devour creatures they slay and move on. When individual grubs mature in a swarm, they are quickly eaten by those grubs yet to achieve adulthood.

Swarms of rot grubs are single-minded in their purpose, and know only hunger. They are voracious, and never stop moving or pursuing flesh that can be eaten. As long as consumable flesh exists, they replenish their numbers at a speed such that they never need to stop to rest. Swarms of rot grubs have been known to cross vast expanses of land like flesh-eating floods, consuming all living creatures that they happen to encounter. These menaces arise most frequently in warm, moist environs, but prove tenacious and might be found in nearly any unfrozen clime.

GIANT ROT GRUB

This twitching, pale yellow maggot is the size of a large dog. A four-jawed mouth twitches and gasps at one end of its pulsating body.

GIANT ROT GRUB

CR 3



XP 800

N Small vermin

Init +1; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 size)

hp 34 (4d8+16)

Fort +8, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d6+3 plus poison and grab)

Special Attacks gnaw

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 12, **Con** 18, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

ECOLOGY

Environment any

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

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Gnaw (Ex) A rot grub that is grappling a foe and chooses to damage the foe with an additional grapple check inflicts twice

its normal bite damage (2d6+6 for most giant rot grubs), in addition to injecting an additional dose of poison with each successful check.

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 16; *frequency* 1/round for 5 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Strength damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Sometimes a rot grub's transformation into an adult simply fails to trigger. In this case, the mutant grub continues to feed and grow, eventually reaching its maximum size and becoming a venomous giant rot grub. At this size, the rot grub ceases its parasitic behavior and functions more like a predator, scouring the region for living creatures to feed upon.

Although it proves notoriously difficult to predict what circumstances might lead to the growth of a giant rot grub, many seem to arise from swarms allowed to feed upon the flesh of dragons, be they true wyrms or other breeds. While these giants can't be trusted to arise from every draconic meal a rot grub swarm ingests, the frequency with which they do proves statistically higher.

Rot Grubs as Hazards (CR 4)

Smaller groups of normal-sized rot grubs do not constitute a swarm, but even individually they're quite dangerous. Generally, a handful of the grubs infest a single corpse at a time, and a DC 15 Perception check is enough to note the infestation before the grubs have a chance to attack anything living that comes in contact with the corpse. If the Perception check is failed, 1d6 grubs swiftly burst from the carcass to burrow into the creature, which can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid the grubs (but only if the creature is aware of the grubs' presence).

Once rot grubs are burrowing in a living body, the host must make a DC 17 Fortitude save each round. Failure results in 2 points of Constitution damage per grub infesting the victim—at Constitution 0, the rot grubs have reached the host's heart, brain, and other key internal organs and death occurs.

On the first round of infestation, applying flame to the point of entry can kill the grubs and save the host, but this inflicts 1d6 points of fire damage to the victim. Cutting the grubs out also works, but the longer the grubs remain in a host, the more damage this method does. For each round that the grubs have remained in a host, cutting them out requires a slashing weapon and a DC 20 Heal check, and inflicts 1d6 points of damage per round that the host has been infested. On a successful Heal check, the grubs are removed. A *remove disease* spell (or similar effect) instantly halts the infestation, but as the grubs themselves are parasites, immunity to disease offers no protection against infestation.

The Rot Grub Legacy

Rot grubs have been menacing PCs for decades. Traditionally, the grubs are dangerous en masse but individually quite harmless. The variant rot grubs presented here serve different roles than the traditional rot grub—the rot grub swarm is a deadly mid-level monstrosity, while the solitary giant rot grub is a lower-level threat that has traded efficiency for sluggish size and strength. GMs interested in presenting the PCs with a more traditional rot grub should consult the *Tome of Horrors Revised*, page 421, for rules on using rot grubs as a hazard. Those rules are converted to the Pathfinder RPG here.

Any amount of damage reduction is enough to provide immunity to infestation, however.

Infested Undead

Since rot grubs only feed on living flesh and use dead flesh as an incubator, undead are not harmed by infestations of the parasites. A corporeal, non-skeletal undead infested with rot grubs transfers one rot grub to any creature that touches it or to any creature it strikes with a touch attack or with any natural attack. The target may make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being infested, but otherwise is immediately subjected to a single grub burrowing through his flesh. A rot-grub-infested undead's CR increases by +1.



SHADOWGARM

This amorphous creature loosely resembles a cross between a large snake and an insect. It has black oily skin, and parts of its very flesh blend seamlessly into the shadows. Its constantly moving, writhing form makes it difficult to identify from a distance.

SHADOWGARM

CR 2



XP 600

NE Medium aberration (extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

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

hp 19 (3d8+6)

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

Defensive Abilities feather fall, shadow blend; **SR** 7

Weaknesses light fixation

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee 3 claws +4 (1d4+2 plus shadow slime)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 5, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Climb +14, Perception +6, Stealth +6 (+10 in dim light);

Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth in dim light

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Plane of Shadow)

Organization solitary or gathering (2–12)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Feather Fall (Ex) A shadowgarm's body is both light and consists of numerous folds of thin flesh. Although it cannot fly, a falling shadowgarm always descends as if under the effects of a *feather fall* spell, and thus never takes falling damage.

Light Fixation (Su) Although a shadowgarm is not particularly harmed by bright light, it prefers dim lighting. Magical light, on the other hand, causes a shadowgarm to grow slow and lethargic. Whenever a shadowgarm is within an area of bright light that is magically created, it is staggered.

Shadow Blend (Su) In conditions of dim light, a shadowgarm's outline wavers and blends with the surrounding shadows, granting it concealment (20% miss chance) even if its opponents are capable of seeing clearly in dim light.

Shadow Slime (Su) A shadowgarm is coated with a thin layer of oily black slime. Whenever it strikes a foe, it transfers a swath of this cold black slime onto the creature struck. This slime causes a growing numbness and lethargy in the bodies of those it coats. Each time a creature takes damage from a shadowgarm's claws, the creature struck must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or take a cumulative –2 penalty to its Dexterity score. A creature whose total Dexterity penalty equals its Dexterity score is paralyzed and blinded as long as the penalty

remains in effect. All accrued Dexterity penalties fade an hour after the last time the victim was affected by shadow slime, but any new shadow slime resets the recovery period. Exposure to bright light of any sort causes the Dexterity penalty to lessen by 2 points per round until all of the shadow slime is effectively “burned away” by the light. A shadowgarm is immune to the effects of its shadow slime and the shadow slime of other shadowgarms. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Shadowgarms are strange monsters from the Plane of Shadow, where they function as lowly predators and pests somewhat akin to the Material Plane's coyotes, leopards, and similar hunting mammals. Yet to a creature unfamiliar with the workings of the Plane of Shadow, the shadowgarm is a hideous and frightening beast. Generally lairing in ruined sections of towns or dead-end alleys clogged with refuse during the day, they come out at night to prey upon creatures that stray too far from the safety of light. These aberrant predators “leak” into the Material Plane anywhere the Plane of Shadow's influence is strong. Small groups of shadowgarms are occasionally seen lurking in old graveyards where undead (particularly shadows) are known to reside, and anywhere that has strong traditions of shadow magic tends to have a healthy population of shadowgarms lurking in out-of-the-way areas as well.

The typical shadowgarm measures about 4-1/2 feet long and weighs approximately 90 pounds, their bodies being strangely light, composed of a spongy dark matter and seemingly wisps of shadow itself. Some, however, grow to be much larger, though shadowgarms of all sizes prove especially adept at blending in among the shadows and detritus of their hunting grounds or crawling into crevices it seems creatures of their size would not be able to squeeze.

Ecology

Strange beings with a little-understood physiology, shadowgarms prove endlessly hungry, taking sustenance from shadow as if it were water and drawing nutrition from the flesh of other creatures as their only source of food. Shadowgarms can eat and digest any sort of animal matter, from flesh to bone, converting them into little more than smoke and shadow. A creature left to a shadowgarm to feed upon leaves behind nothing but trappings of metal and similarly solid accessories.

A shadowgarm's physical form seems strangely fluid, proving slightly malleable and generalized. No two shadowgarms appear exactly alike, and even individuals of the race seem to gradually change, all the faster in areas of deep shadows. Regardless of their endless, fluid alterations, they retain three primary clawed appendages, which serve them in consuming meals and fighting. Their number of feelers or tentacle-like legs, however, is constantly in

flux, numbering but two or three one moment and then multiplying to dozens the next. Shadowgarms do not have a mouth and hardly have heads to speak off—possessing only slight knobby protuberances that seem to have little role in guiding their motions. When ingesting matter, they slowly dissolve their meals, their bodies breaking down any organic substance they choose by resting upon their meal for a matter of moments. The entire process might be likened to a body-wide ingestion process similar to that of a fly, as matter is dissolved and subsumed by the shadowy hunter's bulk.

Once every several months, the urge to mate descends upon shadowgarms like a mass racial insanity. At this time, their natural aversion to their own kind is overwhelmed by a need to procreate. Shadowgarms are hemaphroditic, but cannot fertilize themselves—when a shadowgarm gathering begins, these creatures congregate in groups of up to a dozen, remaining in close proximity to each other for days at a time. The cycle that drives shadowgarm gatherings is nothing connected to the Material Plane—most scholars have been unable to determine what pattern the timing follows, if indeed there is a pattern at all.

Habitat & Society

Although shadowgarms are quite active at all times on the Plane of Shadow, the realities of the Material Plane force them into the niche of nocturnal predator. Yet despite their hatred of light, they seem to need it in some strange way. Observers have noted that the creatures prefer to stand in actual shadows, rather than just in darkness, and seem to savor the ever-changing nature of the shadows themselves. It may be that shadowgarms abhor total darkness as much as light, though neither bright light nor utter darkness causes them physical harm. Most shadowgarms' hunts take place under the light of the full moon, or in the shadowy hours of dusk or dawn.

In cities where shadowgarms are common, they naturally gravitate to sewers or narrow alleys. This allows them the easiest way to quickly strike at unwary victims from above or below. They do not build any sort of true nest or lair, preferring to remain constantly afoot in search of new prey. As shadowgarms have no fear of falling, they often clamber up to corners and niches at the tops of tunnels or just under rooftop overhangs, both to avoid any bright light that might be shining down from above

and to lie in wait to ambush unsuspecting prey that walks underneath. This leads to the discovery of shadowgarms in truly unexpected and unnerving places, like in bell towers, within attics and crawl spaces, and even hidden amid cracks and loose shingles in old roofing. More than one child's tale of boogiemen or strange shapes lurking outside their windows might actually be attributed to the daring nocturnal wanderings of shadowgarms.

Shadowgarms are incredibly territorial, and usually do not nest together except during their mating gathering. Shadowgarms immediately confront one another upon meeting. Pickpockets and other street urchins often share wild tales of shadowgarms battling fiercely in the alleyways and nighted dens, fighting with raw savagery instead of their more customary stealth. Some canny streetfolk use this territorial nature to trick competing shadowgarms into fighting each other, giving wanderers out after dark enough time to move through territories infested by these lurking hunters without being attacked. Of course, this tactic doesn't work well in areas where large numbers of shadowgarms are known to skulk, as directing one's attention to avoid a single hunter might prevent a traveler from noticing other predators lying in wait in the shadows.

On rare occasions, a shadowgarm might take to the seas, stealing aboard a ship at dock and hiding in the hold. Once at sea, such hunters emerge nightly to prey upon the ship's crew. Since a shadowgarm melts away into shadow and fog when it dies, leaving no evidence of a corpse behind, this might be one explanation for mysteriously derelict ships found adrift on the waves with nothing living on board.



Council of Thieves

STRIX

The wings of a monstrous raven cloak this leanly muscled, onyx-skinned humanoid. With eyes like a nocturnal predator he considers his surroundings, as if scanning for prey.

STRIX

CR 1/3



XP 135

Strix warrior 1

AL Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0 (+2 at night)

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex)

hp 5 (1d10)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0 (+2 against illusions)

OFFENSE

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

Melee spear +2 (1d8+1)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 10, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Fly +3

Languages Strix

Special Qualities hatred, nocturnal

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate mountains

Organization solitary, hunting party (3–6), war party (5–12), or tribe (22+ plus 100% noncombatants plus 1 champion of 2nd-level per 10 adults, 1 or 2 seers of 3rd or 4th level, and 1 leader of 5th–7th level)

Treasure NPC gear (never coins)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hatred (Ex) Strix receive a +1 bonus on attack rolls against humanoid creatures of the human subtype due to special training against these hated foes.

Nocturnal (Ex) Strix gain a +2 racial bonus on Perception and Stealth checks at night.

Devil's Perch, an infamous reach of Avistan's southwestern coast, has long captured the imaginations of the Chelish people. For untold centuries, gruesome deaths and diabolical shadows have haunted the region's spires, while local folklore weaves tales of winged devils. There strange rock spurs and unnaturally deep abysses make the heights deadly and nearly impossible to reach by land, and those who manage to survive the pitiless environment swiftly discover that the land's inhabitants, the dark-winged strix, do not welcome trespassers.

Winged humanoids, the strix fiercely defend both their land and their air, claiming dominion over all reaches within sight of Ciricskree, the Screeching Spire. Deadly but wise, savage yet content with their realm,

the strix would prefer to live quietly amid the towers of Devil's Perch, yet time and tradition have taught them the wingless peoples of the shores and lowlands cannot be trusted, and that only fear and bloodshed will protect their ancient lands.

The common strix stands just over 6 feet tall, with males and females being roughly the same size. Sharply pointed ears, pupilless eyes, and slitted nostrils distinguish the race, though their 12-foot wingspans prove most distinctive. An adult strix weighs around 170 pounds. Most strix live to be about 40 years old, with the eldest reaching ages of up to 60.

Strix speak their own language, a strange pidgin of Azlanti and Infernal understandable only by those who speak both languages or Strix.

Ecology

A mysterious, secretive race of winged humanoids, the isolationist strix are set apart from their human neighbors by several subtle differences. The eyes of strix prove particularly interesting, as they are both highly reflective—leading many tales to claim the natives of Devil's Perch possess glowing eyes—and fixed within their owners' heads, forcing strix to rotate their necks to adjust their field of vision. This causes most strix to appear either stiff and somber or jerky and skittish in their rare dealings with other creatures. Strix also possess slightly clawed hands and feet, which aid them in gripping perches but are too delicate to be used as weapons.

Habitat & Society

The only known strix in Avistan occupy a single group of tall, rocky spires in western Cheliox, communally known as Devil's Perch. From their largest settlement atop the spire of Ciricskree, they hunt the surrounding land by night and guard their territories against the slightest incursion, especially those made by humans.

Strix have learned to hate humans, and teach their young from an early age to fear and mistrust them above all other races. Although the source of this hatred proves unclear to all but the strix, it most likely comes from centuries of bloody invasions into their lands, disastrous first encounters, or an even older grudge.

Strix culture is tightly knit, as it must be in a society numbering less than a thousand members. Children are cherished and deaths are serious and ceremonious occasions. Murder is unknown among the strix, except when those of their kind are slain by outsiders. The strix take a vicious eye for an eye stance when it comes to retaliation. They also realize that they are small compared to the human nation that—as they see it—besieges them, and view the death of one of their number as proportionally equaling dozens, even hundreds, of outsiders. Suspecting that the cultures of land dwellers prove as tightly knit as their own, the strix might strike against and destroy an

entire ship or caravan that comes near their land, avenging themselves against victims who have done no wrong. Their ways are often bloody, but they are not merciless, and what they do, they do only to survive.

Lost Origins of the Strix

Few who know of the strix believe them to be natives of Avistan's shores. Although such tales are never told to outsiders, even the legends held by the strix of Devil Perch cast doubt on their origins. Rather, ancient tales passed down through their oral tradition tell of a green storm that carried the vicious and undeserving far from their homes, where they and their children would be punished until the sun ceased to rise in the sky. Then came the time when the sun did cease to rise, and the ancestors of the strix were freed from their torment. Lost and alone in a world of darkness, they hunted like beasts for untold years until those few of their race's survivors came to a fortress of stone, where the fish of the sea were plentiful and the terrors of the earth could not reach. There they made their home, and there they have stayed—the inheritors of a forgotten exile—for thousands of years.

Aside from these legends, little remains among the strix connecting them to a greater past, though all among those of Devil's Perch harbor the belief that their people are cursed and bear the shame of misdeeds of which none among them know the truth. The great library of Iadara in Kyonin, however, bears faded and ancient scrolls of a strange leather. Said to have been saved from before the Age of Darkness, these man-sized rolls show both black and gray figures bearing great wings and mysterious masks sitting among the men of Azlant and the elves of the lost elven fortress of Adarshavir. Only a handful of elven scholars have made the supposition that the tales of winged devils in western Chelax and this ancient scrollwork might bear some connection.

Strix as Characters

Strix are defined by their class levels—they do not possess racial Hit Dice. All strix have the following racial traits.

+2 Dexterity, -2 Charisma: Strix are swift and elusive, but their fearsome appearances and insular nature make them difficult to interact with.

Normal Speed: Strix have a base speed of 30 feet.

Flight: Strix have a fly speed of 60 feet with average maneuverability.

Low-Light Vision: Strix can see twice as far as humans in conditions of dim light.

Darkvision: Strix can see in the dark up to 60 feet.

Hatred: Strix receive a +1 bonus on attack rolls against humanoid creatures of the human subtype due to special training against these hated foes.

Nocturnal: Strix gain a +2 racial bonus on Perception and Stealth checks at night.

Monstrous Characters

Some players and GMs might seek to include characters from races other than those found in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* in their games. Individuals of such unusual races can make for fantastically memorable characters, but bring with them the potential for a variety of challenges. A strix character, for example, gains advantages over the races presented in the *Core Rulebook*, most notably the ability to fly. While this ability might not prove advantageous in all campaigns, GMs should carefully consider how a particular race's abilities might impact his game or that character's interaction with the rest of the party. In the end, GMs may include or exclude any races they wish based wholly on the needs of their campaigns.

See the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* for more details on running monstrous characters.

Suspicious: Strix receive a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusion spells or effects.

Languages: Strix begin play speaking Strix, their racial language. Strix with high Intelligence scores can choose any of the following bonus languages: Azlanti, Common, Infernal.



Council of Thieves

TORBLE

This scuttling thing looks at first glance like a colorful, animate blob of slime, but its thin insectoid legs and eyestalks suggest it is a more advanced creature. Its antennae-like appendages wave about curiously, and its multiple legs carry forth its transparent, hand-sized body at a surprisingly swift scuttle.

TORBLE

CR 1/8



XP 50

N Diminutive vermin

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 30 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSES

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

hp 1 (1d8–3)

Fort –1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

DR 1/piercing or slashing; **Immune** acid

Weaknesses ooze-vermin hybrid

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft.

Melee bite +0 (1 plus 1 acid)

Space 0 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 3, **Dex** 15, **Con** 5, **Int** —, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +0; **CMB** –8; **CMD** 4

SQ primitive sight, telepathic sensitivity

TORBLE SWARM

CR 2



XP 600

N Tiny vermin (swarm)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 30 ft.; Perception +8

DEFENSES

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 size)

hp 13 (3d8)

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

Immune acid, swarm traits, weapon damage

Weaknesses ooze-vermin hybrid

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft.

Melee swarm (1d6 plus 1 acid)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 11)

STATISTICS

Str 3, **Dex** 15, **Con** 10, **Int** 3, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +2; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Feats Dodge, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +8

SQ hive mind, primitive sight, telepathic sensitivity

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hive Mind (Ex) Any torble swarm with at least 3 hit points per Hit

Die (or 9 hit points, for a standard torble swarm) forms a hive mind, giving it an Intelligence of 3. When the swarm is reduced below this hit point threshold, it becomes mindless, losing its feats and reducing its Perception bonus to +2.

Ooze-Vermin Hybrid (Ex) Torbles react to ooze-affecting effects as if they were oozes and vermin-affecting effects as if they were vermin, whichever is least advantageous for the torble or more advantageous for the originator of the effect.

Primitive Sight (Ex) Though it has blindsight and can operate without vision, a torble's simple eyes give it poor sight (mainly light and color) with an effective range of 30 feet. Because they can see, they are subject to attacks that affect sighted creatures (such as gaze attacks), but as they can still rely on their blindsight, they cannot be dazzled or blinded by sight-based attacks.

Telepathic Sensitivity (Ex) Torbles are receptive to the thought-energy of telepathic minds. A creature with the telepathy special ability can use a swift action to mentally command one torble per point of Charisma bonus for one round, twice that many by using a move action, or four times that many by using a standard action. The creature's control of the vermin is limited to simple commands ("attack," "defend," "stop," and so forth); orders to attack a certain creature when it appears or guard against a particular occurrence are too complex for the vermin to understand. Torbles that leave the range of the creature's telepathy immediately revert to their standard behavior.

Torbles (called "chordoplasms" by scholars of strange fauna and "ooze bugs" by many others) are strange and fascinating creatures, curious in ways beyond what their simple forms might suggest. These strangely colored creatures resemble a cross between a tiny ooze and an insect. They typically have a bulbous, beetle-like translucent body, six legs, and long eyestalks with primitive sensory knobs on the end. Usually they take on green, gray, or pink shades, though they may be any color. Older torbles often tend toward the colors of large ooze predators such as ochre jellies, black puddings, or the colorless gelatinous cubes, though any relationship between them is unclear. The creature's interior may be clear or cloudy, and has the same consistency and properties of the fluid that surrounds the brains of lower animals. After the creature feeds, however, its color temporarily changes to match the color of its meal—which sometimes remains visible for hours. Although a torble has no true organs, it has a stiff bundle of fibrous nerve tissue running the length of its body that helps hold its shape. When it rests, it retracts its antennae and legs into its body, similar to how a snail or slug withdraws its eyestalks when threatened.

A typical ooze bug is about 7 inches long and 5 inches wide, and weighs about 1 pound.

Ecology

Torbles fulfill the same roles as oozes and insect vermin: they hunt creatures close to their own size, scavenge corpses and organic material, and territorially attack anything they perceive as food or a threat. They gravitate to damp caves, city sewers, rotting logs, or corpses—anywhere they can find plentiful prey and not

be disturbed by rival scavengers and predators. Because torbles are easily controlled by both ooze- and vermin-specific spells, some isolationist clerics and druids use them to guard their secret lairs or process garbage when otyughs are unavailable or unsuitable.

Ooze bugs reproduce by creating internal buds that mature and migrate to the creature's outer surface, erupting as inch-long, disgusting transparent things resembling a cross between a slug and a cockroach. These buds can survive the destruction of the parent for days, feeding off the corpse until they are ready to emerge and fend for themselves; this means attempts to eradicate an infestation are usually only temporarily effective, as the unborn torbles quickly grow and repopulate the area inhabited by the now-dead adults. Only if the bug-slayers deliberately crush the adult corpses or consume them with fire or similar methods can they be certain their efforts are successful in the long term.

Because torbles are sensitive to mental commands, telepathic creatures sometimes use them as guardians, distractions, or shock troops; even a lowly imp becomes a petty tyrant with a few torbles under its command. Torbles cannot resist such compulsions, unless they've already been telepathically commanded in the same round or have made a more significant bond with another.

Most torbles seem endlessly hungry and insistent on eating their discoveries before designating them edible or inedible. A torble can ingest nearly any fleshy, wooden, or bony matter, visibly dissolving such meals within their transparent bodies. Stone, metal, glass, and similarly hard objects prove resistant to their digestion, however, and pass through their system in a matter of 3 or 4 hours, floating suspended within their colorful ooze during that time. Once a torble has consumed something, it seems to retain memory of whether not such an object is edible—though many seem terribly forgetful in this regard.

Habitat & Society

Most torbles work in groups, coordinating their attacks like ants or bees, or forming large swarms that may number hundreds of individuals, though unlike colony insects they do not appear to have specialized roles such as queens and workers. Usually all members of a colony or swarm have an identical appearance—coloration, number of legs, and so on. They never attack others of their kind that match their specific physiognomy, though explorers have found caves with bulbous pink victors feasting on rent gray corpses, or six-legged varieties hunting down and killing four-legged intruders in their territory.

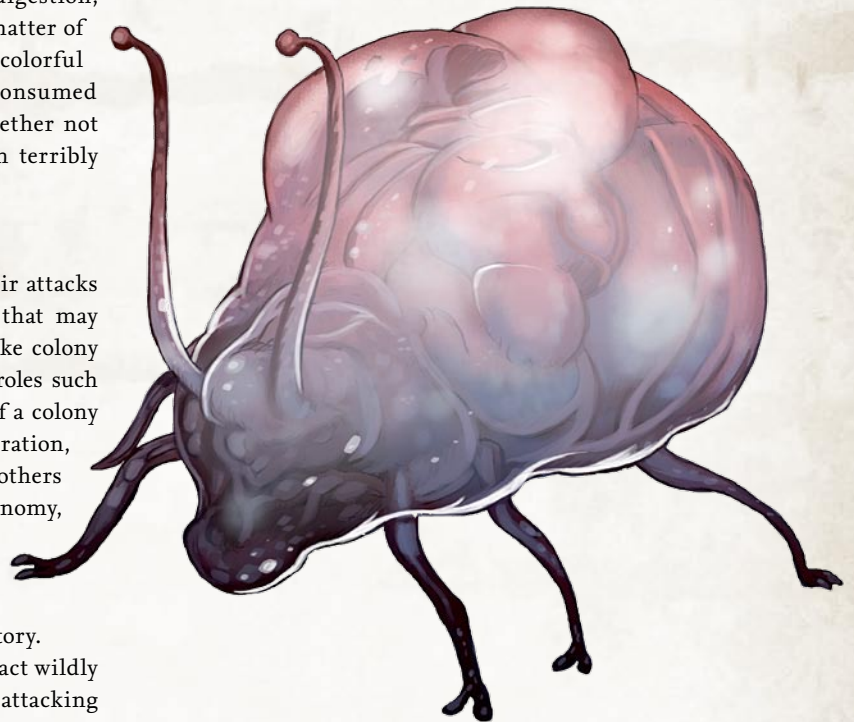
Torbles that get separated from such groups act wildly different, proving edgy and cowardly. Rarely attacking

Torble Familiars

Notorious for infesting swamps and the sewers of coastal cities, torbles prove annoying and sometimes startling, but rarely dangerous in small numbers. Their devotion—or at least, lazy hunting practices—make them easily manipulated by even creatures without the ability to command them telepathically. Children in poor communities and swamp dwellers often adopt lone torbles, enjoying their attachment and shiny, ever-shifting colors. Some magic-users from such backgrounds even go so far as to adopt torbles as their familiars. While hardly the most popular or aggrandizing companions, torble familiars help their masters better understand strange magical processes and prove obsessively devoted, if at times clumsy.

Torbles that undergo the process of becoming a spellcaster's familiar lose their telepathic sensitivity and hive mind abilities, but gain a permanent Intelligence score of 3. Torble familiars grant their masters a +2 bonus on Craft (alchemy) checks.

living creatures, a lone torble scavenges for whatever food it can find. Those who happen across individual torbles and offer them food find that ooze bugs instantly warm to them, likely following their benefactors for hours, even days on end. Those who continue such practices find torbles make dutiful pets, even if the skittish creatures often prove more comical than clever.



Council of Thieves

DEVIL, UKOBACH

The light of a flaming pitchfork illuminates a creepily malformed little man, his red skin scarred and raw like the victim of horrific burns. Although barely taller than a child, his features mock those of a terrible old man with an oversized head, knife-like nose, and crazed round eyes flickering with wild flames.

UKOBACH (TINDER DEVIL) CR 4



XP 1,200

LE Small Outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Perception +3

DEFENSES

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+4 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 32 (5d10+5)

Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

DR 5/silver or good; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 15

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 1 fire poker +5 (1d6–1 plus 1d4 fire) or
2 claws +5 (1d4–1 plus 1d4 fire)

Ranged 1 ember +10 (1d6 fire)

Special Attacks animate flames, fire breathing, scorch

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 19, **Con** 13, **Int** 13, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +3; **CMD** +17

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Throw Anything

Skills Acrobatics +12, Appraise +9, Bluff +9, Climb +7, Craft (any)
+9, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Stealth +16

Languages Celestial, Common, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ fire leap

ECOLOGY

Environment Hell

Organization solitary, pair, or team (4–16)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Animate Flames (Su) As a standard action, an ukobach can animate an existing fire of Small size or larger. Doing so requires an ukobach to make a DC 15 Wisdom check as it impresses its will upon the fire. This DC increases by +5 for every size category of the flame above Small. If an ukobach succeeds, the flame animates with the statistics of a fire elemental of the same size, and follows the ukobach's mental commands. The flames remain animate for a number of rounds equal to the ukobach's Wisdom modifier—usually 3—after which they return to being simple flames, setting the square they cease moving in alight or being extinguished, as their surroundings warrant.

Up to five ukobachs can make use of the aid another action to each grant an adjacent ukobach a +2 bonus on this Wisdom check to animate flames (granting a maximum +10 bonus).

Fire Leap (Su) As a swift action, an ukobach occupying the same space as a fire, pool of lava, vent of searing steam, or similar blaze can teleport from that burning feature and emerge from another within 100 feet. This ability functions similarly to the

spell *dimension door*, but only between fires. Upon entering a flame, an ukobach is instantly aware of all flames within range through which it might exit. If an ukobach enters a flame and there are no others to exit through within 100 feet, the devil's movement immediately ends and it is stunned for 1 round.

Firebreathing (Su) An ukobach can spend a standard action to guzzle a pint of oil, alcohol, or similarly flammable fluid and hold the combustible liquid within its body. At any point within 10 minutes of doing so, the ukobach can expel the liquid either as a 10-foot cone of fire or a 20-foot line of flame, both dealing 3d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 13 for half). Upon breathing fire an ukobach cannot make use of this ability again until it drinks another pint of oil. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Scorch (Su) An ukobach's touch is searing hot, causing its claws and any metal weapon it grasps to deal an additional 1d4 points of fire damage.

Maniacal and clever, ukobachs embody the tenacity and ever advancing genius of Hell. Legions of these tiny devils labor throughout the it, and from their efforts rise new heresies and tools of depravity. They revel in the fires of Hell and manipulate them not toward destruction, but to the creation of ever greater and more innovative diabolical ends. The keepers of Hell's furnaces, they delight in their mad work, breaking only to torment the damned with their burning tools or newest inventions.

Ukobachs stand approximately 3-1/2 feet tall and weigh 70 pounds on average. Their fire pokers are fundamentally tied to their beings and disintegrate in a flash of cinders and ash upon the devil's death. These tools hold up to 10 fist-sized embers, which an ukobach can fling at its enemies.

Ecology

Born from the burning depths of Hell, ukobachs find themselves most at home amid the choking and sultry pits where mortals dare not delve, proving well adapted to such stifling environs. While they must breathe, they prove equally well adapted to breathing smoke, cinders, and steam as air. Like all devils, the ukobachs' infernal eyes gaze through even the most stygian night, but unlike their brethren, they dislike the dark. While they harbor no fear of darkness and certainly see its value when tormenting mortals, they view it largely as a waste, seeking to dispel even the most fleeting shadow with an explosion of flame.

Habitat & Society

Most ukobachs originate from the flaming canals of Dis or the fiery pits of Phlegethon. Although rarely born from Moloch's crematoriums at the heart of Citadel Ba'al, hordes of ukobach furnace keepers tend the flames of the archdevil's ceremonial ovens. Devastating ukobach engineers also tinker in the foundries at the heart of

Phlegethon, creating ingenious devices of intentional or incidental immolation—some infernal rumors claim a particularly insidious ukobach inspired the invention of the first fireworks, leaving these devils with a universal love of such creations.

On the mortal plane, ukobachs gravitate to cities. While many metropolises prove ill prepared to defend against the flames these devils delight in spreading, most ukobachs take more subtle approaches, finding lairs in abandoned smithies, large furnaces, stone ruins, and other places likely to survive the occasional errant flame.

While indisputably pyromaniacal, ukobachs are more than merely crazed marauders. Seeing a small hovel, pile of leaves, or alley cat burn is nothing to creatures born from the flames of Hell. Rather, they enjoy the order and progression of flames, exalting in striking the spark that ignites a wildfire, upturning the lantern that sets a whole city quarter aflame, or immolating the leader whose death results in the dispersal of a formerly devout congregation. Further satisfying their methodological obsessions, ukobachs prefer setting elaborate traps for their victims over direct combat, often turning whole structures into burning deathtraps, trapping and re-trapping the same location, or setting obvious snares that cause their quarries to overlook more devious ambushes. These impish devils understand the use of flammable fluids and materials well, often employing barrels of oil, casks of alcohol, heaps of coal, and even alchemical items like tindertwigs in their creations.

Among diabolists, it is said that all ukobachs know the secret of creating berith, an alchemical element by which any material might be distilled into gold. Stories tell of ukobachs trading knowledge of this element for wild prices or only after an alchemist gathers components from exotic lands. Such tales often offer blatant moral lessons and warnings against these unnatural obsessions, such as the Taldan author and former alchemist Smardina's cryptic and symbol-laden work *Shagreen*, wherein an obsessed alchemist adventures across the world and ultimately trades an ukobach 23 years of his life, only to find his age and journeys have made his hands too crippled to work—he dies soon after and is dragged to Hell in a golden coffin.

Summoning Ukobachs

Ukobachs prove unusually congenial when it comes to answering the summons of many diabolists, especially

those with an obvious creative streak, interest in alchemy, or queries regarding the inventions of Hell.

Any diabolist who draws the *magic circle* necessary to bind an ukobach with mercury or silver powder, or who lights their diabolical summoning with chemical fire rather than normal oil or tinder, increases how difficult an ukobach finds it to escape from the magical trap by +2. Additionally, a diabolist gains a +2 bonus on the opposed Charisma check made to obtain an ukobach's service if the task involves creating alchemical or metallurgical works, or otherwise involves fire.

In addition, ukobachs who know and favor their summoner sometimes bring gifts with them from Hell. While on the surface such boons might seem like blessings, they are always carefully selected by an ukobach and meant to encourage a summoner toward a destructive end. Commonly, such infernal gifts take the form of fireworks and explosives—especially in lands where such creations are uncommon—inscrutable blueprints or formulas for fiendish devices or magic items, or powerfully volatile alchemical reagents.



A Heritage of Evil

No city in all of Golarion was racked more fundamentally by Aroden's death than Westcrown. The capital of Cheliox, Westcrown was the expected site of Aroden's return and had for decades prepared for the event. Within years of Aroden's demise, his church had fallen, holy sites were abandoned, and the country found itself gripped by civil war with fierce diabolists. The rise of the Thrice-Damned House of Thrune saw Westcrown's further descent. The new diabolical rulers moved the capital north to the city of Egorian, stripping Westcrown of much of its affluence and prestige. While still a vibrant and important port, the city swiftly lost the splendor that had typified it, becoming but a pale shadow of its former glory and a playground for vultures eager to pick the royal carcass.

Even before Aroden's death, the Council of Thieves had been an open secret in Westcrown. Comprised mainly of influential and noble families, the guild's power rested upon smuggling, banditry, and many white-collar crimes. Key among its members were the Drovenges, an incredibly wealthy and conservative family of moneylenders and property owners. Led by their patriarch, Vassindio Drovenge, the family weathered much in the years after Aroden's death but kept a comfortable grip on their underworld holdings.

All that was threatened by Vassindio's son, Sidonai. Arrogant and manipulative, the Drovenge scion was incensed by the birth of his first offspring, a mere girl her mother named Chammady. Sidonai had wanted a son to usher in a new era of power and prosperity for his family. Although tieflings in Cheliox face a harsh life as second-class citizens, Sidonai sought a way by which he might sire a son by one of the archdevils, an infernal heir whom Cheliox's diabolically obsessed rulers would have no choice but to respect. To this end, Sidonai bargained for the aid of three hag sisters living within the woods near Westcrown. The hags presented the nobleman with a coin from the depths of Erebus, the realm of the archdevil Mammon, telling Sidonai to swallow the gold piece before next bedding his wife. Yet Mammon, the Lord of the Third, is all the treasure that comes to lie within Hell's vaults, being a creature of no forms and of many, a profane animating spirit. Thus, swallowing the coin allowed Mammon to temporarily possess Sidonai, imparting his foul immortal seed unto the criminal's wife.

The child birthed 9 months later was a boy, yet there was no question of its true parentage. Disfigured with

Spoiler Warning!

What follows is both the background and outline for the Council of Thieves Adventure Path. If you intend to play in this campaign, be warned! The contents of these two pages spoil the plots of the upcoming adventures as thoroughly as possible!

horns, silver eyes, and golden skin, the devil-touched child drew the horror of its mother, and soon the wrath of the family patriarch. Vassindio Drovenge murdered Sidonai's wife and ordered the death of his house's staff, the midwives, and the hags his son had consulted. Sidonai was spared death but not punishment. Vassindio gathered a generous stipend for his one-time heir

and sent him to live among family members in distant Oparra, the capital city of Taldor. Enraged but fearful of his father's recent display of wrath, Sidonai departed for Taldor immediately, yet he never arrived in Oparra and has not been seen since. Considering his son dead even before this disappearance, Vassindio mourned the cruel fate that had come upon his family. Too old to sire a new heir, Vassindio decided to raise his son's children. Even though the tiefling embodied the shame Sidonai had inflicted upon the family, he was now Vassindio's only male heir, and the old man named him Ecarrdian.

Ecarrdian and his sister Chammady spent their youths together among servants and cold luxury. Theirs was a family of two, where each was the only companion of the other, and the devotion they formed for one another grew strong. Chammady had some contact with her grandfather, receiving occasional boons from him that she secretly shared with her brother. She also heard the jabs and mockery the house staff heaped daily on her brother; one of her handmaids had to be released from service after Chammady cut her with a wine bottle for such an offense. Ecarrdian's childhood proved even more painful, and he came to loathe his grandfather and his army of servants—not just for their stuffy ways and slander, but for their race, nurturing a hatred for all humans save his beloved sister.

Upon entering into their majority, Chammady and Ecarrdian found that escaping from their family would not prove as easy as expected. Well into his eighties, their grandfather remained vigorous and spiteful, and they began to believe that the old man's death and their freedom would never come. The plot was simple and obvious, but Chammady spoke it first. The siblings would kill their grandfather and Ecarrdian would take control of the family. In fact, with their grandfather's power and prestige, why stop there? Vassindio would die, Westcrown would be theirs, and if the pair had to shatter the criminal underworld, throw the entire city into chaos, and draw upon the power of Ecarrdian's true father, so be it.

Adventure Outline

Bastards of Erebus

by Sean K Reynolds

Pathfinder Adventure Path #25, Levels 1–3

The PCs join Wiscrani rebel commander Janiven Key and the Children of Westcrown in a grassroots operation aimed at winning the hearts and minds of Westcrown's downtrodden populace by defeating the Bastards of Erebus, notorious tiefling brigands operating in the city's northern ruins. In order to accomplish this task, the PCs must rescue the revolutionaries' leader from the infamous Hellknights of the Order of the Rack before launching a daring raid against the tieflings' secret base. However, it soon becomes clear that the Bastards of Erebus are but pawns of something far more sinister: a powerful group of crime-lords long shrouded in myth—the legendary Council of Thieves.

The Sixfold Trial

by Richard Pett

Pathfinder Adventure Path #26, Levels 3–5

In a continuing campaign to win the devotion of Westcrown's populace, the PCs embark on a plan to banish the terrible shadow beasts that haunt the nighttime streets of Westcrown. Told that a powerful artifact capable of accomplishing such a task lies within Westcrown's abandoned, magic-warded Pathfinder lodge, the PCs go undercover as a theatrical troupe in order to infiltrate Lord Mayor Arvanxi's fiendish estate and retrieve information needed to bypass the lodge's cunning and deadly traps. Even if the PCs can blend in with Westcrown's decadent nobility without being discovered and prevent the catastrophic release of a bound pit fiend, can they survive the grueling tortures of a Chelish play long enough to pull off the performance of a lifetime?

What Lies in Dust

by Michael Kortez

Pathfinder Adventure Path #27, Levels 5–7

Armed with information secretly procured from Lord Mayor Arvanxi's estate, the PCs set out on a series of macabre quests, following various clues and accumulating information needed—much of it from the long-dead—to infiltrate the abandoned Pathfinder lodge of Delvehaven. When they finally enter the imposing structure, the PCs discover that they are not alone, and soon run afoul of deadly traps, diabolical guardians, and vile vampires. The PCs must overcome these dangers to retrieve the powerful ancient artifact, and only then can Westcrown finally be free of the shadow beast menace!



The Infernal Syndrome

by Clinton Boomer

Pathfinder Adventure Path #28, Levels 7–9

Devils are loose in Westcrown! Before the PCs can return their recently acquired artifact to the rebels, the bound pit fiend in Lord Mayor Arvanxi's decadent estate begins to break loose, releasing swarms of devils upon the city. To prevent the beast from breaking free of its bonds entirely and unleashing Hell upon the city, the PCs must brave their way through Lord Mayor Arvanxi's estate—now infested with devils, tiefling rebels, and agents of the Council of Thieves—and confront the diabolical menace. Can the PCs stop the pit fiend in time to save the city from utter ruin? And is all of this but a distraction from a greater plot finally put into action?

Mother of Flies

by Greg Vaughan

Pathfinder Adventure Path #29, Levels 9–11

The sinister noble siblings Ecarrdian and Chammady Drovenga have led a coup within the Council of Thieves, seizing control over much of Westcrown's criminal underworld. In order to learn what she knows about the notorious thieves' guild, the PCs seek out an ancient hag known as the Mother of Flies, deep in the swampy woods just outside of Westcrown. When they arrive, the PCs find that a group of assassins sent by the Council of Thieves have laid siege to her lair, and after saving their unlikely new ally, the PCs learn where the Council of Thieves' hidden guildhall is located. The PCs must infiltrate the thieves' guild and confront the Council of Thieves' chief lieutenant, the vampire Ilnarik, and his shadow beasts. Even with this victory, the Council of Thieves is yet to be broken, and the PCs learn that the organization does not wish to control merely all of Westcrown's underworld, but the city itself!

The Twice-Damned Prince

by Brian Cortijo

Pathfinder Adventure Path #30, Levels 11–13

Westcrown lies in chaos. Outraged by reports of lawlessness in the city streets, General Vourne of Egorian sails with a dozen ships toward Westcrown, determined to restore imperial order. Fearing direct Chelish control, the Children of Westcrown beseech the PCs to restore peace first. In order to accomplish this monumental task, the PCs must seek out the disparate factions of Westcrown and convince them to work together in order to defeat the Council of Thieves. Even if they succeed in this task, the PCs must confront the siblings Chammady and Ecarrdian high atop the Vacant Throne and prevent them from summoning the power of the tiefling's true father: the archdevil Mammon!

Council of Thieves



LEM

MALE HALFLING

DEITY	Shelyn
HOMELAND	Cheliox

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL	Bard 1
ALIGNMENT	Chaotic Good
INITIATIVE	+3
SPEED	20 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH	8
DEXTERITY	16
CONSTITUTION	13
INTELLIGENCE	12
WISDOM	8
CHARISMA	17

DEFENSE

HP 9
AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)
Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +2; +2 vs. fear

SKILLS

Acrobatics +9 (+5 to jump), Climb +1, Knowledge (local) +6, Perform (comedy) +7, Perform (wind instruments) +9, Perception +5, Spellcraft +5, Stealth +11, Use Magic Device +7

FEATS

Dodge

OFFENSE

Melee short sword +0 (1d4-1/19-20)
Ranged dagger +4 (1d3-1/19-20)
Base Atk +0; CMB -2; CMD 12
Special Abilities bardic knowledge +1, bardic performance (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +1)

Spells Known (CL 1st)

1st (2/day)—*cure light wounds*, *hideous laughter* (DC 14)
o (at will)—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *light*, *prestidigitation*

Gear leather armor, short sword, throwing daggers (4), backpack, masterwork flute, rations (6), spell component pouch, sunrods (3), 16 gp

Although Lem was raised in the lap of luxury, his childhood was anything but comfortable. Born into slavery, Lem was sold a half-dozen times to different nobles before he reached the age of 2. Always quick to side with the underdog, Lem has learned that his most powerful trait is his optimism and sense of humor—skills that more than make up for his small stature and impulsive nature.



SELYIEL

MALE HALF-ELF

DEITY	Asmodeus
HOMELAND	Cheliox

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL	Fighter 1
ALIGNMENT	Lawful Evil
INITIATIVE	+3
SPEED	30 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH	12
DEXTERITY	17
CONSTITUTION	13
INTELLIGENCE	14
WISDOM	8
CHARISMA	10

DEFENSE

HP 11
AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +3 Dex)
Fort +3, Ref +3, Will -1; +2 vs. enchantment
Immune sleep
Senses low-light vision

SKILLS

Craft (alchemy) +3, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Perception +3, Spellcraft +3

FEATS

Combat Expertise, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (longsword)

OFFENSE

Melee longsword +3 (1d8+1/19-20)
Ranged shortbow +4 (1d6/x3)
Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 15

Combat Gear acid, alchemist's fire (2); **Other Gear** leather armor, longsword, dagger, shortbow with 20 arrows, flask of fine absinthe worth 50 gp, gold holy symbol worth 75 gp, mysterious spellbook, 8 gp

Selyiel grew up surrounded by shame and disgrace. Before he came of age, his stepfather attempted to kill him, but after Selyiel turned the tables, he fled into the wild. Since then, his life has been a cruel series of betrayals and pain. Recently escaped from a period of imprisonment after his true father, a notorious bandit, set Selyiel up to take the blame for his crimes, the half-elf longs for revenge against both his fathers.

Pre-generated Characters



SEELAH

FEMALE HUMAN

DEITY	lomedae
HOMELAND	Katapesh

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL	Paladin 1
ALIGNMENT	Lawful Good
INITIATIVE	+0
SPEED	20 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH	15
DEXTERITY	10
CONSTITUTION	14
INTELLIGENCE	8
WISDOM	13
CHARISMA	14

DEFENSE

HP 13
AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 shield)
Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +3

OFFENSE

Melee longsword +4 (1d8+2/19–20)
Ranged longbow +1 (1d8/x3)
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 13
Special Abilities aura of good, detect evil, smite evil 1/day (+2 to attack roll, +1 damage)

SKILLS

Knowledge (religion) +3, Sense Motive +5

FEATS

Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Combat Gear holy water; **Other Gear** scale mail, heavy steel shield, longsword, longbow with 20 arrows, backpack, rations (4), silver holy symbol, 23 gp

When a group of lomedae's knights arrived to save Seelah's hometown of Solku from gnolls, Seelah knew where her destiny lay. Atoning for her misdeeds as a child, she devoted her life to lomedae. Over the years, guilt over her misspent youth has changed into a powerful faith and conviction. Today, she sees the good in everyone, and hopes that by leading by example, she can help other wayward souls (such as Seltziel) find their way.



SEONI

FEMALE HUMAN

DEITY	Pharasma
HOMELAND	Varisia

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL	Sorcerer 1
ALIGNMENT	Lawful Neutral
INITIATIVE	+2
SPEED	30 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH	8
DEXTERITY	14
CONSTITUTION	12
INTELLIGENCE	10
WISDOM	13
CHARISMA	17

DEFENSE

HP 8
AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge)
Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3

OFFENSE

Melee quarterstaff +0 (1d6–1)
Ranged dagger +2 (1d4–1/19–20)
Base Atk +0; **CMB** –1; **CMD** 12
Special Abilities arcane bond

Spells Known (CL 1st)
1st (4/day)—*mage armor*, *magic missile*
0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 14), *read magic*
Bloodline arcane

SKILLS

Bluff +7, Climb +2, Knowledge (planes) +4, Perception +3, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +4

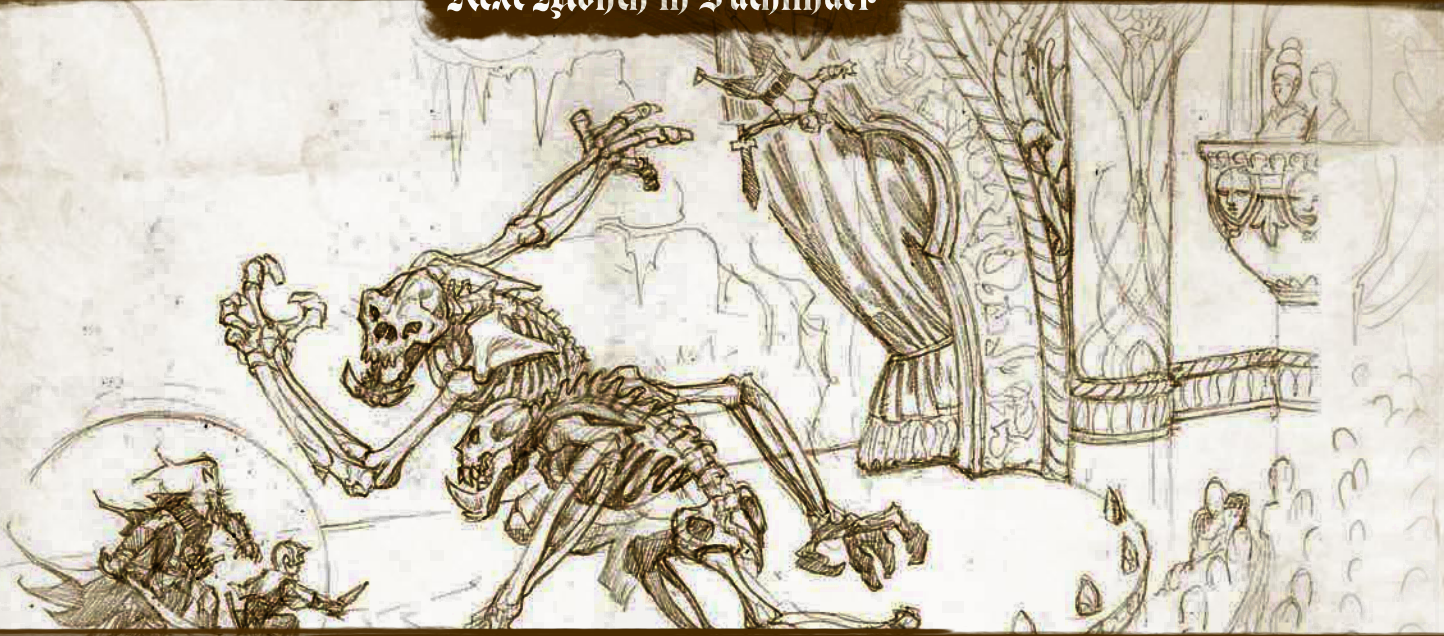
FEATS

Alertness, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Spell Focus (evocation)

Familiar blue-tailed skink named Dragon

Combat Gear smokestick, tanglefoot bag; **Other Gear** dagger, quarterstaff, backpack, sunrod (5), rations (4), 27 gp

Seoni is something of an enigma—quietly neutral on most matters, bound by codes and mandates she rarely feels compelled to explain, the beautiful sorcerer keeps her emotions tightly bottled. Extremely detail-oriented, Seoni is a careful and meticulous planner who frequently finds herself frustrated by the improvised plans of her more impulsive companions.



THE SIX-FOLD TRIAL

by Richard Pett

To strike at the black heart of Westcrown's aristocracy, the PCs take part in a plot to infiltrate one of the most famous theaters in the city. Yet their rebellious plan relies wholly on their ability to perform the infamous *Trial of Larazod*, an elaborate play few actors have ever survived. Should they succeed, the invitation of the lord-mayor will grant them admission to a gala attended by Westcrown's crème de la crème. Should they fail, however, their deaths will be nothing more than an evening's grim entertainment.

THE TRIAL OF LARAZOD

by Nicolas Logue

The script of that heretical tale of a tiefling punished and his tortures exposed before all of Heaven and Hell, revealed to the world at last. This notorious work of theater has long proven one of the most shocking spectacles in Cheliax, a complete play—performed only by criminals and the desperate—which few actors have ever survived.

IOMEDAE

by Sean K Reynolds

Join the crusade of Iomedae, righteous goddess of justice and valor. Learn of her benevolent church, the duties of her honored servants, and the great works of her noble champions.

AND MORE!

Varian and Radovan's investigation into a noble's death reveals a dark family secret in the Pathfinder's Journal by Dave Gross. Plus, discover the gilded monsters of royalty and nobility in a decadent entry into the Bestiary.

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Bastards of Erebus Dramatis Personae

Janiven	(second in command of Children of Westcrown)
Morosino	(street urchin who serves Arael as a messenger and scout)
Amaya	(Child of Westcrown, beautiful but self-conscious glassblower)
Ermolos	(Child of Westcrown, blacksmith whose father has gone missing)
Fiosa	(Child of Westcrown, house servant with a new faith in Iomedae)
Gorvio	(Child of Westcrown, believes an ancestor was a tiefling)
Larko	(Child of Westcrown, dock worker who misses rural life)
Mathalen	(Child of Westcrown, recently unemployed philosopher)
Rizzardo	(Child of Westcrown, bad-tempered but hard-working laborer)
Sclavo	(Child of Westcrown, soft-spoken scribe and devotee of Iomedae)
Tarvi	(Child of Westcrown, aspiring wizard stuck in a dead-end job)
Vitti	(Child of Westcrown, green-haired eccentric who respects nature)
Yakopulio	(Child of Westcrown, offensive and irreverent gnome bartender)
Arael	(leader of the Children of Westcrown)
Shanwen	(Hellknight signifer who sponsors the Hellknight trainees)
Thesing Umbero Ulvauno	(talented but arrogant actor, misogynist, and likely long-term foil)
Scabby	(mangy guard dog pet of the Bastards of Erebus)
Ostengo and Vethamer	(Bastards of Erebus, tiefling brothers with hideous leathery skin)
Dravano the Digger	(Bastard of Erebus, thick-clawed tiefling and second-in-command)
Palaveen	(Tiefling leader of the Bastards of Erebus)
Ailyn Ghontasavos	(undercover Pathfinder agent, ally and supporter of the rebels)
Ecarrdian Drovence	(Chammady's brother, wants to rule Council of Thieves and Westcrown)
Chammady Drovence	(Ecarrdian's sister, wants to rule Council of Thieves and Westcrown)
Vassindio Drovence	(patriarch of the Council of Thieves)
Aberian Arvanxi	(decadent mayor of Westcrown)



The Rebellion Begins

The city of Westcrown is dying. Since being stripped of its station as the capital of Cheliax, the wealth and prestige of the city has gradually slipped away, leaving the desperate people to fend for themselves in a city beset by criminals, a corrupt nobility, and a shadowy curse. Can the PCs fight back against champions of both the law and the criminal world?

This volume of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* launches the Council of Thieves Adventure Path, and includes:

- ▶ “The Bastards of Erebus,” a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 1st-level characters, by Sean K Reynolds.
- ▶ A gazetteer of Westcrown, the shadow-haunted City of Twilight, by Steven Schend.
- ▶ An investigation into the lives of tieflings, along with hundreds of fiendish variations, by Amber Scott.
- ▶ A deadly mystery of nobility and intrigue for Pathfinder Varian Jeggare and his tiefling bodyguard Radovan in a new series of the *Pathfinder’s Journal*, by Dave Gross.
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