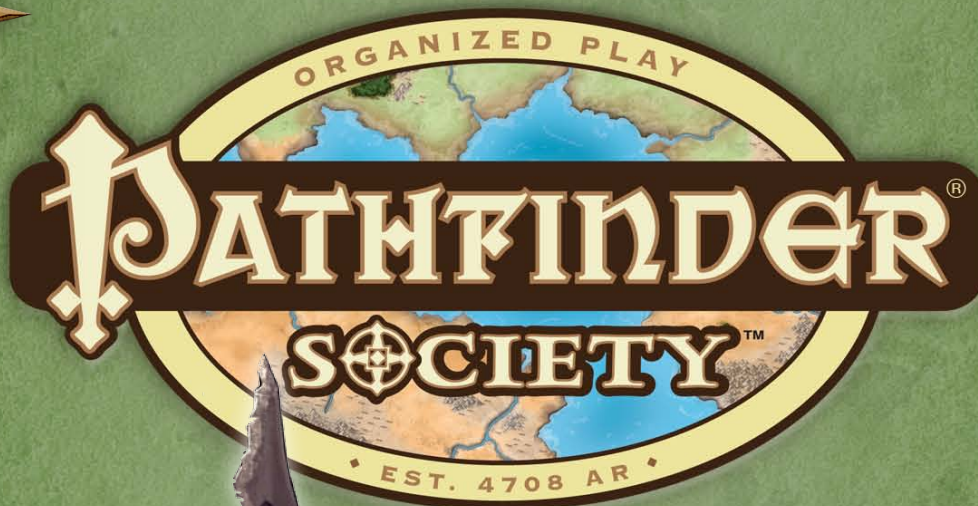


A Pathfinder Society Introductory Scenario



First Steps, Part II:
**TO DELVE THE
DUNGEON DEEP**

By Stephen Radney-MacFarland



FIRST STEPS, PART II: TO DELVE THE DUNGEON DEEP

A PATHFINDER SOCIETY INTRODUCTORY SCENARIO

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Pathfinder Society Introductory Scenario: First Steps, Part II: To Delve the Dungeon Deep is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 1st-level characters (Tier 1). This scenario is designed for play in the Pathfinder Society Organized Play campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. This scenario is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game.

The OGL can be found on page 18 of this product.

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FIRST STEPS, PART II: TO DELVE THE DUNGEON DEEP

BY STEPHEN RADNEY-MACFARLAND

Pathfinders must learn to navigate many treacherous paths in order to stay alive and catalog the world's treasures. They brave perilous dungeons, monster-infested caverns, and even forests that seem intelligent and ravenous. While these adventures often take Pathfinders to the farthest corners of the Golarion, sometimes they occur in the Pathfinder Society's backyard. In the Cairnlands—the barren wasteland of ruined siege castles and crumbling fortresses surrounding the metropolis of Absalom—a group of Pathfinders recently discovered a long-lost Qadiran siege castle known as Asad's Keep, named after the would-be conqueror who built it centuries ago. A newly discovered ruin is never something the Pathfinder Society takes lightly, and even now agents and venture-captains scramble to discover the wealth and secrets buried within.

Taliq Asad, an ambitious Qadiran general, built the fortress that now bears his name nearly 4 centuries ago as a base of operations as he laid siege to Absalom. The assault lasted months, but the last of Asad's forces were finally repulsed by the city's insurmountable defenses. On the same day that his army was defeated, an earthquake struck the plains north of the city, its epicenter directly under Asad's Keep. The fortress was completely destroyed, and sank into the earth with its master within. Whether the loss of their headquarters and leader brought about the army's defeat or whether Asad somehow brought about his keep's destruction as a result of being defeated was never discovered, and Asad and his keep were soon forgotten among the myriad other attempted assailants on Absalom's walls. In truth, the general caused the earthquake in frustration at his defeat, and brought the tower down upon himself and the servants who he believed, in his anger, had so grievously failed him.

Since the fort's burial, it has become a breeding ground for all sorts of dangerous monsters, including a small tribe of kobolds who worship a skulk charlatan as a prophet and oracle. The powerful emotions that drove Asad to attack Absalom and later take his own life remain, haunting any who delve too deep into the dungeon, as the spirits of those trapped beneath the crumbled

WHERE ON GOLARION?

To Delve the Dungeon Deep takes place on the Isle of Kortos. Specifically, this adventure starts in the city of Absalom and then has the PCs explore a siege castle long lost in the Cairnlands—the vast plains of ruined siege engines, crumbling towers, and the makeshift graves of countless armies of failed conquerors of Absalom. The siege castle known as Asad's Keep is located north and east of Absalom within the jagged foothills of the Kortos Mountains. For more information on the Cairnlands or Absalom, see the Pathfinder Campaign Setting book *Guide to Absalom*, available wherever books or games are sold, or online at paizo.com.



tower remain, tormented, on the Material Plane. Now the Pathfinder Society seeks a group of ambitious—or perhaps foolhardy—agents to enter the keep and retrieve from it whatever treasures and secrets they can find, assuming they can overcome the significant challenges that stand in their way, for the keep has only become more perilous over the centuries.

SUMMARY

The adventure starts with a celebration hosted by Tian venture-captain Amara Li, at the Lantern Lodge in Absalom's Petal District. While the PCs partake in the festivities, Li gives them a mission to explore a recently

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THE FIRST STEPS SERIES

The three-part First Steps series is intended to introduce both new players and new characters from experienced players to the Pathfinder Society, the city of Absalom, and the 10 factions to which all members of the Pathfinder Society Organized Play campaign may belong. While each adventure in the series is a self-contained story, the series is intended to be played in order by brand new PCs without any experience or Prestige Points. At the end of the third scenario, *A Vision of Betrayal*, after the PCs have met and done a favor for all 10 faction heads, players will be able to choose their PCs' allegiance and gain retroactive Prestige for the completion of the previous two scenarios.

This series may only be played at the normal advancement rate of 3 XP per level, meaning PCs who complete the series will advance to 2nd level, making them better prepared for tiered adventuring in normal Pathfinder Society play.

discovered ruin in the Cairnlands and retrieve a ceremonial jade katana that once belonged to her ancestor. After the PCs accept her mission, two other notable figures at the party approach them with additional tasks—Major Colson Maldris of the Andoren Eagle Knights tasks them with destroying any undead they may encounter during their mission, while the Qadiran Trade Prince Aqir al'Hakam of House Damaq asks them to retrieve a number of valuable trade agreements he believes to be located in the ruined keep.

The following morning, the PCs travel beyond the city walls to Asad's Keep, in the rocky foothills of the Kortos Mounts. At the entrance, they encounter a former Pathfinder, Maurit Zergo, who met an unfortunate end and is now finishing the terrible transition from life to undeath as a ghou. She offers to assist the PCs, but eventually turns on them if they don't destroy her first. Within the ruins themselves, the PCs may explore a number of rooms in the order of their choosing, facing various monstrous denizens, a haunted well, and a series of elementally attuned traps. In the depths of the dungeon live a small tribe of kobolds, followers of a skulk charlatan pretending to be a prophet of the Fire God. Once the PCs have defeated these kobolds or turning them against their master, they may face Fledzer, the skulk con artist, and retrieve the ceremonial jade katana they were sent to find.



Amara Li

GETTING STARTED

The PCs begin the scenario by receiving invitations to a party being held that evening at the Lantern Lodge, the beautiful and exotic estate of the Tian venture-captain, Amara Li, in Absalom's Petal District. Tonight, the invitation informs them, is the Snapdragon Festival, a traditional Gokan holiday featuring fireworks and rich plum wine. The PCs are encouraged to dress to impress, and instructed to seek out the hostess and head of the Lantern Lodge, Amara Li, upon their arrival. When they reach the Lantern Lodge, prepared to enter the party, read the following to get the adventure underway.

Only the luckiest or most influential Pathfinders receive invitations to Amara Li's annual Snapdragon Festival celebration, and wise recipients take advantage of them. The aroma of blooming orchids and flowing wine mixes with the acrid tang of recently exploded fireworks, and the sound of strangely discordant music comes from a duo of Tian women playing an unusual stringed instrument and a reed flute. The crowd mingles calmly, most guests clearly hoping to be seen more than actually paying attention to those with whom they converse, though the plum wine seems to have affected many who now move about the lodge's grounds waving sparkling wands of fire and shooting whirring, whizzing fireworks into the sky above the koi pond.

Any PC who took no effort to dress up for the occasion and arrives in simple adventuring gear and armor, or who carries excessive weaponry, is scoffed at by many of the attendees, while those who put in extra effort to dress well, particularly in the Gokan style, are especially congratulated on getting in the spirit of the festive occasion.

After the PCs spend several minutes perusing the party, they are invited into Amara Li's private study, where they find her seated on a reed mat before a low table set with an exquisite porcelain tea set. She motions for the Pathfinders to sit with her around the table, and once the door is closed behind them and they have taken their seats, begins talking in a low, hushed voice without even the hint of a Tian accent:

"Well met, Pathfinders, and welcome to the Lantern Lodge. I hope you find the Snapdragon Festival and my hospitality worthy of your time and energy. I have not brought you here for mere pleasantries, however, and wish to ask you to partake a dangerous mission on my behalf.

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“Long ago, one of my most esteemed ancestors, who was rich in power but poor in sense, gave a gift to a foreign prince, a gift that prince did not deserve and my foolish ancestor had no right to give—a ceremonial jade katana. At the time the gift was sent, its recipient was invading this island. He laid siege to Absalom from his fortress in the foothills of the Kortos Mounts. Like those who came before him, the warlord failed to take Absalom and perished in the attempt. On the very day of his defeat, his castle crumbled to dust in a violent earthquake and has been lost to the centuries ever since. My family’s heirloom was lost with it.

“A recent report by a group of Pathfinders gives me hope that they have finally found the ruin, and I might finally recover my family’s treasure. I’m looking for an intrepid group to retrieve it for me, and I’m hoping that is you. The fame and wealth you will doubtlessly recover will bring you much honor within the Society, and if you deliver the katana to me, you will have my favor as you begin your careers as full agents of the Pathfinder Society.”

Though it may not be evident from her extravagant party, Amara Li is nearly bankrupt; the cost of establishing the Lantern Lodge in Absalom has cost her dearly, and she needs the assistance of the Pathfinder Society to recoup the losses involved. While she is expecting a new influx of wealth as her agents begin traversing the Inner Sea and cooperating more closely with their counterparts in Tian Xia, she cannot wait until then to recover the katana. Because of her celebrity, she cannot go herself. She does not want the Qadira government to know what she has found, for she knows that they will also be interested in the jade katana, or at least in what it contains.

Venture-Captain Li makes it clear to the PCs that their mission into the dungeon would be as Pathfinders, but their retrieval of the katana would be a personal favor for her. She tries to hide from them the fact that the ceremonial blade is actually a vessel within which important trade agreements between her family and agents within Qadira were transported to General Asad. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Sense Motive check has a hunch that Amara Li is omitting some facts but do not gain any further information, nor does she yield any of the details she is hiding, reminding those who pry too forcefully that she is their superior within the Pathfinder Society and that they “defile their honor” by using such a tone with her.

She gives the PCs directions to the ruined keep and advises them to enjoy themselves at the Snapdragon

Festival, rest for the night, and venture forth to the Cairnlands tomorrow. At this point, the PCs are free to enjoy the festivities, partake in the excellent food and drink, and participate in the fireworks displays that light up the Petal District sky well into the morning.

ACT 1: THE SNAPDRAGON FESTIVAL

While the PCs mingle and enjoy the celebration at Amara Li’s Lantern Lodge, several other guests approach them with requests and offers of their own. First, esteemed Eagle Knight and head of the Andoran faction of Pathfinders, Major Colson Maldris, gives the PCs some insight into the dangers they may face on their adventure, and he challenges them to defend the cause of freedom, even among the ruins. Next, Trade Prince Aaqir al’Hakam of House Damaq, a Qadiran noble and major player in Absalom’s mercantile circles, asks

that the PCs do him a favor during while they explore the ancient Qadiran ruin, and promises a future of financial success in return.

Major Colson Maldris

Major Colson Maldris (NG male human fighter 5/steel falcon 5) approaches the PCs decked out in the military fineries of an Eagle Knight’s ceremonial uniform—a bright blue overcoat with polished gold buttons, gold eagle epaulets, and a fine, black felt tricorne hat. The handsome man is a charmer who clearly thinks very highly of himself. He speaks loudly and confidently, as if he wants the entire party to “overhear” his conversation with the PCs.

“Greetings, Pathfinders! I hear you’re headed out into the Cairnlands on official Society business. Best of luck outside the city walls, though you look like sturdy enough adventurers. Perhaps not Eagle Knight material, but qualified for the work of a Pathfinder.

“A word of warning, though, friends—beware the walking dead. The crumbling ruins surrounding the city are rife with them, and you’re likely to run into more than your fair share over the course of your career. Undeath and the undead are more than just a physical peril, however. Undeath is the worst kind of slavery. And it should be eradicated like all servitude, whether to aristocracy or to mental control. Being enslaved to the flesh beyond when Pharama calls one’s soul to the Boneyard is a fate I wouldn’t wish upon my greatest enemy.



**Major
Colson Maldris**

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So while you plumb the depths of Asad's Keep, remember your solemn duty to your fellow man—both living and dead. Any undead you encounter along the way should be freed of their earthly shell.

"If you prove your dedication to freedom, the resources of Andoran will be at your disposal in your future endeavors."

The major honestly knows nothing more about the PCs' future adventure than he's already told them. His warning that they may face undead comes from years of experience dealing with Andoren agents who have died exploring the ruins of the Cairnlands. He offers general suggestions on battling undead, if asked, but he can't provide specific advice, since he doesn't know the PCs' capabilities or any specific foes they may face. He uses every opportunity to proselytize to the PCs (and anyone he can get to listen) about the glory of freedom and the righteous Andoren cause of spreading democracy throughout the Inner Sea.

When the conversation has run its course, a member of the serving staff, decked out in a finely crafted silken robe, approaches the major and interrupts him, whispering something in his ear. He quickly excuses himself from the PCs' company and heads toward the door, saying he has urgent Eagle Knight business to attend to and wishing them good fortune on their quest.

Trade Prince Aaqir al'Hakam

As the party winds down, or when the PCs are preparing to leave, a well-dressed Keleshite man approaches them and asks for a quick word. **Trade Prince Aaqir al'Hakam** (N male human aristocrat 2/diviner 7/rogue 3) is soft-spoken and subtle, quite the contrast to Major Maldris's ostentatious pomposity. He draws the PCs to the side, away from any crowds or activity, and addresses them in a slow, level voice with a strong Kelish accent.

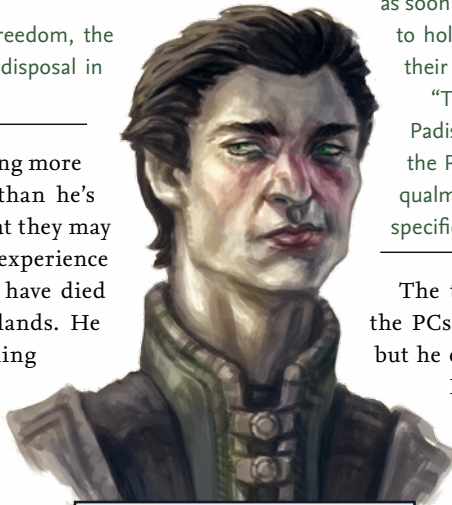
"Like a fast-spoken djinn, I'll get to the quick. I know where you are going. House Damaq of Qadira claim the ruin, but we are willing to allow you access for the price of a small deed easily accomplished during your adventure. You will be well-compensated, I assure you, for profits are most rewarding when shared. I assume treasure-seekers like yourselves are interested in such a proposition?"

Without waiting for an answer, he continues, his eyes intent and his posture rigid.

"The ruin is Qadiran, which is why we claim it, and we are willing to defend it, but there are really only certain things left

in Asad's Keep we are interested in: trade agreements, of which we believe there to be many within the ruins. All we ask that you do is to turn over all trade agreements you find to us as soon as you return to Absalom, as we will be able to hold the signers to them even centuries after their signing.

"The satrap of Qadira—nay, the entire Padishah Empire of Kelesh—has much to offer the Pathfinder Society, and I personally have no qualms about sharing those resources with you, specifically. Shall we shake on this agreement?"



**Trade Prince
Aaqir al'Hakam**

The trade prince is overstating his case. If the PCs refuse, they gain al'Hakam's distrust, but he does nothing to bar their way to Asad's Keep, nor does he dispute any claims on their return. A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check knows that the trade prince's legal statements are somewhat dubious. Few houses try to protect any claims within the Cairnlands as such claims are notoriously difficult to uphold and enforce.

Still, if any house could do it, it would be House Damaq. Similarly, a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Sense Motive recognizes that Aaqir al'Hakam is a deliberate man whose attitude, while brusque, is not directly hostile toward the PCs or the Pathfinder Society. Nevertheless, it's clear that he is unaccustomed to hearing the word "no." If the PCs agree to assist him, he shakes their hands solemnly, thanks them and blesses their journey, and then makes his exit.

Development: After the Snapdragon Festival winds to a close or the PCs leave it, allow them the opportunity to purchase any equipment they may desire before they head into the Cairnlands the following morning. While it may be very late at night, a city the size of Absalom never sleeps, and nearly anything characters of the PCs' level can afford can be found at any time of day or night. Returning to their respective homes, inns, or chosen places to bed down for the night, the PCs are free to make their own preparations for the task at hand before meeting up the following morning.

ACT 2: ASAD'S KEEP

Asad's Keep was buried long ago, when its master, a Qadiran warlord named Taliq Asad lost his bid to conquer Absalom. This place was his last stronghold. As his conquest crumbled around him, Asad became paranoid, and in his madness he took out his frustration by creating a terrible earthquake that reduced the above-ground portions of his keep to rubble, killing many of

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his lieutenants and trapping dozens of his officers and servants in the catacombs beneath the ruined structure. It was only a matter of time before the trapped Qadirans devolved into madness, cannibalism, and suicide. In the end, they all died violent deaths, succumbed to starvation or disease, or suffocated when the air finally ran out.

Recently, a band of Pathfinders exploring the Cairnlands stumbled across what looked to be a door, revealed by a recent rockslide. Their initial venture into the dungeon did not end well—they lost one of their number to a ravenous undead creature lurking in the network, which ran free into the wilderness after pursuing them halfway through the Cairnlands. It now falls on the PCs to explore what remains of Asad's Keep, hopefully with better results than their predecessors.

Unless stated otherwise, areas in the ruin have the following terrain.

Doors: Many of the ironbound wood doors of this dungeon have weakened or become stuck. A quiet and careful PC should have no problem gathering intelligence by listening through doors. The weakened doors provide a +5 bonus to those who use Stealth to sneak up and listen, and only impart a –5 penalty to hear what is beyond. The DC for listening at a door is equal to 10 + the Stealth modifier of whatever creature lies beyond, or DC 10 if no creature lies beyond. Unless stated otherwise, before a PC tries to open the door, roll a d6. On a result of 1–2, the door is stuck, and opening it requires a DC 15 Strength check; on a 3–4, the door is weakened, and breaks when opened; on a 5–6, the door acts like a regular ironbound wooden dungeon door. Alternatively, you may roll for all the doors before the start of the session, or just decide which doors are weakened or stuck as befits your play style.

Floors: The floors of Asad's Keep are composed of dingy slate tile that act as flagstone.

Walls: The dungeon's walls were once plastered and painted, featuring the occasional section of mosaic tiles. Some tiles served as borders, and other made designs, while a few depict scenes of life back when this place was the base of a would-be conqueror of Absalom. Climbing the walls requires a successful DC 20 Climb check.

Light: There are no sources of light within the dungeon except where noted.

Ceiling: The ceilings of the surviving catacombs are quite high. They are 15 feet high in hallways, and 20 feet high in chambers. At one time, the ceilings were plastered and painted and featured mosaics, just like the walls; much of that decoration has fallen off and now litters the floor.

Rubble: Litter from the crumbling ruins sometimes forms small piles, either by accident or arranged by the dungeon's denizens. These piles are denoted by rubble on the map. Squares with rubble are difficult terrain.

GM TIP: DUNGEON CRAWLING

Pathfinder Society Scenarios often have story-based time limits that prevent the PCs from resting or recovering over the course of the adventure. In the case of this and other dungeon crawls, the PCs are under no such external constraints and can return to town or lock themselves in a room within the dungeon to heal if their resources are depleted. Keep in mind delayed-onset effects (like ghoul fever) if the PCs take longer than a day to explore the ruins, and be mindful of the real-life time constraints on completing the scenario before the slot ends, but allow PCs to rest if needed; the treasure and enemies they encounter will still be there tomorrow.

Additionally, some of the challenges within may be too much for some parties. Remind them that there's nothing wrong with fleeing or bypassing some challenges; after all, there are two ways into almost every room in the dungeon and most of the enemies encountered have no way to pursue PCs if they close a door behind them.

This adventure contains more encounters than the average Pathfinder Society Scenario, but many of them are completely avoidable. If, when running this, you find that the players are spending too much time with encounters that do not provide treasure or that have little bearing on the story, consider these traps or combats optional. Make sure, however, that the players have the time to go through at least five encounters in the dungeon, and that they have the opportunity to retrieve the jade katana from the skulk in area 14.

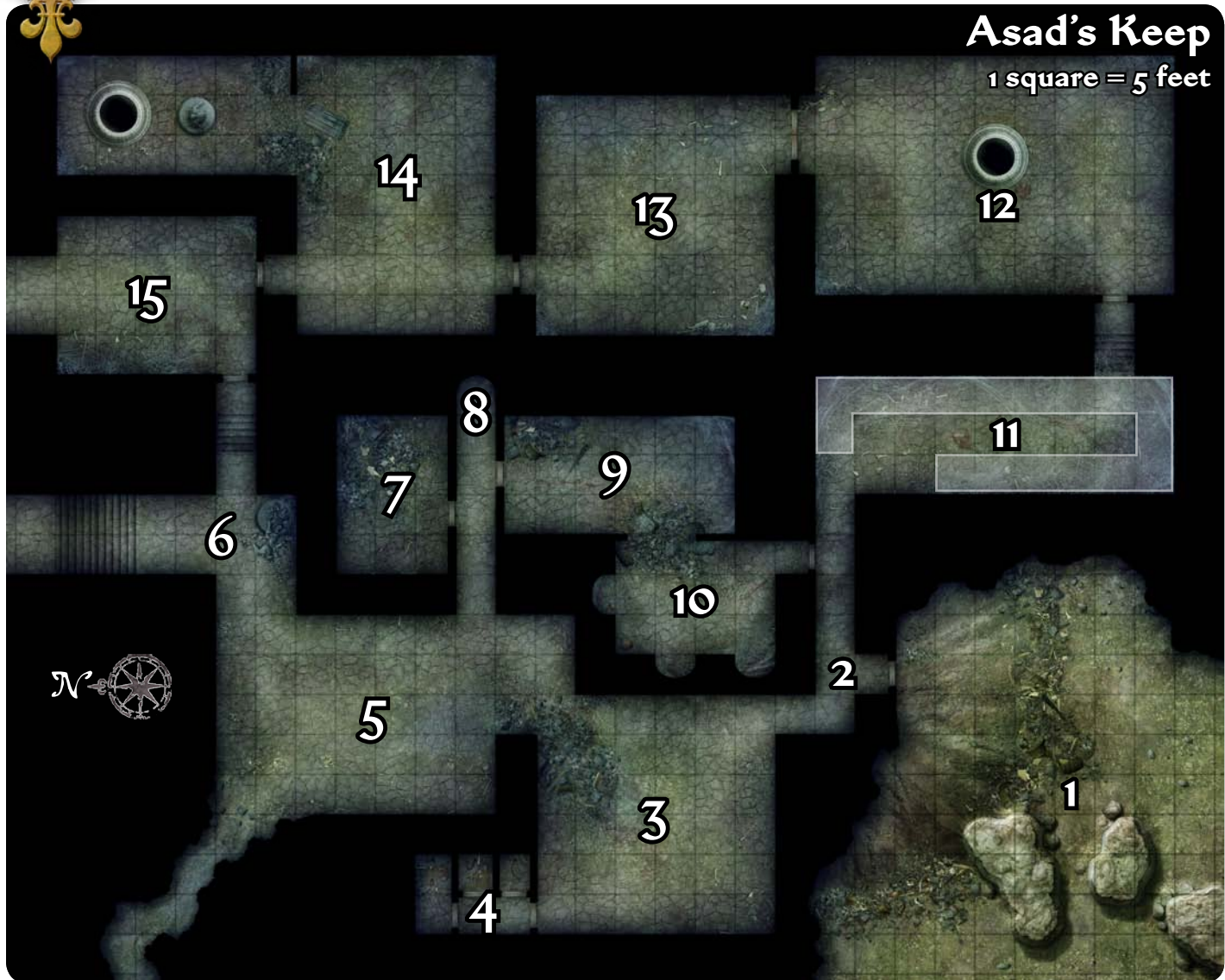
1. Entrance (CR 2)

Once the PCs have the directions to Asad's Keep and have made the necessary preparations, they find travel to the site to be arduous; the terrain is rocky and marred with the scars of millennia of wars, making it thirsty work for the PCs to get to their destination, but they encounter no resistance. The directions they have lead to a small gully; at the end of it is a cliff wall with a door set into it approximately 15 feet off the ground.

At the end of the gully, about fifteen feet above the ground on a cliff face, is an ancient, ironbound door. Its wood is dried and cracked. Directly in front of the door is a steep slope of rubble and dust-crusting debris that, as luck would have it, provides a path—albeit a rough and difficult one—right up to the door.

The areas of flat rock are wind-blown pillars of sandstone standing 10 feet off the ground (Climb DC 15). The walls of the canyon are 20 feet tall. Climbing the trash pile requires a successful DC 10 Climb check.

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Creature: When the Pathfinder team that discovered the entrance to Asad's Keep ventured into the ruin's musty halls, they encountered a ghoul that had laired there, hunting the Cairnlands via the hidden tunnel to the surface in area 5. Caught by the surprise, the ghoul attacked the first person into the chamber viciously, and tore its victim to ribbons. His fellow agents fled, with the ghoul in close pursuit, leaving their companion for dead. Since then, however, the unlucky Pathfinder has himself risen as a ghoul, and he now waits hungrily atop the cliff, waiting for food to come to explore the ruins that were his tomb.

Allow each of the PCs a DC 17 Perception check to hear or see the ghoul—who still goes by her human name, Maurit Zergo—scramble across the cliff top before leaping down in front of the party (Maurit takes 10 on the Acrobatics check to jump down). PCs who notice her before she leaps can act in the surprise round. Unless immediately attacked, the ghoul addresses the PCs in hissing Common.

“How long will it take you all to cure, I wonder? You seem so full of life, and I am oh so hungry.”

Maurit is a conflicted character. Although a ghoul, with ghoulish appetites, and very hungry, the still-human part of Maurit strongly identifies with the Pathfinders. If the PCs wear Pathfinder or faction identification or identify themselves as Pathfinders, her attitude abruptly changes. The ghoul's head jerks, and her expression softens as the foul light of undeath drains from her eyes somewhat. She straightens from her crouch, and calls out to the PCs.

“Friends, it is I, Maurit Zergo, a Pathfinder as well, even in this horrid form. I can help you, if you will take the help of someone as damned as I.” She almost seems normal and living for a second, but soon shambles back to her crooked slouch.

PCs who succeed at a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check can recognize that Maurit Zergo is a recently turned ghoul.

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Her physical and maybe mental transformation is not entirely complete, but the effects of the transformation cannot be reversed.

A DC 20 Sense Motive checks reveals that Maurit is serious about both her hunger and her desire to help fellow Pathfinders. She leaps back and forth between the two extremes with those head-twitching spasms. For now, the Pathfinder side of Maurit seems to take control for longer periods than ghoulish side of her personality.

MAURIT ZERGO CR 2

Female ghoulish rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

CE Medium undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

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

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d6+2 plus disease and paralysis), 2 claws +4 (1d4+2 plus paralysis)

Ranged dagger +4 (1d4+2/19–20), shortbow +4 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 13, elves are immune to this effect), sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

Before Combat If the PCs befriend Maurit, she follows them into the dungeon, offering helpful advice, and waits near a particularly tasty looking PC for the party to become engaged in combat with another foe.

During Combat While Maurit has manufactured weapons, she only uses her daggers or shortbow for ranged attacks when melee is impossible, much preferring to use her new natural weapons to take down her foes. Though hungry and ravenous, Maurit knows what Pathfinders are capable of, and attempts to paralyze all her foes before she begins eating any of them.

Morale Maurit's condition is irreversible and she knows it. She fights to the death to get a meal.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

Feats Acrobatic, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +11, Climb +8, Disable Device +9, Escape Artist +7, Fly +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Perception +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +9, Swim +8

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Varisian

SQ trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (2), *potions of protection from evil*; **Other Gear** leather armor, dagger, shortbow with

20 arrows, masterwork thieves tools, opal worth 200 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Su) Ghoul Fever: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1 day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Charisma-based.

A humanoid of 3 Hit Dice or fewer who dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul at the next midnight; a humanoid of 4 Hit Dice or more rises as a ghast.

Development: How the encounter with Maurit plays out is entirely up to the PCs. They could attack the creature outright, remembering Major Maldris's advice. If they do, Maurit's ghoulish hunger takes hold, and she attacks with ravenous fury. If the PCs take a more diplomatic route, Maurit becomes almost giddy, asking with great interest what treasure they seek and providing intelligence about the threats inside Asad's Keep.

Maurit knows that a small tribe of kobolds dwells within, led by a strange, color-shifting humanoid. She even knows the creature has a jade katana that meets the description of the item the PCs seek. She can confirm that there are many papers, most written in Kelish, scattered throughout the catacombs. She also warns that strange creatures stray into the ruin from a deep well, and that a second well seems to be haunted.

In a manic frenzy, Maurit even sketches a map of the interior on the canyon floor, a sandstone wall, or even parchment or paper if these are offered to her. She can point out the location of the haunted well where the kobolds and their skulk leader lair, and the various places where large numbers of Kelish papers are located.

Maurit is quiet about other monsters dwelling within the ruin. If pressed, she tells the PCs, "It changes all the time because of the well," which is not entirely true (Sense Motive DC 12). She actually does have a good idea of the monsters that dwell within the ruin, but doesn't reveal any details, as she secretly hopes to betray the PCs when they're facing the threats within.

All of this intelligence is contingent on what the PCs share with Maurit. She has no idea of what the PCs are after in the ruin until they tell her.

Lastly, she offers them another way into the ruins, a secret entrance that leads deeper into the complex, and will even lead them to the cave that exits into area 5.

Of course, there are consequences if the PCs accept Maurit's aid. The ghoul shadows the PCs as they explore the ruins and is always on the lookout for an opportunity to strike. She moves as stealthily as possible in the hops of not alerting the PCs. She ruthlessly strikes the PCs if they are in danger from another threat.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Maurit Zergo, give each PC 60 gp.

2. Aspect of Air (CR 2)

Attached to the north wall at this corridor junction is the relief carving of a giant face. The relief is that of a Qadiran man with a billowing beard. His eyes are closed, and his lips are parted, as if he were blowing out a flame. His lips frame a deep hole in the wall. The paint once adorning the relief is chipped and faded, but traces of its brilliant blues and pristine whites are still visible here and there. On the man's forehead is a single Kelish word, carved in a flowing script.

The Kelish word carved on the head's forehead translates as "air" in Common. If the Kelish word is spoken aloud within 30 feet of the head, the relief's mouth blasts out a dangerous gust of air. This air gust was once used to blow refuse out the side of the siege castle; the servants would stack all of the keep's refuse in the corridor, open the door, and then activate the head. Now it is just a dangerous curiosity.

Trap: Though not technically a trap, if the rune is activated, it has very trap-like consequences.

WIND GUST TRAP CR 2

Type magic; **Perception** DC 27; **Disable Device** DC 27
Bypass hidden switch halfway down the mouth (Perception DC 25 locates)

Effects

Trigger a creature within 30 feet of the trap speaks the word for "air" in Kelish; **Reset** automatic (24 hours)
Effect spell effect (*gust of wind*, Fortitude DC 14, shooting down the corridor toward the door to area 1. The spell has enough power to force the door open, but characters blown out the door can attempt a DC 12 Reflex save to grab onto the door or doorframe and stop their fall. Those who fail this save take 1d6 points of falling damage as they tumble into the gully below the door.

3. Large, Quiet Room (CR 1)

This large room is dank, and a strange draft flows through it carrying with it a foul odor. Rubble is strewn here and there. A strange, slimy slick glistens down the western wall. Near the slick is a wooden door. The only sound in this room is a faint drip echoing from deeper in the dungeon.

The room is largely empty. The rubble consists of stone and the battered and ancient remains of a wooden chair. The slick is on the wall 10 feet from the door leading to area 4.

Creature: The slick covering the southern wall is actually a giant amoeba. When a creature approaches within 10 of it, it peels itself off the wall and attacks. When reduced to 7 or fewer hit points, it attempts to flee to area 5.

GIANT AMOEBIA CR 1

Bestiary 2 24

N Small ooze (aquatic)

Init –5; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft.; **Perception** –5

DEFENSE

AC 6, touch 6, flat-footed 6 (–5 Dex, +1 size)

hp 15

Fort +3, **Ref** –5, **Will** –5

Defensive Abilities ooze traits

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee slam +3 (1d3+1 plus 1d3 acid and grab)

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

Special Attacks constrict (1d3+1 plus 1d3 acid)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 1, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1 (+5 grapple); **CMD** 6 (can't be tripped)

Skills Climb +9, Swim +9

SQ amphibious

4. Moldering Prison

This cramped chamber stinks of something worse than rotten eggs. A black mildew covers the walls and the three doors that lie beyond the entrance. Each has a small metal slot at its bottom, but the latched covers long ago rusted away.

This prison once held Asad's enemies, and even his own soldiers who disappointed him too much. Though the doors are locked, the black mold has weakened the metal and wood, and doors yield with a strong jolt or two (Strength DC 15).

Hazard: The smelly black mold covering the walls and doors in this room sickens any living creatures that breathe in its smell, causing them to become sickened while they are within the area, but is otherwise harmless.

Treasure: Within the cells are remains of three prisoners—those unfortunate prisoners left here when Taliq Asad brought the fortress down around him. Now nothing but bones and tattered possessions remains.

The Tian ambassador who delivered the jade katana to Asad shortly before his demise rests in the cell closest to the prison's exit. Among his remains is a letter of introduction written in Tian. The letter's paper is brittle and browned with age. Its broken seal features a kirin flying amid three clouds. The letter introduces the ambassador as Xeng Li, and describes the gift to Taliq Asad—a jade katana, a representation of the Li family's honor and its ties to House Asad.

5. Bone Lair (CR 1/3)

Cracked and crumbling frescos line the walls of this large empty room. The sections of the frescos not destroyed by

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the passing ages show Qadiran men engaged in battle. A rough stone tunnel leads off to the northwest, as if the ground simply cleft in two ages ago. A pile of bones rests just inside the passage.

This large room once served as a meeting place, entertainment hall, and occasional fighting pit. Now it sees use primarily as the route by which creatures come and go from the dungeon. Many wild animals have laired just inside the narrow tunnel, which was created during the earthquake that destroyed the tower above; the remains of their myriad prey lie in a pile near the exit.

Creatures: Among the pile of bones is a single human skeleton, animated by the necrotic energy that arose in the catacombs after Asad fatally trapped his soldiers here. The skeleton begins prone under the bones, lying still as it awaits sentient intruders into its lair, which grants it a +4 bonus on Stealth checks to hide from the PCs. It begins combat by rising from the pile and attacks the nearest creature until all targets are dead or it is destroyed. This skeleton has neither the armor nor the scimitar listed in the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* description.

HUMAN SKELETON**CR 1/3***Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 250

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

hp 4

Treasure: Among the pile of bones are 100 gp in mixed coin, a golden crown worth 300 gp, a masterwork short sword, and a wax-sealed tin scroll tube with a *scroll of comprehend languages*, all of which can be located with a successful DC 15 Perception check.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the skeleton and retrieve the treasure from the bone pile, give each PC 95 gp.

6. Aspect of Stone (CR 1)

This crossroads of stairs has one dominant feature: a crumbled statue in the southeast corner, once the image of a proud warrior chiseled roughly in granite. The statue's helmeted head now rests on the floor, its lifeless stone eyes gazing toward the south. On the helmet, a single Kelish word is carved in the stone. The wide stairway to the north leads to a passage that ends in a cave-in ten feet past the foot of the stairs.

The word carved on the statue's helmet is the Kelish word for "earth." Saying the word aloud within 30 feet of the crumbled statue releases a single earth elemental servitor. Before it was shattered, this device could summon one such creature each day, but in its broken state, it only has the residual energy to summon one elemental before becoming dormant forever.

Creature: When any creature speaks the command word to activate the statue, a small earth elemental emerges from the wall behind the statue. The creature has an empathic bond with the creature who spoke the command word, and the summoner can control the earth elemental servitor each round with a swift action. When this happens, the earth elemental takes its turn directly after the summoner, and gets a full round of actions.

If the summoner speaks Terran, controlling the elemental is a free action the summoner can take once each round.

If the summoner does not spend the action, the earth elemental servitor does nothing.

The servitor lasts for an entire day (a full 24 hours) at which time it returns to its home plane by melding back into the ground or a nearby stone wall. If the servitor dies before that 24-hour period ends, it returns to its home plane and the summoner gains the fatigued condition.

The servitor knows nothing of Asad's Keep or Golarion.

EARTH ELEMENTAL SERVITOR**CR 1**

hp 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 122; as a Small earth elemental, but it lacks tremorsense, burrowing, and earth glide except when being summoned and when returning to its home plane)

7. More Black Mold (CR 1)

The door to this chamber is stuck; a DC 15 Strength check is required to open it.

Rubbish and black mold choke the far end of the chamber. The slightest movement kicks up dust and spores, choking the stagnant and already foul-smelling air.

The black mold here is less pungent than the large growths found in the prison, and thus does not cause the sickened condition.

Creatures: Long trapped in this place, a trio of fire beetles come out of their long hibernation if someone disturbs the rubbish heap in any way. When this happens, their glowing glands begin to emit light, though it is dimmed by the layer of dust and mold coating them, and the beetles scramble from their hiding places, attacking any living creature within the chamber. PCs who succeed at a DC 15 Perception check notice the beetles before they are alerted to the PCs' presence.

Eating is the last chance these long-trapped beetles have for life. They will not give it up cheaply, and thus fight to the death. If the PCs flee and close the door behind them, however, the beetles have no means of pursuing them.

FIRE BEETLES (3)**CR 1/3**hp 4 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 33)

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Treasure: Among the mess in the room’s northeast corner, there is a small bundle of four half-buried trade agreements; all are written in Kelish. One of the agreements is between one Taliq Asad, the self-styled Satrap of Kortos, and a band of pirates that roamed the Inner Sea centuries ago. The other three are between Asad and a trio of Katapeshi merchants, surely all long dead. The PCs may locate these agreements with a successful DC 10 Perception check.

PCs who succeed at a DC 20 Perception check notice a small sack containing 200 silver pieces and a set of bronze *bracers of armor +1* buried amid the rubble.

Rewards: If the PCs recover the treasure from the trash heap, give each PC 87 gp.

8. Aspect of Water (CR 1)

At the end of this corridor sits a sinister-looking fountain in a rounded alcove. A four-headed hydra, displayed in cross formation, protrudes from the middle of the rounded wall. The hydra’s heads all face directly down the hallway. Its top head’s mouth is firmly shut, its socketed eyes staring darkly down the corridor, and its head fin is flared and up. On that head fin, a single Kelish word is carved into the stone. The other three heads have toothy mouths open wide and reclined head fins; these obviously served as spouts for the fountain. Just below the mouths is a ceramic basin. The basin has been dry for many long centuries now.

Trap: Like the crumbling statue and the large relief head near the cliff-side entrance, this is another magical device with a single word written on a forehead—in this case, the head fin. The word here is the Kelish word for “water.” This fountain was not originally designed as a trap, but rather as a method for filling the basin. When “water” is spoken aloud in Kelish within 30 feet of the hydra relief, the following trap-like affect is triggered.

WATER SPOUT TRAP CR 1

Type magic; Perception
 DC 23; Disable
 Device DC 27
 Bypass hidden switch halfway down the mouth of the

top hydra head (Perception DC 25 locates)

EFFECTS

Trigger a creature within 30 feet of the trap speaks the word for “water” in Kelish; **Reset** automatic (24 hours)

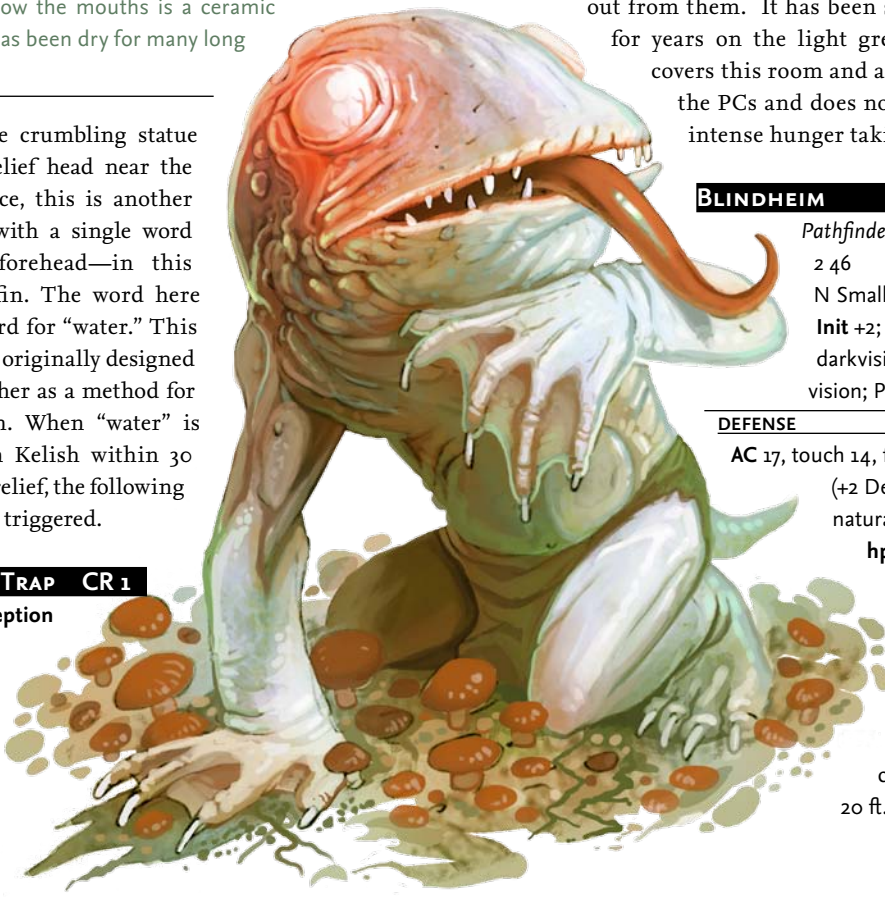
Effect Three jets of water shoot out of the bottom three hydra heads. All creatures in a 15-foot line must succeed at a DC 14 Reflex saving throw or be pushed by an erratic stream of high-pressured water. This jet deals 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage and knocks the target prone. A successful saving throw avoids this effect.

Development: The sound of running water causes the blindheim in area 9 to investigate.

9. Glowing Eyes (CR 2)

This large room looks like it was once a scribing chamber. The remains of many desks are scattered about, and amid the rubble is a number of long-dried inkwells, other writing utensils, and scraps of paper. These things are covered with black mold and patches of light green mushrooms.

Creature: Amid a particularly thick patch of fungus in the southeast sits a pale and crusty froglike humanoid. It trembles and twitches as it stands and lurches forward. His skin is patchy and dry, like a squid left out in the sun and sand. His bulbous eyes open, and light stabs out from them. It has been sustaining itself for years on the light green fungus that covers this room and area 10. It attacks the PCs and does not back down, its intense hunger taking control.



BLINDHEIM CR 2

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary
 2 46
 N Small magical beast
Init +2; **Senses**
 darkvision, low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14
 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 size)
hp 25 (3d10+9)
Fort +5, **Ref** +5,
Will +2
Immune
 blindness
OFFENSE
Speed 30 ft.,
 climb 20 ft., swim
 20 ft.

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Melee bite +5 (1d4+1), 2 claws +5 (1d3+1)

Special Attacks blinding gaze

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

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

Feats Improved Natural Armor, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +6 (+10 jumping), Perception +6, Swim +9

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blinding Gaze (Ex) A blindheim's eyes emit bright light to a range of 30 feet. Any creature in that area must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1 hour. Blindheims can see normally in the light generated by their eyes, which illuminates a 30-foot spread with bright light. Creatures with light blindness or light sensitivity take the normal penalties within 30 feet of a blindheim that is using its blinding gaze. A blindheim can activate or suppress this ability as a free action. The save DC is constitution based.

Treasure: One trade agreement, three flasks of holy water, and a *potion of cure moderate wounds* are hidden in the blindheim's mushroom nest, and can be located with a DC 15 Perception check.

Rewards: If the PCs retrieve the blindheim's treasure, give each PC 31 gp.

10. Ancient Agreements

Three rounded alcoves in this chamber contain the rotting remains of scroll shelves, honeycombing from floor to ceiling. Scattered amid the compromised shelving are damaged scrolls, and a number of still-sealed scroll tubes. A glimmering trickle of water seeps down from the ceiling in the northwest corner of the room.

Treasure: Sitting on the rotting shelves in this room are a number of moldering trade agreements. A dozen of them are of the type the PCs are searching for. All are written in Kelish, and detail pacts that Satrap Taliq Asad made with pirates, mercenary groups (for the protection of caravans), petty lords, and even a few nations scattered about the Inner Sea region. One agreement contains a personal note addressed to the Satrap, congratulating him on gaining the Li family's jade katana and the promise it contains.

11. Webbed Chamber (CR 1)

This long, narrow room is choked with webbing. Within the webs are a number of what appear to be small, dead humanoids with dark, scaled skin, each wrapped in a cocoon of sticky webbing.

This room has long been the lair of a giant spider who has fed well on the denizens of Asad's Keep, including two desiccated kobolds currently wrapped in webbing and waiting to be eaten. Movement through the web-filled squares (shaded on the map) requires a DC 12 Strength check, which allows the PCs to move through the squares at half speed, or the webs can be cleared by attacking them. The webs have 2 hit points per 5-foot square and have DR 5/—.

Creature: The spider hides in the southeast corner of the room and leaps out at its potential prey when they reach the center of the room, or if its web is disturbed, targeting the closest PC. The spider sees the PCs only as food, not a threat, and fights to the death.

GIANT SPIDER
CR 1

hp 16 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 258)

Treasure: Next to the remains of one of the two dead kobolds wrapped in the webbing is a small purse containing 30 gp and a *pearl of power* (1st level). This purse may be found with a successful DC 15 Perception check.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the spider and recover the kobold's treasure, give each PC 88 gp.

12. Haunted Well (CR 3)

As the PCs approach closer to either door of this chamber, those who succeed at a DC 5 Perception check hear a strange howling. When the PCs open the door, read the following.

A mournful howl comes from a stone well in the room's center. This large chamber's walls, once painted with vermilion and gilded with gold leaf, are now splotched and crumbling. Unlike the walls, however, the tiles that decorate the well are untouched by the ages and gleam as if recently polished.

When Taliq Asad, the self-styled Satrap of Kortos, knew his bid to conquer Absalom was hopeless, he flew into a terrible rage and brought about a massive earthquake to topple his fortress and kill all those within for failing him. While those above ground were pulverized in the collapse, dozens of soldiers and servants were trapped beneath the pile of rubble in the catacombs below. Unable to escape, they all died eventually, many by their own hands as food and air ran out. One such prisoner leapt into this well to the stone bed 20 feet below. And though his spirit went on to the Boneyard for judgment by the Lady of Graves, the terror and hopelessness that so dominated the last days of his life remained.

Haunt: The residual energy of the trapped soul's suicide has formed a haunt in the well. The haunt is harmless if

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no one looks down into the well, but any creature that does is subject to a *suggestion* that urges it to throw itself into the hole. The suggestion manifests at initiative rank 10 in the surprise round once the haunt triggers, and any PC who succeeds at her Perception check to notice it may act on her own initiative in the surprise round. If the PCs can deal 13 points of damage using positive energy or holy water to the mouth or any part of the shaft of the well before it acts, they can deactivate the well. Its effects persist until it is destroyed, meaning that any PC may be targeted with the suggestion effect when looking in the well as long as it is active. A PC who saves against the well's effects may not be targeted for 1 hour.

SUICIDE WELL**CR 3**

CE Haunt (5 ft. by 5 ft., 15-ft.-deep well)

Caster Level 3rd**Notice** Perception DC 10 (the distinct sound of a person screaming mixed in with the howl of the well)**hp** 13; **Weakness** tricked by *hide from undead*, susceptible to holy water damage; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** persistent, 1 hour/target**Effect** This haunt triggers when any creature looks down the well. The creature must make a DC 14 Will save or be affected by a *suggestion* spell, urging it to leap into the well as a means of speeding it to its inevitable fate of a terrible death in the subterranean darkness.**Destruction** The well ceases its howling if the remains of the victim whose suicide spawned the haunt are retrieved from the bottom of the pit and laid to rest respectfully in hallowed ground.

Development: If the well is disrupted or destroyed, the howling stops. PCs who look down the well see the bottom 20 feet down, where lie the long-dead remains of a humanoid man. The man was a mere servant and had no treasure, but retrieval of his body and providing him proper burial ends the haunt and prevents it from resetting after an hour.

13. Dispossessed Kobolds (CR 1)

This large room is an aged gallery. Its once-decorated walls have been stripped of the original mosaics and its decorations replaced with Draconic graffiti, crudely etched into the walls. Other than the scrawl on the walls, the chamber is noticeably cleaner and less dusty than the dungeon's other rooms.

The graffiti is nothing more than a group of names in Draconic (Tarka, Gogot, Rexus, and Lurtill among a few others that are hard to read) interspersed with short phrases such as "All hail the fire speaker!" and "The flame lives!"

Creatures: Four kobold warriors, all of whom are dissatisfied with the increasingly strange orders of their leader, a creature they call the Fire Speaker, are involved in a heated discussion in the center of the room. If the Suicide Well remains active, the sound of the howling wind likely drowns out the sounds of the PCs' approach from the south, and the kobolds don't expect visitors from the north, where the Fire Speaker holds court. When the kobolds notice the PCs, they end their discussion and arrange themselves into a defensive position. Three kobolds form a loose line of spears, while the fourth moves behind the line and readies its sling. Unless the PCs try to treat with the kobolds, they attack.

KOBOLD WARRIORS (4)**CR 1/4****hp** 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

Development: The lead kobold, who is named Tarka, is the smartest among the tribe, and serves as the group's leader. She does know a smidgen of Common (enough to initiate Diplomacy), and parleys with the PCs if they show her the proper respect. While the kobolds begin the encounter with an unfriendly attitude, if the PCs attempt to communicate with the kobolds in any way, their attitude changes to indifferent. If the PCs can change the kobolds' attitude to friendly (Diplomacy DC 14), Tarka explains her dissatisfaction with the Cult of Fire and its skulk leader, which is really frustration over the fact that she is no longer the leader of the band. She believes that the skulk, who calls himself the Fire Speaker, is a fraud, and that he is tricking her tribe into following strange edicts, but she does not offer to help the PCs against him. If the PCs can change the kobolds' attitude to helpful (Diplomacy DC 19), Tarka offers her group's help. If the PCs flub the Diplomacy check (DC 9 or lower), the kobolds attack to defend their tribe, and they even move to warn the Fire Speaker and the kobolds in area 14.

If the PCs gain the friendship of Tarka and her minions, they agree to vouch for the PCs with the rest of their band, which has an effect on the combat in area 14. Tarka tries to create a convoluted explanation for the conflict between the PCs and the Fire Speaker in order to justify supporting them—perhaps claiming that the PCs seek revenge for some past wrong committed by the Fire Speaker—but she accepts any plan that pits the PCs against the skulk posing as oracle, even if it doesn't fit her limited world view.

Treasure: Tarka has a small bag containing three tanglefoot bags and a thunderstone.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat or parley with the kobolds, give each PC 19 gp.

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14. Aspect of Fire (CR 3 or CR 4)

This large room was once two, but the wall between them has been partially torn down, and the broken door now serves as a makeshift altar. The candles and strange statues that decorate it all face the dark alcove beyond the broken wall.

A small band of tribeless kobolds has long used this chamber as its home because it is one of the most secure rooms in the dungeon. The well in the dark northern alcove leads down to a shallow underground stream that provides them easy access to the outside world as well as potable drinking water. Several months ago, a strange, shapeshifting humanoid climbed out of the well. While the skulk known as Fledzer was initially met with hostility, he was canny and quickly found a way out of the kobolds' sights: a freestanding dragon statue positioned between the well and the broken wall.

This statue features a single word in Kelish—a language Fledzer happens to know—the word for “fire.” When he spoke this word, a blast of flames shot from the statue’s mouth. The clever skulk made a swift plan, pretending to speak to the spirit of the statue. His ability to communicate with the flame impressed the gullible kobolds, and their attitude shifted from one of hostility to reverence. Fledzer renamed the group the Cult of Fire and now sends his worshipers out to do his bidding throughout the Cairnlands. He maintains the illusion of power by “speaking with the flame,” asking the statue a question and then triggering the flames—two gouts for yes, one for no.

Creatures: Four kobolds kneel before the broken door altar, facing the dark alcove to the north, as the red glow of fire flashes quickly in the darkness. If the PCs enter with Tarka and her band of kobolds from area 13, the kobolds rise and ask their companions for an explanation. If the PCs enter alone, the kobolds rise and draw their weapons and attack when a thin, whispering voice from the darkness tells them to “defend the flame” in Draconic.

The skulk illusionist Fledzer—known by the kobolds as the Fire Speaker—is hidden in the darkness by the statue, watching the events in the larger chamber unfold. Tall and hairless, he clings to the back of the statue, looking out nervously in jolts of his head from behind the cover it provides.

If the PCs have enlisted Tarka’s helpful attitude, she quickly moves forward to speak with her kin and persuades them to stand down. She calls for a fight

between the PCs and the Flame Speaker to prove the Fire God’s power. All of the kobolds stay out of the fight.

If the PCs were not able to gain Tarka’s help, Fledzer uses the kobold assault as a distraction for his getaway, and he slinks back into the well on the second round of combat, after he’s sure the PCs are properly engaged with his minions.



KOBOLD WARRIORS (4) CR 1/4

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

FLEDZER CR 2

Male skulk illusionist 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 248)

CE Medium humanoid (skulk)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+3 Dex)

hp 24 (4 HD; 3d8+1d6+8)

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +2 (1d4/19–20)

Ranged dagger +5 (1d4/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +3)

5/day—blinding ray

Illusionist Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +3)

1st—*color spray* (DC 13), *disguise self*, *magic missile*

0 (at will)—*ghost sound*,

mage hand, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

Opposition Schools Divination, Conjuraton

TACTICS

Before Combat Fledzer hides in the darkness, blending in with the statue unless called out by the PCs or Tarka, in which case he reluctantly moves into the open to speak with the kobold or the PCs.

During Combat No matter what the kobolds decide to do, Fledzer attempts to escape. A false prophet using the power of the Qadiran statue to manipulate the kobolds, he knows when it is time to abandon a con. The skulk uses his abilities to hide his treasure from both the PCs and the kobolds, and uses his spells and spell-like abilities to blind and stun the PCs to ease his escape. If a PC moves in front of the dragon statue, Fledzer activates the trap as a free action. If cornered and given the opportunity to surrender, he parleys for his life, willingly handing over the jade katana and his other treasures in exchange for his freedom.

Morale Fledzer is more interested in saving his own chameleon hide than he is in maintaining control of the kobold tribe. If reduced to 8 or fewer hit points, he attempts to flee down the well in the northern portion of the room.

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 16, **Con** 15, **Int** 14, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11

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

Feats Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Bluff +4, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Perception +4,

Spellcraft +9, Stealth +17; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth

Languages Common, Draconic, Kelish, Undercommon

SQ arcane bond (ring), camouflaged step, chameleon skin,

extended illusions (+1 round)

Combat Gear *potion of blur*, *potion of cure light wounds*;

Other Gear dagger, jade katana, spell component pouch, spellbook (contains all prepared spells as well as all 0-level spells, *burning hands*, *magic aura*, *silent image*, and *ventriloquism*)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Camouflaged Step (Ex) Skulks can pass through forest and subterranean terrain almost without a trace. Add +10 to the DC to track a skulk in these environments.

Chameleon Skin (Ex) A skulk's racial bonus on Stealth checks comes from his ability to change the color of his skin complex or regular patterns like bricks and mortar. A skulk loses this conditional bonus if he is wearing armor, or if he wears any clothing that covers more than one-quarter of his body, as skulks can only change the color of their own flesh, not that of the things they carry. A skulk normally conceals small items behind his body; by putting his back to a wall and changing the color of his front half, he can hide these items because observers don't have line of sight to the items.

Trap: The dragon figure in the dark alcove is the last of the elemental statues in the catacombs. It produces a gout of fire when the command word is spoken: the Kelish word for "fire."

FIRE BREATH TRAP CR 1

Type magic; **Perception** DC 27; **Disable Device** DC 27

Bypass hidden switch in the statue's mouth (Perception DC 25 locates)

EFFECTS

Trigger a creature within 30 feet of the trap speaks the word for "fire" in Kelish; **Reset** automatic

Effect Any creature in the square directly in front of the statue must make a DC 13 Reflex saving throw or take 1d4 fire damage. A successful save halves the damage.

Treasure: Fledzer carries the ceremonial jade katana that Amara Li seeks, wearing it on his hip attached to a thin belt. A DC 25 Perception check notices the secret compartment in the jade katana. Inside the compartment is a tightly-rolled document, which both serves as a letter of credit and details a trade agreement between any holder of that agreement and a group called the Way of the Kirin. The terms are written in both Tien and Kelish, and promise the holder the full support of the Way of the Kirin, along with naval and war materiel worth 50,000 gp.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Fledzer and recover the jade katana, give each PC 32 gp.

FIRST STEPS PART II: TO DELVE THE DUNGEON DEEP

15. Kobold Stockroom

This room has a wide corridor exiting it toward the north, and a door to the south. Barrels and boxes of supplies fill the cramped chamber.

This room serves as the kobolds' storeroom, where they keep food rations and trap-making supplies. Most of the stores here are worthless, rotten, or too bulky to be worth carrying them back to Absalom. The wide tunnel leading north from the room goes 40 feet before ending in a solid stone wall.

Treasure: Among the mostly worthless junk the kobolds have amassed, the PCs may find four vials of alchemist's fire hidden in a bag of weevil-infested flour with a successful DC 20 Perception check. The labels on the bottles—which contain the sort of spirits one might find in a mining village tavern—read “Gurk's Fire Juice” in Draconic.

Rewards: If the PCs recover Gurk's fire juice cache, give each PC 7 gp.

CONCLUSION

How the GM should conclude this adventure depends on the PCs' actions and in what order they visit the various faction heads upon the return to Absalom.

If the characters take the trade agreements to Trade Prince Aaqir al'Hakam first, he accepts them with gratitude, and then asks to see the jade katana, whether or not the PCs are forthcoming with their retrieval of it or not. If they refuse, he allows them to keep the katana but informs them of its contents. If they have not yet discovered the trade agreement within, he reveals it, and claims it for Qadira. If Aaqir claims the trade agreement, cross out the Debt of the Kirin boon from the PCs' Chronicle sheets.

If the PCs present the jade katana to Amara Li, she is ecstatic. She showers them with praise if the agreement is still within the katana, says that she is always in their

debt, and tells them they are always welcome within her Lantern Lodge. If Amara claims the trade agreement, cross out the Debt of the Kirin boon from the PCs' Chronicle sheets. While Amara hopes to find the trade agreement within to help with her own finances, if the PCs or al'Hakam has claimed it, she admits that she didn't share her knowledge of its existence with the PCs and acknowledges that they did what she asked. She takes full responsibility for the PCs giving the agreement to al'Hakam first, despite her disappointment.

If the PC destroyed Maurit Zergo—either before her betrayal or after—Major Maldris hears of their action through his contacts in the Society and visits the PCs to congratulate them for their good deed. “I know it was difficult,” he says. “The undead sometimes cling to life, but they always turn to evil. This was a hard lesson that I felt you had to learn, to better serve the common good. As Pathfinders, we should always serve the common good and always fight for freedom.”

If the PCs keep the trade agreement from within the katana for themselves, do not cross out the Debt of the Kirin boon from their Chronicle sheets; this action may have future consequences later in the PCs' careers.

Success Conditions

In order for the PCs to earn their Prestige Point for completing the adventure, they must have completed at least four combat encounters in Asad's Keep.

Faction Missions

There are no faction-specific missions in this scenario, as PCs playing through the First Steps series have not yet chosen factions. The PCs each earn 1 additional Prestige Point for the scenario if the party completes any one of the following three tasks: retrieve the jade katana and return it to Amara Li; retrieve the trade agreement from within the jade katana and return it to Trade Prince Aaqir al'Hakam; destroy Maurit Zergo. When a PC earns her third Chronicle (after completing *A Vision of Betrayal*), all of the Prestige Points she has earned over the course of the series will be reported to her chosen faction.

**PATHFINDER SOCIETY INTRODUCTORY SCENARIO:
FIRST STEPS, PART II: TO DELVE THE DUNGEON DEEP**

Event _____ Date _____

GM # _____ GM Character # _____

GM Name _____

Andoran Cheliah Grand Lodge Lantern Lodge Osirion
 Qadira Sczarni Shadow Lodge Silver Crusade Taldor

Character # _____ Prestige Points _____

Character Name _____

Andoran Cheliah Grand Lodge Lantern Lodge Osirion
 Qadira Sczarni Shadow Lodge Silver Crusade Taldor

Character # _____ Prestige Points _____

Character Name _____

Andoran Cheliah Grand Lodge Lantern Lodge Osirion
 Qadira Sczarni Shadow Lodge Silver Crusade Taldor

Character # _____ Prestige Points _____

Character Name _____

Andoran Cheliah Grand Lodge Lantern Lodge Osirion
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Character # _____ Prestige Points _____

Character Name _____

Andoran Cheliah Grand Lodge Lantern Lodge Osirion
 Qadira Sczarni Shadow Lodge Silver Crusade Taldor

Character # _____ Prestige Points _____

Character Name _____

Andoran Cheliah Grand Lodge Lantern Lodge Osirion
 Qadira Sczarni Shadow Lodge Silver Crusade Taldor

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PATHFINDER SOCIETY INTRODUCTORY SCENARIO

FIRST STEPS, PART II: TO DELVE THE DUNGEON DEEP

Scenario Chronicle #

Slow Normal

SUBTIER	—	419
1		
SUBTIER		
—		

MAX GOLD

This Chronicle Certifies That

_____ A.K.A. _____

Player Name Character Name Pathfinder Society # Faction

_____ Has Completed This Scenario.

EXPERIENCE

Starting XP

+	<input type="text"/>	GM's Initial
---	----------------------	--------------

XP Gained (GM ONLY)

Final XP Total

FAME

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------

Initial Fame Initial Prestige

+	<input type="text"/>	GM's Initial
---	----------------------	--------------

Prestige Gained (GM ONLY)

Prestige Spent

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------

Final Fame Current Prestige

GOLD

Start GP

+	<input type="text"/>	GM's Initial
---	----------------------	--------------

GP Gained (GM ONLY)

+	<input type="text"/>	GM's Initial
---	----------------------	--------------

Day Job (GM ONLY)

+	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------

Items Sold

=	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------

Subtotal

-	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------

Items Bought

=	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------

Total

Items Found During This Scenario

SUBTIER
1

- Debt of the Kirin:** You possess a series of letters of credit and a trade agreement between any holder of that agreement and a group called the Way of the Kirin.

Bracers of armor +1 (1,000 gp)

Pearl of power [1st level] (1,000 gp)

Potion of blur (300 gp)

Potion of cure moderate wounds (300 gp)

Items Sold / Conditions Gained

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

Items Bought / Conditions Cleared

TOTAL COST OF ITEMS BOUGHT

For GM Only

EVENT

EVENT CODE

DATE

Game Master's Signature

GM Pathfinder Society #