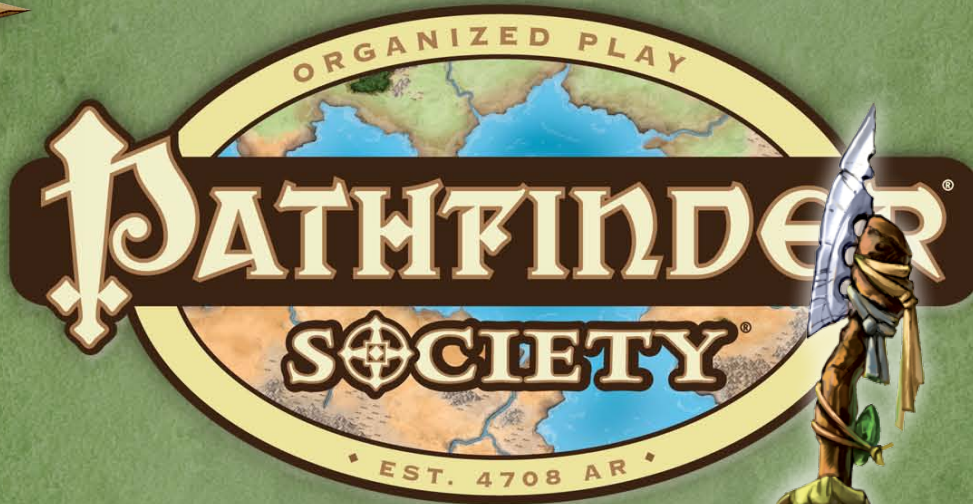


# Pathfinder Society Quest



# AMBUSH IN ABSALOM

By Mark Moreland



# AMBUSH IN ABSALOM

A PATHFINDER SOCIETY QUEST

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*Pathfinder Society Quest: Ambush in Absalom* is a Pathfinder Society Quest designed for 1st- to 5th-level characters (Tier 1–5; Subtiers 1–2 and 4–5). This quest is designed for play in the Pathfinder Society Organized Play campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world.

This product makes use of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* and the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*. These rules can be found online for free as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at [paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd](http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd).

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# AMBUSH IN ABSALOM

## A PATHFINDER SOCIETY QUEST FOR TIER 1-5

BY MARK MORELAND



The Pathfinder Society has a presence in nearly every city in the Inner Sea region but nowhere as strongly as the bustling streets of Absalom. Even when lost among a teeming population of over 300,000 souls, agents working on covert missions or setting up clandestine meetings sometimes make use of the much less-traveled passages beneath the city instead of its crowded thoroughfares and shadowy alleys. Whether the soggy Siphons below the flooded Puddles district or the wide catacombs beneath the Ascendant Court, most Absalom-based Pathfinders have at least a passing familiarity with the city's sewer systems.

The way is anything but safe, however, as novice Pathfinder Derris Jerval discovered late last night. Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin, the Grand Lodge's strict chamberlain, entrusted the naïve Andoren recruit with a time-sensitive message to a Varisian contact named Guaril Karela. While trying to avoid the city's many distractions and obstacles and prove himself a trustworthy agent, Jerval took a shortcut through the sewers from the Grand Lodge to the Docks district. He underestimated the difficulty of navigating the tunnels, however, and quickly became lost amid the meandering passages. Growing fearful and careless, Jerval didn't hear the sounds of movement ahead as he charged blindly around a corner and ran headfirst into a kobold patrol. In seconds, Jerval lay dead from their jagged spears, and Valsin's urgent message never reached Guaril Karela.

The skittish kobolds misinterpreted Jerval's encroachment as a sign of an imminent attack on their territory and alerted the rest of their clan, the noble Shockclaw Tribe. The industrious kobolds spent the entire night fortifying the borders of their warren tunnels with traps and additional guards. The next day the mighty Chief Altergrik of the Blackfang Tribe from beneath Eastgate would be coming this way to meet with the Shockclaw chief, and the entire tribe wants to ensure their dignified guests' route is secure.

### SUMMARY

The PCs are tasked with following Derris Jerval's trail through the Absalom sewers to rescue him, or retrieve

his body, and complete his mission. Along the way, they trigger the Shockclaw kobolds' defenses, encountering a guard patrol around a deadly pit trap. Following any fleeing foes or tracking Jerval's trail brings the Pathfinders face-to-face with Chief Altergrik's retinue as they return from their meeting with the Shockclaw's chief. Interpreting the PCs' presence as a well-planned ambush, they defend themselves and their leader viciously. The diplomatic spoils gifted to them from the Shockclaws include all of Jerval's equipment, specifically the satchel containing the vital missive to Guaril Karela.

### GETTING STARTED

Read the following to get the adventure underway:

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In his usual terse manner, Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin requested an audience in his office. He wasted no words once the last invitee had closed the door.

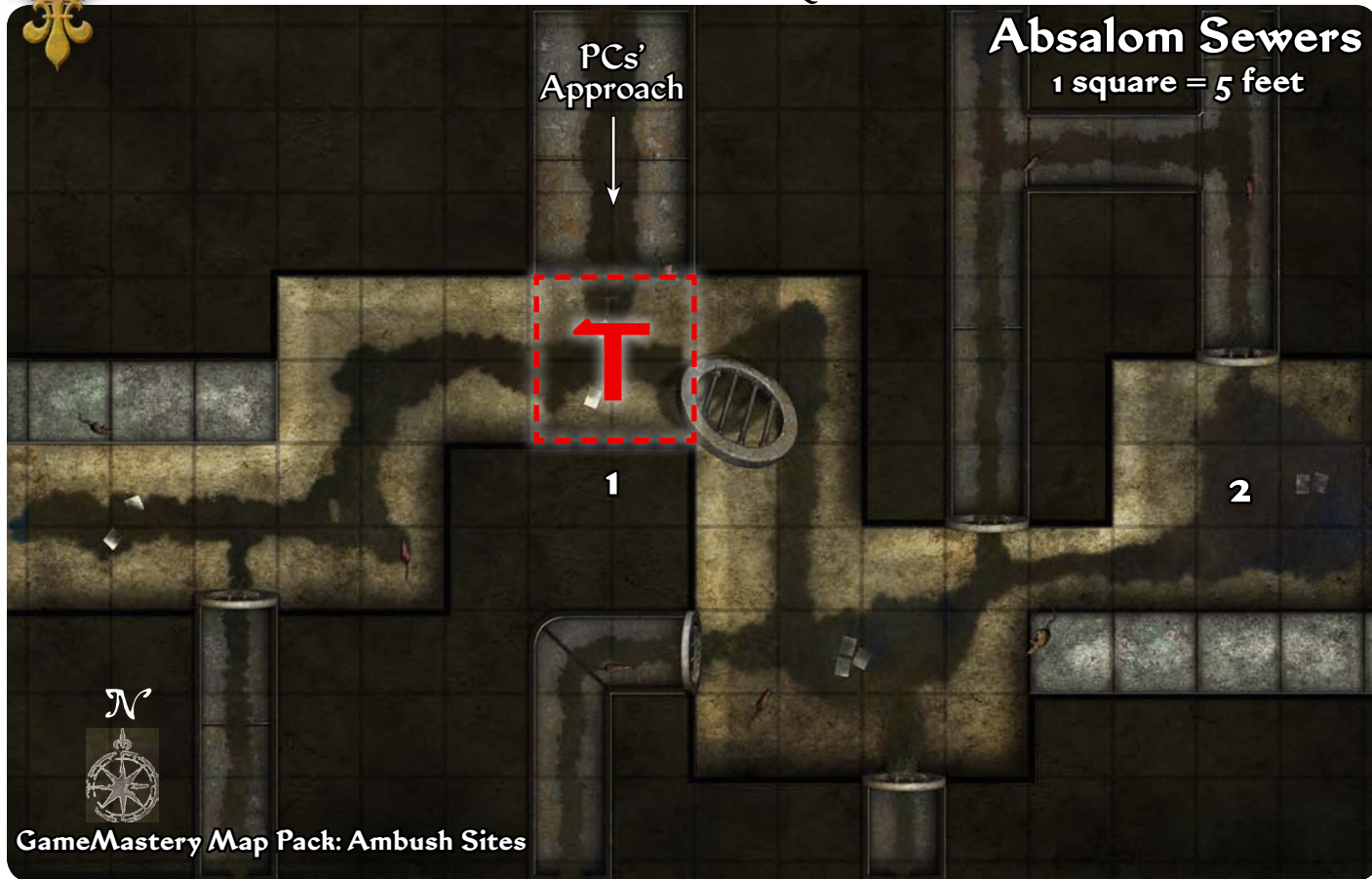
"Some of you may know a novice named Derris Jerval. Last night I gave him an important message to deliver to an associate of the Society, a Varisian businessman in the Docks named Guaril Karela. I received word this afternoon that the package never arrived. I need you to look into it.

"My initial inquiries lead me to believe Jerval entered the sewers mere yards from the Grand Lodge's walls. I'm worried for his safety down there and annoyed that he wasn't able to get the message to Karela. I need you to go after him. If he's well, slap some sense into him and ensure he delivers the message. If he's been injured or gotten himself killed, recover the message and make sure it gets to Guaril Karela at the Pickled Imp, a curiosity shop located in the Docks—and get it there soon. I'm counting on you, Pathfinders."

---

Because this Quest is intended to take only a short amount of time, proceed quickly through the introduction, and get the player characters into the sewer tunnels and hot on Derris Jerval's trail. If time is particularly tight, start immediately at the first encounter to get the dice rolling. For parties not constrained by time, however, consider expanding the journey through Absalom to its sewers.

PATHFINDER SOCIETY QUEST



## 1. SEWER AMBUSH (CR 3 OR CR 6)

A set of muddy bootprints that match Jerval's lead through the winding tunnels, following a small rivulet of stagnant runoff in a solid stone passage. The flow ends at the intersection with a perpendicular tunnel filled with a mass of filthy water and mud. The footprints continue in the mud to the east.

The Shockclaw kobolds put many of their defensive efforts in shoring up this juncture, seeing it as a likely point of attack from surface dwellers following their scout's path.

**Creatures:** A kobold patrol of four guards hides in the pipes branching off from this main tunnel, intently watching for intruders.

**Traps:** The kobolds set a number of traps in the sewers to waylay their foes and alert them to intrusion. One such snare fills the 10-foot square at the intersection of the main sewer tunnel and the murky flow channel.

### Subtier 1–2 (CR 3)

**SHOCKCLAW GUARDS (4)** CR 1/4  
 Kobold warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)  
 hp 4 each

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The kobolds have taken up sentry positions in the drainage pipes near their trap. They remain hidden until the PCs spring the trap or bypass it.

**During Combat** The guards surround the PCs, preferring to fight from range with their slings. They focus their attacks first on any PCs who have not fallen in the pit, especially any working to help their comrades out of the hole.

**Morale** The kobolds take their job seriously and fight to death. When all but one have been slain or knocked unconscious, the survivor attempts to flee to area 2 to alert the shaman's guards to the attack.

**PIT TRAP** CR 1

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** manual

**Effect** 20-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. area)

### Subtier 4–5 (CR 6)

**ELITE SHOCKCLAW GUARDS (4)** CR 1

Kobold warrior 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

## AMBUSH IN ABSALOM

**DEFENSE**

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 30 each (4d10+4)

Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0

Weaknesses light sensitivity

**OFFENSE**

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk spear +6 (1d6/x3)

Ranged sling +6 (1d3)

**TACTICS**

Same tactics as Subtier 1–2.

**STATISTICS**

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

Base Atk +4; CMB +3; CMD 14

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Craft (trapmaking) +7, Perception +7, Profession (miner) +1, Stealth +10

Languages Common, Draconic

SQ crafty

Gear studded leather, masterwork spear, sling with 10 bullets

**CAMOUFLAGED PIT TRAP****CR 3**

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 20

**EFFECTS**

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect 30-ft.-deep pit (3d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. area)

**Development:** In the fray, Jerval's tracks are lost among the kobolds' footprints. Locating the trail requires a DC 14 Survival check. Once located, the tracks can be followed east toward area 2.

## 2. THE CHIEF'S ESCORT (CR 4 OR CR 7)

This wide passage continues straight into the darkness as far as one can see, a five-foot-wide elevated walk running the length of its south side. The sound of trickling water echoes ominously through the hollow drainpipes all around.

Sewage from throughout the district flows here, where it then runs to even larger tunnels near the waterfront. As such, it serves as a major thoroughfare for subterranean denizens, including Chief Altergrik and his honor guard of the Blackfang Tribe's best warriors.

**Creatures:** As the PCs reach the wider tunnel here, Chief Altergrik and his escort just happen to be approaching from the other direction, returning to Westgate from the Foreign Quarter's immense sewer network. Already on the alert for an ambush, when the kobolds see the PCs,

they instantly assume that the PCs plan is to attack and assassinate Chief Altergrik.

### Subtier 1–2 (CR 4)

**BLACKFANG GUARDS (8)****CR 1/4**

Kobold warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

hp 5 each

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** The kobolds are on the lookout for attack and difficult to catch by surprise. Once they see non-kobolds in the tunnel with them, they rush into battle.

**During Combat** Dedicated to protecting their chief, the guards charge into melee with their spears and attempt to overwhelm the Pathfinders with superior numbers.

**Morale** All members of the Blackfang Tribe fight to the death.

**CHIEF ALTERGRIK****CR 1**

Kobold warrior 4 (use the stats for Elite Shockclaw Guards on page 4 with the following changes)

hp 30

**OFFENSE**

Melee mwk greataxe +6 (1d10/x3)

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** Surrounded by his most loyal guards, the Chief declares the Pathfinders enemies and ambushers and orders his minions to attack.

**During Combat** Chief Altergrik prefers to let his underlings fight for him, but if threatened directly he fights ruthlessly with his greataxe. If his guards' numbers fall to three or less, he likewise enters the fray.

**Morale** An honorable leader of his tribe, Chief Altergrik fights to the death.

### Subtier 4–5 (CR 7)

**BLACKFANG HONOR GUARDS (4)****CR 1**

Kobold warrior 4 (use the stats for Elite Shockclaw Guards on page 4)

hp 30 each

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** The kobolds are on the lookout for attack and difficult to catch by surprise. Once they see non-kobolds in the tunnel with them, they rush into battle.

**During Combat** Dedicated to protecting their chief, the guards charge into melee with their spears and attempt to overwhelm the Pathfinders with superior numbers.

**Morale** All members of the Blackfang Tribe fight to the death.

**CHIEF ALTERGRIK****CR 5**

Male kobold fighter 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

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

## PATHFINDER SOCIETY QUEST

**DEFENSE**

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 55 (6d10+18)

Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +4; +2 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +2

**Weaknesses** light sensitivity

**OFFENSE**

Speed 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *greataxe* +12/+7 (1d10+5/\*3)

**Ranged** sling +9/+4 (1d3+1)

**Special Attacks** weapon training (axes +1)

**TACTICS**

Same as Subtier 1–2.

**STATISTICS**

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

Base Atk +6; CMB +6; CMD 19

**Feats** Dazzling Display, Dodge, Iron Will, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (*greataxe*), Weapon Specialization (*greataxe*)

**Skills** Craft (trapmaking) +3, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +8, Perception +2, Profession (miner) +2, Sense Motive +4, Stealth +10

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**SQ** armor training 1, crafty

**Gear** masterwork hide armor, +1 *greataxe*, sling with 10 bullets

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**Development:** Among the items carried by the kobold guards, the PCs find a decorated bag of various items including a *wayfinder*, a Medium breastplate, a Medium heavy mace, and a book-sized bundle wrapped in paper and sealed with the Glyph of the Open Road. The PCs easily identify these as a Pathfinder's possessions and may glean they belonged to the late Derris Jerval. The wrapped package contains a book of traditional Varisian recipes and cannot be opened without breaking the seal.

**CONCLUSION**

If the PCs follow Venture-Captain Valsin's orders and deliver the package in Jerval's stead, they may easily locate the Pickled Imp in the Docks with a DC 12 Diplomacy check to gather information or a DC 12 Knowledge (local) check. Behind the counter the PCs find a thin, mustachioed man who answers to the name Guaril Karela. He thanks them for the book if the seal remains in place and immediately turns to a specific recipe in the back.

After reading it quickly, he returns the book, saying that he already has this volume but thanking Ambrus all the same. If the seal has been broken, he refuses the package, and asks the PCs to kindly leave lest the venture-captain learn that they've been prying into his affairs.

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