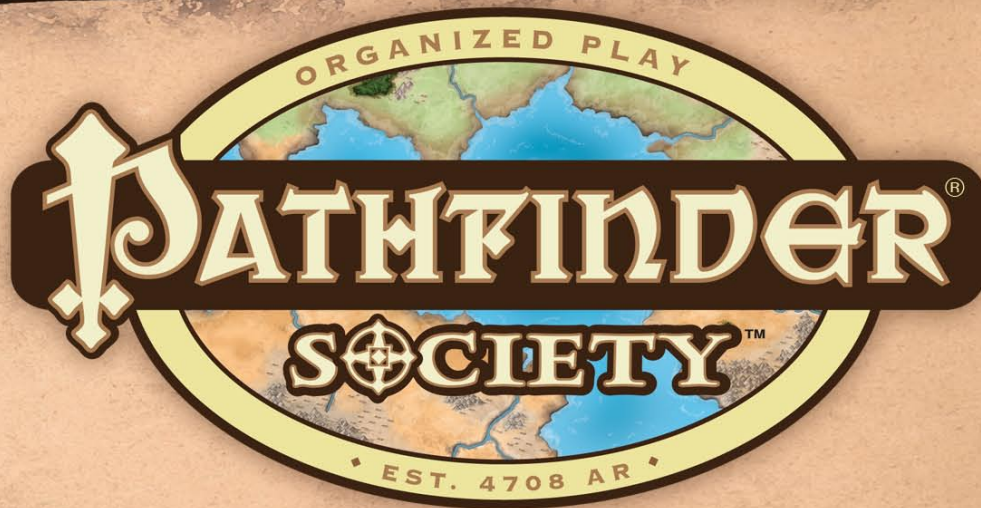


A PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO



THE JESTER'S FRAUDTM

By James F. MacKenzie



THE JESTER'S FRAUD

PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO 56

Design: James F. MacKenzie

Development: Joshua J. Frost

Editing: Judy Bauer

Senior Art Director: Sarah Robinson

Layout: Crystal Frasier

Interior Artist: Nicholas Cloister, Kevin Yan, Kieran Yanner

Cartographer: Christopher West

Vice President of Operations: Jeff Alvarez

Events Manager: Joshua J. Frost

Paizo CEO: Lisa Stevens

Corporate Accountant: Dave Erickson

Financial Analyst: Chris Self

Technical Director: Vic Wertz

Publisher: Erik Mona

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The OGL can be found on page 21 of this product.

Paizo Publishing, LLC

7120 185th Ave NE Ste 120

Redmond, WA 98052-0577

paizo.com/pathfindersociety

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THE JESTER'S FRAUD

BY JAMES F. MACKENZIE

Some know Taldor as the land of a thousand noble vendettas, infamous for the plots and betrayals of its political factions. Vendettas sputter on for decades, carried from one generation to the next. Of all these ancient feuds, few have gone on as long as the grim rivalry between House Bourtze and House Disaren, which originated in the early years of Qadira's Grand Campaign against Taldor.

House Bourtze, whose leaders serve as the Tribunes of Evondemor, once ruled several villages north of Old Sehir. Sadly, the house fell from this zenith centuries ago. Much of their domain has fallen to wilderness, depopulated by warfare and banditry. Only Evondemor remains, the sole inhabited village in once-prosperous lands.

House Disaren's leaders, implacable foes of House Bourtze, long to crush their rivals. Only one thing has kept them from final victory: an unholy relic guarded by the Bourtze, the *alabaster urn of Kalates the Accursed*. A trophy of Qadira's Grand Campaign, this sinister vessel holds the power to devastate entire towns.

Four months ago, tragedy befell House Bourtze, and the Disarens saw their chance to strike. Tribune Bourtze's wife Ariesin died in a strange magical mishap, leaving the Tribune wallowing in guilt and despair. His allies tried to comfort the bereaved nobleman, distracting him with exotic entertainments that easily allowed an agent of the Disarens to infiltrate the Tribune's court amid the multitude of newcomers.

Known as "Simple Sabas," this lanky, awkward jester was much more than the naïve simpleton he seemed: a cruel, calculating mind lay behind his idiotic smile. He combed through the Bourtze's decaying estate for weeks, studying the secret defenses of their vaults.

When Sabas finally located the hidden vault containing the urn, he hesitated to report his success to House Disaren. The Bourtze's library held alarming accounts of the urn's history, and Sabas had no desire to suffer its mysterious curse, though he was quite intrigued by the artifact's potential power.

Given the urn's power, House Disaren's pay for stealing the item suddenly seemed quite meager. Betraying his patrons, Sabas decided to steal the urn for himself. An

THE HEART OF A DECAYING EMPIRE

Taldor's broad Tandak Plains stretch hundreds of miles, from northeast of the Verduran Forest in the north to Taldor's fortified border with Qadira in the south. Lush grasslands spread across the north, while rugged scrub growth covers the plains' southern extent.

The scores of small villages located within a week's travel of Taldor's major towns provide the foodstuffs that keep the decrepit empire fed. Aging canals and rutted roads patrolled by troops of the Taldan Phalanx preserve these villages' ties to the Taldan coast.

Though everything you need to run this scenario is included here, you can learn more about Taldor by purchasing the Pathfinder Player Companion *Taldor, Echoes of Glory*, available at your local hobby or bookstore, or online at paizo.com.

arrogant bandit-lord might offer 10 times what House Disaren had offered, so Sabas contacted unscrupulous allies to make arrangements.

Although the lanky jester had read enough to fear the *alabaster urn*, he had barely scratched the surface of its dark history. No ordinary mortal could completely command the ancient vessel, which is actually a self-aware prison binding extra-planar horrors.

Word of the sudden and unexpected arrival of Pathfinders forced the jester's hand. Fearing they would unravel his schemes, Sabas had his confederates spread rumors of bandits and then lure House Bourtze's guards off on a wild-goose chase. Sabas seized the accursed relic, along with two other promising items and fled, hotly pursued by the Tribune and his remaining troops.

SUMMARY

Sent to Taldor to negotiate the purchase of historical manuscripts, the PCs have barely arrived in the village of Evondemor when Tribune Makarius Bourtze bursts into their inn, closely pursued by rampaging annis hags Sabas has somehow managed to summon from the *alabaster urn*. After the battle, Bourtze begs the Pathfinders to help recover the dangerous stolen relic, as well as other stolen

THE NIGHT'S FOG

Throughout this scenario, nighttime fog limits vision to 60 feet, although tall objects such as towers may be visible further away, as the mists grow thinner higher above the ground. Distances beyond 40 feet grant concealment. After sunrise, the fog dissipates within 2 hours and then returns within 2 hours of sunset.

accursed items, and promises artifacts and documents for the Grand Lodge should they help.

Although the rival House Disaren sent the thieving jester, he betrayed them. The rival house also has a group in the area seeking their treacherous agent, and the PCs encounter them as they lay in wait for the sneaky jester just outside the Bourtze's town of Evondemor.

Sabas fled across open country, following a long-abandoned canal toward a distant ruined village. The PCs closely pursue the jester and eventually find him in the ruins of an old trade city, planning an auction in which some of the region's deadliest bandits will bid for control of the urn.

GETTING STARTED

Read the following to get the adventure underway.

Aram Zey strides into the cramped chamber, his withering glare boring into anyone who dares to meet his gaze. One of the smaller rooms in the Grand Lodge's Skyreach tower, the room is nearly filled by a large table on which lie tarnished funerary brasses and heaped parchments, leaving scant room for occupants. "I'm pleased to see you all here," says the Society's cantankerous Master of Spells, his chilly expression contradicting his words. "The Society needs its most capable members on this task."

Unrolling a massive map of Taldor, he continues. "A rare opportunity stands before us. A Taldan noble named Makarius Bourtze has sent inquiries to Oppara and Cassomir, seeking buyers for a trove of lore about Qadira's Grand Campaign against Taldor. Bourtze is the Tribune of Evondemor, a small town some six days' journey from Oppara." Tracing along the chart, his finger points out an isolated village on the Tandak Plains.

"Your mission is to visit this backwater, review the offered items, and acquire them if a reasonable price can be arranged. While we can offer gold, I'd like to instead suggest several fine sculptures in trade. They depict well-known Taldan heroes, including several of Bourtze's ancestors. Since his line was once quite distinguished, I'm optimistic that they'll interest him." Aram hands over a bundle of carefully drawn sketches depicting the statues.

"Frankly, we considered sending a less experienced team, but Bourtze's motives make me uneasy. The man's wife was

a scholar of ancient magics who recently died in some sort of magical accident. If something in the collection caused the mishap, we fear the Tribune might try to unload it on an unsuspecting stranger!"

The PCs should leave for Oppara the next morning, equipped with Aram Zey's drawings and documents authorizing the bearer to withdraw 5,000 gp in Society funds from an Abadaran bank in Oppara. Allow the PCs any time they may need to acquire items before departing Absalom for Taldor.

Those examining the drawings find two marked as being ancestors of the Bourtze's. One depicts Dame Lexera the Crusader, clutching a small urn and a marshal's scepter. The other shows Magram Scarjaw, "The Blood-Soaked Tribune," from Taldor's Grand Campaign against Qadira. The heads of a dozen fallen foes hang from the Tribune's belt.

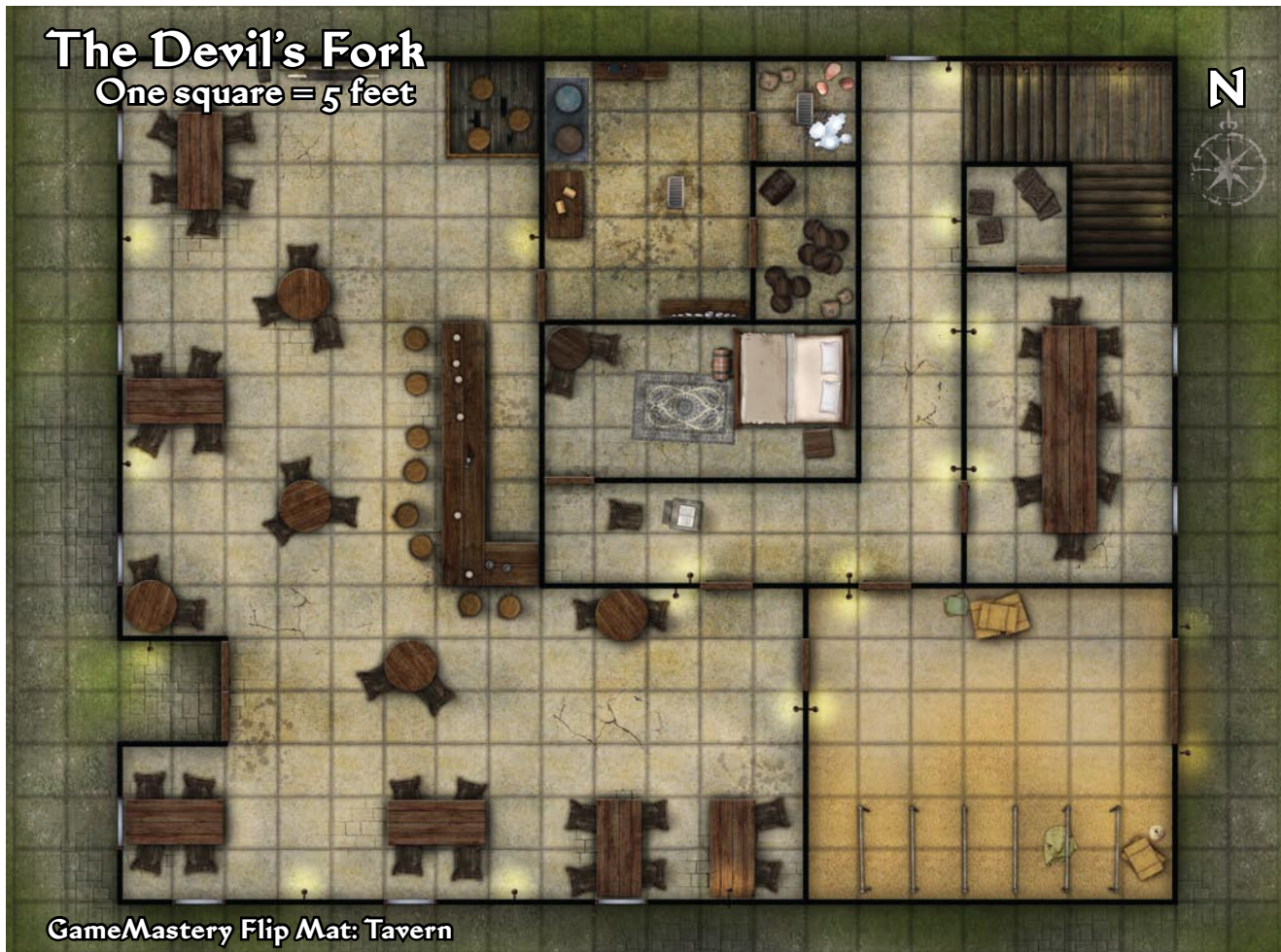
A DC 28 Knowledge (nobility) or (history) check allows the PCs to remember that the Tribune's wife wasn't the first Bourtze to die mysteriously. Numerous household members have suffered bizarre disasters.

The PCs' journey passes uneventfully, with no encounters more unpleasant than Oppara's customs officials. After Oppara, well-patrolled canals carry the PCs past merchant barges laden with foodstuffs. After leaving the canals, the PCs enter a part of the central Tandak Plains filled with decayed roads winding past forlorn villages.

Mission Notes: Osirion faction PCs may be worried about their lethal cargo. Fortunately for them, the snake isn't actually a deadly asp, but is instead a harmless sevencoat serpent, known for its mimicry of other species. Given the chance, it escapes from its basket.

ACT 1: HUNTERS IN THE MIST (CR 8 OR CR 9)

Two more days pass before Evondemor looms through the evening mists. Arriving shortly before nightfall, the PCs travel through a ghostly realm of fog. A muddy ditch and lichen-encrusted palisade guards the village perimeter. Two aged veterans, Walric (N male human warrior 2) and Kaleda (N female human warrior 2), occupy its gatehouse. Unless the PCs sneak over the palisade, these cantankerous guards challenge them on approach, shouting, "No armed bands allowed in town without the Tribune's say-so. Get on over to the Devil's Fork Inn and wait there for Tribune Bourtze." They then wave the PCs through the gates. Within the village, empty cottages and sagging, roofless structures testify to the town's decline. Its muddy streets are nearly deserted. Occupied cottages keep their doors barred. The Bourtze manor stands at the far end of the village, its tall towers vague shapes in the rising fog.



Read or paraphrase the following text if the PCs go to the inn. If they skip visiting the inn, they encounter the Tribune elsewhere in the muddy streets of Evondemor.

Flickering candlelight dimly illuminates the common room of the Devil's Fork. Stained and mended tablecloths cover rickety tables, but the walls hold an impressive display of antique Chelish fighting gear. Battered shields carry the heraldry of the Order of the Lash, an iron barbazu beard rusts in one corner, and a military fork bears dozens of infernal symbols. Men and women sit and drink at various tables. Behind the bar, a dispirited-looking woman listlessly wipes leather tankards.

Just after the PCs settle in, a blood-spattered man throws the inn's front door open and storms into the common room. Clad in a blood-spattered heraldic surcoat bearing blue stars on a golden field, this man is the Tribune of Evondemor, Makarius Bourtze. The frantic nobleman gasps out, "Bar the doors! They're right behind me!" and the inn's twelve patrons (N human commoner 1) scatter in panic.

Creatures: When Tribune Bourtze and his guards pursued him, the jester Sabas invoked the *alabaster urn*,

releasing hideous annis hags. As Sabas fled into the fog, the hags slew all of the pursuers but the Tribune, who then fled into the Devil's Fork Inn.

MAKARIUS BOURTZE, TRIBUNE OF EVONDEMOR CR 5

Male human aristocrat 7

N Medium humanoid

Init -1; Senses Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, -1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 49 (currently 16) (7d8+14)

Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 longsword +5 (1d8+2) or dagger +4 (1d4+1)

Ranged composite longbow +3 (1d8)

TACTICS

During Combat Makarius stays behind the PCs, engaging foes only if pressed.

Morale Having just seen his men massacred by the hags, Makarius has little stomach for more. If two or more of the PCs drop, Makarius bolts in panic.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 9, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 14

Feats Leadership, Persuasive, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Shield Focus

Skills Bluff +10, Diplomacy +14, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (nobility) +10, Linguistics +4, Ride +4, Sense Motive +4, Survival +3

Languages Common, Kelish

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*; **Other Gear** masterwork breastplate, buckler, +1 *longsword*, dagger, composite longbow with 20 arrows, bronze holy symbol of Abadar, nobles' clothing

Tier 5–6 (CR 8)

ANNIS HAGS (2)

CR 6

CE Large monstrous humanoid (*Pathfinder RPG Bonus Bestiary* 11)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13



DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19; (+1 Dex, +10 natural, –1 size)

hp 66 (7d10+28)

Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

DR 2/bludgeoning; **SR** 17

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +13 (1d6+7), 2 claws +13 (1d6+7 and grab)

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

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 2d6+10)

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

3/day—*alter self*, *fog cloud*

TACTICS

Before Combat One of the hags cast *alter self* to assume the guise of an injured guard. She bangs away on the door and cries to be let in. If she makes it inside, she approaches a healer for help. The other hag waits until the first has been let in, and then crashes through a nearby outside wall (DC 18 Strength check) and attacks.

During Combat If the hags see obvious spellcasters or archers among the PCs, one of them drops *fog cloud* on the first round of combat. The hags stick together and try to flank one PC at a time if possible.

Morale Summoned and enchanted by the *alabaster urn*, the hags fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 12, **Con** 18, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 26

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Intimidating Prowess

Skills Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +17, Perception +13, Stealth +7

Languages Common, Giant

Tier 8–9 (CR 9)

ANNIS HAGS (3)

CR 6

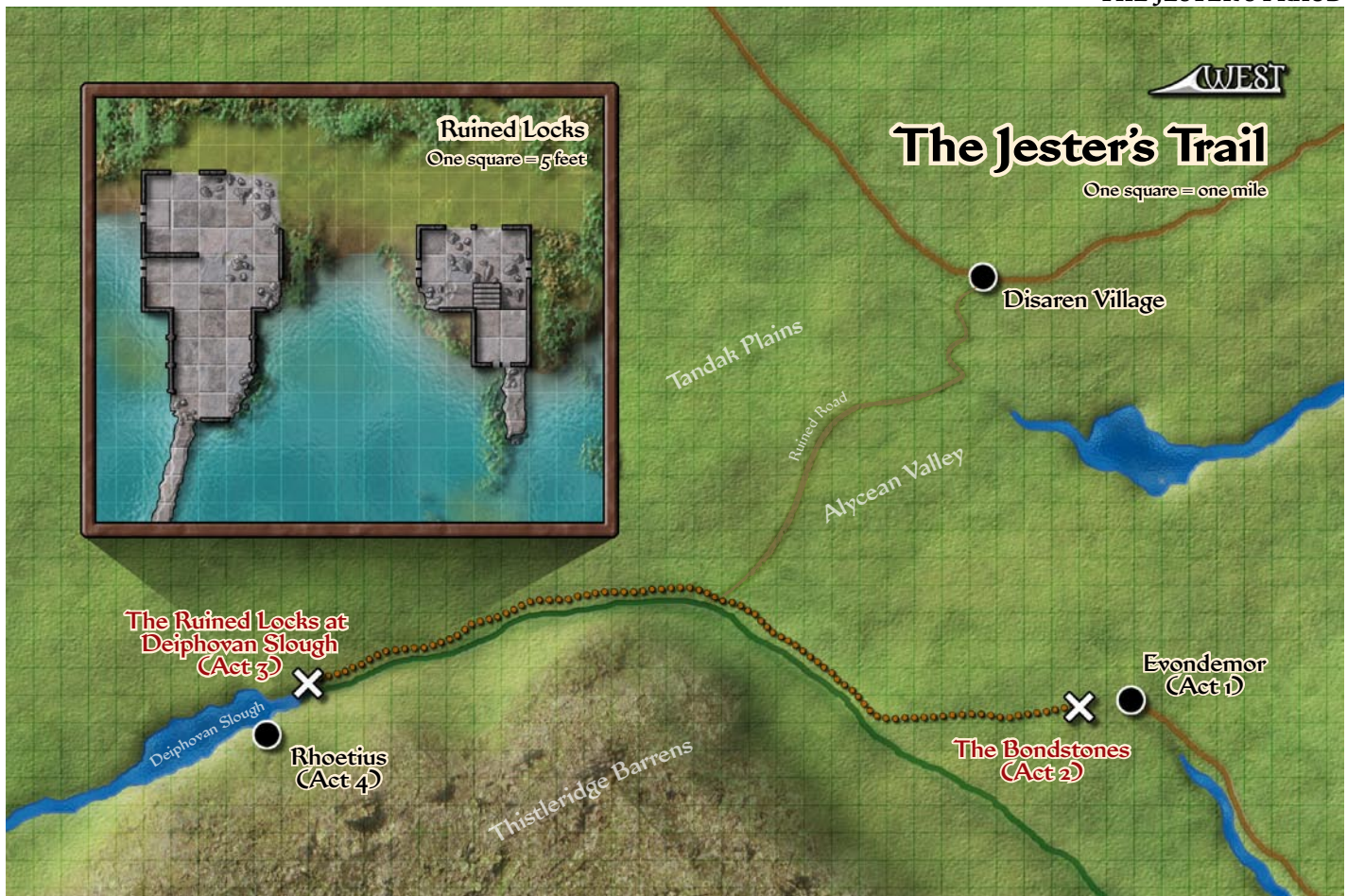
hp 66 each (use the stats for Tier 5–6)

TACTICS

Before Combat The three hags form a coven, significantly increasing their magical abilities (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 167). The coven casts *veil*, and the hags all assume the form of injured guards. One hag bangs on the door, while the others wait to smash through the wall (see the tactics section for Tier 5–6).

During Combat If the hags see obvious spellcasters or archers among the PCs, one of them drops *fog cloud* on the first round of combat. Two of the hags fight the PCs in melee while the third uses her coven abilities, such as *blight*, *baleful polymorph*, and *forcecage*. The hags lose these abilities if they're not within 10 feet of one another, so they'll stay close to each other whenever possible.

Development: After the combat, Makarius thanks the PCs (if he didn't flee the tavern),



desperately urging the Pathfinders to find the fleeing jester. He offers them the texts the Society wants, sweetening the deal with additional antiquities from his estate. Since the PCs likely have no idea what's going on, they may have numerous questions. Some sample questions and answers are listed below.

What happened here? "Dark magic! For centuries, my family guarded an accursed relic seized during Qadira's wretched invasion. Tonight I found the item stolen! My guards and I almost caught the thief, but he unleashed those murderous creatures against us. The thief is a jester named Sabas. We thought him a simpleton, but clearly he was a spy sent by our enemies!"

Who are these enemies? "Only the scum of House Disaren would be so brazen! Our two houses have longed to destroy one another for centuries. The Disaren are justly infamous; this horror would be nothing new to them."

What was taken? "Three items: a magical urn, dreaded for its dark power to issue forth horrors; a mace that drives its possessor to murderous madness; and a necklace that throttles anyone who dons it."

How did Sabas steal the items? "They were kept in a hidden vault, protected by magical guardians. Somehow, the jester learned how to bypass the vault's defenses." (Sabas

overheard the Tribune's drunken ramblings, something Bourtze is unlikely to admit.)

What is the magical urn? "Centuries ago, during Qadira's treacherous invasion, a band of heroic knights captured a trove of magical relics from the Satrap's stupid soldiers. The *alabaster urn* was part of that hoard, a vessel in which are trapped hideous beasts of inhuman power and malice."

Who is this jester you mentioned? "After my wife's death, friends sent entertainers and other diversions to distract the household in its grief. That's when Sabas arrived, begging a place. He seemed a simpleminded innocent, a natural fool with a gift for ridiculous nonsense."

Where would he go? "He's sure to head west along the abandoned canal and then turn north toward House Disaren's lands at the northernmost point of the Thistleridge Barrens. An old road that leads across the Alycean Valley meets the canal there."

Does this have something to do with your wife's death? "My wife died trying to find a way to destroy that urn."

Development: The jester is traveling roughly in the direction that Makarius told the PCs, though he isn't headed for Disaren lands, as Tribune Bourtze assumes—

instead, he's heading west to the ruined town Rhoetius (see the map on page 7).

Treasure: Makarius rewards the PCs for saving him by offering them an emerald-studded brooch worth 1,200 gp (1,800 for Tier 8–9).

Mission Notes: Andoran faction PCs may suspect Pauva, the innkeeper, of being the Chelish spy. After infiltrating one of Andoran's bands of arms smugglers, she betrayed her confederates under torture by Chelish authorities. Branded a traitor, Pauva fled to this isolated backwater. A DC 18 Knowledge (planes) check notices that Pauva bears a slight taint of diabolical ancestry. Since her arrival in Evondemor, Pauva has kept a journal of Tribune Bourtze's indiscreet comments, hidden beneath the false bottom of a jar of dried ginger roots (A DC 26 Perception check locates it). Meant as insurance in case the Tribune accused him of wrongdoing, the notes could well inspire the Tribune to hang her as a spy. The journal's information is fairly mundane, mostly describing Tribune Bourtze's numerous infidelities.

Both Taldor and Chelixa faction PCs can discern the name of Tribune Bourtze's heir with a successful DC 30 Diplomacy (gather information) check. His heir is in fact a little girl named Goosegrass who works in his household, who is his child by one of the serving ladies. This child may prove an easy pawn for either faction to control.

Osirion faction PCs asking about Khenankantra in town, encounter Mene Harcliffe (the tribune's majordomo), who warns them that the sage encouraged the worship of Sarenrae and was run out of town. A DC 14 Sense Motive check notices veiled hostility—a passionate enemy of Sarenrae's worship, Harcliffe instigated the sage's exile.

Qadira faction PCs who investigate the fate of the Silken Whisper in town learn that a Qadiran woman of haughty bearing was hanged as a thief; her withered remains still dangle near the town gates. Before her execution for breaking into the tribune's vaults, she insisted that a man had ensorcelled her.

Rewards: If the PCs save the inhabitants of the inn, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 5–6:

Give each player 100 gp.

Tier 8–9:

Give each player 150 gp.

ACT 2: THE JESTER'S TRAIL (CR 7 OR CR 10)

The PCs can find the jester's trail (headed west through the Bondstones toward the abandoned canal at the other side of the valley) either with a DC 40 Survival check or by spending 1d6+6 hours asking around the village of

Evondemor for witnesses who may have seen the jester fleeing with the relic. Either way, the jester has a head start, and is quite adept at fleeing pursuers and avoiding capture. PCs who use magical means to find the jester or speed up travel find those avenues thwarted (by both a combination of his skill and—unknown to him—the magic of the *alabaster urn*). The jester leaves behind only faint traces of his passage, and anyone making a DC 15 Survival check after finding the first such trace will know that only through normal overland movement will the PCs be able to track and find the fleeing jester.

After the PCs leave the village and head west toward the abandoned canal, they encounter a location known as the Bondstones, once a shrine to Sarenrae. The villagers still visit the place to seek the forbidden goddess's blessing. Once the PCs arrive at the Bondstones, read or paraphrase the following:

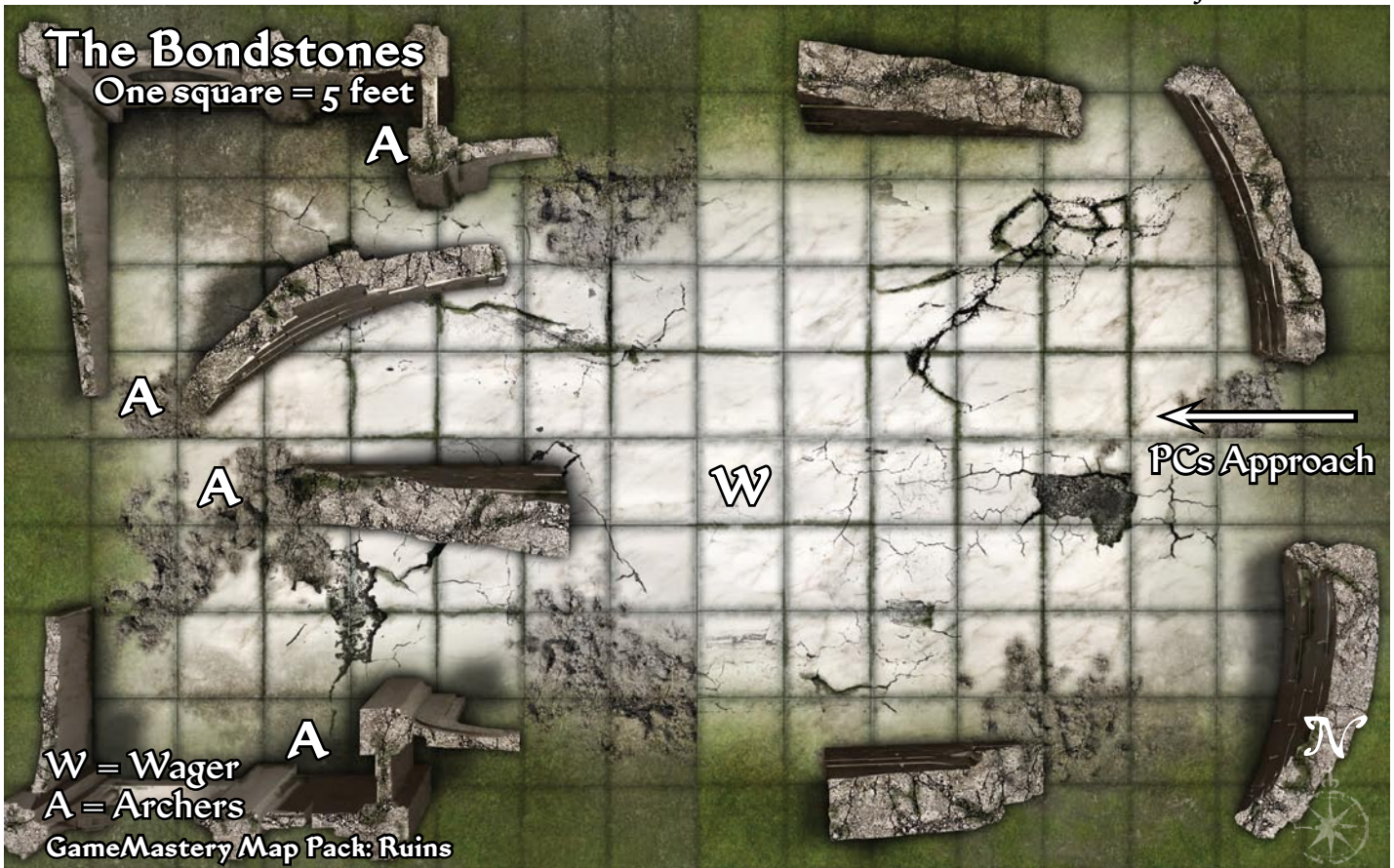
Shattered ruins loom up through the mist, limestone walls covered in ornate carvings. One massive slab depicts a radiant figure blessing a pair of worshippers. The remains of a small campfire stain an adjacent wall with smoke. Above the coals, a roast snake dangles from a stick, badly burnt.

After Sabas stopped reporting, House Disaren's leaders sent a man named Baran to investigate, a Taldan phalanx soldier loyal to their house. He failed to report back, so they gathered a hunting party of other soldiers led by Baran's brother, a ruthless captain named Wager.

Lurking in the Bondstones near Evondemor, Wager's party have spotted the PCs headed toward the Bondstones and now have scattered throughout the ruins, hiding in ambush. Because of the jester's skill at evading pursuit, he passed the Bondstones hours ago without the party of soldiers even noticing, and Wager thinks the PCs might either be the jester in disguise or townsfolk pursuing him—either way, he and his group hope to get learn the whereabouts of Wager's brother Baran and the jester Sabas from the PCs peacefully. They'd rather not start a fight so close to Evondemor, but they'll kill the PCs if their patience is tried.

Wager's negotiation style is rustic and intimidating. "Where's the jester, Pathfinders? And what have you done with my brother? We can't have strangers poking around in our business, so you'd best explain yourselves!" If the PCs seem cooperative, Wager demands that the PCs explain what happened to his brother, Baran. The PCs, of course, have no idea at this point who Baran is, but Wager isn't interested in hearing "I don't know," and gets progressively angrier if the PCs continue to deny knowledge of Baran's whereabouts.

If Wager learns of the jester's westerly route from the PCs, he demands that they leave off and instead let



his band pursue and fight the jester. “After all,” Wager explains, “he betrayed us, not you.”

Should the PCs argue with Wager, disagree with him, or refuse to stop pursuing the jester, Wager calls to his troops, who assault the PCs, hoping to solve the problem with combat.

Tier 5–6 (CR 7)

WAGER		CR 5
Male human fighter 6		
CN Medium humanoid (human)		
Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6		
DEFENSE		
AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)		
hp 57 (6d10+24)		
Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +3; +2 vs. fear		
Defensive Abilities bravery +2		
OFFENSE		
Speed 20 ft.; Step Up		
Space 5 ft.; Reach 10 ft.		
Melee +1 guisarme +13/+8 (2d4+10/x3)		
TACTICS		
During Combat Wager charges any PC who has mouthed off to him. He keeps opponents at reach whenever possible and uses Step Up to follow if they try to 5-foot-step away from		

him. He attempts to trip heavily armored opponents before he attacks them.

Morale Wager surrenders only if he's reduced to 20 hit points or fewer and all of his troops are dead.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; CMB +10; CMD 22

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Mobility, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (guisarme), Weapon Specialization (guisarme)

Skills Intimidate +12, Knowledge (local) +2, Perception +6, Ride +3, Survival +9

Languages Common, Dwarven

SQ armor training 1, weapon training (polearms)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*; **Other Gear** half-plate, +1 guisarme, cloak of resistance +1

WAGER'S ARCHERS (4)		CR 1
Male or female human fighter 2		
CN Medium humanoid (human)		
Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2		
DEFENSE		
AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex)		
hp 18 (2d10+7)		
Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0; +1 vs. fear		
Defensive Abilities bravery +1		

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee longsword +4 (1d8+2/19–20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +7 (1d8/x3)

TACTICS

Before Combat The archers hide in the nearby ruins (Perception DC 23).

During Combat The archers stay at range whenever possible and rain arrows down on the PCs who seem to be causing the most harm to Wager.

Morale The archers fight to the death if Wager is alive. If Wager dies, they fight until reduced to 5 hit points or fewer, at which point they flee.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

Feats Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

Skills Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (nature) +2, Perception +2, Ride +5, Survival +4

Languages Common, Dwarven

Gear chain shirt, masterwork composite longbow with 20 arrows, longsword

Tier 8–9 (CR 10)

WAGER

CR 8

Male human fighter 9

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 85 (9d10+36)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.; can move at normal speed in Heavy armor, Step Up

Melee +2 *guisarme* +19/+14 (2d4+12/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat Wager charges any PC who has mouthed off to him. He keeps opponents at reach whenever possible and uses Step Up to follow if they try to 5-foot-step away from him. He attempts to trip heavily armored opponents before he attacks them. With Mobility, Spring Attack, and heavy armor, Wager doesn't fear attacks of opportunity, and he moves about the battlefield wherever he likes.

Morale Wager surrenders only if he's reduced to 20 hit points or fewer and all of his men are dead.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25

Feats Critical Focus, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (*guisarme*), Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Mobility, Spring

Attack, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (*guisarme*), Weapon Specialization (*guisarme*)

Skills Intimidate +15, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +9, Ride +4, Survival +12

Languages Common, Dwarven

SQ armor training 2, weapon training (bows, polearms)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** full plate, +2 *guisarme*

WAGER'S ARCHERS (4)

CR 5

Male or female human fighter 6

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 51 (6d10+18)

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

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.; can move at normal speed in Medium armor

Melee longsword +8/+3 (1d8+2/19–20),

Ranged +1 *composite longbow* (+2 Str) +13/+8 (1d8+6/x3) or +1 *composite longbow* (+2 Str) +11/+11/+6 (1d8+6/x3)

TACTICS

Before Combat The archers hide in the nearby ruins (Perception DC 24).

During Combat The archers stay at range whenever possible and rain arrows down on the PCs who seem to be causing the most harm to Wager.

Morale The archers fight to the death if Wager is alive. If Wager dies, they fight until reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, at which point they flee.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 23

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow)

Skills Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (local) +3, Knowledge (nature) +3, Perception +6, Ride +9, Survival +9

Languages Common, Dwarven

SQ armor training 1, weapon training (bows)

Gear breastplate, +1 *composite longbow* (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, longsword

Treasure: Wager forced one of his archers to haul a chest of gold to be used for bribes and living expenses on a cart pulled by the archer's horse. A simple DC 10 Perception check finds the cart carrying the chest crudely hidden in the ruins. For Tier 5–6, the chest is locked (DC 15 Disable Device check) and contains 5,500 gp. For Tier 8–9, the chest is locked (DC 25 Disable Device check) and contains only 1,000 gp and a note to Wager from his brother Baran

that reads, "Borrowed 4,500 gp. Will pay you back on my return. —Baran."

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Wager and his soldiers, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 5–6:

Give each player 1,477 gp.

Tier 8–9:

Give each player 1,948 gp.

ACT 3: THE RUINED LOCKS AT DEIPHOVAN SLOUGH (CR 8 OR CR 11)

The jester's sparse trail leads across rolling grassland for 8 miles before it hits the remains of a long-forgotten canal. The trail then follows what's left of the old canal for 24 miles. Allow the PCs to either make a DC 40 Survival check to discover these telltale signs or spend 2d6+6 hours asking locals and travelers for any signs of Sabas. A successful check or spending the required amount of time asking around reveals that the jester met with a group on horseback—the confederates who'd distracted Tribune Bourtze—just where the canal bends around the northernmost point of Thistleridge Barrens, and then continued west on horseback. This actually makes the jester's trail easier to follow from here on (Survival DC 20), but he's also moving significantly faster—it appears the riders are pushing their horses to the point of exhaustion.

It'll likely take the PCs a day or two to reach the locks at Deiphovan Slough; once they are there, read or paraphrase the following:

The jester's trail winds through a tangled thicket along the marshy banks of a silt-clogged canal. Foul secretions drip from the withered trees, and broad patches of ground lie barren, as if scorched.

Almost lost in the thorny tangle, structures crumble beside the abandoned canal. Heaped debris—the remains of the pumps and waterwheels that once powered the canal's locks—clutters their interior. The battered structures now guard a causeway of broken stone and tangled driftwood, a crude dam allowing foot traffic to avoid the swamps that line the silt-filled canal.

Torn body parts lie scattered near the buildings. Bright spatters of blood discolor the bleached stone walls and lie smeared in wide swaths across the ground.

The thickets and the debris-filled building interiors form difficult terrain for creatures that are size Large or smaller, but Huge creatures can crush through them without hindrance.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

The encounter at Deiphovan Slough is an optional encounter. Should the players have less than 2-1/2 hours remaining to play this scenario, have them find the blood and signs of battle, but no slugs appear to devour the PCs.

Creatures: Unfortunately, the recent movement of the jester and his allies has riled the lake's vile inhabitants, gigantic, horrifying slugs descended from the abomination that destroyed Rhoetius a century ago. Sensing the jester's party passing in the darkness, the massive vermin converged to feast, killing most of the jester's party.

Tier 5–6 (CR 8)

GIANT SLUG

CR 8

hp 102 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 254)

Tier 8–9 (CR 11)

FIENDISH GIANT SLUGS (2)

CR 9

hp 102 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 254, 294)

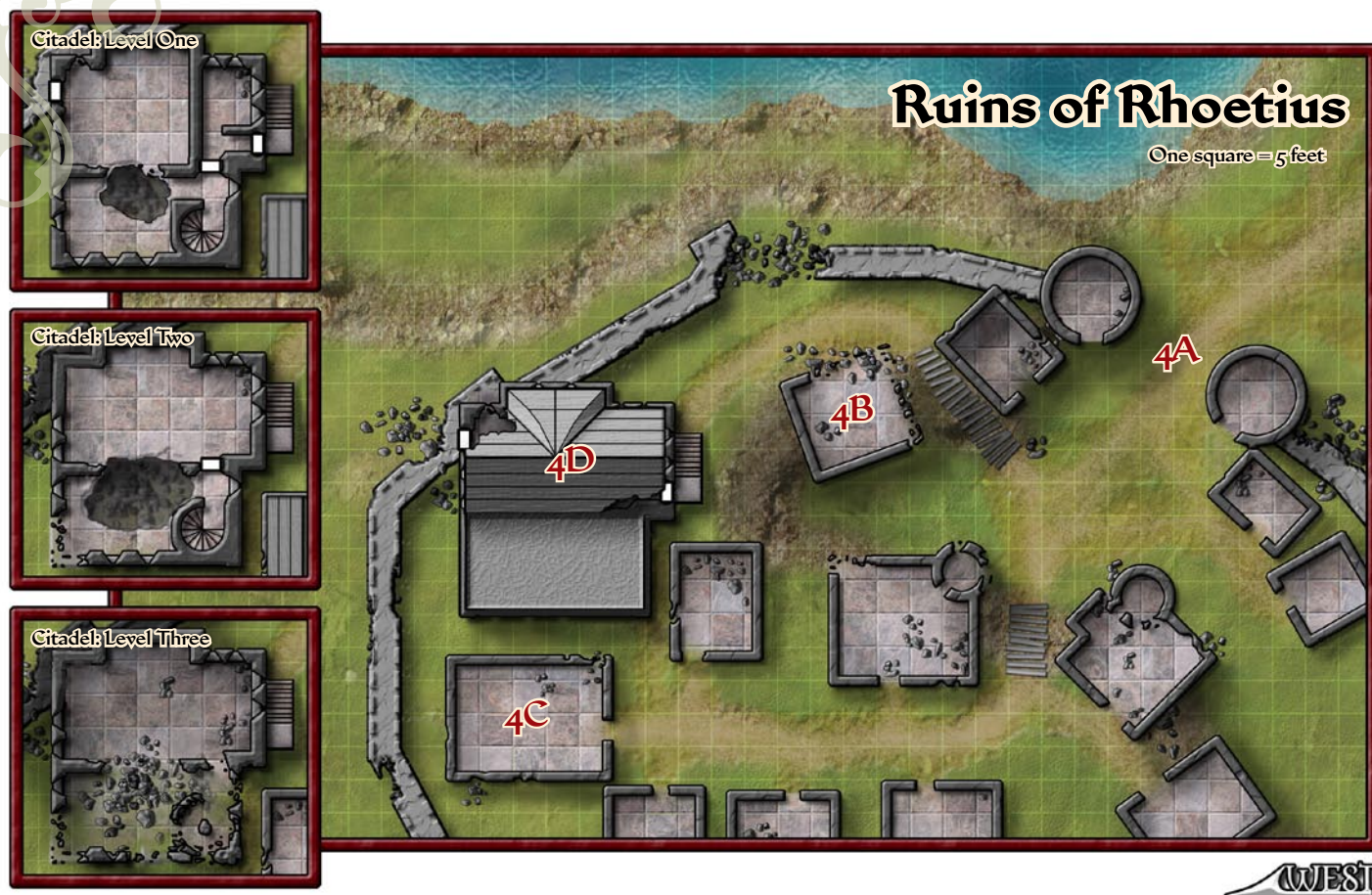
Development: A DC 22 Perception check spots an acid-scarred satchel tangled amid the brambles. Dropped by one of the riders in the panic following the slugs' attack, it holds a scorched grimoire, the journal of Lady Ariesin Bourtze. Her final entry describes the planned summoning of an ancient salamander.

Treasure: The satchel also holds one of the items stolen from the Bourtze: a golden *necklace of strangulation*, adorned with intricately worked rose motifs. While the PCs can attempt to use the *necklace of strangulation* in this scenario if they choose, the necklace, as a cursed item, is not available for purchase on the chronicle and is not included in the rewards.

Mission Notes: With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check, Osirion faction PCs spot polychrome lilies growing in the Slough, far from the banks. Cheliox faction members can locate the name of the last creature Lady Ariesin summoned in her journal.

ACT 4: THE RUINS OF RHOETIUS

Once a proud trade town, Taldor's slow decline and the failing canal have left Rhoetius a crumbled ruin. This is where Sabas chose to hold his auction. Although several groups of bandits have gathered here to bid on the jester's magical treasures, they have no particular desire to battle a band of Pathfinders.



Throughout this act, the PCs can meet several different groups of bandits (see below). Some of these groups, such as the tower archers and the Blackfists, may be overtly hostile to the PCs, while others, such as the Lionbanes, may turn out to be staunch allies given the right diplomatic maneuvering.

The PCs can tackle this act in several ways. They can use the 5,000 gold pieces from Wager to attempt to buy the urn during the auction (which will earn them the immediate enmity of the Blackfists), they can steal it (which will earn them the enmity of all of the bandits), they can convince the Lionbanes to aid them in taking the urn (which at least nets them allies), or they can assault the jester outright (which is likely to bring the entire camp down on them). Allow the PCs to discuss creative solutions to these encounters and be flexible about how the different bandit groups respond.

4A. The Gates (CR 6 or CR 9)

On the muddy shores of the lake jut parapets of crumbling limestone, their stones missing and walls broken. A massive gateway yawns open, its original doors long since lost to decay, but its vacant expanse is blocked by an improvised barrier of lashed wooden stakes, ten feet high.

Creatures: Towers on either side of the gateway hold bandit sentries. Assuming that the PCs have arrived for the jester's auction, the bandits helpfully point out empty buildings and suggest that the newcomers make themselves comfortable until the auction begins. They then ask the PCs, "You are here for the auction, right?" Have one of the PCs make a Bluff check versus the archers' +0 Sense Motive. If the archers think the PCs are lying, they attack. Otherwise, they go back to staring out at the Slough and wave the PCs in.

Should the PCs assault the ruins instead, they meet with immediate resistance from the bandits in the towers, but not from any of the other bandits (see development). It's a DC 15 Climb check to reach the top of the towers, as the stairs long ago collapsed.

Tier 5–6 (CR 6)

BANDIT ARCHERS (4)

CR 1

Male or female human fighter 2

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

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

hp 18 (2d10+7)

Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** longsword +4 (1d8+2/19–20),**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +7 (1d8/x3)**TACTICS****During Combat** If the PCs attack, the sentries shout warnings back into the ruins (which go unheeded), then rain arrows on the PCs.**Morale** The bandits surrender if reduced to 5 hit points or fewer.**STATISTICS****Str** 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17**Feats** Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)**Skills** Climb +5, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (nature) +2, Perception +2**Languages** Common, Dwarven**Gear** chain shirt, longsword, masterwork composite longbow with 20 arrows**Tier 8–9 (CR 9)****BANDIT ARCHERS (4)****CR 5**

Male or female human fighter 6

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6**DEFENSE****AC** 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)**hp** 51 (6d10+18)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2; +2 vs. fear**Defensive Abilities** bravery +2**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.; can move at normal speed in Medium armor**Melee** longsword +8/+3 (1d8+2/19–20)**Ranged** +1 composite longbow +13/+8 (1d8+4/x3)**TACTICS****During Combat** If the PCs attack, the sentries shout warnings back into the ruins (which go unheeded), then rain arrows on the PCs.**Morale** The bandits surrender if reduced to 5 hit points or fewer.**STATISTICS****Str** 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 23**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow)**Skills** Climb +8, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (local) +3, Knowledge (nature) +3, Perception +6, Survival +8**Languages** Common, Dwarven**SQ** armor training 1, weapon training (bows)**Gear** breastplate, +1 composite longbow, longsword**Development:** A successful DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals that there are several different factions of bandits

present in the ruins and the bandits in the tower are not from any of the other factions. Should the PCs assault the towers, none of the other bandits come to their aid since they assume the PCs are yet another bandit group simply getting revenge on the tower archers for some previous slight—a common occurrence in rural Taldor, which is infested with ex-soldiers with short fuses. If the PCs manage to make enough trouble, though—say, by yelling loudly that they are here to kill the jester—they could conceivably bring the entire camp down on them at once. If this is the case, give the PCs ample time to flee and return to the town later, perhaps with a cleverer strategy.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the sentries, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 5–6:

Give each player 172 gp.

Tier 8–9:

Give each player 939 gp.

4B. The Lionbanes (CR 5 or CR 8)

The cured skins of several plains lions are strewn about this partially-collapsed ruin.

The least degenerate of the bandit gangs represented here, the Lionbanes count a handful of renegade centaurs in their numbers. Their leader, the centaur Gwyndryda, hopes to bring the urn to the druids of the Verduran Forest, using it to buy pardon for offenses committed in her homeland. The Lionbanes are a bit out of their element here, and can make for good allies for the PCs. Successful Diplomacy checks that make the centaur Gwyndryda friendly (she begins indifferent) ensure that if the PCs ask the Lionbanes to help them get the urn (after explaining its awful power), they'll receive any help they might need—especially if the PCs ask the Lionbanes to attack the Blackfists.

Creatures: Two human bandits (for Tier 8–9, two human bandits plus the centaur Cundrie) have escorted Gwyndryda to the auction. They have a long-running hatred of the Blackfists and are only held back from destroying them by Gwyndryda, who wishes to maintain peace before the auction.

Tier 5–6 (CR 5)**LIONBANE FIGHTERS (2)****CR 1****hp** 18 each (use the stats for the bandit archers on page 12)**GWYNDRYDA****CR 3**Female centaur (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 42)**hp** 30

Tier 8–9 (CR 8)

LIONBANE FIGHTERS (2) CR 5

hp 51 (use the stats for the bandit archers on page 13)

GWYNDRYDA AND CUNDRIE CR 4

Female advanced centaurs (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 42, 294)

hp 38 each

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the Lionbane bandits, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 5–6:

Give each player 192 gp.

Tier 8–9:

Give each player 978 gp.

4C. Blackfist's Camp (CR 6 or CR 9)

What was once a domed structure of red stone has been reduced to roofless wreckage. Columns of polished marble lie scattered like children's blocks. In front of the structure, a carelessly-built pen holds the torn remains of several dogs and other animals.



A muscled figure in rusty black armor stomps through the camp: Gaunt Blackfist. While he has brought a stronger bandit force than his rival bidders, he's sent his men off to catch more animals, hoping to arrange further gruesome animal fights in the afternoon. He's enjoying the chance to goad the local wildlife into combat with each other. Gaunt has already purchased the Bourtze's cursed mace (a *mace of blood*) from the jester and is eager to kill someone with it. Should the PCs cause him any problems at all—real or perceived—Gaunt doesn't hesitate to attack.

Creatures: If he notices the PCs approaching, Blackfist laughs and cuts the leash securing one of his lions (two dire lions for Tier 8–9), urging it to attack. A sadistic killer, he fights for the sheer joy of carnage.

Tier 5–6 (CR 6)

GAUNT BLACKFIST CR 5

Human fighter 6

hp 48 (use the stats for Wager on page 9)

Melee +3 *heavy mace* +15/+10 (1d8+12/x3)

NOTES

Instead of a guisarme, Gaunt wields his new *mace of blood* two-handed, which changes his melee line.

LION CR 3

hp 32 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 193)

Tier 8–9 (CR 9)

GAUNT BLACKFIST CR 5

Human fighter 6

hp 48 (use the stats for Wager on page 10)

Melee +3 *heavy mace* +15/+10 (1d8+12/x3)

NOTES

Instead of a guisarme, Gaunt wields his new *mace of blood* two-handed, which changes his melee line.

ADVANCED DIRE LIONS (2) CR 6

hp 76 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 193, 294)

Treasure: While the PCs can use the *mace of blood* in this scenario if they choose (being mindful of the consequences of doing so), as a cursed item, the *mace of blood* is not available for purchase on the chronicle and is thus not included in the rewards below.

Mission Notes: Andoran faction PCs should kill or capture Gaunt Blackfist. Osirion faction PCs find the sage Khenankantra in Blackfist's camp, enslaved and tortured by the cruel bandit. The sage is overjoyed to be not only freed, but also reunited with his favorite pet serpent.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Gaunt Blackfist, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 5–6:

Give each player 196 gp.

Tier 8–9:

Give each player 196 gp.

4D. The Jester's Citadel (CR 8 or CR 11)

This once powerful citadel now has massive holes rent in its mighty walls. Half of the top floor has been reduced to tumbled stone and other areas seem to have been burned with acid. The keep's doors stand in stark contrast to the rest of the structure: they appear to have recently been replaced and freshly painted.

The citadel's main floor has been cleaned up and chairs have been set out for guests at the jester's auction. On the upper floors, resting places have been cleared for Sabas and his allies.

Creatures: The jester Sabas plays his raucous hurdy gurdy here, accompanied by the charmed soldier Baran and one of the bandits. His homunculus, Loggerhead, lurks nearby, spying for his master.

Tier 5–6 (CR 8)

SABAS THE SIMPLE	CR 6
Male human bard 7	
CE Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +2; Senses Perception –1	
DEFENSE	
AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)	
hp 45 (7d8+14)	
Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +4; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee mwk rapier +6 (1d6/18–20)	
Ranged shortbow +7 (1d6/x3)	
Special Attacks bardic performance (25 rounds/day, move action), countersong, distraction, fascinate (DC 16), inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, suggestion (DC 16)	
Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +10)	
3rd (2/day)— <i>charm monster</i> (DC 17), <i>confusion</i> (DC 17)	
2nd (4/day)— <i>glitterdust</i> (DC 14), <i>invisibility</i> , <i>misdirection</i> (DC 14), <i>suggestion</i> (DC 16)	
1st (5/day)— <i>comprehend languages</i> , <i>cure light wounds</i> , <i>hideous laughter</i> (DC 15), <i>obscure object</i> , <i>ventriloquism</i>	
0 (at will)— <i>dancing lights</i> , <i>detect magic</i> , <i>ghost sound</i> , <i>message</i> , <i>prestidigitation</i>	

TACTICS

Before Combat If he hears the PCs approaching the citadel, Sabas moves down from his lair on the top floor, casting *ventriloquism* and then *invisibility*.

During Combat Once the PCs are in the citadel, Sabas uses rude comedy to inspire courage in his allies and moves to hide from the PCs. He then casts *confusion*, followed with *web* (with his wand) to separate casters from their confused allies and trap them in melee.

Morale Sabas flees if he's reduced to 15 hit points.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

Feats Extra Performance, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Leadership, Skill Focus (Perform [Comedy]), Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills Acrobatics +16, Bluff +16, Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (geography) +9, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nobility) +11, Knowledge (planes) +9, Perform (comedy) +16, Perform (dance) +16, Perform (keyboard instruments) +13, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +11, Use Magic Device +13

Languages Aklo, Common, Kelish

SQ bardic knowledge +3, jack-of-all-trades (use any skill), lore master 1/day, versatile performance (comedy: Bluff, Intimidate; keyboard instruments: Diplomacy, Intimidate), well-versed

Combat Gear *wand of touch of idiocy* (20 charges), *wand of web* (17 charges); **Other Gear** masterwork chain shirt, masterwork buckler, masterwork rapier, short bow with 20 arrows, mismatched courtier's clothing, hurdy gurdy, spell component pouch

LOGGERHEAD	CR 1
Homunculus (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 176)	
hp 11	

BARAN	CR 5
Male human fighter 6	
CN Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6	
DEFENSE	
AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +1 dodge)	
hp 57 (6d10+24)	
Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +2; +2 vs. fear	
Defensive Abilities bravery +2	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee club +10/+5 (1d6+6)	
TACTICS	

During Combat Baran is under the effects of Sabas's *charm monster* spell and attacks whomever Sabas tells him too. It's a DC 16 Spellcraft check to notice Sabas is charmed—if the PCs manage to break the charm, Baran immediately turns on Sabas.

Morale While charmed, Baran fights to the death. If the charm is broken, Baran attacks Sabas and then surrenders to the PCs.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Mobility, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (guisarme), Weapon Specialization (guisarme)

Skills Intimidate +12, Knowledge (local) +2, Perception +6, Ride +3, Survival +9

Languages Common, Dwarven

SQ armor training 1, weapon training (polearms)

THE JESTER'S TROOPS (2)

CR 1

hp 18 each (use the stats for the bandit archers on page 12)

Tier 8–9 (CR 11)

SABAS THE SIMPLE

CR 9

Male human bard 10

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 65 (10d8+20)

Fort +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +8/+3 (1d6/18–20)

Ranged shortbow +9/+4 (1d6/3)

Special Attacks bardic performance (32 rounds/day, move action), countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate (DC 19), inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, suggestion (DC 19)

Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +15)

4th (2/day)—*freedom of movement*, *modify memory* (DC 20)

3rd (4/day)—*charm monster* (DC 19), *confusion* (DC 19), *dispel magic*, *summon monster III*

2nd (5/day)—*glitterdust* (DC 16), *invisibility*, *misdirection* (DC 16), *shatter* (DC 16), *suggestion* (DC 18)

1st (7/day)—*comprehend languages*, *cure light wounds*, *hideous laughter* (DC 17), *obscure object*, *ventriloquism*

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat If he hears the PCs approaching the citadel, Sabas moves down from his lair on the top floor, casting *ventriloquism* and then *invisibility*.

During Combat Once the PCs are in the citadel, Sabas uses rude comedy to inspire courage in his allies. He follows that with *confusion*, then casts *web* (with his wand) to separate casters from their confused allies and trap them in melee. He inspires

greatness if an ally is attacked by multiple PCs.

Morale Sabas flees if he's reduced to 15 hit points.

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Extra Performance, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Improved Initiative, Leadership, Skill Focus (Perform [comedy]), Skill Focus (Perform [dance]), Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills Acrobatics +23, Bluff +23, Diplomacy +17, Fly +23, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +11, Knowledge (geography) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (local) +15, Knowledge (nobility) +15, Knowledge (planes) +11, Perception +7, Perform (comedy) +23, Perform (dance) +23, Perform (keyboard instruments) +17, Sleight of Hand +12, Stealth +14, Use Magic Device +17

Languages Aklo, Common, Kelish

SQ bardic knowledge +5, jack-of-all-trades (use any skill), lore master 1/day, versatile performance (comedy: Bluff, Intimidate; dance: Acrobatics, Fly; keyboard instruments: Diplomacy, Intimidate), well-versed

Combat Gear *potion of fly*, *wand of touch of idiocy* (20 charges), *wand of web* (17 charges); **Other Gear** +1 chain shirt, +1 buckler, masterwork rapier, mismatched courtier's clothing, hurdy gurdy, spell component pouch

LOGGERHEAD

CR 1

Homunculus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 176)

hp 11

BARAN

CR 8

Male human fighter 9

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 85 (9d10+36)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee club +13/+8 (1d6+6)

TACTICS

During Combat Baran is under the effects of Sabas's *charm monster* spell and attacks whomever Sabas tells him too. It's a DC 16 Spellcraft check to notice Sabas is charmed—if the PCs manage to break the charm, Baran immediately turns on Sabas.

Morale While charmed, Baran fights to the death. If the charm is broken, Baran attacks Sabas and then surrenders to the PCs.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25

Feats Critical Focus, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (guisarme), Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Mobility, Spring

Attack, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (guisarme),
 Weapon Specialization (guisarme)
Skills Intimidate +15, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +9, Ride +4,
 Survival +12
Languages Common, Dwarven
SQ armor training 2, weapon training (bows, polearms)

THE JESTER'S TROOPS (2) **CR 5**
 hp 51 each (use the stats for the bandit archers on page 13)

Development: The *alabaster urn* sits on the citadel's top floor in Sabas's makeshift lair.

Mission Notes: *The Blood Feast of Al-Yazr* lies open next to the jester's bedroll and fresh notes fill its margins. Qadira faction PCs will want to secure it. Taldor Faction members should be concerned with the urn.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the jester and his allies, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 5–6:

Give each player 427 gp.

Tier 8–9:

Give each player 1,162 gp.

CONCLUSION

The PCs must decide what to do with the *alabaster urn*. While their mission suggests that they should return it to House Bourtze, some PCs may prefer to bring it to the Society. If the urn is returned, House Bourtze sends the PCs back to Absalom in triumph, laden with items from the Grand Campaign for the Society's vaults. If the PCs turn it over to the Society, their superiors receive a blunt message from the Taldan Emperor, insisting that the relic be returned immediately. Dreading the political consequences of keeping the accursed urn, the Decemvirate reluctantly orders it to be returned.

FACTION MISSIONS

Andoran Faction: PCs from the Andoran faction who recover the innkeeper Pauva's journal earn 1 Prestige Award. Additionally, PCs from the Andoran faction who capture or kill Gaunt Blackfist in the ruins of Rhoetius earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Cheliox Faction: PCs from the Cheliox faction who locate the scorched grimoire near the locks earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Cheliox faction who

determine the name of the House Bourtze heir earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Osirion Faction: PCs from the Osirion faction who rescue the sage Khenankantra earn 1 Prestige Award (even if his snake gets lost). PCs from the Osirion faction who also recover lilies from Deiphovan Slough earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Qadira Faction: PCs from the Qadira faction who recover *The Blood Feast of Al-Yazr* from the jester's citadel in Rhoetius earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Qadira faction who also learn of and arrange suitable burial for Silken Whisper's remains earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Taldor Faction: PCs from the Taldor faction who recover the urn and ensure its safe return to House Bourtze earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Taldor faction who determine the name of the House Bourtze heir earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.



Andoran Faction Handout

Friend of Liberty.

Your mission brings you to northern Taldor, lawless lands where enemies of our cause have found safe harbor. One particular enemy of freedom is the notorious brigand and slaver Gaunt Blackfist, reputed to be near Evondemor. He is infamous for his torture and murder of four Eagle Knights; your mission is to see that he is slain or brought to justice.

Conveniently, another foe of liberty has also settled in the area. A devil-blooded Chelaxian named Pauva infiltrated a band of Andoran arms smugglers some years ago, betraying them to Chelish authorities. Without revealing that we are on to her, discover what plots this diabolical spy is hatching.

Capt. Colson Mald

With Warmest Regards,

Captain Colson Maldreis



Cheliox Faction Handout

Tender Flesh Morsel,

Under our land's firm guidance, rustic Evondemor could see order brought from chaos. Unfortunately, the Bourtze family spurned our agents' offers, an error which has cost them dearly. Despite this misfortune, Cheliox may yet benefit from Lady Bourtze's research into the urn; her notes should contain information that suggests the true identity of her slayer—recover them for me.

Tribune Bourtze also refused our offers, but rumor suggests his health is failing. Determine who is likely to succeed him and deliver Cheliox's offer of assistance. House Bourtze thirsts for allies, and the might of Cheliox can certainly aid them more than Taldor's decadent emperor would.

Fail not in this charge, lest I withhold the incomparable pleasures that are mine to dispense.

For Cheliox,

Zarta Draldeen

Paracountess Zarta Draldeen

Osirion Faction Handout

Honored Scholar,

Your journey into Taldor may prove to be of assistance to a venerated ally, an aged historian named Khenankantra. A devotee of Sarenrae, this pious scholar was traveling in the hope of aiding others of his sect, which is forbidden in those lands. In his last correspondence, the sage indicated that he had settled near Evondemor.

In this letter, Khenankantra requested that an unusual pet be brought to him: a deadly Ashenscale asp. Enclosed with this message is a basket—inside is the poisonous asp. Please deliver it to the sage at once.

I would also ask that you bring back a sampling of the unusual polychrome lilies known to grow in Taldor's wetlands. In addition to their medicinal properties, they would be a lovely addition to my garden.



Sincerely,

Amenophus

Amenophus, The Sapphire Sage

Qadira Faction Handout

Servant of the Satrap,

During Qadira's Grand Campaign, Taldan raiders struck deep into Qadira, assaulting a stronghold of heretical sorcery known as the Resolute Citadel. After slaughtering every living creature in that forlorn place, the raiders stole a cache of ancient treasures. For centuries, the fate of these items remained a mystery. Only recently have scholars discovered the ill-gotten cache within House Bourtze's keep. One of these stolen texts must be returned to Qadira—The Blood Feast of Al-Uzr. Its secrets are far too perilous to remain among outlanders.

Be advised: you are not the first to attempt this endeavor. Some months ago, a distant relation of the Satrap sought to recover the text known by the codename "Silken Whisper," she disappeared soon after her arrival there. Subtly investigate this matter, as His Exalted Eminence desires to know what fate befell his cousin.

Sincerely,

Pasha Muhlia Al-Jakri

Muhlia Al-Jakri

Taldor Faction Handout

Glorious Agent of the Empire,

Your mission to Evondemor may prove to be of critical importance to the Empire. Centuries ago, the Tribunes of Evondemor were given responsibility to safeguard a cache of cursed magic, items of potential use to the Empire, but too dangerous to be allowed near the seat of power.



House Bourtze has fallen far since that time. Rumors reaching Cassomir indicate that Tribune Makarius Bourtze has neglected his house's defenses, compromising the security of their grim hoard.

Your mission is twofold. First, ensure that the Bourtze's accursed trove—especially this fiendish urn—is properly secured. The perilous relics entrusted to their house must be kept far from our land's cities, safe from those who would wield them against the empire. Second, ensure House Bourtze's continued loyalty to the empire by identifying the heir to their House. Bourtze currently has no children that we know of, and it's important to the scholars at the Primogeniture Library that you discover whether or not he's left a few bastard heirs laying about.

For Taldor!

Baron Jacquo Dalsine

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ADVANCED PLAYER'S GUIDE • AUGUST 2010

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SCENARIO #56: THE JESTER'S FRAUD

This Chronicle Certifies That

Player Name A.K.A. Character Name Pathfinder Society # Faction

Has Completed This Scenario.

Items Found During This Scenario

TIER

5-6

Cloak of resistance +1 (1,000 gp)
Potion of cure serious wounds (750 gp)
Wand of touch of idiocy (20 charges) (Limit 1; 1,800 gp)
Wand of web (17 charges) (Limit 1; 1,530 gp)

TIER

8-9

+2 *guisarme* (8,309 gp)
Potion of cure moderate wounds (300 gp)
Potion of fly (750 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

Scenario Chronicle #

TIER	5-6	2,564
TIER	8-9	5,373
TIER		

MAX GOLD

EXPERIENCE

Starting XP

+1 XP

Final XP Total

Prestige Award

Starting PA

GM's Initial

PA Gained (GM ONLY)

Final PA Total

GOLD

Start GP

GM's Initial

GP Gained (GM ONLY)

+

Items Sold

=

Subtotal

-

Items Bought

=

Subtotal

-

Gold Spent

=

Subtotal

For GM Only

EVENT

EVENT CODE

DATE

Game Master's Signature

GM Pathfinder Society #