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Pathfinder Society Scenario #5-18: The Stranger Within is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 5th- to 9th-level characters (Tier 5-9; Subtiers 5-6 and 8-9). This scenario is designed for play in the Pathfinder Society Organized Play campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world.

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hen Guaril Karela, the current leader of the Sczarni, began his rise to power in 4712 AR, most of the clans quickly reached agreements with him. The Gael family, an up-andcoming crime syndicate operating out of Korvosa, was one of the few who chose not to work for him. Guaril eventually saw his opportunity to eliminate his rivals when the Hellknights captured one of the Gaels. He provided the Gaels with explosives, a flawed map of the Hellknights' fortress, and faulty tactical advice for an illfated prison break that all but destroyed the family. The survivors fled Korvosa and regrouped in Kaer Maga, the one city in Varisia where Karela has never quite managed to get his foot in the door. Since their failed assault on the Fortress of the Nail, the surviving members of the Gael family have been obsessed by one goal: the assassination of Guaril Karela. They've spent the last few months in Kaer Maga gathering resources and allies, refining their plans to kill Karela in a single decisive attack.

Nicu Gael, the current patriarch of the Gael family, has already left Kaer Maga, leaving his daughter Imelda in charge. Imelda got her start in the family business in Korvosa, where she directed part of the Gaels' drug operation, using alchemy to refine flayleaf. Her skill with alchemy saved her life at the ill-fated assault on the Fortress of the Nail; her own bombs proved more effective than the fireworks Guaril supplied, and her elixirs facilitated her escape. To evade the Order of the Nail Hellknights as they hunted down any Gaels who stayed in Korvosa, she fled to Kaer Maga with several other survivors to seek shelter with her cousin Orphyro. Imelda has kept herself and her underlings busy in the Asylum Stone by recruiting allies and developing plans to kill Guaril Karela-all financed by accepting ruinous debts, selling flayleaf, and engaging in any fast-money scheme she can devise.

Imelda has contacted most of the powerful factions in Kaer Maga, yet only two have reached out to assist her: the Freemen and the Commerce League. When the Gaels first arrived in Kaer Maga, Imelda's story about Karela's seizing power and enslaving the rest of the Sczarni

WHERE ON GOLARION?

The Stranger Within takes place in Kaer Maga, an isolated city carved into a massive, hexagonal monument perched on the edge of the Storval Plateau. The city has no official authority; instead, each region is run by factions or families with a vested interest in ensuring varying amounts of stability within the city walls. In particular, this adventure explores the districts of Ankar-Te, Bis, the Bottoms, and Downmarket. For more information regarding Kaer Maga, see Pathfinder Campaign Setting: City of Strangers, available in bookstores and game stores everywhere, and online at **paizo.com**.



convinced the Freemen to provide the Gaels with shelter, weapons, extra guards, and access to their fighting school, the Price of Freedom. The Commerce League extended a large loan to Imelda on the basis of her prior success in Korvosa's drug trade; however, instead of investing the money in building a business, the Gaels have spent much of it purchasing weapons, monsters, poisons, allies, intelligence, and spellcasting services. The Gaels have worked in secret for months, but soon after hiring the information broker Grandmaster Torch, he sold out their location to the Pathfinder Society and, by extension, to Guaril Karela.

GM RESOURCES

This adventure makes use of the Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook, the Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide (APG), the Pathfinder RPG Bestiary, Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 (B3), and Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment (UE). The rules from these books can be found online for free as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at **paizo.com/prd**.

Having learned that their anonymity was compromised, the Gaels have scattered; Imelda and her Kaer Magan allies have remained, whereas her other relatives have left to put their latest assassination scheme in motion. Further, Imelda has begun covering her tracks by trapping her home, relocating her flayleaf business, and moving in with Orphyro in the Ankar-Te district. Should Karela's allies try to find her, she has prepared a deadly welcome for them.

SUMMARY

In the Varisian city of Kaer Maga, the Pathfinders seek members of the Gael family and their allies to prevent an assassination attempt against Guaril Karela, the head of the Sczarni faction. As the PCs converse with the residents of Kaer Maga, they learn that Imelda Gael rents a modest balcony home in the Bis district, maintains a shaky alliance with the militant anti-slavery Freemen, and owes the Commerce League a substantial debt.

At the balcony house, the PCs run afoul Imelda's deathtrap ooze but find evidence of her involvement in the assassination plot as well as hints about her business selling flayleaf. To gain the cooperation of the Freemen, the PCs can visit their headquarters in the Bottoms and help to free a pegasus about to be auctioned in the Stockyards. Finally, Dakar, the mysterious head of the Commerce League, invites the PCs to speak with him, offering to trade information about the Gaels' hideout on the condition that they spare the life of one of the Gaels' allies. Dakar offers additional information about the Gaels if the PCs were subtle enough in their investigation to impress him.

The PCs may investigate and follow up on these three leads in any order they choose, but Dakar is not ready to meet with the PCs until they have visited the balcony house and spoken with the Freemen. Once the PCs learn the location of the Gael family's Kaer Magan hideout—a shop that sells zombies in the Ankar-Te district—they must raid the hideout and disrupt the Gael family's operations. In doing so, the PCs pass through the storefront, which is guarded by both Gael family agents and the merchandise itself. A concealed staircase in the store leads to a basement where the PCs face Imelda Gael, her cousin Orphyro, and several of his undead creations.

GETTING STARTED

The PCs begin the adventure in or near Kaer Maga when they each receive a letter sealed with the Glyph of the Open Road. Give the players **Player Handout #1**, a letter from Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin informing the PCs of the threat the Gael family poses to Guaril Karela, an important ally of the Society. Valsin has little further information, should the PCs use magic to contact him directly; he just prompts the PCs to be resourceful and start asking around the city to see what they can find.

PART 1: THE CITY OF STRANGERS

To complete their mission, the PCs must discover the location of the Gael family's secret headquarters and identify their allies. Pathfinders who find what they're looking for quickly and make friends with the locals can avoid raising the profile of their investigation and alerting the Gaels. If the PCs desire, they can hire a local guide for 5 gold pieces per day to help them navigate Kaer Maga, locate the best informants, and avoid trouble.

In order to track down a local with reliable information about the Gaels or their allies, the PCs must attempt a DC 22 Diplomacy check to gather information (DC 25 in Subtier 8–9). On a success, the PCs spend 1d4 hours finding the contact and learning what he or she knows; three knowledgeable NPCs and their contribution to the PCs' investigation are detailed later in this section. On a failure, the PCs still track down the contact, but doing so instead takes 3d4 hours, involves speaking to many more citizens, and raises the profile of the PCs' investigation. Keep track of how long the PCs take to complete this legwork, as this gives Imelda more time to prepare and modifies Dakar's attitude toward the PCs in later encounters.

In addition, each contact has a condition that the PCs can fulfill to befriend the NPC. If the PCs fulfill this condition, this NPC is then more willing to keep quiet about the PCs' inquiries. This increases the effective number of hours the PCs can spend gathering information before negatively impacting later encounters. When calculating the number of hours the PCs spend gathering information, treat the final result as three lower for each of the three NPCs they befriend. Succeeding at a DC 25 Diplomacy check is also sufficient for a PC to befriend a contact in this way.

Attempts to locate Imelda with divination magic can work, especially if PCs use some of her clothes from the balcony house. If the PCs succeed in locating Imelda with *scrying* or similar magic, they see her fully armed and armored, attended by powerful undead in an underground location.

The Blushing Rose

The PCs' first lead directs them to the Blushing Rose, a brothel located near the center of the Hospice District.



There the PCs meet Miss Feathers, a muscular woman who stands a head taller than the other working ladies. She loves telling stories about her most awkward romantic entanglements, her booming voice and quick laugh accompanied by dramatic gestures with her feathered boa.

Befriending Miss Feathers is as simple as spending an hour or more listening to some of her wilder stories. She considers anyone who can handle her boisterousness for that long to be a good sport, and with a wink she assures the PCs that she can feed false leads to anyone who might come asking after them.

What do you know about the Gael family? "I know a lady named Imelda Gael, but not well enough to have met her family. She's a rough one, all muscles and tattoos and always mad about something. Sharp as a whip crack too, but I wouldn't be surprised to hear she's gotten herself in trouble."

Where can we find Imelda? "Oh, she rents a lovely little house in the Bis district. I'll give you directions, though I can tell you she hasn't been seen there for several days. I doubt

FREQUENT VISITORS

PCs who have visited Kaer Maga before have the advantage of first-hand experience when exploring the bustling city. A PC gains a +1 cumulative circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks to gather information and influence contacts for each of the following Chronicle sheets earned from the following:

- Pathfinder Society Scenario #51: City of Strangers, Part I: The Shadow Gambit
- Pathfinder Society Scenario #52: City of Strangers, Part II: The Twofold Demise
- Pathfinder Society Scenario #4–10: Feast of Sigils
- Pathfinder Module: The Godsmouth Ossuary
- Pathfinder Adventure Path #63: The Asylum Stone

she's left the city, but there are enough nooks and crannies around here that anyone wanting to lie low can do so."

Development: Meeting with Miss Feathers gives the PCs enough information to locate Imelda's rented home in Bis (see Part 2).

The Street of Sighs

One of the PCs' other leads points them to Shiyu, a well-connected Sweettalker who knows about the deal between the Freemen and a renegade Sczarni faction. The PCs find him in the Oriat district in the Sweettalker neighborhood known as the Street of Sighs.

Shiyu is a middle-aged man with light brown skin and dark hair, but his most striking feature is the thread that binds his lips together. Sweettalkers are a tightly knit religious community whose members stitch their mouths closed as an act of piety. Shiyu offers what he knows freely, but he communicates only in the peculiar language of Sweettalkers-a combination of clicks, sighs, whistles, and hand gestures. Although the language is remarkably intuitive for strangers, a PC must nonetheless succeed at a DC 15 Linguistics or Sense Motive check to understand Shiyu easily. Alternatively, the PCs can hire an interpreter for 5 gold pieces or have a hired guide provide translations.

The Sweettalker is quite friendly but becomes increasingly frustrated if he frequently has to repeat himself. Befriending him requires that at least half of those PCs who interact with him succeed at the skill check to understand what he says (or use a guide or interpreter to do the same). Otherwise, Shiyu

later shares the story with others, drawing unwanted attention to the PCs.

What do you know about the Gael family? "I've heard of the Gaels, because when they arrived in Kaer Maga, they came to the Freemen for help. They told a story about barely escaping a crime boss who tried to enslave them. People rarely claim that unless it's true, so for a while the Gaels received help from the Freemen."

Who are the Freemen? "The Freemen are mostly freed or escaped slaves who live in the Bottoms district. They work together to free other slaves in the city, and they all undergo some combat training so they know what to do if somebody tries to capture them again.

What kind of help did the Freemen give the Gaels? "I hear they gave the Gaels some gear, a few guards, and training at their fighting school. The Freemen also offered the Gaels a safe place to stay in the Bottoms district, but the Gaels didn't take up the offer. I'm not sure what else happened, but the Freemen's council at the Common House has been debating whether to withdraw support from the Gaels."

Development: Speaking with Shiyu should provide the PCs enough information to track down the Freemen in the Bottoms (see Part 2).

The Augurs' Temple

The PCs' third possible lead points them to the Augurs, a society of trolls blessed with the gift of prophecy

and foresight. The Augur in question is Vargun, a particularly worldly troll whom the PCs find shopping in the stalls of Winesop Alley in the shadow of the Augurs' temple. Vargun wears a long, purple toga with a bloodstained, horizontal slit across her midsection. To answer difficult questions, such as those regarding the Gael family, she slices her belly open, examines her own entrails, and delivers the information in the form of a dramatic pronouncement before reinserting her organs and allowing her regeneration to close the wound.

> Augurs typically expect a fee often presented as donations for their services, though Vargun does little more than raise an eyebrow as she concludes her reading. With a successful DC 15 Sense Motive check, a PC can tell

that she expects at least a few coins in payment. She politely accepts a donation of at least 5 gold pieces, but the PCs can befriend her and buy her

silence by giving her at least 25 gold pieces. If the PCs refuse to pay her minimal fee, she glowers and storms off; angering her in this way actually *adds* an effective 3 hours to the time the PCs spend gathering information for the purpose of determining Imelda's and Dakar's reactions in later encounters.

What do you know about the Gael family? "These Gaels have borrowed beyond their means, and their creditors grow restless. The coins that circuit the city are the coins that once padded the purse, but a dead debtor pays no bills," she intones before providing a basic interpretation. "The ones you speak of have dealt with the Commerce League, and the Commerce League's business is Dakar's business. Be careful about dabbling in Dakar's business without his blessing."

How do we find Dakar? Vargun grins cruelly, noting, "One does not find Dakar. Dakar finds you."

Development: By dealing with Vargun, not only do the PCs learn about Dakar's involvement, but also Dakar

MISS FEATHERS

quickly learns of the PCs' interest in finding him (see Part 2).

A. TERRACE COTTAGE

The Bis district is entirely indoors, located inside the hollowed-out southwestern segment of the city wall known as the Ring. The Kiln, an imposing fortress and golem factory, is visible in the district's center. Giant lamps hang on cables from the roof 80 feet above in artful geometric arrangements. Massive balconies jut from the

walls of the Ring, supporting lavish homes for the district's elite. Theirflickering, magical lights could almost be mistaken for sparkling waterfalls constantly pouring down the terraced stone interior of the Ring.

The directions the PCs receive from Miss Feathers lead them to a smoothed, stone terrace on the northeast wall of Bis that rises 20 feet above the street level. An enclosed staircase spirals upward toward the home. A statue of a human man stands beside the house's front door, holding out an everburning torch to light the balcony and entry. The front door is a sturdy wood door locked with a

good lock (Disable Device DC 30). The large window in the great room doesn't open, though it is easily broken (hardness 0, hp 2). A creature that can reach the kitchen window finds it is unlocked and opens easily.

A1. Main Room (CR 8 OR CR 11)

This room's walls are papered in white with elaborate patterns in gold leaf. Large glass windows provide a commanding view of the district. A comfortable leather armchair occupies one corner, while a glass orb hanging over a round oaken table glows with magical light. A door along the north wall stands slightly ajar.

Traps: Imelda's front door is rigged with a wrecking ball trap, which uses a swinging weight to knock unwanted visitors backward over the edge of the balcony. The trap at the front door pushes its target to the west, whereas the trap at the bedroom door pushes its target to the south. **Creatures:** One of the assassination methods that Imelda explored involved an exotic monster called a deathtrap ooze. When Imelda learned that Pathfinders were in Kaer Maga looking for her, she released the ooze in her home and relocated quickly. The deathtrap ooze has adapted to mimic this trap and taken up a position at the bedroom door. In Subtier 8–9, a second deathtrap ooze has replaced the trap on the front door.

Subtier 5–6 (CR 8)

WRECKING BALL TRAP

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20; Bypass hidden switch (Perception DC 30)

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual Effect wrecking ball +15 (4d6 bludgeoning plus bull rush; a creature struck by this attack is pushed back 10 feet plus another 5 feet for every 5 points by which the trap's attack exceeded the target's CMD)

CR 2

DEATHTRAP OOZE CR 8

CR 5

CR 9

hp 126 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 64)

Subtier 8-9 (CR 11)

WRECKING BALL TRAP

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 25; Bypass hidden switch (Perception DC 30)

EFFECTS

VARGUN

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect wrecking ball +20 (4d6 bludgeoning plus bull rush; a creature struck by this attack is pushed back 10 feet plus another 5 feet for every 5 points by which the trap's attack exceeded the target's CMD)

ADVANCED DEATHTRAP OOZES (2)

hp 150 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 64, 290)

A2. Bedroom

This large bedroom is where Imelda used to sleep and research potential assassination methods. It's dark inside, as Imelda took her lamps with her when she left. A large oaken barrel stands open against the western wall. A locked chest at the foot of the bed contains some of



SCALING ENCOUNTER A1

Make the following changes to accommodate a party of four PCs.

Subtier 5–6: The ooze was damaged in transit and has not been fed enough for it to heal properly. Reduce its hit points by 20 and give it the sickened condition.

Subtier 8-9: Remove the deathtrap oozes' advanced simple template.

Imelda's old clothes. A large writing desk occupies the northeast corner. A small wastepaper basket beneath it contains some bent nails, a broken quill, and a crumpled paper bearing a partially composed coded letter. With a successful DC 15 Linguistics check, a PC can decode the text; give the players **Player Handout #2**.

Treasure: The locked chest (Disable Device DC 20 or break DC 23) contains spare clothes and several potions Imelda dropped while she hastily packed to leave. In both subtiers, a *potion of invisibility*, a *potion of lesser restoration*, and a tin containing two applications of *restorative ointment* are nestled among the clothes. In Subtier 8–9, there is also a *potion of haste* and a *boro bead* (2nd-level). **Rewards:** If the PCs fail to defeat or bypass the deathtrap ooze(s) and search this room, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 475 gp. Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 702 gp. Subtier 8–9: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 954 gp.

A3. Kitchen

Despite appearing clean, this kitchen exudes a peculiar, sour smell. A mortar and pestle, cutting board, and several bowls sit out on the counter.

Imelda based her flayleaf production out of this house, using the kitchen to dry and refine the leaves into a form suitable for smoking or brewing tea. Though she cleaned out the pantry, she didn't have time to thoroughly remove all traces of her work. A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Craft (alchemy) or Knowledge (nature) check identifies the smell and traces of the flayleaf plant in the tools on the counter. Flayleaf is a mildly addictive plant that is typically dried and smoked or brewed into tea for a narcotic effect, but the odor indicates Imelda was refining the plant even more than is typical for smoking-grade flayleaf.

A4. Privy

This small privy includes a brass tub and a washbasin with a silver mirror. Many buildings in Bis have arcane machines, and this home has a small magical incinerator to dispense of household waste and thereby discourage residents from tossing refuse down into the streets.

PART 2: BREAKING ALLIANCES

Once the PCs have gathered intelligence, they should be ready to meet with the Gael family's allies. Although the head of the Commerce League is difficult to locate, arranging an audience with the Freemen is as simple as walking into a bar in the Bottoms district.

The Common House

A maze of small tables fills the crowded floor of the Common House, which is packed with plainly dressed citizens of the Bottoms enjoying good company and a variety of local brews. One especially long table in the center of the floor seats a dozen humans and halflings, all engaged in debate.

The Freemen council holds its meetings at a long table in the Common House, a pub and temple of Cayden Cailean located in the Bottoms district. As the PCs arrive, the council members are busy discussing a variety of topics, such as district upkeep, regional injustices, and future plans. They tend to take input from the crowd in stride, and onlookers are free to nominate topics for discussion whenever there's a lull in the conversation. Should the PCs bring up the Gael family, many of the council members grumble and mutter noncommittally before the de facto leader, a former Chelish mercenary named Halman Wright, sums up the group's sentiments, saying, "The Gaels have been quiet but have done little harm. We know them and can understand their concerns, but you're strangers to us. I see little that needs voting on here."

The council moves on to discuss other matters unless the PCs make a convincing case. They can get the council's attention either by sharing Imelda's coded letter from area A2 or by succeeding at a DC 20 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Perform (oratory) check. If the PCs are successful, Wright takes the PCs aside and concedes that the Gaels' activities of late have been suspicious, but he's reticent to cease supporting fugitives in need. If the PCs agree to perform a potentially dangerous task for him, he might trust them enough to push the council to vote against continuing to support the Gaels. If the PCs agree, Wright gives them the details.

"Some folk walked in off the plateau yesterday with a pegasus they captured—Cayden knows how—and they plan on selling

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN BIS

If the PCs set the building on fire, break down walls, or otherwise cause extensive mayhem that would alarm the neighbors, they risk attracting the attention of the Ardoc family. The PCs have 1d2+1 minutes of warning before Chatham Ardoc, a longtime member of the Ardoc Brotherhood, arrives with two iron golems (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 162) in tow. He irritably questions them about the damage they caused, hears any excuses, and then passes judgment. Unless the PCs can convince him of their innocence with a successful DC 30 Bluff or Diplomacy check, he administers the typical punishment for burglary, vandalism, and similar crimes: removing a knuckle from the fingers of each PC with the sharp chisel that hangs at his belt. A PC subjected to this punishment takes 1d4+1 Dex damage.

Should the PCs attempt to resist Ardoc justice, treat Chatham as a battle mage (*Pathfinder RPG Gamemastery Guide* 256).

the poor thing at the Stockyards in Downmarket tomorrow. All intelligent creatures deserve to be free, but we don't have the budget to buy it, and the Freemen can't free it by force without starting a war. You, though... you don't live around here. Being a newcomer doesn't make things any safer for you, but at least nobody expects your actions to fit into the city's politics. Make sure the Pegasus escapes the market, and you'll be sure to find the council tipped in your favor when you return."

It's possible that some Pathfinders own slaves themselves, or attempt to offend the Freemen by arguing in favor of slavery. In this case, the Freemen may indicate that the offending PC is no longer welcome by buying the rest of the party a free round of drinks but offering the offending character watered-down ale for 100 gp per mug. In any case, the Freemen understand being forced to deal with people they disagree with and are still willing to speak to the other PCs.

B. STOCKYARDS (CR 7 OR CR 10)

Out in the open air of the city's core, the Stockyards are a maze of animal pens filled with earthy aromas and activity. The occasional roars and bellows of more exotic creatures punctuate the bleating of goats, cows, and other grazing animals.

Creatures: Once they reach the Stockyard, the PCs can easily locate two Varisians named Arodus and Lissa who are, in fact, anti-Karela Sczarni trying to raise money for the Gael family—standing by a small animal pen. Inside the pen is a white pegasus that is muzzled,

S

S

1 square = 5 feet

B. Stockyards

hobbled, and has her wings bound to her sides with rope. One of the Varisians holds a rope tied to the pegasus, while the other shouts enthusiastically at wealthy looking passersby, trying to interest them in buying the creature. The Sczarni initially ask 5,000 gp for the pegasus, yet a PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Appraise, Diplomacy, Intimidate, or Profession (merchant) can talk them into accepting half that amount. Alternatively, the PCs can use enchantment spells, create diversions to cut the pegasus free, the Bluff skill, or any number of other creative solutions to secure the pegasus's freedom. If the situation escalates to combat, pedestrians and livestock vendors hurry past or look on in distaste but don't interfere.

P

All Subtiers

PEGASUS

hp 34 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 225)

P = Pegasus Pathfinder Map Pack: Marketplace

S

= Sczarni Enforcer

CR 5

CR 8

TACTICS

During Combat While hobbled, the Pegasus can only move at 1/4 speed, but it attempts to move closer to any good-aligned PCs it detects.

Subtier 5–6 (CR 7)

SCZARNI ENFORCERS (2)

hp 48 (see page 14)

Subtier 8–9 (CR 10)

SCZARNI ENFORCERS (2)

hp 71 (see page 15)

Development: The Freemen have sent a few spotters to see how the PCs handle their mission. If the PCs free the pegasus successfully, one of the spotters surreptitiously advises them to return to the Common House for more

CR 3

formal congratulations. There the Freemen greet them with a hearty cheer and a round of drinks. The PCs' arrival also coincides with the council members debating whether or not to send an emissary to Andoran—a perfect opportunity for Andoran faction PCs to make their case, as detailed below.

If the PCs rejected the mission or failed to save the Pegasus, the Freemen don't vote to withdraw their support from the Gael family, and the PCs must face additional Freemen mercenaries in area **C2**. In addition, it the PCs resolved the situation without resorting to violence, their actions may improve the Pathfinder Society's reputation in Kaer Maga; this contributes to the scenario's secondary success condition.

Faction Notes: Andoran faction PCs have an opportunity to form their own alliance with the Freemen. The members of the Freemen council understand the virtues of Andoran's representative government, but are skeptical about the actual success of the Eagle Knights in combating slavery. Some of the Freemen have heard stories about rich Andorens wielding disproportionate political influence and companies such as the Lumber Consortium treating their workers poorly. These and other rumors have driven council members to vote against the emissary proposal.

Andoran faction PCs can win over these council members in a variety of ways, whether by using the democratic atmosphere to win votes or by taking advantage of the pub setting to impress individual council members with feats of alcohol tolerance, skill at pub games, and braggadocio. If a PC prefers negotiation, a successful DC 18 Diplomacy or Perform (comedy or oratory) check wins the support of one of the five members against the proposal. Meetings at the Common House tend to run long, fluctuating between debate and roistering, so the PCs can engage council members to contests of drinking, darts, or arm wrestling; as appropriate, allow the PC to attempt a DC 18 Fortitude save or Strength check or a ranged attack roll against AC 23 in place of a Diplomacy or Perform check. Increase the each DC by 3 in Subtier 8-9. Andoran faction PCs have five opportunities to attempt these checks—one per skeptical Freeman; they successfully secure enough votes if they can win over at least three of the five members.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to release the pegasus, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 600 gp. Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 925 gp. Subtier 8–9: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,250 gp.

The Commerce League

Since his involvement in the feud between the Pathfinder Society and the Shadow Lodge years ago, Dakar, the

SCALING ENCOUNTER B2

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a party of four PCs.

Subtier 1–2: Remove one brigand from the encounter. In addition, Aldona has consumed a significant quantity of alcohol as she awaits word from Marek, and she has the sickened condition to reflect her intoxication.

Subtier 4–5: Remove one brigand from the encounter, and replace Grinner with an advanced wolf.

mysterious leader of the Commerce League, has made a point of keeping close tabs on any Pathfinders that visit Kaer Maga. If the PCs attempt to locate Dakar's headquarters on their own, the information they find simply leads to an unused building, which is empty but for an unsigned note that reads, "Your enthusiasm is noted, but we shall meet on my terms." Once the PCs have spoken with the Freemen, Dakar decides the time is right to meet these Pathfinders at one of his secretive hideouts.

As the PCs are traveling the streets, the thick crowds suddenly disperse, leaving only a half-dozen burly thugs and a wiry man leaning against a wagon. He smirks and informs the PCs that "Dakar wants to speak with you." The location of the League's leader is a secret, and only by agreeing to have black bags (each bearing a permanent effect akin to silence) placed over their heads and be driven about the city in the wagon can the PCs reach Dakar's home. If the PCs agree, the wagon winds and bounces its way through the streets for over an hour before the goons guide the PCs for a short walk. When the bags are removed, the PCs find themselves in a room luxuriously appointed in the Tian style. Dakar, visible only as a shapeless silhouette, addresses them from behind a large backlit paper screen decorated with images of imperial dragons. "You've been busy, Pathfinders, so I'll get straight to the point. I've invested a lot of money in the Gaels. If you're asking me to help you kill my investment, you'll have to offer me something more valuable in return."

In truth, Dakar was already close to sending some of his agents to shake Imelda down and send a message to her family. If the PCs offer him money, he dismisses the idea, preferring to deal in favors with individuals as potentially useful as the PCs. He does not object to a future service to be named, which translates to 2 Prestige Points spent per PC; the PCs can share this cost among themselves in whatever they please. However, Dakar already has a favor in mind, which he suggests if the PCs hesitate in devising their own payment.

"If you have nothing to offer, I have a job for you. Imelda Gael is using her cousin Orphyro as a bit of a shield. The boy has been

a member in good standing for many years now and always paid his dues on time. Of course, I realize the kind of mishaps that occur in your line of work, but I would be disappointed to hear he was dead. Spare Orphyro's life, and tell him he lives courtesy of Dakar."

So long as the PCs accept this deal, Dakar remarks, "You'll find your Gaels hiding in Orphyro's store, Pallbearers. It's on the ground level of Ankar-Te, at the corner of Blackstone Shamble and Three Eel Alley." Dakar appreciates dealing with street-smart and clever clients, and he provides additional information if the PCs concluded their investigation within 8 hours (after including any adjustments if the PCs befriended one or more of the NPCs during Part 1). "You should be aware that Imelda Gael is an accomplished alchemist, and she sells a drug called flayleaf that can induce a pathetic state of fatigue or inebriation. She's also benefited from combat training with the Freemen for several months. Her cousin Orphyro is a necromancer, as I'm sure you guessed. Just yesterday he purchased the bodies of some deceased Brothers of the Seal-a bit excessive for creating household servants if you ask me."

Very few know of Dakar's true identity as a dark naga (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 211), and he prefers to keep it that way. If a PC has already discovered Dakar's identity from a previous adventure and shares the information aloud, Dakar threatens to end the meeting unless his guests can show more discretion. If a PC knocks over the screen shielding Dakar or otherwise reveals the naga's form, Dakar concludes the meeting, remarks, "I'm sorry, but I was under the mistaken impression that I was dealing with professionals," and refuses to deal with the PCs further during this adventure. Note that as a dark naga, Dakar is immune to all forms of mind reading.

Faction Mission: Once the PCs conclude their business regarding the Gaels, Dakar remarks, "It is regrettable to lose out on an investment, especially one with such connections to exotic goods as the disgraced Sczarni. Should you learn of more reliable investments that might pique my interest, it would be in your interest to keep me apprised." Although Dakar is willing to hear out PCs' individual business deals, which he likely dismisses for one reason or another, this is principally an opportunity for Qadira faction PCs to propose a deal between the Commerce League and their faction.

The prospect of dealing with Trade Prince Aaqir al'Hakam intrigues Dakar, though he takes care not to appear eager. He lays out a mercantile contract for Qadira faction PCs to consider and sign as representatives of the trade prince. The contract includes numerous unfavorable terms: a discount on any goods traded, a price protection agreement, promises to buy back unsold merchandise, and formal introductions to the trade prince's suppliers. Qadira faction PCs can easily tell that al'Hakam would be unhappy with the deal as proposed, and they have an opportunity to haggle over the details. With a successful DC 20 Appraise, Diplomacy, or Profession (merchant) check, a PC can convince Dakar to drop one unfavorable term from the deal. For every 5 points by which the check exceeds the DC, Dakar drops one additional unfavorable term. If the PCs insist on taking the contract back to Aaqir al'Hakam, Dakar observes that opportunities rarely last long, and his guests may not have the luxury of having another opportunity like this one.

Although the PCs' success at negotiating a deal depends largely on a successful skill check, the GM and players are encouraged to play out some of the negotiations; the Qadira faction thrives on making deals, and they should enjoy some spotlight time in this encounter. Feel free to reward particularly clever haggling or roleplaying by awarding up to a +5 bonus on the skill check.

C. PALLBEARERS

Imelda and several of her underlings have been hiding out in the basement of a zombie shop in Kaer Maga's Ankar-Te district. Located on the street Blackstone Shamble, Pallbearers specializes in selling palanquins, sedan chairs, and zombie teams to carry them. Its owner, Imelda's cousin Orphyro, never really got into the family business. Instead, he found his own success in Ankar-Te animating and selling bound zombies for menial labor. He values his family and has taken significant steps to shelter and aid them, but he's concerned about the risks they're taking with his own life and livelihood.

C1. Blackstone Shamble (CR 7 or CR 10)

Spices from Tian Xia and Vudra mingle with the muted scent of death on the busy streets of Ankar-Te. The wealthy ride litters carried by teams of undead that slowly push their way through the press of pedestrians.

By now, Imelda Gael has discovered that the PCs are looking for her and orders a preemptive strike as the PCs approach the store. As part of her research into possible assassination methods, she bought a large basket of asps. To accomplish her preemptive strike, she has one of her minions dump the snakes into a palanquin and order four zombies to carry it through the street and drop it next to the PCs, releasing the angry serpents.

Subtier 5-6 (CR 7)

HUMAN ZOMBIES (4)

hp 12 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 288)



VENOMOUS SNAKE SWARMS (2)

CR 4

CR 6

hp 37 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 249)

Subtier 8-9 (CR 10)

RELENTLESS HILL GIANT ZOMBIES (2)

Variant relentless hill giant fast zombie (*Pathfinder RPG* Bestiary 150, 288, *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Classic* Horrors Revisited 55) NE Large undead **Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 9, flat-footed 12 (+3 natural, -1 size) hp 77 (14d8+14) Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +9 Immune undead traits OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft. **Melee** 2 slams +17 (1d8+8) **Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks quick strikes

STATISTICS

Str 27, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10 Base Atk +10; CMB +19; CMD 29

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

Blackstone Shamble is an optional encounter. If there are fewer than 2 hours remaining in which to complete the adventure, skip this encounter.

Feats Toughness^B

Skills Climb +16

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Quick Strikes (Ex) Whenever a relentless hill giant zombie takes a full-attack action, it can make one additional slam attack at its highest base attack bonus.

ADVANCED VENOMOUS SNAKE SWARMS (3)

hp 47 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 249, 290)

C2. Pallbearers Storefront (CR varies)

The front door of Pallbearers is unlocked and opens into this area.

CR 5

A glass display case along the west wall presents a row of mindless undead standing motionless within. Several skullshaped amulets hang on pegboard on the back wall behind

SCALING ENCOUNTER C2

To accommodate a party of four PCs, Elbie is taking a nap on the worktable in area **C3**, and it takes him 2 rounds to wake up, gather his equipment, and join combat. Crick instead has the *death's head talisman*..

the shop counter. A red lacquered-wood palanquin rests on the floor, as if ready for a test ride.

The glass case remains spotlessly clean since the last time Orphyro cleaned it.

Creatures: While Imelda and Orphyro work out possible assassination scenarios in the secret basement, Elbie and Crick—two of the lower-ranking Sczarni keep watch in the storefront above. By this time, Imelda has learned of the Pathfinders in Kaer Maga, and her subordinates are on alert. When the PCs enter the shop, Crick (**S1** on the map) leans casually on the counter and calls out: "Sorry, the boss ain't in right now. I can take your order, though. Just step right up to the counter here." Elbie carries a *death's head talisman* (see the sidebar) and waits for the PCs to file into the main room before commanding the special, alchemically enhanced zombies to attack.

If the PCs failed to convince the Freemen to withdraw their support, there are also two Freemen mercenaries playing cards in area **C3**. When combat begins, they join the fight. Remove these two combatants if the PCs instead gained the Freemen's support.

Subtier 5–6 (CR 9)

FLAYLEAF ZOMBIES (4) CR 1
Variant human zombie
hp 12 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 288)
OFFENSE
Special Attacks breath weapon (15-ft. cone, once every 1d4
rounds, exposed to flayleaf smoke, Fortitude DC 12 negates),
death burst
TACTICS
During Combat On orders from one of the Sczarni enforcers,
one of the zombies breaks a 10-foot section of glass,
creating an opening for the other zombies to attack. On the
opening round and each round thereafter, one zombie uses
its breath weapon, if possible.
SPECIAL ABILITIES
Death Burst (Ex) When a flayleaf zombie dies, it explodes in
a burst of rotten flayleaf litter. All creatures adjacent to the
flayleaf zombie are exposed to flayleaf smoke.
Flayleaf Smoke (Ex) Creatures caught in a cloud of bitter
reddish flayleaf smoke must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude

save or take 1 point of Wisdom damage and become fatigued for 1 hour. This is a poison effect.

FREEMEN MERCENARIES (2) CR 3

Guard officer (*Pathfinder RPG Gamemastery Guide* 261) **hp** 34

TACTICS

During Combat The mercenaries hinder and harry the PCs with a combination of Intimidate checks to demoralize, entangling PCs with nets, and using superior reach to strike and trip foes.

CR 5

Morale The Freemen loyally support their allies and only surrender or try to flee when the Sczarni do.

SCZARNI ENFORCERS (2)

Human rogue 6 CN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +8; Senses Perception +8 DEFENSE
AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +4 Dex)
hp 48 (6d8+18)
Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +1
Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny dodge, trap sense +2
OFFENSE Speed 20 ft
Speed 30 ft.
Melee +1 short sword +9 (1d6+2/19-20)
Ranged mwk dart +9 (1d4+1)
Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6
TACTICS
Before Combat The enforcers try to lure the PCs toward the
back of the store.
During Combat The enforcers order their zombies to break
through the glass and attack. They try to flank with the
zombies to make use of their sneak attack ability.
Morale The enforcers are dedicated to the Gael family, but they're
not interested in fighting a losing battle. Once one enforcer is
defeated, the other flees once reduced to 15 or fewer hit points.
STATISTICS
Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 10
Base Atk +4; CMB +5; CMD 19
Feats Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative,
Nimble Moves, Step Up, Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +12, Bluff +9, Climb +6, Disable Device +6,
Escape Artist +12, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering)
+7, Knowledge (local) +7, Perception +8, Sense Motive +5,
Sleight of Hand +12, Stealth +12, Use Magic Device +9
Languages Common, Giant, Varisian
SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +3, combat trick, finesse
rogue), trapfinding +3
Combat Gear <i>potion of invisibility,</i> alchemist's fire (2); Other
Gear +1 chain shirt, +1 short sword, masterwork darts (3),
death's head talisman (10 HD; Elbie only), antitoxin, thieves'
tools, 69 gp

Subtier 8-9 (CR 12)

FLAYLEAF WIGHTS (4)

CR 4

Variant wight (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 276)

hp 26 each OFFENSE

Special Attacks breath weapon (15-ft. cone, once every 1d4 rounds, exposed to flayleaf smoke, Fortitude DC 15 negates), death burst

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Death Burst (Ex)** When a flayleaf wight dies, it explodes in a burst of rotten flayleaf litter. All creatures adjacent to the flayleaf wight are exposed to flayleaf smoke as if caught in its breath weapon.
- Flayleaf Smoke (Ex) Creatures caught in a cloud of bitter reddish flayleaf smoke must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Wisdom damage and become fatigued for 1 hour. This is a poison effect.

FREEMEN MERCENARIES (2)

CR 3

Watch captain (*Pathfinder RPG Gamemastery Guide* 261) **hp** 57

TACTICS

During Combat The mercenaries use their halberds to trip and strike the PCs, coordinating their maneuvers to the best of their ability with those of their Sczarni allies.

Morale The Freemen loyally support their allies and only surrender or try to flee when the Sczarni do.

SCZARNI ENFORCERS (2)

CR 8

Human rogue 9

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +9; Senses Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +5 Dex, +1 dodge) **hp** 71 (9d8+27)

Fort +7, **Ref** +11, **Will** +2

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. **Melee** +1 short sword +12/+7 (1d6+2/19-20) **Ranged** mwk dart +12/+7 (1d4+1)

Special Attacks sneak attack +5d6

TACTICS

Before Combat The enforcers try to lure the PCs toward the back of the store.

During Combat The enforcers order their wights to break through the glass and attack. They try to flank with the wights to make use of their sneak attack ability.

Morale The enforcers are dedicated to the Gael family, but they're not interested in fighting a losing battle. Once one enforcer is defeated, the other flees once reduced to 25 or fewer hit points.

DEATH'S HEAD TALISMAN

Though several necromancers in Kaer Maga deal in undead servants, all use variations of the same method, instilling their innate control over the creature into a convenient magic item that can then be passed to the customer.

DEATH'S HEA	PRICE VARIES			
CL 5th (10 HD)	1,000 GP			
CL 7th (14 HD)	1,400 GP			
CL 9th (18 HD)	1,800 GP			
CL 12th (24 HD)	2,400 GP			
SLOT neck	CL varies	WEIGHT —		
AURA faint or moderate necromancy				

This amulet allows the wearer to command a number of undead skeletons and zombies, which are keyed to the amulet when it is created. The animation of the undead is part of the creation process—undead that have already been created cannot be bound to a death's head talisman. The number of HD of undead tied to the amulet is equal to twice the amulet's caster level. The amulet allows the wearer to command the undead as if she had created them with animate dead, even if she has no magical talent of her own. The undead are only under control while the amulet is worn; if the amulet is removed, the undead revert to normal behavior, standing in place but responding if attacked. Once the specific undead tied to the amulet are destroyed, the talisman loses all power.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST varies
10 HD	625 GP
14 HD	875 GP
18 HD	1,125 GP
24 HD	1,500 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, animate dead

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 21, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 10

Base Atk +6; CMB +7; CMD 23

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Nimble Moves, Quick Draw, Step Up, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +17, Bluff +12, Climb +8, Disable Device +16, Escape Artist +17, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Perception +11, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +17, Stealth +17, Use Magic Device +7

Languages Common, Giant, Varisian

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +5, combat trick, finesse rogue, slow reactions), trapfinding +4

Combat Gear potion of invisibility, alchemist's fire (2); Other Gear +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 short sword, masterwork

darts (4), belt of incredible dexterity +2, death's head talisman (18 HD, Elbie only), antitoxin, thieves' tools, 73 gp

Development: If the PCs capture Elbie or Krick, the enforcers admit that they're part of an anti-Karela Sczarni faction and that two of their leaders are in underground rooms hidden beneath the shop. They are able to show the PCs how to find the secret trap door in area **C3**. Any Freemen mercenaries are unfamiliar with shop's basement.

In addition, at the end of each combat round, Imelda, Orphyro, and the vampires in area **C5** can attempt a DC 32 Perception check to hear the combat through several doors and walls. If they perceive the combat, they begin preparing for a fight. See the NPCs' tactics in area **C5** for more details.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to defeat or bypass the Sczarni and any Freemen mercenaries, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 600 gp. Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 925 gp.

Subtier 8–9: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,250 gp.

C3. Workroom

In the center of the room, a long table bears a confusing mess of stains, a glass of red wine, and a half-eaten bag of peanuts. A huge oil-on-velvet painting of woman in varying states of decay covers much of the eastern wall.

Orphyro uses this room both to inspect the bodies he buys to ensure they're fit for reanimation and to make repairs to damaged undead. The woman depicted in the painting is Urgathoa, and is recognizable with a successful DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check. PCs who search the area and succeed at a DC 20 Perception check notice the painting conceals a lever that, when flipped, pops up a large stone tile in the floor. Beneath is a winding staircase that leads down about 20 feet.

Treasure: A *wand of inflict light wounds* with 20 charges lies on the table.

C4. Hidden Staircase

A stone staircase doubles back on itself as it stretches deep below surface level. A stone wall divided by a pair of doors faces the foot of the stairs, with a single door each on the east and west walls. Two human skulls rest on identical shelves on either side of the double doors.

Orphyro created this basement over several months through repeated use of *stone shape* and initially concealed his work because he didn't have a permit to dig from the Duskwardens. The walls and floors in the hidden chambers beneath Pallbearers are made of roughly dressed stone. The underground rooms have 10-foot-high ceilings decorated with bones laid out in geometric patterns illuminated by bone chandeliers bearing continual flame effects.

Orphyro plans to eventually station an undead guardian in this room, but for now he has to settle for a simple parlor trick. Orphyro has cast *magic mouth* on the skulls that flanks the double doors. When a creature enters the room while holding a weapon, the two skulls speak in unison: "Lay down your weapons and enter peacefully into the realm of the twice-born!"

Development: When Imelda and Orphyro hear the *magic mouths* speak, they begin preparing for a fight. See the NPCs' tactics in area **C5** for more details.

C5. Animation Studio (CR 9 or CR 12)

A quartet of bone chandeliers illuminates this chamber. Wiry, reddish-brown plants grows in clay pots along the west wall, and a collection of pots, pans, knives, and hammers hangs above a butcher block, wood stove, and washbasin to the east. To the south, a long stone table serves as an altar. A shelf set into the wall behind the table holds a variety of sacred texts.

This room is Orphyro's secret laboratory, a place where he feels free to perform experiments that might offend even the jaded residents of Ankar-Te. Orphyro recently purchased the bodies of several deceased Brothers of the Seal, an order of monks based out of the Oriat district who are locked in a violent internal power struggle. He has managed to reanimate two of them as powerful jiang-shi vampires. In doing so, he knows he's taking a significant risk due to the prohibition against intelligent undead in Kaer Maga, but he believes he can keep them under control and out of sight until the family crisis passes.

The potted plants are what remain of Imelda's flayleaf crop, which continues to grow with the alchemist's care and the room's light. Each plant is about 4 feet tall; collectively, they create a small area of difficult terrain.

Creatures: Imelda, Orphyro, and two jiang-shi vampire monks prepare to ambush the PCs here. It is very likely that the cousins are aware that the PCs are in the building, and both use their alchemy and magic to prepare for the inevitable conflict. If they hear the fighting upstairs or learn of the fighting from the jiang-shi vampires they begin to cast spells and consume extracts that last for 7 minutes or more. Once they hear the *magic mouths* in area **C4**, they perform the other preparations listed in their tactics section. If the PCs take more than 5 minutes to reach the area, the two complete any further

preparations, command the jiang-shi vampires to advance, and go hunting for the Pathfinders.

If the PCs spent 8 or more hours investigating the Gaels and their allies during Part 1, Imelda has had additional time to study the PCs and prepare for the inevitable confrontation. Her extract of *resist energy* is attuned to whichever energy type the PCs favored most in an earlier combat. Orphyro also casts *resist energy* to match that energy type as well as *death ward* as part of his spellcasting when he senses intruders. If one or more of the PCs specializes in ranged combat, Imelda has also purchased an *arrow magnet* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 281) and deploys it near Orphyro as she prepares the ambush. If none of the PCs specialize in ranged combat, she instead acquires a *feather token* (*whip*) and activates it as part of her preparations.

Subtier 5–6 (CR 9)

IMELDA GAEL

Human alchemist 4/fighter 3 CN Medium humanoid (human) **INIT +1; SENSES PERCEPTION +9 DEFENSE** AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22 (+10 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural) **hp** 48 (7 HD; 3d10+4d8+11) Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +4 (+1 vs. fear); +2 vs. poison **Defensive Abilities** bravery +1; Resist fire 10 OFFENSE Speed 20 ft. Melee mwk greatsword +14/+9 (2d6+9/19-20) or mwk spiked gauntlet +13/+8 (1d4+6) Special Attacks bomb 5/day (2d6+1 fire, DC 13) Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 4th)

2nd—invisibility, resist energy 1st—cure light wounds, expeditious retreat, shield, true strike

TACTICS

Before Combat Imelda drinks her strength mutagen and extract of *resist fire* (already included in her stats) at the first signs of trouble. She prefers to wait to drink her extracts of *shield*, *invisibility*, and *expeditious retreat*, in that order, until she hears the magic mouth spells.

During Combat Imelda attacks with her weapons and bombs while shouting to Orphyro for magical support. She relies on the jiang-shi vampires to protect her cousin while she focuses on particularly dangerous targets.

SCALING ENCOUNTER C5

To accommodate a group of four PCs, remove one jiangshi vampire from the encounter. In Imelda's frenzied preparations to ambush the PCs, she has mixed her mutagen improperly; she has the sickened condition while under its effects.

Morale After seeing most of her family perish at the Hellknights' hands with Guaril Karela's help, Imelda is hellbent on getting revenge and cutting down anyone who stands in her way. She fights to the death.

Base Statistics Without her mutagen and extract of *resist energy (fire)*, Imelda's base statistics are **AC** 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; **Str** 18, **Int** 14; **Melee** mwk greatsword +12/+7 (2d6+6/19–20).

STATISTICS

CR 6

Str 22, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10 Base Atk +6; CMB +12 (+14 bull rush); CMD

> 23 (25 vs. bull rush) Feats Brew Potion, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack, Step Up, Throw Anything, Weapon Focus (greatsword) Skills Bluff +7, Climb +6, Craft (alchemy) +11, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +9 Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Varisian **SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +4, identify potions), armor training 1, discoveries (explosive bomb, shock bomb), mutagen (+4/-2, +2 natural, 40 minutes), poison use, swift alchemy Combat Gear acid (4), smokestick, *preserving flask* (1st-level)^{UE} containing cure light wounds; Other Gear +1 full plate, masterwork greatsword, masterwork spiked gauntlet, cloak of resistance +1, alchemy crafting kit, antitoxin, formula book

(contains all prepared extracts

17

CR6

plus ant haul^{APG}, crafter's fortune^{APG}, disguise self, enlarge person, and reduce person), 560 gp

ORPHYRO FERENC

Half-elf cleric of Urgathoa 7 NE Medium humanoid (elf, human) Init +3; Senses low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+7 armor, +3 deflection, -1 Dex, +1 natural) hp 49 (7d8+14) Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +8; +2 vs. enchantments Immune sleep OFFENSE

. . .

Speed 20 ft. Melee mwk scythe +7 (2d4+1/×4) Special Attacks channel negative

energy 6/day (DC 20, 4d6), hand of the acolyte (6/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities

(CL 7th; concentration +10) 6/day—bleeding touch (3 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +10)

- 4th—death ward[®], freedom of movement
- 3rd—animate dead⁰, cure serious wounds, dispel magic, wind wall
 2nd—eagle's splendor, magic mouth⁰,
- remove paralysis, resist energy, undetectable alignment
- 1st—cause fear⁰ (DC 14), entropic shield, hide from undead, protection from good, remove fear, shield of faith
- 0 (at will)—detect magic, detect poison, purify food and drink, stabilize

D domain spell; **Domains** Death, Magic

TACTICS

- **Before Combat** Orphyro casts *freedom of movement, eagle's splendor, shield of faith,* and *entropic shield* (already included in his stats), in that order, at the first sign of trouble. He casts *undetectable alignment* at the start of every day, believing it's a prudent business precaution.
- **During Combat** Orphyro uses his spells to support his allies and channels negative energy to harm his enemies. He tries to keep his jiang-shi vampires between himself and the PCs.
- **Morale** Orphyro is not ready to die. If the PCs defeat Imelda and at least one of his jiang-shi vampires, Orphyro proposes a truce. He only surrenders if he believes he has a chance of surviving to see another day.
- Base Statistics Without *eagle's splendor* and *shield of faith*, Orphyro's stats are AC 17, Special Attacks channel negative energy 6/day (DC 18), Cha 16.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 20 Base Atk +5; CMB +6; CMD 18

Feats Command Undead, Improved Channel, Improved Initiative, Selective Channeling, Skill Focus (Sense Motive) Skills Bluff +6, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (religion) +8,

Perception +9, Sense Motive +12; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception Languages Common, Elven

SQ elf blood

Other Gear +1 breastplate, masterwork scythe, amulet of natural armor +1, silver unholy symbol of Urgathoa, tattoo unholy symbol of Urgathoa^{UE}, onyx gems worth 300 gp, 7 gp

IMPERFECT JIANG-SHI VAMPIRES (2) CR 5

hp 51 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 278) TACTICS

> **During Combat** The jiang-shi vampires follow Orphyro's orders but recoil in horror if ordered to enter the pantry (area **C7**).

> > **STATISTICS SQ** staggered

Subtier 8–9 (CR 12)

CR 9

IMELDA GAEL

Human alchemist 7/fighter 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*) CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +11

DEFENSE

ORPHYRO FERENC

AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 26 (+10 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural, +4 shield)

hp 68 (10 HD; 3d10+7d8+17)

Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +6 (+1 vs. fear); +4 vs. poison

Defensive Abilities bravery +1; Resist fire 20

OFFENSE Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 greatsword +18/+13 (2d6+13/19-20) or mwk spiked gauntlet +17/+12 (1d4+8)

Special Attacks bomb 8/day (4d6+1 fire, DC 14)

Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 7th)

3rd*—haste*

2nd—bull's strength, invisibility (2), resist energy 1st—cure light wounds (2), expeditious retreat, shield, true strike

TACTICS

Before Combat Imelda drinks her strength mutagen and extracts of *resist fire, bull's strength, shield,* and *invisibility* (already included in her stats), in that order, at the first signs of trouble. She prefers to wait to drink her extract of *haste* until she hears the *magic mouth* spells.

- **During Combat** Imelda attacks with her weapons and bombs while shouting to Orphyro for magical support. She relies on the jiang-shi vampires to protect her cousin while she focuses on particularly dangerous targets.
- **Morale** After seeing most of her family perish at the Hellknights' hands with Guaril Karela's help, Imelda is hell-bent on getting revenge and cutting down anyone who stands in her way. She fights to the death.
- Base Statistics Without her mutagen and extracts, Imelda's base statistics are AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20; Str 18, Int 14; Melee +1 greatsword +14/+9 (2d6+7/19–20) STATISTICS

Str 26, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10

Base Atk +8; CMB +16 (+18 bull rush); CMD 28 (30 vs. bull rush)

- Feats Brew Potion, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack, Step Up, Throw Anything, Weapon Focus (greatsword)
- **Skills** Bluff +9, Climb +8, Craft (alchemy) +13, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (local) +10, Perception +11
- Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Varisian
- **SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +7, identify potions), armor training 1, discoveries (concussive bomb, explosive bomb, shock bomb), mutagen (+4/–2, +2 natural, 70 minutes), poison use, swift alchemy, swift poisoning
- **Combat Gear** acid (4), smokestick, *preserving flask* ^{UE} (1stlevel) containing *cure light wounds*; **Other Gear** +1 *full plate*, +1 *greatsword*, masterwork spiked gauntlet, *cloak of resistance* +2, alchemy crafting kit, antitoxin, formula book (contains all prepared extracts plus *aid*, *ant haul*^{APG}, *crafter's fortune*^{APG}, *disguise self*, *enlarge person*, *fly*, *fox's cunning*, *reduce person*, and *spider climb*), 310 gp

ORPHYRO FERENC

CR 9

Half-elf cleric of Urgathoa 10

NE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +3; Senses deathwatch 30 ft., low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+7 armor, +3 deflection, -1 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 78 (10d8+30)

Fort +11, Ref +2, Will +11; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities death's embrace; Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. **Melee** mwk scythe +9/+4 (2d4+1/×4)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 6/day (DC 22, 5d6), hand of the acolyte (7/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +14)

7/day—bleeding touch (5 rounds)

1/day—dispelling touch

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +14) 5th—*insect plaque, spell resistance*^D, wall of stone (DC 19)

- 4th—air walk, cure critical wounds, death ward^o, dismissal (DC 18), freedom of movement
- 3rd—animate dead[®], cure serious wounds, dispel magic, invisibility purge, wind wall
- 2nd—desecrate, eagle's splendor, magic mouth⁰, remove paralysis, resist energy, undetectable alignment
- 1st—cause fear⁰ (DC 15), entropic shield, hide from undead, protection from good, remove fear, shield of faith
- 0 (at will)—detect magic, detect poison, purify food and drink, stabilize
- D domain spell; Domains Death, Magic

TACTICS

Before Combat Orphyro casts *desecrate, freedom of movement, eagle's splendor, shield of faith,* and *entropic shield* (already included in his stats), in that order, at the first sign of trouble. He casts *undetectable alignment* at the start of every day, believing it's a prudent business precaution.

During Combat Orphyro uses his spells to support his allies and channels negative energy to harm his enemies. He tries to keep his jiang-shi vampires between himself and the PCs.

Morale Orphyro is not ready to die. If the PCs defeat Imelda and at least one of his jiang-shi vampires, Orphyro proposes a truce. He only surrenders if he believes he has a chance of surviving to see another day.

Base Statistics Without *eagle's splendor* and *shield of faith*, Orphyro's stats are AC 17, Special Attacks channel negative energy 6/day (DC 18), Cha 16.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 20 Base Atk +7; CMB +8; CMD 20

Feats Command Undead, Great Fortitude, Improved Channel, Improved Initiative, Selective Channeling, Skill Focus (Sense Motive)

Skills Intimidate +8, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

Languages Common, Elven

SQ elf blood

Combat Gear unholy water (2); **Other Gear** +1 breastplate, deathwatch eyes, masterwork scythe, amulet of natural armor +1, headband of inspired wisdom +2, silver unholy symbol of Urgathoa, tattoo unholy symbol of Urgathoa, onyx gems worth 300 gp, silver dust worth 50 gp, 657 gp

JIANG-SHI VAMPIRES (2)

hp 51 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 278)

TACTICS

During Combat The jiang-shi vampires follow Orphyro's orders but recoil in horror if ordered to enter the pantry (area **C7**).

CR 6

Development: If Orphyro survives the fight, he is shaken by any news that he only survives thanks to Dakar's will. Although the half-elf has helped Imelda for several months, she has kept him at arm's length when it comes to the details

of many of the Gael family's plots and schemes. He can relate that there are only a handful of other Gaels operating in Avistan, and the rest of the family left Kaer Maga only a few weeks ago, leaving Imelda in charge of further operations in the city. From what he could gather, Imelda was certain that she would be leaving soon to strike at Guaril Karela.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to defeat Imelda and her allies, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 907 gp. Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,403 gp. Subtier 8–9: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,899 gp.

C6. Sleeping Shelves

This room's western wall bears a dozen morgue cabinets that slide out from wall, each large enough to store a humanoid corpse. The lowest shelves hold bundles of clothes or bedrolls. This room is normally used to store bodies awaiting animation, extra inventory of zombies, and customer returns or repairs. Recently, the Gaels have commandeered the room as living quarters.

Several small notebooks, encoded using the same cypher as the letter in Imelda's house, are stacked on one of the sleeping shelves. These notebooks contain details about other members of the Gael family and the locations and plots they were tasked with pursuing. The cities and settlements of Absalom, Daggermark, Jol, Riddleport, and Tamran appear most frequently in these plans.

C7. Pantry

The walls of this long room are lined with shelves that bow under the weight of precariously stacked jars, cans, and bags of rice. This small room is always cool and filled with snacks and staple foods, though there's nothing innately magic about it. The necromancer likes to buy food in bulk and typically brings several zombie servants to the market to carry back large loads.

Hazard: A creature moving through here at more than half speed must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or knock down several shelves loaded with jars and cans. Failure produces a loud crash and makes the floor of this room difficult terrain.

CONCLUSION

Evidence found in Pallbearers suggests that although the Pathfinders have crippled the Gael family's operations in Kaer Maga, several of its members have already departed to perform a desperate attack on Guaril Karela. Once the Gaels realize that Imelda is dead or captured, they call upon their agents in other cities to accelerate their plans to undermine Guaril's empire, weaken his defenses, and deliver a deathblow.

If the PCs allowed Orphyro to live, Dakar considers the PCs' debt fulfilled and does not trouble them in the future;

however, if the PCs killed Orphyro, Dakar seethes at the PCs' failure to uphold their end of the bargain. The PCs' and the Society's endeavors in Kaer Maga are much more difficult in the future as the Commerce League flexes its muscles. Unless the PCs spend 2 Prestige Points each at the end of scenario to pay off Dakar, each PC receives the Dakar's Ire boon on his or her Chronicle sheet.

Reporting Notes

If Andoran faction PCs convinced the Freemen to send an envoy to Andoran, check box A on the reporting sheet. If Qadira faction PCs secured a favorable trade deal with Dakar and the Commerce League, check box B; note that failing to fulfill Dakar's request not to kill Orphyro also causes him to abandon any trade deal (see Faction Notes, below). If Qadira faction PCs instead secured an unfavorable trade deal, check box C. Check neither box if no deal was reached. Finally, check box D if Orphyro survived until the end of the scenario.

Primary Success Condition

The PCs successfully complete their main mission so long as they capture or kill Imelda Gael, which disrupts the rogue Sczarni operations in Kaer Maga. Doing so earns each PC 1 Prestige Point.

Secondary Success Conditions

The PCs successfully complete their secondary success condition if they avoid damaging—or actually improve— the Pathfinder Society's reputation in Kaer Maga. Doing so requires fulfilling three of the following four conditions: befriend at least two of the three contacts in Part 1, avoid punishment by the Ardoc family for actions in Bis (attacking the Ardoc family counts as failing this condition), resolve encounter **B** without killing either of the Sczarni, or fulfill the deal with Dakar by not killing Orphyro. Should the PCs somehow bypass one of these condition's respective encounters, treat the condition as fulfilled. Succeeding at these tasks earn each PC 1 additional Prestige Point.

Faction Notes

Members of the Andoran faction must convince the Freemen Council to send an envoy to Andoran, which requires faction PCs to win the support of at least three of the five dissenting members. Earning these councilors' support earns each Andoran faction PC the Price of Freedom boon on his or her Chronicle sheet.

Members of the Qadira faction need to secure a favorable trade deal or other commercial alliance with Dakar, the leader of Kaer Maga's Commerce League. Securing a successful deal requires Qadira faction PCs to negotiate and haggle with Dakar to include at most two unfavorable terms in the deal. If a deal is secured

in such a manner, each Qadira faction PC receives the Kaer Maga Contract boon on his or her Chronicle sheet, unless the PCs also killed Orphyro, in which case Dakar calls off the deal.

Completing this scenario and succeeding at the primary success condition contributes directly to the Sczarni faction's goals, and Sczarni faction PCs have no additional conditions to fulfill. Each Sczarni faction PC who completes this scenario receives the Deal from the Pickled Imp boon on his or her Chronicle sheet.

PLAYER HANDOUT #1: SEALED LETTER

Greetings Pathfinders,

As you may have heard, the Decemvirate has decided to extend its protection to Guaril Karela, who has proven himself a valuable informant. Karela has requested the Society's help to head off an assassination plot against him. We've learned that the Gael family, a rogue Sczarni faction, is behind the plot, and they are operating out of Kaer Maga with the support of some of the city's ruling factions. As the senior field agents in the area, you are the best equipped to investigate the Gael family and disrupt its plans. Root out where they're hiding, and shut down their operation.

As you are no doubt aware, politics in the Asylum Stone can be complex and nuanced, even by Absalom's standards. To avoid stirring up a hornet's nest, I advise you to do your best to turn the conspirators' allies against them before striking their hiding place. Keep in mind that past events in Kaer Maga have tarnished the Society's image in the city. I wouldn't expect hostility, but flashing a *wayfinder* is unlikely to impress the locals. Try not to further undermine our image through acts of public mayhem. Since Master Karela is officially under the Society's protection now, I would remind you that our reputation is on the line. Be efficient.

Ambrus Valsin

PLAYER HANDOUT #2: CRUMPLED LETTER

Orphyro,

My most recent experiments have fared poorly. The snakes and slimes are deadly, but I've given up trying to train them. One way or another, we're going to kill that weasel, and I've reached the point that I'm willing to entertain your methodologies. Don't make me regret that.

At least the training at the fighting school is going well; we should probably all spend some time there. I just wish we could get more use out of the Freemen. They would make great soldiers if I could get them dependent on me for something.

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Author: Sam Polak

Event		Date	
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Pathfinder Society Scenario #5-18: The Stranger Within

SUBTIER Slow Normal ĿР 1,291 2,582 5-6 A.K.A. **Player Name Character Name** Pathfinder Society # Faction SUBTIER Slow 🗌 Normal Ь Out of This Chronicle sheet grants access to the following: 1,984 3,968 subtier SUBTIER Slow Normal Dakar's Ire: You failed to uphold your end of a bargain with Dakar, and the wily leader of the Commerce League won't forget such a slight. In fact, he actively undermines your future deeds in the City of 2,677 5,353 8-9 Strangers until you pay off your debt. You take a -2 penalty on all Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks while in Kaer Maga; this penalty increases to -5 when dealing with any member of the Commerce SUBTIER Slow 🗌 Normal League. In addition, at the start of any meeting with Dakar, he orders his guards to rough you up as a reminder that he still remembers what you owe, dealing 1d6 points of nonlethal damage to you per Hit Die you possess. You can make amends by spending 2 Prestige Points to pay off your debt, after which you must cross this boon off your Chronicle sheet. Deal from the Pickled Imp (Sczarni Faction): You have crippled the rogue Sczarni operations, leaving Starting XP the survivors scattered but still capable of a desperate counterattack. Guaril Karela trusts that you will EXPERIENCE GM's be properly equipped for that confrontation. You may use this boon when selling one item to sell it for + its full market price rather than at half value. When you use this boon, cross it off your Chronicle sheet. XP Gained (GM ONLY) Kaer Maga Contract (Qadira Faction): You helped to secure a lucrative contract between the Qadira faction and the Commerce League. Recognizing you as an able negotiator, Trade Prince Aaqir al'Hakam = invites you to accompany him as he meets with suppliers and other contacts, during which time he **Final XP Total** helps you to polish the skills you have and learn several that you might have ignored before. When using the retraining rules presented in Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat to retrain skill ranks over a period of 5 days, you may use this boon to retrain those skill ranks for free. When you use this boon, Initial Prestige Initial Fame cross it off your Chronicle sheet. GM's The Price of Freedom (Andoran Faction): Your friendship with the Freemen has secured you some + time to train at the Price of Freedom, their combat training facility. When using the retraining rules Prestige Gained (GM ONLY) presented in Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat to retrain a feat, you may use this boon to retrain that feat for free. When you use this boon, cross it off your Chronicle sheet. **Prestige Spent** Amulet of natural armor +1 (2,000 qp) Belt of incredible dexterity +2 (4,000 gp) Current Prestige Final Cloak of resistance +1 (1,000 qp) Boro bead (2nd-level; 4,000 gp; Ultimate Fame Preserving flask (1st-level; 1,000 gp; Pathfinder RPG Equipment 284) *Ultimate Equipment* 316) Cloak of resistance +2 (4,000 gp) **Starting GP** Restorative ointment (2 applications remaining; Deathwatch eyes (2,000 gp; Ultimate Equipment 224) Headband of inspired wisdom +2 (4,000 gp) 1,600 gp, limit 1) GM's Initials + GP Gained (GM ONLY) GM's GUDD + Day lob (GM ONLY) **Gold Spent** = Total гЬ

For GM Only

EVENT