

PATHFINDER SOCIETY®

Year of Factions' Favor



ON THE BORDER OF WAR

By Crystal Malarsky



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HOW TO PLAY

Pathfinder Society Scenario #9-03: On the Border of War is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 5th- through 9th-level characters (Tier 5-9; Subtiers 5-6 and 8-9). This scenario is designed for play in the Pathfinder Society Roleplaying Guild campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. For more information on the Roleplaying Guild, how to read the attached Chronicle sheets, and how to find games in your area, check out the campaign's home page at paizo.com/pathfinderSociety.



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GM RESOURCES

On the Border of War makes use of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5*, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* (ACG), *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* (APG), *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*, *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*, and *Pathfinder RPG Villain Codex* (VC). This adventure assumes the GM has access to these sourcebooks. All rules referenced in this adventure are available in the free online Pathfinder Reference Document at paizo.com/prd, and the relevant rules from the *Bestiary* and *Codex* volumes are reprinted at the back of the adventure for the GM's convenience.

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ON THE BORDER OF WAR

By Crystal Malarsky



Long ago, pilgrims left the plague-ridden land of Iobaria, crossing the Icerime Peaks into the land that would one day be called Brevoy. Led by cyclopean prophets, they settled in a place they claimed held spiritual significance. They believed it to be the birthplace of “the Second Dragon,” an alleged figure of greatness and divinity. These immigrants became known as the Firespeakers, and they forged an alliance with the local warlords to ensure the area remained a neutral territory. In exchange for this allowance, the Firespeakers offered the warlords access to their healers, scholars, and seers. They even served as mediators during diplomatic sessions between the tribes. The Firespeakers constructed a solitary temple, where they recorded their prophecies and met with tribal representatives.

This peace ended in 2009 AR, when Taldan settlers moved into Brevoy, seeking to stake out land for themselves. One such settler, Lysius Corcina, set his sights on the copper-rich hills where the Firespeakers lived. Lysius and his retinue destroyed the Firespeakers and leveled their temple, building a fortress on its foundation. Angered by the Taldan invasion, local forces moved against Lysius. They eventually killed him, and the once-neutral lands again became a site of frequent squabbles. The keep shifted hands between the quarrelsome lords for centuries, until an earthquake in 2920 AR collapsed significant portions of the building. The local warlords lost interest in the ruined keep entirely.

Taldan colonists kept a firm hold on the southern portion of Brevoy, naming their colony Rostland, while the independent northern tribes called their land Issia. The two lands retained fiercely independent identities for another fifteen hundred years. Iobarian warlord Choral the Conqueror disrupted this balance when he took over both nations and forced them to unite into Brevoy under the rule of his family, House Rogarvia. The strength of House Rogarvia was sufficient to hold the country together despite internal tensions, until every member of House Rogarvia mysteriously disappeared 17 years ago in an event known as the Vanishing. A member of the Issian House Surtova holds the throne, but his position is far from stable. Brevoy now teeters on the brink of civil war, with its noble families locked in a struggle for power.

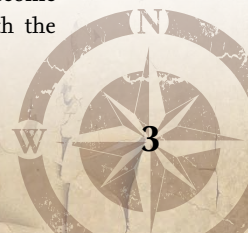
WHERE ON GOLARION?

This scenario takes place in Brevoy. The adventure starts in the city Restov, though the majority of the action takes place in and around Zmeyka, a town in the hilly region to the south of the Golushkin Mountains. For more information on Brevoy, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* and the Brevoy article in the back of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #31: Stolen Land*, available in bookstores and games stores everywhere and online at paizo.com.



The fortress built over the Firespeakers' old temple and the nearby town of Zmeyka find themselves at the center of a new conflict. Founded by Velimir Orlovsky, a scion of the Issian House Orlovsky, Zmeyka flourished as a copper mining town. After Choral ascended the throne, however, he gave control of the land to House Surtova. In the aftermath of the Vanishing, the Surtovas offered to make Zmeyka a neutral territory in an effort to win the Orlovsky's support, but the land's status is still in contention.

Although both Orlovsky and Surtova loyalists have immigrated to the industrious town, its popular baron managed to keep the peace up until the last month, when he passed away from natural causes. The citizens have become increasingly bold in sniping at each other, and both the



Orlovskys and the Surtovas have mobilized sizeable armed forces as “peacekeepers” in the power vacuum. It is only a matter of time before the two houses clash.

In the midst of this tension, a disturbed cyclops oracle named Ismene secretly took up residence in the keep’s basement. She and her followers wish to continue what their Iobarian ancestors started by annexing the keep’s ruins in preparation for “the Dragon’s second coming.” The Firespeakers’ ancient prophecy indicates that war between two noble houses heralds the return of the Second Dragon. As such, Ismene has directed her followers to covertly fan the flame between Houses Orlovsky and Surtova in hopes of seeing the return of this legendary figure.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs begin the scenario by meeting with Venture-Captain Alvar Hadrias in the Brevic city of Restov. Hadrias tells them about a local town called Zmeyka and its recent heated political climate. He tasks the PCs with exploring a nearby abandoned keep to learn its history and, if possible, soothing the tensions between the regional noble houses. From there, the PCs travel north to the town.

Upon their arrival in Zmeyka, the PCs speak with locals about the area’s past and meet representatives from the noble houses of Lebeda, Orlovsky, and Surtova. They then set out for Hartsfall Keep but are waylaid by local soldiers with a violent agenda. After dealing with the soldiers, the PCs continue to the keep and explore the crumbling ruins. They uncover secrets about its tumultuous past and encounter the current menacing denizens. Their mission concludes in a confrontation with a self-proclaimed guardian of the keep and her deranged followers.

GETTING STARTED

The adventure begins with the PCs meeting Venture-Captain Alvar Hadrias at Birchwood Hall in Restov, a city on Brevoy’s southern border. Hadrias is an Aldori swordlord, a master of Rostland’s iconic Aldori dueling style. He also enjoys studying apparel from different countries and proudly houses his fashionable collection at the lodge. Given his interest, he is quick to compliment particularly well-dressed PCs during their interactions.

When the PCs arrive, read or paraphrase the following.

Sturdy wood paneling runs the length of Birchwood Hall’s main corridor. Framed sketches of garment designs hang along the walls beside glass-encased pieces of fine raiment. Thick shelves carry an assortment of headwear and shoes, each carefully labeled with small, engraved plaques specifying their origins and cultural significance.

To the far south, the gallery opens into a circular lounge where a middle-aged Taldan man sits mending the hem of an ornate blue silk robe.

The man is Alvar Hadrias, and he sets down his work and rises as the PCs approach.

“Pathfinders, thank you for coming. Pardon me; I was just finishing up restoring a new arrival. The Six Springs Empress herself wore this garment. It’s a very exciting addition to the collection. But enough of all that—I’m afraid I must be brief. Time is of the essence.

“Tensions are rising in the local town of Zmeyka regarding the rightful ownership of the region. The main source of contention comes from the noble houses of Orlovsky and Surtova. While I would appreciate if you could gather information on the current political climate and help soothe the strain, your primary task lies elsewhere.

“The unfortunate truth is that Brevoy is likely headed toward civil war, with Zmeyka as its starting point. Such violence is sure to lead to the destruction of many valuable relics, including an ancient local site known as Hartsfall Keep. It is now little more than ruins, but most of its history has gone undocumented. I need you to explore the keep and learn as much about its history as possible for our records before it’s destroyed.

“Avoiding war would be ideal if you can discover a solution to end the current divide between Surtova and Orlovsky, but that may not be an option at this point. If you can present yourselves as neutral arbiters, you may have a chance. Your main focus should be on logging your findings and retrieving any artifacts for safekeeping. In the meantime, I am bound for the capital to see if I can convince King Noleski Surtova not to send more troops that way.”

The PCs have the opportunity to ask the venture captain questions about their mission. Below are some potential questions they may ask, along with Hadrias’ responses.

Who are House Surtova and House Orlovsky, and why is there a conflict between them? “They are noble houses of Brevoy. After the reigning royal House of Rogarvia vanished, House Surtova assumed the throne, much to the chagrin of some of the other houses. House Orlovsky and House Surtova both have ancestral claims to Zmeyka, and with House Rogarvia gone, the land’s ownership has fallen into question.”

Should we expect to encounter any danger at the keep? “There are tales of it being haunted, but I can’t confirm the veracity of such rumors. It is possible that unsavory creatures now call it home. Orlovsky’s and Surtova’s soldiers may also be nearby and might react aggressively to any intruders. You should certainly be on guard.”

What history is known about Hartsfall Keep? “Old survey notes indicate it holds promising points of historical interest significant to Brevoy and Taldor, likely related to Taldor’s Fifth Army of Exploration. The notes, however, are incomplete. Most of what we know comes from regional stories told from one generation to the next. These tales are vague and unreliable, but they imply the keep passed many hands throughout its history. I hope you will unlock more concrete details.”



How strict is our timeline? “The tension grows every day. I’m unsure how long until war erupts. Try to delay these hostilities to buy time for your exploration. I recommend spending a day at Zmeyka, and then another day at Hartsfall; two at the most. Be warned—even if you manage to assuage the nobles, I wouldn’t dally too long. The dragon has two heads, so any truce between nobles is often tenuous.”

“The dragon has two heads”? “That is a local expression for the tendency of nobles to fight and catch the common folk in the middle of their squabbles. It’s also a reference to the two-headed red dragon on Brevoy’s flag.”

Is there any specific information you want collected, and how do you want it recorded? “The more information you discover, the more of the keep’s history we will learn. Examine the structure for signs of renovation. Map the layout. Be on the lookout for any art or relics. I leave the methods of recording to your best judgment, but I would appreciate if you could retrieve any artifacts that can safely be removed without damaging the structural integrity. Be as thorough as you can in the time you have, but if it gets too dangerous, don’t overstay your welcome.”

Who is the Six Springs Empress? She was an empress of Minkai renowned for her diplomatic skill. The flourishes in this garment symbolically reflect her lineage and achievements. I wish I had more time to discuss the details of Minkaian imperial fashion with you, but, alas, that will have to be a conversation for another day.”

After speaking with Hadrias, the PCs can purchase equipment before traveling to Zmeyka. The venture-captain provides them with transportation for the journey, riding with them on horseback as far as the capital New Stetven before hiring a riverboat to take them the rest of the way.

WELCOME TO ZMEYKA

Weathered granite encircles the sloping hillside town of Zmeyka with an iron gate built into the west wall. A dirt road leads from this entrance to a market square surrounded by several wooden buildings. At the town’s northernmost point stands a white-stone building with a single tower at its center. A large, ornate gold key protrudes from atop its onion-shaped dome. To the south, a collection of modest cottages rests on an expanse of verdant grass and wildflowers.

Zmeyka is a small town built near a local copper mine, which is the town’s main industry and export. Baron Oberion Vohonich oversaw Zmeyka’s management and skillfully mitigated the dispute between the nobles until his recent death. In his absence, the nobles resumed their rancor toward one another.

TIMELINE

If PCs take over 2 days starting from their arrival at Zmeyka, the hostilities reach a boiling point and the area is overrun in battle. The conflict forces the PCs to retreat, bringing an immediate end to their investigations at Hartsfall Keep. If the PCs are able to improve both Berislav and Sylvanna’s attitudes to indifferent, they have three days. If they improve both of their attitudes to friendly, they have four days. Note that if the PCs formally ally with one of these nobles, the other’s attitude drops to hostile (see Development on page 6).

Sylvanna Orlovsky, niece of the family’s ruling lord Poul Orlovsky, represents her house. King Noleski’s distant cousin Berislav advocates for House Surtova. Also in town is Lander Lebeda, the heir of House Lebeda, whose concern brought him to Zmeyka to monitor the situation.

Ismene’s followers have begun to visit the town, sowing animosity between the noble families through a combination of false auguries, deceptive rumors, and subtle enchantments.

Around town, wary-faced residents shuffle about their business, averting their eyes from the numerous armored figures keeping watch. Half of these imposing soldiers wear yellow tabards bearing the symbol of a black eagle, while the other half wear dark tabards bearing the symbol of a gray ship sailing under a night sky.

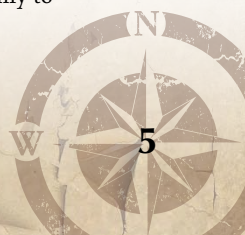
KNOWLEDGE (NOBILITY)

The PCs may know more about House Surtova and House Orlovsky. Based on the result of a Knowledge (nobility) check, the PCs learn all of the following information with DCs equal to or less than the result of their check.

15+: The soldiers with yellow tabards wear the crest of House Orlovsky, while the soldiers in the dark tabards wear that of House Surtova.

20+: The disappearance of former ruling Brevic family, House Rogarvia, caused a massive divide between the remaining noble houses. Despite House Surtova’s previous favored status, Rogarvia loyalists now consider them usurpers. These loyalists include House Orlovsky, which is known for its staunch fealty, even after the Vanishing.

25+: Lord Poul Orlovsky’s niece, Sylvanna Orlovsky, often acts as her uncle’s emissary. She was betrothed to a scion of House Rogarvia from birth, but the Vanishing soon ended the arrangement. She is known for her keen equestrianism and is considered an accomplished joustier despite her age. Berislav Surtova is a distant cousin of King Noleski Surtova and frequently serves as his envoy. He is an eligible bachelor who is rumored to favor the company of men over women. His skill with a sword is said to be second only to his expertise with gambling and strategic games.



Speaking with NPCs

During this portion of the scenario, the PCs are likely to want to gather information from several NPCs around town. Convincing most NPCs to share information requires the PCs to improve each NPC's opinion of them. In addition to the standard use of Diplomacy for this purpose, PCs may use an alternate skill check to raise the NPC's attitude—this functions just like raising the NPC's attitude using Diplomacy. Below is a quick summary that provides alternate skill options for each NPC, along with the DC needed to improve the NPC's attitude by one step and where the NPC can be found in town. GMs should encourage roleplay during this section of the scenario, freely awarding +2 circumstance bonuses to the PCs for their words. At the GM's discretion, PCs may use different alternative skills in addition to the ones listed below, but they should generally be niche skills, such as Craft, Profession, or Perform, and not broadly applicable skills such as Perception.

The higher DCs in Subtier 8–9 reflect the common sense of distrust and suspicion that has been brewing in the mining town.

TABLE: IMPROVING ATTITUDES

NPC	Location	Alternate Skill	DC (Subtier 5–6/ Subtier 8–9)
Berislav	Blacksmith Shop	Profession (gambler) or Sleight of Hand	22 / 26
Grandt	Apothecary Shop	Heal or Profession (herbalist)	17 / 21
Idhrenniel	Market Square	Survival	17 / 21
Lander	Tavern	Perform (oratory or comedy)	17 / 21*
Sylvanna	Stables	Handle Animal	22 / 26
Tarn	**	N/A	–

* If Lander starts at friendly due to a PC holding a Chronicle sheet for *Pathfinder Society Scenario #5–19: The Horn of Aroden*, lower this DC by 5.

** Tarn wanders through town and can easily appear at any location of the GM's choosing.

ZMEKYA'S POLITICS

The following is a list of people the PCs can speak with to gather information about the political feud and the history of the region. Encourage the PCs to explore the town. If the PCs ask locals in the street for information, have the locals point the PCs to one or more of the people below.

Development: If the PCs pledge their support to House Orlovsky or Surtova during this part of the adventure, the attitude of the opposing side's representative moves down to

hostile. When the PCs have finished their business in Zmeyka, they can continue on to Hartsfall Keep. The keep is within an hour's walking distance from the town.

BERISLAV SURTOVA

Berislav Surtova (LN male human) is a cousin of King Noleski Surtova and acting representative for the house. He is a somber man in his early 30s with dark features and a small scar running through his upper lip. He views Sylvanna with disdain over her stubborn nature, a perception only reinforced after he received false divination from Tarn which proclaimed that the Orlovsky noble will never yield.

Improving Attitude: Berislav's attitude starts at unfriendly. PCs must succeed in a DC 22 (26 in Subtier 8–9) Diplomacy check to improve his attitude. Alternatively, the PCs can improve his attitude by playing cards with him and using Profession (gambler) or Sleight of Hand checks in lieu of Diplomacy.

Interaction with the PCs: He and a few of his men play cards near the blacksmith, waiting on his dagger's repair. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Sense Motive check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) notices that he is distracted and upset about something unrelated to the noble feud. In truth, his concern is over an unrelenting plague sweeping through his hometown. The lack of any cure has soured his temperament and rendered him tactless in diplomacy. The PCs can learn this detail by speaking to Grandt the Marred. They can also learn about the plague if they improve Berislav's attitude to friendly, at which point he apologizes for his foul disposition and explains the source of his agitation. If the PCs improve his attitude to at least indifferent, he attempts to persuade them to grant the Pathfinder Society's support in the current conflict by offering weapons and equipment for future Pathfinder endeavors in Brevoiy and any neighboring kingdom.

If the PCs ask Berislav about the current situation in town, read or paraphrase the following, regardless of his attitude.

"As the stars see me, this entire dispute rests on the Orlovskys! They claim these lands as their ancestral legacy, but House Rogarvia granted these lands to my family years ago. We even offered to keep them as neutral territory as a truce, but they won't have it. They won't listen to a word we say. It's as if they blame us for the disappearance of the Rogarvians. Stubborn fools, all of them! Especially that proud Captain Sylvanna of theirs. Between you and me, I think she's just sore that she missed her chance to move up the chain after the Vanishing ended her betrothal to some Rogarvian scion."

GRANDT THE MARRED

Grandt the Marred (NG male human apothecary) is so named for the burns covering most of his body. Despite his fearsome appearance, the apothecary is a soft spoken and mild individual.



Improving Attitude: Grandt's attitude starts at indifferent. PCs must succeed in a DC 17 Diplomacy check (DC 21 in Subtier 8–9) to improve his attitude. Alternatively, the PCs can improve his attitude by engaging him in a conversation about the healing arts and using Heal or Profession (herbalist) checks in lieu of Diplomacy.

Interaction with the PCs: The PCs find Grandt his shop, cataloging his wares. If the PCs improve his attitude to friendly, he offers the following information.

"Discontent spread through Brevoys after House Rogarvia's disappearance. House Orlovsky owned these lands before the days of Choral the Conqueror, or so they say. House Rogarvia eventually awarded it to Surtova but with the Rogarvias gone, old feuds resurfaced. It's a shame they're both so stubborn. They aren't bad folk, but they aren't acting with clear heads. Take Berislav for example. He's supposedly a rather sensible man, but his own hometown recently fell on hard times. Plague broke out and there are too many infected and not enough healers. Watching your people suffer is sure to put anyone in a foul mood. I'm trying to research a way to help, but a cure has eluded me, just as it has eluded everyone else."

If the PCs ask Grandt how they can help with finding a cure for the plague, he relays information regarding the plague's symptoms and what efforts have already been attempted. Read or paraphrase the following.

"I've heard tales of similar illnesses in this region, long ago. They were supposedly prevented through medicinal mixtures of native and foreign fungal extracts, but those secrets are now lost. If you happen to hear of any potential remedies though, I would be eager to learn of them. In the meantime, I shall continue my experiments in the hopes of a breakthrough."

If the PCs improve his attitude to helpful, he also offers the following information.

"Baron Oberion Vohonich kept the peace until his recent death. He managed the town with grace and wisdom. Everyone listened when he spoke. Poor Oberion was getting on in his years and his heart failed, so no one's listening any more. He kept all the town's records in the Church of Abadar. Maybe someone should check them out to see if he left behind any advice on how to get these nobles to behave."

Scaling Welcome to Zmeyka

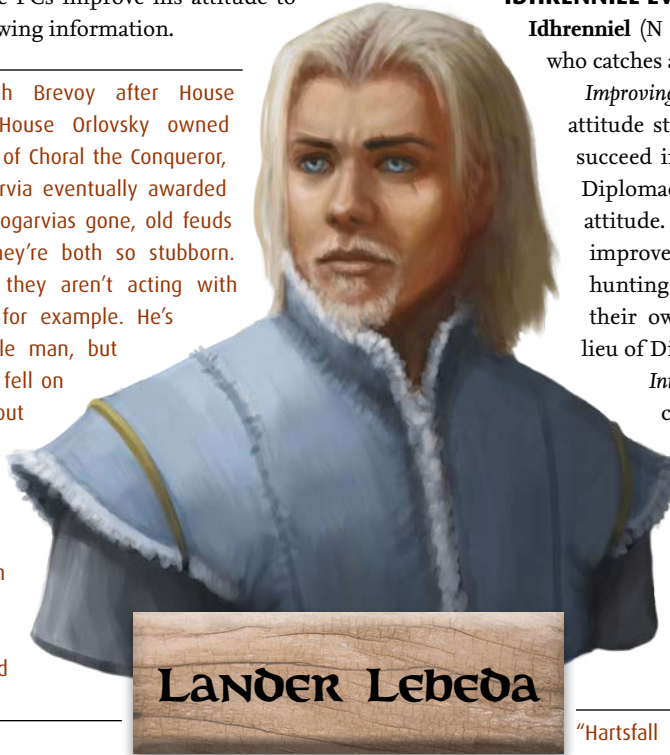
To accommodate a group of four PCs, lower the DCs of all skill checks to improve NPC attitudes by 2.

IDHRENNIEL EVERGUARD

Idhrenniel (N female elf) is a local hunter who catches animals in the nearby hills.

Improving Attitude: Idhrenniel's attitude starts at indifferent. PCs must succeed in a DC 17 (21 in Subtier 8–9) Diplomacy check to improve her attitude. Alternatively, the PCs can improve her attitude by praising her hunting techniques or demonstrating their own, using Survival checks in lieu of Diplomacy.

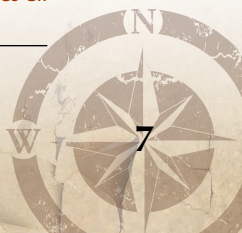
Interaction with the PCs: The PCs can find Idhrenniel selling meat and fur from her catches in Zmeyka's market square. She is reserved, and does not offer more than basic pleasantries unless the PCs improve her attitude to at least friendly, in which case she offers the following.



"Hartsfall Keep was in ruins well before I drew my first breath. Its name refers to the prominent imagery of deer found throughout the rubble. Perhaps the original resident was a fellow hunter. Whoever he or she was, they must have met with poor luck. They say that the keep was built atop an ancient burial ground, which ultimately upset the dead and led to its fall. Rumor has it a secret chamber is hidden underneath the keep where the corpses of the angry spirits dwell."

If the PCs improve her attitude to helpful, she also offers the following.

"Many dangers lurk in the shadows of Hartsfall Keep. Reports speak of ghosts and monsters roaming through its remains. It's always been a place we locals avoid, but reports of strange activity increased in the wake of the Vanishing. People now claim to hear chanting echoing in the night. There are also curious foreigners about. They wear robes and keep one eye covered. They're scaring the townsfolk with all their eccentric nonsense of rising dragons coming to devour us all. As for myself, I fear neither madman nor dragon; after all, Pharamasma makes cradles for us all at some point."



LANDER LEBEDA

Lander Lebeda (LN male human) is the heir of House Lebeda. He is a handsome young man in his late teens with shoulder length pale hair and a trimmed goatee. His clothing appears well tailored and made of fine material but practical and weatherworn. Lander carries himself with poised gallantry.

Improving Attitude: Lander's attitude starts at indifferent. PCs must succeed in a DC 17 Diplomacy check (DC 21 in Subtier 8–9) to improve his attitude. Alternatively, the PCs can improve his attitude by offering assistance with his poetry and using Perform (oratory) checks in lieu of Diplomacy.

Interaction with the PCs: The PCs can find Lander in a local tavern. In the years following his first encounter with the Pathfinder Society (in *Pathfinder Society Scenario #5–19: The Horn of Aroden*), he has matured considerably. He traveled to Zmeyka to do what he can to salvage the bleak situation. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Sense Motive check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) discerns his romantic interest in Sylvanna Orlovsky. If any of the PCs has the Chronicle sheet for #5–19, his attitude starts at friendly to represent his regard for the Pathfinder Society. Otherwise, his attitude begins at indifferent. If his attitude toward the PCs is at least friendly, he offers the following information.

"The Orlovskys and Surtovas are obstinate as only Issians can be, I'm afraid. I've been here a week now working alongside the clerics of Abadar to help end this feud, but neither side will budge. Sylvanna is a childhood friend and I know how much this land means to her. She used to visit a lot with her father when she was young. He told her tales about the glory of their family's legacy and cast her little eagle figurine out of copper mined from these hills. When her father passed away, she fell into despair. Then she lost her cherished token when we were playing together outside of Hartsfall Keep. This place holds a lot of memories for her, so you can see why she's so protective of it. Unfortunately, the significance this place holds for her is clouding her judgment."

If the PCs improve his attitude to helpful, read or paraphrase the following.

"While seeing Pathfinders here bolsters my hope for a peaceful resolution, I must warn you of not getting too tangled up in the politics. Assistance in soothing tension is most certainly welcomed, but you might reconsider forging any official alliances. Doing so may only hasten aggression from the jilted party."

SYLVANNA ORLOVSKY

Sylvanna Orlovsky (LN female human) is the niece of Lord Poul Orlovsky and the captain of the house's forces in town. She is an attractive young lady with delicate features and gold hair bound into two plaits. She carries herself with

fierce pride and a headstrong temperament, and views Berislav as an uncivilized brute. After hearing fraudulent rumors of House Surtova's contemptuous plans for House Orlovsky regardless of the outcome of diplomacy, she is wary of trusting Berislav's word on anything.

Improving Attitude: Sylvanna's attitude starts at unfriendly. PCs must succeed at a DC 22 (26 in Subtier 8–9) Diplomacy check to improve her attitude. Alternatively, the PCs can improve her attitude by winning her steed's affection and using Handle Animal checks in lieu of Diplomacy.

Interaction with the PCs: The PCs can find Sylvanna at the stables grooming her steed, Silvermane. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Sense Motive check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) notices a layer of wistfulness in her expression and speech. The source of her sorrow stems from losing a treasured childhood token in Hartsfall Keep many years earlier. The item was a copper eagle cast by her deceased father, and being back in the area has caused her to become overcome with memories of her loss. The PCs can learn this detail by speaking to Lander Lebeda, or by improving her attitude to friendly, at which point she reveals her heartbreak. If the PCs improve her attitude to at least indifferent, she attempts to persuade the PCs for the Pathfinder Society to support House Orlovsky in the current conflict, offering them their pick from her herd of fine Brevic Warmblood horses in exchange. This rare breed, descended from horses that rode with Choral's army, is said to have some red dragon blood in them (see the Chronicle sheet for more details).

If the PCs ask Sylvanna about the current situation in town, read or paraphrase the following, regardless of her attitude.

"House Surtova seized the Dragonscale Throne with more haste than a quickling. It makes one wonder how long they've been waiting for the opportunity. They belittle us with derision and mockery; you should hear how Berislav addresses me! It's one insult after another. I would sooner see these lands barren than in the hands of such crude brutes. They think they can claim whatever they like, but House Orlovsky has had enough of their overreach. This land was ours long before they weaseled it from our grasp. This very town was founded by the blood and sweat of my kin's toil. They will return it to us, or we shall take back what is rightfully ours."

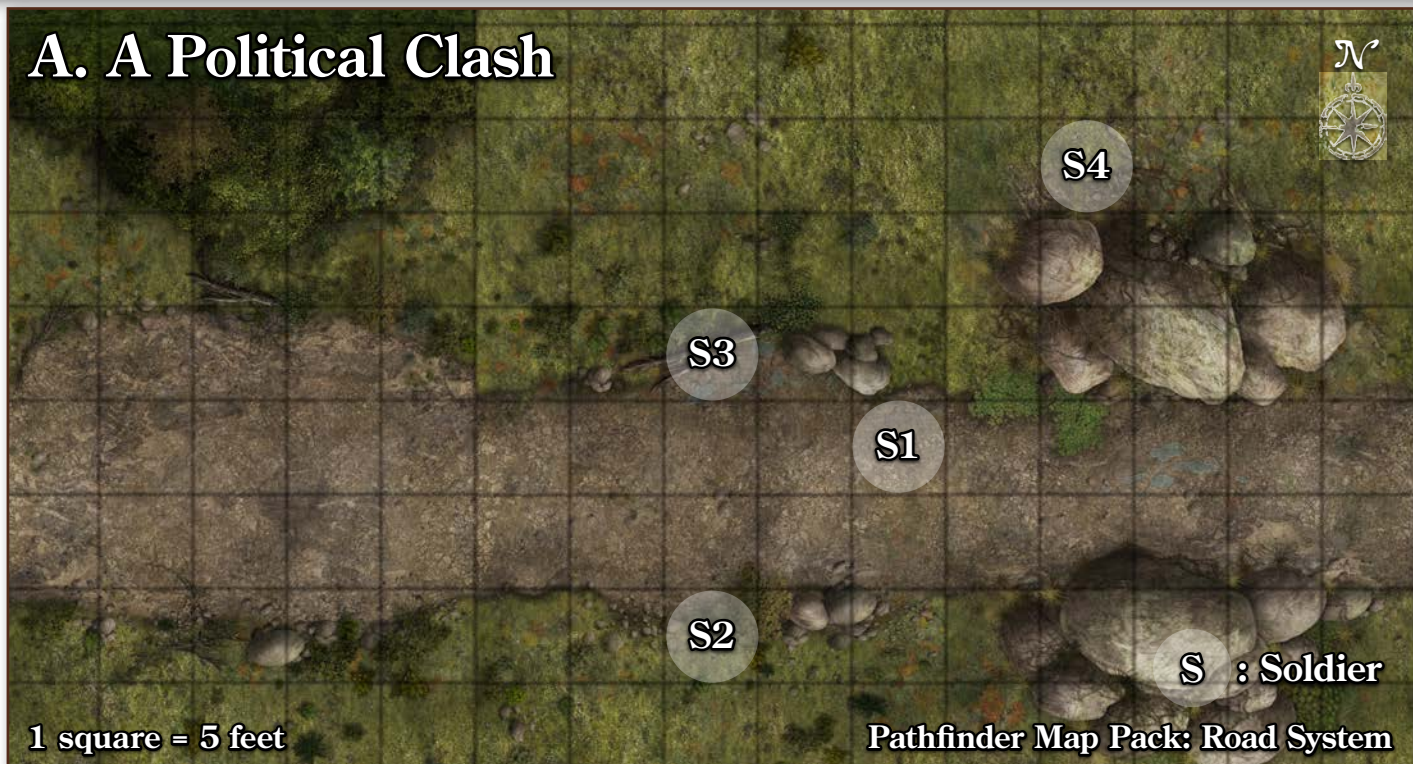
TARN

Tarn (CE female human skald [spell warrior]^{ACG 8}) is one of Ismene's followers who resides in town spreading deceit and warnings of the dragon's second coming. She is dressed in a shabby robe with a filthy bandage covering one eye. She wanders through town, delivering ominous portents and selling divisive divinations to the townsfolk.

Improving Attitude: Tarn's attitude remains indifferent throughout any encounter.



A. A Political Clash



Interaction with the PCs: Unlike the other NPCs, Tarn is likely to approach the PCs first. When the PCs speak with Tarn, she offers the following.

"You should leave while you can. This land is doomed and will soon fall. The second dragon will awaken and rain fire from the skies. Bone will fill rivers and ash will smother crops. The portents of the past speak true to this day. Retreat now or resign to drown under the weight of your own blood."

She does not voluntarily offer more information about her warnings, and she attempts to flee if the PCs become aggressive toward her. If this occurs, GMs may use the mad seeress stat block found in area C5 to resolve conflict. If the PCs remain amiable and request a divination, she offers gloomy forecasts about their futures in exchange for 5 gp.

CHURCH OF ABADAR

In addition to speaking with the locals, PCs can search the archives within the Church of Abadar where the late Baron Oberion Vohonich kept most of the town's records. The clergy have attempted to mediate peace between Houses Orlovsky and Surtova in Vohonich's absence, but their endeavor has been unsuccessful thus far.

PCs who succeed at a DC 20 Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (history) check (DC 24 in Subtier 8–9) discover a file mentioning a missing document called *The Firespeaker Accord*. The baron's notes indicate the document is significant to the town but do not state any further details. Alternatively, the PCs can pay a fee of 20 gp per PC to hire a cleric to assist

them; the cleric then retrieves the above information. The clerics almost certainly rebuff any attempts on the PCs' part to lower this fee, citing a religious obligation to charge a fair price for their time.

A. A POLITICAL CLASH (CR 8 OR CR 11)

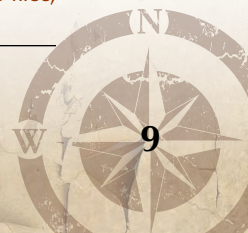
A travel-worn road cuts through the rolling farmlands between Zmeyka and Hartsfall Keep. Gentle breezes carry the sound of rustling crops and the bleating of livestock across the fields.

The first half of the PCs' journey on this pastoral road is peaceful, but an armed group soon strikes against them.

Creatures: Four armed warriors rest by a pile of boulders along the edge of the road, casting a grim gaze over the scenery. If the PCs sided with House Orlovsky while in Zmeyka, the warriors are soldiers of House Surtova who have been tipped off about the alliance and are bent on revenge for the slight against their house. Conversely, these soldiers are from House Orlovsky if the PCs sided with House Surtova. If the PCs remained neutral to the conflict, the armed group are local brigands looking to take the PCs' loot by force.

If the soldiers are from either House Orlovsky or Surtova, read or paraphrase the following, making sure to adjust the dialogue to fit the correct house.

"House Orlovsky commands this territory, and you owe a traitor tax. We're here to collect, so kindly lay down your arms and armor and come with us for questioning. If you've got nothing to hide, you'll be free again in a few weeks."



Scaling Encounter A

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

Subtier 5–6: Remove one grizzled mercenary. The mercenaries do not drink their *potions of barkskin*.

Subtier 8–9: Remove one sellsword.

Scaling Areas B and C

To accommodate a group of four players, lower the DCs of all skill checks to gain Discovery Points by 2.

SUBTIER 5–6 (CR 8)

SOLDIERS (4)

CR 4

Grizzled mercenaries (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 268, see page 25)

hp 51 each

Gear These soldiers do not carry gold or mwk flails.

TACTICS

Before Combat The grizzled mercenaries drink their *potions of barkskin* if they are aware of the PCs' approach. The benefits of this potion are not included in their statistics.

During Combat The grizzled mercenaries intend to injure and capture the PCs, but not kill them. They are arrogant and try to spread out and engage as many PCs as possible. They start using their javelins and then draw their halberds. Once they engage in melee, the fist and every other round they do nonlethal damage with their weapons. They initially use their Power Attack feat but stop if the PCs prove difficult to hit.

Morale The grizzled mercenaries fight until reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, at which point they attempt to flee.

SUBTIER 8–9 (CR 11)

SOLDIERS (4)

CR 7

Sellswords (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 283, see page 25)

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 80 each

Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of cure light wounds* (2); **Other Gear** mwk full plate, mwk heavy steel shield, +1 bastard sword, spiked gauntlet, javelins (5), cloak of resistance +1

TACTICS

Before Combat The sellswords drink their *potions of bull's strength* if they are aware of the PCs' approach. The bonus from this potion is not included in their statistics.

During Combat The sellswords intend to injure and capture the PCs but not kill them. They are arrogant and try to spread out and engage as many PCs as possible. They start using their Vital Strike feat with their javelins and then draw their swords. Once

they engage in melee, the fist and every other round they do nonlethal damage with their weapons. They initially use their Power Attack feat, but stop if the PCs prove difficult to hit.

Morale The sellswords fight until reduced to 15 hit points or fewer, and then attempt to flee.

Development: If the PCs comply with the soldiers' orders or are captured, they are detained at a nearby outpost where they are held and questioned by authorities on suspicion of espionage. In this event, hostilities rise between the noble houses and Hartsfall Keep is destroyed during skirmishes before the Pathfinder Society can arrange the PCs' release. If these soldiers are unaffiliated bandits and defeat the PCs, they detain them at their base and ransom them back to the Pathfinder Society. The outcome of the mission is the same as mentioned above.

If the soldiers escape, they return to their outpost (or nearest tavern, if unaffiliated with a noble house) but do not report the incident nor pursue further action against the PCs. **Rewards:** If the PCs do not defeat the soldiers, reduce each PC's gold earned by the following amount.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 948 gp.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,412 gp.

Subtier 8–9: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,876 gp.

B. HARTSFALL KEEP

The decaying husk of Hartsfall Keep stands on a tall hill, overlooking the area from its advantageous position. Gaps in its ruined walls provide multiple entrance points to the fortress's interior.

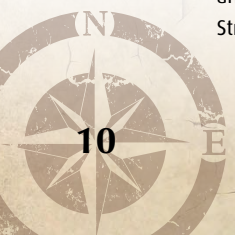
The keep's crumbling stone facade surrounds an interior overgrown with brambles and weeds. Chunks of rocks litter the ground under half-collapsed ceilings. Remnants of four towers rest at each corner, while the dilapidated central keep occupies the northern half of the interior. A rush of wind whistles through the bones of the long abandoned structure, echoing like a mournful dirge.

As the PCs progress through the rest of the scenario, they have opportunities to learn more about the history of the Hartsfall Keep. This adventure uses Discovery Points to track what the PCs have uncovered. For more information about Discovery Points, see the Discovery Points sidebar on page 12.

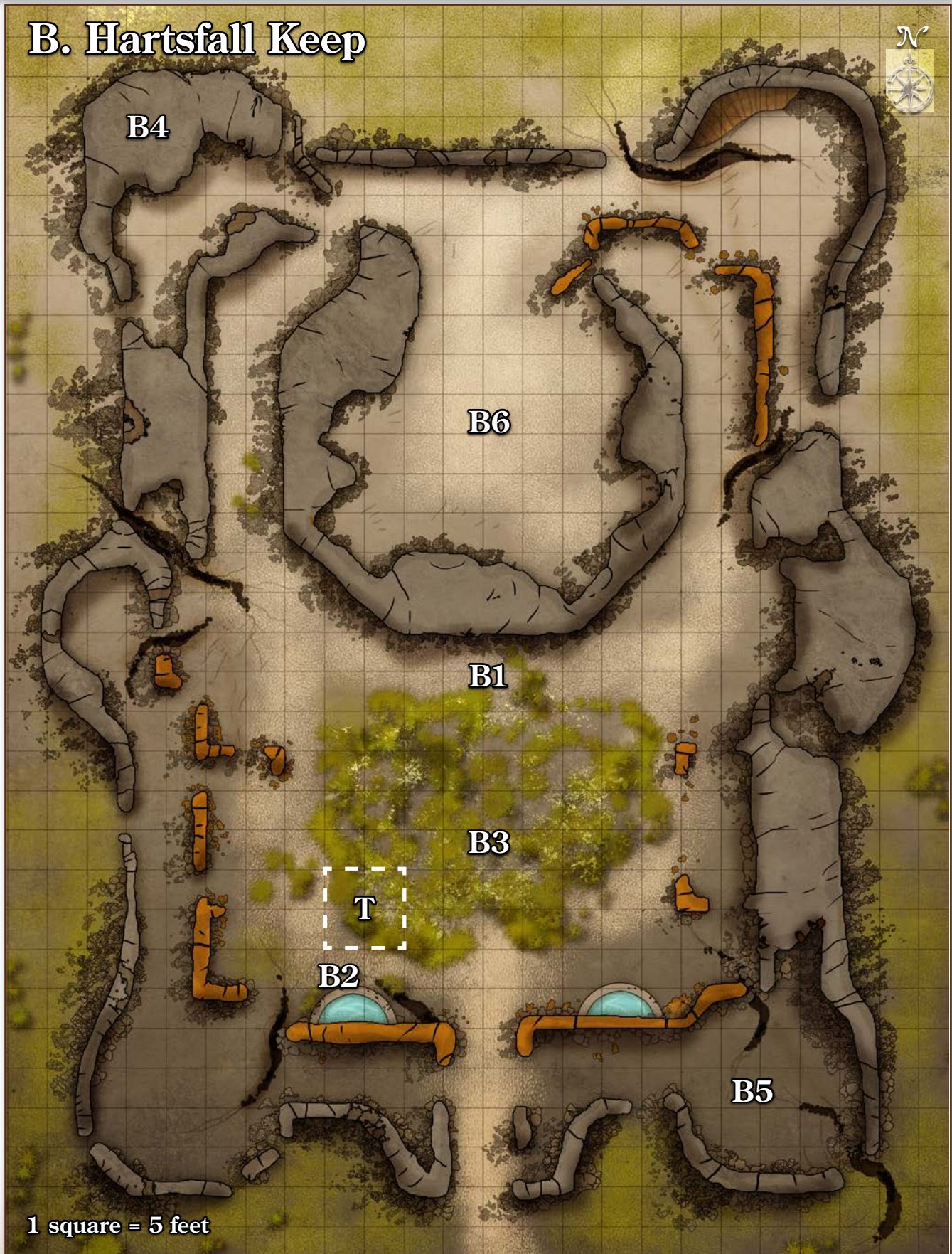
Discovery Point: If PCs make an active effort to map the entirety of the keep (both Part B and Part C) and succeed at a DC 18 Knowledge (engineering) or Profession (architect or cartographer) check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9), they earn 1 Discovery Point.

B1. HAUNTED TOWER (CR 7 OR CR 10)

Thick slabs of red sandstone comprise the keep's main tower, with the exception of one section of the south wall. This section bears



B. Hartsfall Keep



1 square = 5 feet



Discovery Points

Within Hartsfall Keep, the PCs can collect pieces of information about its past. Each piece is worth an allotted number of Discovery Points. There are a total of 13 points to collect throughout areas **B** and **C**. The PCs must acquire a minimum of 8 points to meet their Primary Success Condition. A summary of the Discovery Points the PCs can earn in each area appears below, with full details in the corresponding sections. In addition to the listed skills, other situational skills, such as relevant Craft or Profession skills, may also qualify at the GM's discretion.

TABLE: DISCOVERY POINTS

Location	Points Awarded
B and C*	1
B1	2
B3	1
B4	1
B5	1
C1	1
C2	1
C3	1
C4	1
C5	3

* The PCs earn this Discovery Point by mapping all of areas **B** and **C**. See the Discovery Point section under area **B** below for more details.

blocks of granite displaying a crude etching of a deer hanged from a noose.

The tower's walls reach thirty feet in height and are adorned with slender arching windows. Bordering these windows are reliefs featuring intricate scrollwork and stag horns. Large gaps in the roof's crenulations reveal open air in place of any ceilings or internal infrastructure.

Haunt: When Issian warlords overran the keep, they hanged Lysius Corcina from the central tower so all would witness his demise. After Lysius' death, his body was cut down and unceremoniously sealed into the base of the tower as a warning to foreign invaders. Part of Lysius' spirit continues to haunt the tower.

The haunt only briefly troubled the first Issian warlord to reside in Hartsfall Keep, as he had warding runes placed in the area to protect him from the spectral activity. However, the earthquake of 2920 AR destroyed these runic stones and allowed the haunt to activate once more. The haunt triggers the first time a PC comes within 20 feet of the central tower, regardless of subtier. In Subtier 8–9, it affects the entire courtyard.

SUBTIER 5–6 (CR 7)

LAST BREATH

CR 7

CE haunt (35-foot radius centered on the tower's southern exterior wall)

Caster Level 7th

Notice Perception DC 17 (to hear the sound of boots hitting against the wall)

hp 14; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 hour

Effect When the haunt is triggered, the vision of Lysius Corcina's gruesome death and eventual burial plays out in a ghostly projection. A spectral noose wraps around the PC nearest to the wall and hangs that PC by the neck. This effect acts as *levitate* and *suffocation* (DC 17 Fortitude negates; *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 248). If the target succeeds at the Fortitude save, it is still levitated but experiences no other effects. After 1 round, the *levitate* ends, dropping the target to the ground harmlessly; *suffocation* has the spell's typical duration.

Destruction Lysius Corcina's body must be exhumed from the tower's wall and given a proper burial.

SUBTIER 8–9 (CR 10)

FINAL BREATH

CR 10

CE haunt (50-foot radius centered on the tower's southern exterior wall)

Caster Level 10th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear the sound of boots hitting against the wall)

hp 20; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect When the haunt is triggered, the vision of Lysius Corcina's gruesome death and eventual burial plays out in a ghostly projection. A spectral noose wraps around up to four targets within the area and hangs them by the neck. This effect acts as *levitate* and *suffocation* (DC 19; *Advanced Player's Guide* 248). If a target succeeds at the Fortitude save, it is still levitated but experiences no other effects. After 1 round, the *levitate* ends, dropping the target to the ground harmlessly; *suffocation* has the spell's typical duration.

Destruction Lysius Corcina's body must be exhumed from the tower's wall and given a proper burial.

To destroy the haunt, PCs must remove Lysius' body from the base of the tower. His body is still dressed in a jeweled surcoat worth 800 gp and a signet ring. A PC who succeeds a DC 18 Knowledge (engineering) check or Sleight of Hand check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) safely accomplishes this task without disrupting the structure. If the PCs fail by 5 or more on the skill check to recover Lysius' body, the foundation is compromised and a section of the tower collapses. As such, the PCs lose a Discovery Point for failing to preserve the keep's structural integrity.

Discovery Point: The coat of arms on the Lysius' signet ring prominently features the symbol of a hart. Recovering the ring earns the PCs 2 Discovery Points.

Rewards: If the PCs do not encounter or bypass the haunt, reduce each PC's gold earned by the following amount. This amount represents the value of all of the objects the PCs can find in area B and in area C1.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 223 gp.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 273 gp.

Subtier 8–9: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 323 gp.

B2. SINKING FOUNTAIN (CR 7 OR CR 10)

Mildew stains a pair of cracked fountains, and dried leaves float atop the rainwater collected in their grimy basins. The images of stags are carved throughout their surfaces.

This pair of fountains has deteriorated over the years, and the ground in front of them is now unstable (see Trap below).

Creatures: An ochre jelly rests underneath the loose ground. In Subtier 8–9, there are two black puddings instead.

Trap: The earthquake of 2920 rendered parts of the keep's foundation unstable. When stood upon, the loose ground in the marked squares gives way and tumbles in the center of a natural limestone cavern. The cavern chamber is roughly 30-foot square with a 10-foot-high ceiling (or a 20-foot high ceiling, in Subtier 8–9). Cracks in the ceiling, ground, and walls allow water to seep through, leaving a pool of standing water on the floor. The passages out of this room have collapsed. They once connected to the caverns in the keep's basement (see area C), but another small earthquake 2 years ago collapsed the tunnel, leaving the ooze(s) trapped. If you wish to use a decorated map for this encounter, consider the lower left corner of *Pathfinder Flip Mat: Flooded Dungeon*, which features in area C.

SUBTIER 5–6 (CR 7)

COLLAPSING GROUND CR 5

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect 20-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); jagged rocks (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 jagged rocks per target for 1d6+2 damage each); DC 17 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

OCHRE JELLY CR 5

hp 63 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 218, see page 24)

TACTICS

During Combat The ooze attacks the closest creature to it.

Morale The ooze is starving. It fights to the death against PCs who remain within the cavern.

Scaling Encounter B1

To accommodate a group of four PCs, lower the DC to resist the haunt by 2. In Subtier 8–9, the haunt can hit at most three targets.

Optional Encounter

Encounter B2 is optional. If fewer than 2-1/2 hours remain in which to complete the scenario, the ground in front of the fountains is solid, with no chance of falling into the cavern below.

Scaling Encounter B2

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

Subtier 5–6: The remnants of wards around the fountains neutralize the ochre jelly's acid; it deals no acid damage.

Subtier 8–9: The remnants of wards around the fountains neutralize the black puddings' acid; they deal no acid damage.

SUBTIER 8–9 (CR 10)

BLACK PUDDINGS (2) CR 7

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 35, see page 23)

TACTICS

During Combat The oozes attack the nearest creature.

Morale The oozes are starving. It fights to the death against PCs who remain within the cavern.

COLLAPSING GROUND CR 7

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect 30-ft.-deep pit (3d6 falling damage); jagged rocks (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 jagged rocks per target for 1d6+4 damage each); DC 22 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

B3. OVERGROWN COURTYARD

What was once an impressive courtyard is now overrun with vegetation. A variety of plants cover most of the keep's southern half. The array of colors, odors, and textures makes for a striking yet haphazard display.

As a botany enthusiast, Lysius Corcina brought a variety of plants from Taldor to the keep and planted them throughout



the grounds. He also styled the courtyards interior to reflect popular designs found back in his homeland.

Discovery Point: A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) identifies the origins of these foreign blooms. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Profession (architect or gardener) check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) reveals the layout of the courtyard as a popular design for Taldan estates around the time of Taldor's Fifth Army of Exploration. If the PCs succeed at one or both of these checks, they earn 1 Discovery Point.

B4. FORGOTTEN STOREROOM

Within the northwestern tower's shattered interior, a thick slab of rock blocks the entranceway to a room. The skeletal remains of a humanoid figure are trapped beneath it. PCs must succeed at a DC 22 Strength check to push the rubble to the side and gain access to the room beyond. There is enough space for two Medium PCs to safely aid. A PC succeeding at a DC 15 Heal check recognizes the remains as an adolescent human male.

Nestled in the corner of the tower, this small room remains surprisingly intact. A colorful mosaic decorates the far wall with a tattered tapestry crumpled at its base beside three iron chests.

Minor magical enchantments protect the tapestry and chests from natural decay.

Discovery Point: A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Appraise check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) places the style and weathered material of the mosaic as being Taldan circa 2000 AR, while the tapestry originates from Brevoiy circa 2900 AR. The tapestry details the family tree of the last known owners of Hartsfall Keep. A PC succeeding at a DC 18 Knowledge (history or nobility) check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) discerns that it belonged to the keep's last owners, and identifies the family as a branch of Brevic nobility, House Garess. If the PCs succeed at one or both of these checks, they earn 1 Discovery Point.

Treasure: The tapestry is not the only item of value in this room; the chests contain preserved books and a collection of old coins. The total value of these items is 250 gp. The reward for these items is factored in to the reward for encountering the haunt (see area B1).

B5. OVERLAPPING WALLS

Red stone wrap around the interior side of the keeps walls, while thicker gray walls reinforce the exterior's perimeter. Deep fissures in the ground reveal slabs of white marble with strange, intricately carved patterns hidden underneath the keep's foundation.

Lysius Corcina destroyed most of the Firespeakers' temple and rebuilt his keep on its foundation. A vain man proud of his heritage, Lysius modeled the keep after

the estates of his homeland and even had red sandstone brought in from Taldor to ensure its authenticity. When he was killed, the Issian warlords who inherited it reinforced the structure with sturdier material. The earthquake in 2920 AR destroyed most of the structure. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Knowledge (geography) check can deduce that an earthquake was the major source of the keep's overall collapse. A PC who succeeds at this check by 5 or more also notices that a second, far more recent earthquake dealt minor damage to the structure.

Discovery Point: A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Appraise or Knowledge (engineering) check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) can tell the interior walls appear to be older and made from stone native to Taldor, while the exterior walls are newer and carved from local stone. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Knowledge (history) check (DC 24 in Subtier 8–9) check learns the exposed marble floors bear symbols found in ancient cyclops temples. If the PCs succeed at one or both of these checks, they earn 1 Discovery Point.

B6. MAIN TOWER INTERIOR

Stone rubble and remnants of broken furniture litter the main tower's grassy floor. Scattered patches of tile peek out from under the weeds, giving only a vague glimpse of how the foundation once appeared. Along the walls, cracked open rooms expose their empty innards for all to see.

Looters scavenged most findings of significance long ago. The only item of value here is a wand that was uncovered by the minor earthquake that happened two years ago—a *wand of nap stack* with 6 charges remaining (*Advanced Player's Guide* 233). The tower's guards kept the wand in reserve for dangerous times, when they needed more people awake and on watch.

On the eastern wall, a stairway leads down into the basement. It is partially concealed by collapsed chunks of the tower. The rubble is exceedingly heavy and requires a PC to succeed at a DC 25 Strength check to move it (DC 27 in Subtier 8–9). However, there is enough space for Medium-sized or smaller PCs to squeeze through without moving the debris.

C. UNDER THE KEEP

Though the earthquake of 2920 AR caused damage throughout the keep's basement, it did not collapse the building entirely thanks to the Firespeakers' ingenious structural design and minor arcane enchantments. Lysius Corcina kept the cyclopean elements in place even though they clashed with his Taldan aesthetics. After all, he could simply not allow the public access to these areas and take advantage of their structural strength.

Unless otherwise noted, the ceilings in this section are 15 feet tall and the rooms are dark.



C1. THE PAINTED CELLAR

Rows of tiered casks fill the cellar. Faded frescos adorn the smooth walls, depicting white-robed figures supplicating themselves to red dragons flying above their heads. Strange writing is painted along the ceiling in decorative runic script. Hallways branch off to the north, south, and west, while stairs to the east lead back up to the keep's upper level.

This room was originally used as an entrance chamber to the Firespeakers' private sanctum. Lysius converted the room into a wine cellar shortly after his arrival. The Issian warlords who later resided in Hartsfall Keep consumed most of Lysius' collection of fine Taldan vintages, replacing them with regional blends.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Linguistics check (DC 24 in Subtier 8–9) discerns that the faded words painted on the ceiling read “We await the Dragon's Return” in Iobarian.

If the PCs search this room and succeed at a DC 18 Perception check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9), they locate Sylvanna's missing copper eagle figurine lying under a row of casks. The lampad (see area C3) found the token on her journey to the keep and idly kept it with her before eventually discarding it when it was no longer amusing.

Discovery Point: A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Craft (alchemy) check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) pinpoints the age and origin of the wine collection, while a PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Appraise check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) places the frescos as Iobarian in design. If the PCs succeed at one or both checks, they earn 1 Discovery Point.

Treasure: In the room are 4 casks of aged wine worth 50 gp each (or 200 gp each, in Subtier 8–9) and a pair of goblets worth 20 gp each. The reward for these objects is factored in to the reward for encountering the haunt (see area B1). The copper eagle figurine's market worth is negligible, but it holds significant value to Sylvanna Orlovsky; recovering it may aid the PCs in averting war (see the scenario's Conclusion).

C2. CATACOMBS

Labyrinthine halls snake throughout the keep's underground. Along the passageways, humanoid skeletons rest inside curved alcoves. Rats scurry underfoot, their squeaks echoing in the damp air as they disappear into the shadows.

The Firespeakers built the crypts here to house their dead. Lysius Corcina and his Issian successors later used them for their deceased relatives.

As revenge for the Firespeakers' destruction, Ismene and her followers recently desecrated the tombs of the former residents by removing their skulls and using them for decorations. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Survival check discovers the disturbances to the tombs occurred within the

Scaling Encounter C3

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

Subtier 5–6: The old fungus is breaking down, making the lampad and phycomids sickened. Reduce the DCs to resist the lampad's insane beauty and weep abilities as well as her poisons by 2.

Subtier 8–9: The old fungus is breaking down, making the lampad and psychepores sickened. Reduce the DCs to resist the lampad's insane beauty and weep abilities as well as her poisons by 2.

past few weeks. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Perception check notice the only corpses remaining intact are the ones toward the back of the catacombs. Finally, a PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Heal check observes these undamaged bodies are also oldest, and a PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Knowledge (local) check identifies most of them as cyclopes.

Discovery Point: The names and death dates of the buried corpses are displayed beside each tomb, allowing the PCs to easily record the information. Taking one hour to document these findings earns the PCs 1 Discovery Point.

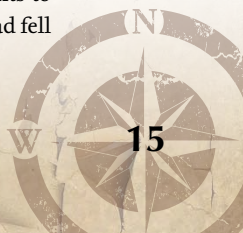
C3. THE MOSS GARDEN (CR 8 OR CR 11)

This damp chamber is overgrown with foliage from top to bottom. Thin rivulets of water trickle down from cracks in the moss-covered walls, obscuring the original painted frescos underneath. Patches of bioluminescent mushrooms festoon columns of shelves and fill the area with a dim glow, while a canopy of vines dangles from the ceiling. A stone podium enveloped in lichen stands on the south wall next to two mounds of fungus and pods.

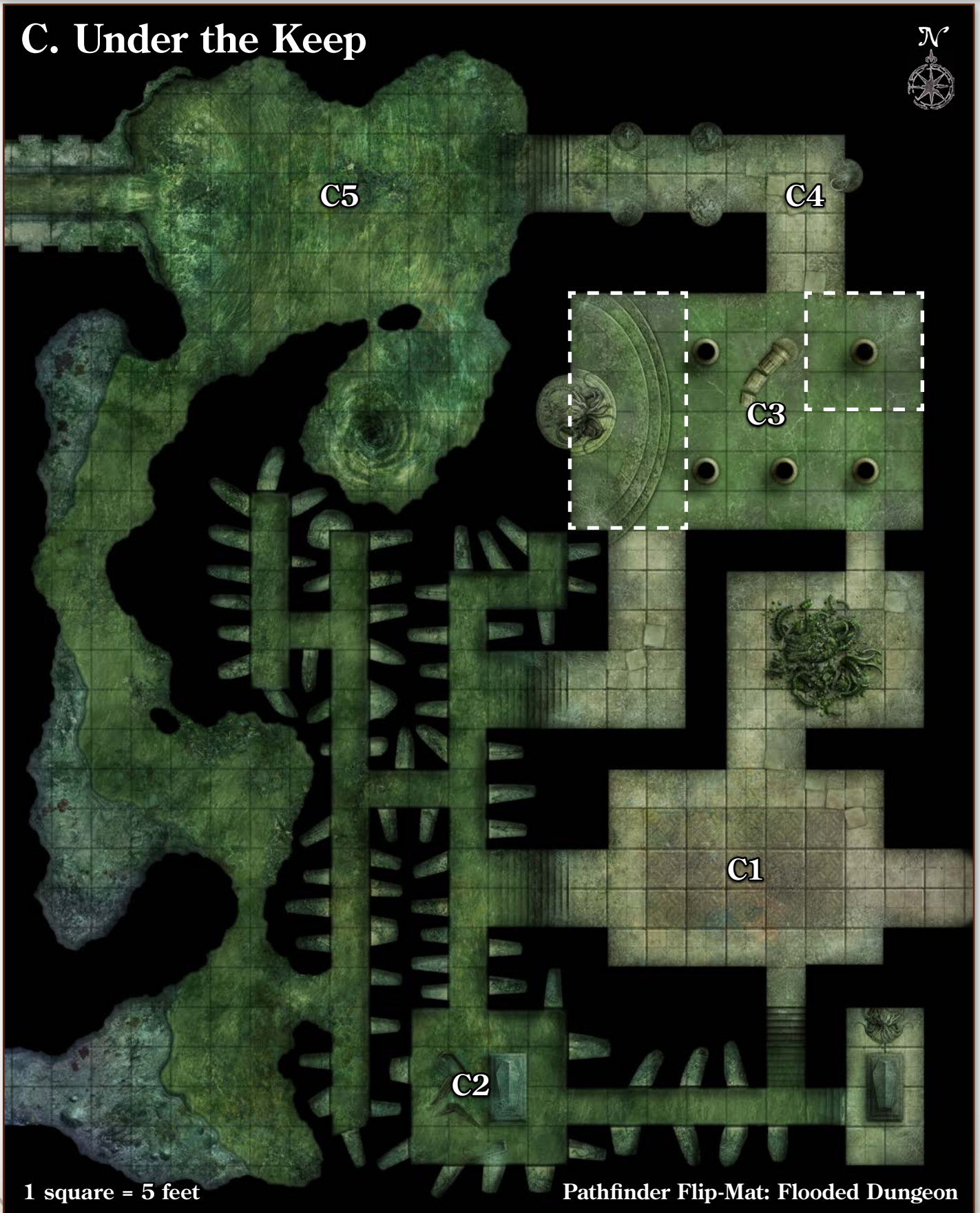
This chamber originally acted as a divination room, where the Firespeakers performed their auguries. The painted walls, now mostly covered in lichen, depict cyclopean rituals and portents. However, the room's spiritual nature was lost on Lysius Corcina, who had other designs in mind for its usage.

He transformed the chamber into a subterranean garden of moss and fungal species. He experimented with cross breeding Taldan and local varieties for both medicinal and recreational purposes. His trials yielded several interesting findings, including a temporary remedy for an illness similar to the one that now plagues Berislav Surtova's home. He maintained records of his work within a journal he kept in this room.

Creatures: A small earthquake two years ago collapsed the lampad's cavern, forcing her to relocate to a new home. She discovered the keep's basement and moved in. Unfortunately, years of inattention caused Lysius' biological experiments to mutate into strange and dangerous creations. The lampad fell



C. Under the Keep



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Flip-Mat: Flooded Dungeon

victim to the deadly plant life, her body rising up as their host. The fungal lampad now spends its time tending to the needs of her fellow fungi.

Among the specimens in the chamber are two phycomids. In Subtier 8–9, these are psychepores instead, and Lysius' experimentation resulted in the psychepores forming as subterranean variants of their forest-dwelling cousins. The fungal creatures keep to this area and generally do not disturb the other creatures in the basement. However, they are now entering their fertilization season and as such they attack any intruders with the intent of reproduction.

Hazard: In Subtier 8–9, two large patches of yellow mold (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 416) lurk within the moss garden chamber in the marked areas. The lampad and psychepores are immune to its effects.

SUBTIER 5–6 (CR 8)

FUNGAL LAMPAD	CR 6
Female fungal lampad (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 4 116, 178) CN Medium plant (augmented fey)	
Init +4; Senses darkvision 90 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15	
Aura insane beauty (30 ft., DC 18)	
DEFENSE	
AC 21, touch 19, flat-footed 17 (+5 deflection, +4 Dex, +2 natural)	
hp 66 (7d8+42)	
Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +8	
Defensive Abilities poisonous blood; DR 5/cold iron;	
Immune disease, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, stunning	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft.	
Melee mwk dagger +8 (1d4+2/19–20)	
Ranged mwk sling +8 (1d4+2)	
Special Attacks create spawn, poison spore cloud, weep	
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +12)	
At will— <i>meld into stone</i> , <i>stone tell</i>	
Druid Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8)	
3rd— <i>spike growth</i> (DC 16), <i>stone shape</i>	
2nd— <i>spider climb</i> , <i>stone call</i> ^{APG} (2)	
1st— <i>cure light wounds</i> , <i>faerie fire</i> , <i>magic stone</i> (2)	
0 (at will)— <i>detect magic</i> , <i>detect poison</i> , <i>light</i> , <i>mending</i>	
TACTICS	
During Combat The lampad uses her weep special ability first and then uses her spells to support her allies. She uses <i>spider climb</i> to avoid melee but tries to stay within range of her insane beauty ability.	
Morale The lampad fights to the death.	
STATISTICS	
Str 14, Dex 19, Con 22, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 21	
Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 24	
Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Point-Blank Shot, Weapon Finesse	
Skills Acrobatics +4 (+0 to jump), Craft (alchemy) +12,	

Diplomacy +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (nature) +12, Linguistics +3, Perception +15, Perform (sing) +9, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +9, Stealth +14

Languages Aklo, Common, Skald, Sylvan, Undercommon

SQ fungal metabolism, guarded, rejuvenation

Gear mwk dagger, mwk sling with 20 bullets

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Create Spawn (Ex) A creature killed by Constitution damage from a fungal creature's poison spore cloud transforms into a fungal spawn over a period of 24 hours. A plant growth spell halves the transformation time, and a diminish plants spell doubles it. A blight spell destroys the fungal spores and prevents the corpse's transformation, but spells that remove disease are ineffective against the growing spores. Once a creature fully transforms into a fungal spawn, the corpse from which it grew is destroyed.

A fungal spawn gains the fungal creature template, but it loses all class levels and memories of the base creature from which it was spawned. If the base creature has 1 or fewer racial Hit Dice and normally has class levels, use a 1st-level warrior version of it as the base creature. The fungal spawn awakens as a free-willed being that knows all it needs to know (including language) in order to use its abilities and survive. Although it bears no allegiance to the fungal creature that created it, the new fungal creature immediately recognizes other fungal creatures as its own kind.

Fungal Metabolism (Ex) A fungal lampad breathes, but does not eat or sleep.

Guarded (Su) A lampad adds her Charisma modifier as a deflection bonus to her Armor Class.

Insane Beauty (Su) This ability affects all humanoids within 30 feet who are viewing a lampad in conditions brighter than dim light. Those who look directly upon the lampad must succeed at a DC 18 Will save or gain the confused condition for 1d6 rounds, as per the *confusion* spell. A creature that succeeds at the save is immune to the same lampad's insane beauty for 24 hours. A lampad can suppress or resume this ability as a free action. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Poison Spore Cloud (Ex) Once per day, a fungal creature can release a choking cloud of spores in a 15-foot-radius spread that lingers in the air for 10 rounds. This cloud functions as an inhaled poison. Any breathing creature in the cloud must succeed at a Fortitude save or inhale the spores. A creature that remains in the area of the spore cloud must continue to attempt Fortitude saves against its effects.

Fungal Spores: Poison—inhaled; *save* Fort DC 18; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Con damage and fatigued for 1 minute; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Poisonous Blood (Ex) A fungal creature's blood and flesh are ingested poisons. Any creature that makes a bite attack against a fungal creature, swallows one whole, or otherwise ingests part of one must succeed at a Fortitude save or be afflicted by the poison.



Fungal Blood or Flesh: Poison—ingested; *save* Fort DC 18; frequency 1/minute for 6 minutes; *effect* 1 Str damage, 1 Dex damage, and nauseated for 1 minute; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Rejuvenation (Ex) A fungal creature gains all the sustenance it requires from contact with moist natural earth, but it must rejuvenate itself as often and for as long as humans need sleep. As long as it is in contact with moist natural earth, a resting fungal creature regains hit points as though it were undergoing complete bed rest and long term care (4 hit points per Hit Die for each day of rest). The fungal creature can engage in light activity during rejuvenation, but any strenuous activity (like fighting, running, or casting a spell) prevents it from regaining hit points for that day. Complete bed rest doesn't increase the amount of healing a fungal creature gains from rejuvenation.

Spells A lampad casts spells as a 5th-level druid but can't swap out prepared spells to cast *summon* spells.

Weep (Su) As a standard action, a lampad can unsettle those near her when she cries. Any creature within 30 feet who can hear a lampad weeping becomes shaken for 1 minute unless it succeeds at a DC 18 Will saving throw. This ability can't cause a creature to become frightened or panicked. This is a mind-affecting fear effect that relies on audible components. The *save* DC is Charisma-based.

PHYCOMIDS (2)

CR 4

hp 39 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 210, see page 24)

TACTICS

During Combat The phycomids attack the closest target as often as possible, hoping to reproduce.

Morale The phycomids fight to the death.

SUBTIER 8-9 (CR 11)

FUNGAL LAMPAD

CR 6

hp 66 (see page 17)

TACTICS

Use the tactics for the fungal lampad in Subtier 5-6.

PSYCHEPORES (2)

CR 7

hp 85 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 198, see page 24)

TACTICS

During Combat The psychepores launch their razor conks at different PCs before closing to melee.

Morale The psychepores fight to the death to protect the lampad. If she dies, they try to flee when reduced to 20 hit points or fewer.

Discovery Point: A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) check (DC 22 in Subtier 8-9) identifies the various species of fungus located throughout the chamber along with their hybrid origins. This earns the PCs 1 Discovery Point.

Treasure: Lysius' journal rests on the lichen-covered stone podium. Its contents provide a basis of a cure to the

plague ravaging Berislav's people (see Secondary Success Conditions on page 22). Alongside his journal is a small metal coffer containing a *ring of delayed doom* with 1 garnet remaining (*Advanced Player's Guide* 292) and, in Subtier 8-9, a *periapt of health*. The lampad has also placed two vials of the rare sporedream poison on the lectern (see below). She brewed this unusual substance in the hopes of trading it to the Firespeakers.

Sporedream Poison: Poison—injury; *save* Fort DC 16; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1 Wis and confused for 1 round; *cure* 1 save.

Development: Upon discovering Lysius' journal, a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Heal check (DC 24 in Subtier 8-9) can use the herbalist's notes as a basis for forming a cure for the plague ravaging Berislav Surtova's homeland. If they are unsuccessful, they may bring the book back to Grandt the Marred in Zmeyka and ask him to craft the cure instead.

Rewards: If the PCs do not defeat the lampad, reduce each PC's gold earned by the following amount.

Subtier 5-6: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 550 gp.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,524 gp.

Subtier 8-9: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,175 gp.

C4. HALLWAY OF STATUES

This hallway leads from west to south and contains several stone statues along the walls. These statues depict legendary figures from cyclopean mythology with their names and deeds carved into their base in Iobarian.

Discovery Point: A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Knowledge (local) check (DC 22 in Subtier 8-9) identifies the statue's cyclopean origins, while a PC succeeding at Linguistics check of the same DC identifies the script engraved into the base of the statues as Iobarian. If the PCs succeed at one or both checks, they earn 1 Discovery Point.

C5. THE CYCLOPS LAIR (CR 9 OR CR 12)

Clear spring water rushes down from a raised opening in the western wall and spills into the pool below. Lit sconces flicker along the cavern's walls, offering ample illumination throughout the chamber. Painted on the rough-hewn ceiling is the image of a resplendent red dragon encircled with flourishing script and arcane symbols.

This cavern was one of the meditation rooms of the Firespeakers', and it remained untouched by the keep's many owners. Ismene and her followers gather here beneath the Firespeakers' prophecy of the Second Dragon to pray for their icon's emergence and cast divinations to aid them in ushering its arrival. The skulls that decorate the braziers are the missing skulls from the skeletons found in C2.

The room is lit with normal light and the ceiling in this chamber is 30 feet tall. The top of the waterfall is 10 feet up



from the floor, and the pool of water on the floor is only 1 foot deep with most of the water leaking through fissures in the earth. The water is too shallow to impede movement, but PCs who fall unconscious are at risk of drowning.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Linguistics check (DC 22 in Subtier 8–9) deciphers the Iobarian script on the ceiling, “When the two pretenders’ heads tear at one another, their blood shall ignite the fires of the Second Dragon’s return.”

A feminine figure with red scales and a single eye stands atop the waterfall between two braziers of fire encased with skulls. Her clawed hands reach up to the painting above as if in reverence to the icon. If made aware of the PCs’ presence, the woman, Ismene, addresses in them as follows.

“You come uninvited and trespass on the sacred grounds of the Firespeakers. Petty lordlings claim this land as theirs, yet it is none but the Dragon who shall inherit the land and rule as its rightful leader. The anger of these upstarts only fuels the fire of the Dragon’s second coming, and we shall continue to stoke that blaze among them until his return. As for you pitiful intruders, you shall make fine offerings, indeed. Count yourself blessed; not everyone receives such an honor.”

Obsessed with the prophecy of the Second Dragon, Ismene briefly engages in dialogue with the PCs if they ask about it or the Firespeakers. She also reveals her part in sowing discord among the two noble houses, but she soon cuts the conversation short, eager to sacrifice them. Below are potential questions the PCs might ask along with Ismene’s responses to them.

Who are you? “I am Ismene, the inheritor of the Firespeakers’ legacy and herald of the Second Dragon. It is my divine mandate to usher in the Dragon’s return.”

Who are the Firespeakers? “Firespeakers were the name given to our ancestors when they first arrived and built this temple. They came to the foretold birthplace of the Second Dragon to await his arrival and carry out his command. Then greedy nobles came from the South and sundered this holy land, slaughtered the tribe, and built a vulgar fortress atop their bones. We are the last of their ancient line and we have come to see the prophecy through.”

What dragon are you referring to? “The one who conquered this land once; the one who will return and conquer it again—the dragon wearing the skin of mortal man. He shall arise and punish these people for forgetting their place and we, his true and loyal subjects, will be at his side to carry out his justice.”

Did you have a hand in the current feud between House Orlovsky and House Surtova? “They are merely the tinder to the coming inferno. We sparked the flame from under them, and now we wait and watch them burn. This feud was long foreseen in our ancestor’s visions; we only hastened along the inevitable with simple whispers and witchery.”

Scaling Encounter C5

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

Subtier 5–6: Ismene used her breath weapon earlier in the day. The mad seeress used a strange fungus during her meditation. She spends her first round of combat babbling incoherently, as per the spell *confusion*.

Subtier 8–9: Ismene used her breath weapon earlier in the day. The mad seeresses used a strange fungus during their meditation. They spend their first round of combat babbling incoherently, as per the spell *confusion*.

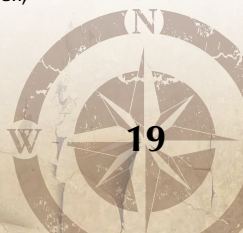
Creatures: Ismene travelled to Hartsfall Keep from her homeland in Iobaria, where she was raised by fanatical remnants of the Firespeakers. The origin of Ismene’s draconic heritage is unclear, but her kin viewed it as a sign of her connection to the Second Dragon. She eventually left for Brevoy with a flock of disciples after augury interpretations deemed it time to prepare for the Dragon’s return.

Ismene and her follower are engaged in ritual meditation in the cavern but if made aware of the PCs’ presence in the basement, they ready to attack any intruders who enter their lair. In Subtier 8–9, Ismene has two followers, who have trained together since childhood and developed an unusual set of abilities. If the PCs attempt to leave without exploring this section of the map, Ismene and her follower instead confront them in the Main Tower (B6) upon their departure.

If Tarn could have reasonably slipped away and gotten to Hartsfall Keep before the PCs, and without being detected, she should be present as the mad seeress below (or one of the seeresses, in Subtier 8–9). Otherwise, another seeress takes her place.

SUBTIER 5–6 (CR 9)

ISMENE	CR 7
Female half-dragon cyclops (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 170, 52)	
NE Large dragon (humanoid, giant)	
Init –1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +20	
DEFENSE	
AC 22, touch 8, flat-footed 22 (+3 armor, –1 Dex, +11 natural, –1 size)	
hp 95 (10d8+50)	
Fort +13, Ref +3, Will +5	
Defensive Abilities ferocity; Immune fire, paralysis, sleep	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)	
Melee bite +15 (1d8+9), 2 claws +15 (1d6+9)	
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.	
Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone, DC 20 Reflex half, 10d6 fire)	



TACTICS

During Combat Ismene uses her breath weapon first and waits for the seeress to enhance her weapon before closing in melee combat. She does not use her flash of insight on an attack roll, instead reserving it for a saving throw against a particularly dangerous spell or effect that would disable her.

Morale Ismene is fanatical in her beliefs and fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 8, **Con** 21, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +17 (+19 bull rush); **CMD** 26 (28 vs. bull rush)

Feats Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Skills Diplomacy +3, Fly +9, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Linguistics +2, Perception +20, Profession (soothsayer) +14, Sense Motive +5, Survival +6; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception

Languages Common, Cyclops, Draconic, Giant, Iobarian

SQ flash of insight

Gear +1 leather armor, cloak of resistance +1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) Once per day as a standard action, Ismene can issue forth a cone of fire, dealing 10d6 points of fire damage to all creatures in a 30-foot cone (DC 20 Reflex half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Flash of Insight (Su) Once per day as an immediate action, a cyclops can peer into an occluded visual spectrum of possible futures, gaining insight that allows it to select the exact result of one die roll before the roll is made. This effect can alter an action taken by the cyclops only and cannot be applied to the rolls of others.

MAD SEERESS

CR 7

hp 79 (*Pathfinder RPG Villain Codex* 183, see page 23)

Speed 60 ft.

Melee +1 flaming longspear +13/+8 (1d8+7/×3 plus 1d6 fire)

Special Attacks rage power (quick reflexes)

Skald (Spell Warrior) Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +11)

3rd (3/day)—*confusion* (DC 16), *haste*, *phantom steed*

2nd (5/day)—*gallant inspiration*^{APG}, *glitterdust*, *heroism*, *reinvigorating wind*^{CC}

1st (5/day)—*expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *grease* (DC 14), *remove fear*, *saving finale*^{APG}

TACTICS

Before Combat The seeress casts *heroism* and *expeditious retreat* on herself and drinks her *potion of bear's endurance*. She activates raging song, using enhance weapon to make her weapon and Ismene's natural attacks +1 flaming weapons. The bonuses from these spells are included in her statistics.

During Combat The seeress tries to use her spells and abilities to support and enhance Ismene and to counterspell the PCs' spellcasting. If Ismene is killed, the seeress targets all her attacks on the PC that slew her.

Morale The seeress fights to the death.

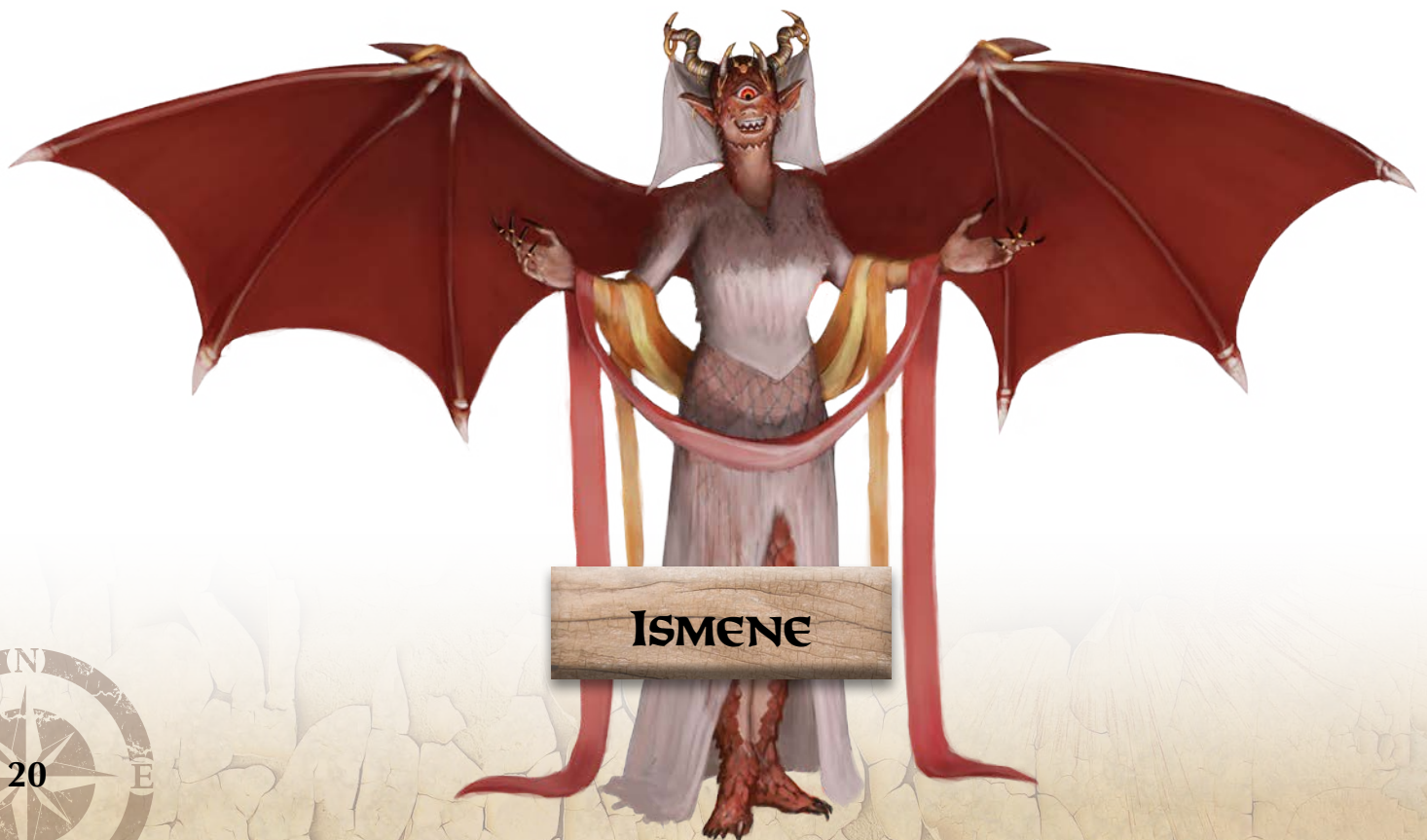
Base Statistics Without *expeditious retreat*, *heroism*, the *potion of bear's endurance*, and enhance weapons, the mad seeress's statistics are

Perception −1; **hp** 63; **Fort** +8,

Ref +5, **Will** +6; **Speed** 30 ft.; **Melee** mwk longspear +11/+6 (1d8+6/×3); **Con** 12; **CMB** +10; **Skills** all 2 lower

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Spells The seeress has the following spell from *Pathfinder PRG Villain Codex*, reprinted below for the GM's convenience.



Reinvigorating Wind: Ismene exhales deeply as a standard action, creating a gentle magical wind that invigorates any allies in a 30-foot cone, as follows. Any sleeping allies immediately wake up. Fascinated allies are shaken free of the fascinate effect. Flat-footed allies no longer count as flat-footed even if they have not acted yet. The duration of effects that cause any allies to be confused, frightened, paralyzed, slowed, or stunned is decreased by 1d4 rounds (roll separately for each target). If the duration of any such effect is reduced to 0 rounds or fewer, the effect ends for that ally. Finally, any allies lying prone may stand up as an immediate action, provoking attacks of opportunity as normal.

SUBTIER 8–9 (CR 12)

ISMENE

CR 11

Female half-dragon cyclops oracle 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 270, 52; *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42)

NE Large dragon (humanoid, giant)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +26

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 10, flat-footed 25 (+5 armor, +1 Dex, +11 natural, –1 size)

hp 172 (17d8+92)

Fort +15, **Ref** +9, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities ferocity; **Resist** fire 10; **Immune** fire, paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft. (30 ft. in armor), fly 80 ft. (average)

Melee bite +23 (1d8+12), 2 claws +23 (1d6+12)

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

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone, DC 20 Reflex half, 10d6 fire)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +11)

3rd (5/day)—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 20)

2nd (7/day)—*augury*, *cure moderate wounds*, *grace*^{APG}, *resist energy*, *status*

1st (7/day)—*burning hands* (DC 18), *cause fear* (DC 15), *command* (DC 15), *comprehend languages*, *cure light wounds*, *doom* (DC 15), *entropic shield*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *create water*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *resistance*, *spark*^{APG} (DC 17), *stabilize*

Mystery Flame

TACTICS

Before Combat If disturbed early from her meditation, Ismene casts *entropic shield* and then drinks her *potion of bull's strength*. The effects of *bull's strength* are included in her statistics.

During Combat Ismene uses *fireball* and her breath weapon to weaken the PCs at range. After a seeress has enhanced her weapon, she goes into melee with her claws and heat aura. She does not use her flash of insight on an attack roll, instead

holding it in reserve for a saving throw against a particularly dangerous spell or effect that would disable her.

Morale Ismene is fanatical in her beliefs and fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 31, **Dex** 12, **Con** 21, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +21 (+23 bull rush); **CMD** 31 (33 vs. bull rush)

Feats Alertness, Cleave, Elemental Focus^{APG}, Great Cleave, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Bull Rush, Lightning Reflexes, Nimble Moves, Power Attack, Spell Focus (evocation)

Skills Diplomacy +12, Fly +8, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +10, Linguistics +2, Perception +28, Profession (soothsayer) +16, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +13, Survival +8; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception

Languages Aklo, Common, Cyclops, Draconic, Giant, Ignan, Iobarian
SQ flash of insight, oracle's curse (tongues [Aklo and Ignan]), revelations (burning magic, cinder dance, heat aura, molten skin)

Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength*; **Other Gear** *soothsayer's travel raiment* [as *soothsayer's raiment*^{APG} but on a +1 chain shirt], *cloak of resistance* +1, *headband of alluring charisma* +2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) Once per day as a standard action, Ismene can issue forth a cone of fire, dealing 10d6 points of fire damage to all creatures in a 30-foot cone (DC 20 Reflex half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Flash of Insight (Su) Once per day as an immediate action, a cyclops can peer into an occluded visual spectrum of possible futures, gaining insight that allows it to select the exact result of one die roll before the roll is made. This effect can alter an action taken by the cyclops only and cannot be applied to the rolls of others.

MAD SEERESSES (2)

CR 7

hp 79 each (*Pathfinder RPG Villain Codex* 183, see page 23)

Special Attacks rage power (spirit totem^{APG} [first seeress] or quick reflexes [second seeress])

Skald (Spell Warrior) Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +11)

3rd (3/day)—*confusion* (DC 16), *haste*, *phantom steed*

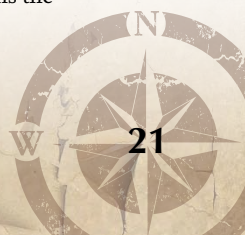
2nd (5/day)—*gallant inspiration*^{APG}, *glitterdust*, *heroism*, *reinvigorating wind*^{AC}

1st (5/day)—*expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *grease* (DC 14), *remove fear*, *saving finale*^{APG}

TACTICS

Use the tactics for the mad seeress from Subtier 5–6.

Discovery Points: A wealth of Iobarian artifacts, including the *Firespeaker Accord*, is located behind the waterfall. The accord details the pact between the Firespeakers and the native warlords, naming the local region as neutral territory. Signatures from the heads of ancient tribes (from whom many of the noble Brevic houses descended) are included in this document. Recovering the trove and the accord earns the PCs 3 Discovery Points.



Treasure: Among the trove of items are engraved bones, old clay jars, tools, and other mundane items. These relics are in poor shape and have little value other than the historical context they can provide to the Pathfinder Society. The *Firespeaker Accord*, however, offers important documentation about the region (see Secondary Success Conditions).

Rewards: If the PCs do not defeat Ismene, reduce each PC's gold earned by the following amount.

Subtier 5–6: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 876 gp.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 1,524 gp.

Subtier 8–9: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 2,173 gp.

CONCLUSION

When the PCs finish their exploration of Hartsfall Keep, Lander rides up and warns them that tensions between the noble houses are about to reach a boiling point. If the PCs fulfill the conditions listed in the Secondary Success Conditions section, they are able to soften the feuding nobles' stances and turn what may have been war into a levelheaded discussion. Otherwise, Lander urges the PCs to leave while they have the chance.

Regardless of whether the PCs averted war, they are still able to achieve their primary mission of uncovering Hartsfall Keep's history.

Venture-Captain Hadrias returns to Restov before the PCs do and is eager to learn of their findings. If the PCs succeeded at their secondary success condition, he delightedly reports that before he left the capital, he heard that Berislav Surtova sent a letter to the king requesting time to "reach an amicable solution rather than resorting to steel," and that by all accounts, the king was not mobilizing forces. Otherwise, he tells the PCs that the result of his pleas to the king was inconclusive but congratulates them on a job well done in the keep.

With Ismene destroyed, her followers that still operate in the region continue their mission to bring forth the Second Dragon, but they have lost their leader and their most skilled planner. It will be some time before they are able to recover, if they can at all.

If the PCs sided with House Orlovsky, they earn the House Orlovsky Steeds boon on their Chronicle sheets. If they sided with House Surtova, they earn the Surtovan Dragonscale boon on their Chronicle sheets.

PRIMARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

PCs must collect a minimum of 8 Discovery Points during their exploration of Hartsfall Keep to achieve their mission's goal. A table of four players need collect only 7 Discovery Points. Gathering this wealth of information allows the Pathfinder Society to properly document the details of the fortress and earns each PC 1 Prestige Point.

SECONDARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

To end the current hostilities between Houses Orlovsky and Surtova, the PCs cannot take sides with either house during their time in Zmeyka. The PCs must also raise both Berislav's and Sylvanna's attitudes to indifferent before leaving for Hartsfall Keep. In addition, the PCs must acquire the *Firespeaker Accord*, the copper eagle figurine for Sylvanna, and Lysius' medicine journal for Berislav. With these personal items returned, the representatives' attitudes improve to helpful and they finally put aside their differences to begin peace talks anew. Moreover, the *Firespeaker Accord* provides them with concrete evidence of the region's original intent and ownership. For averting war, the PCs each earn 1 additional Prestige Point as well as the Peacemaker of Brevoy boon on their Chronicle sheets.



APPENDIX: STAT BLOCKS

The following stat blocks appear in this scenario.

BLACK PUDDING

This black, amorphous blob piles up on itself, a quivering mound of midnight sludge that glistens darkly before surging forward.

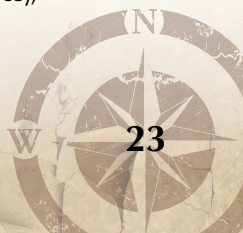
BLACK PUDDING	CR 7
<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i> 35	
N Huge ooze	
Init -5; Senses blindsight 60 ft.; Perception -5	
DEFENSE	
AC 3, touch 3, flat-footed 3 (-2 size, -5 Dex)	
hp 105 (10d8+60)	
Fort +9, Ref -2, Will -2	
Defensive Abilities split, ooze traits	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.	
Melee slam +8 (2d6+4 plus 2d6 acid plus grab)	
Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.	
Special Attacks constrict (2d6+4 plus 2d6 acid), corrosion	
STATISTICS	
Str 16, Dex 1, Con 22, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1	
Base Atk +7; CMB +12 (+16 grapple); CMD 17 (27 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped)	
Skills Climb +11	
SQ ooze traits, suction	
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Acid (Ex) A black pudding secretes a digestive acid that dissolves organic material and metal quickly, but does not affect stone. Each time a creature suffers damage from a black pudding's acid, its clothing and armor take the same amount of damage from the acid. A DC 21 Reflex save prevents damage to clothing and armor. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes a black pudding takes 2d6 acid damage unless the weapon's wielder succeeds on a DC 21 Reflex save. If a black pudding remains in contact with a wooden or metal object for 1 full round, it deals 21 points of acid damage (no save) to the object. The save DCs are Constitution-based.	
Corrosion (Ex) An opponent that is being constricted by a black pudding suffers a -4 penalty on Reflex saves made to resist acid damage applying to clothing and armor.	
Split (Ex) Slashing and piercing weapons deal no damage to a black pudding. Instead, the creature splits into two identical puddings, each with half of the original's current hit points (round down). A pudding with 10 hit points or fewer cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.	
Suction (Ex) The black pudding can create powerful suction against any surface as it climbs, allowing it to cling to inverted surfaces with ease. A black pudding can establish or release suction as a swift action, and as long as it is using suction, it moves at half speed. Because of the suction, a black pudding's CMD score gets a +10 circumstance bonus to resist bull rush,	

awesome blows, and other attacks and effects that attempt to physically move it from its location.

MAD SEERESS

The mad seeress is a prophet, warrior, and master of obscure lore.

MAD SEERESS	CR 7
<i>Pathfinder RPG Villain Codex</i> 183	
Human skald (spell warrior) 8 (<i>Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide</i> 49, 116)	
CN Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +6; Senses Perception +1	
DEFENSE	
AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)	
hp 79 (8d8+40)	
Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +8; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic	
Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee +1 <i>shock longspear</i> +13/+8 (1d8+7/×3 plus 1d6 electricity)	
Special Attacks rage power (spirit totem ^{APG} +9, 1d4+3), raging song 20 rounds/day (move action; enhance weapons, song of marching, song of strength)	
Skald (Spell Warrior) Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +11) 3rd (3/day)— <i>confusion</i> (DC 16), <i>haste</i> , <i>phantom steed</i> 2nd (5/day)— <i>dousing rain</i> ^{MC} , <i>gallant inspiration</i> ^{APG} , <i>heroism</i> , <i>reinvigorating wind</i> ^{MC} 1st (5/day)— <i>feather fall</i> , <i>grease</i> (DC 14), <i>liberating command</i> (<i>Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat</i> 233), <i>remove fear</i> , <i>saving finale</i> ^{APG} 0 (at will)— <i>dancing lights</i> , <i>detect magic</i> , <i>ghost sound</i> (DC 13), <i>message</i> , <i>prestidigitation</i> , <i>read magic</i>	
TACTICS	
Before Combat The mad seeress casts <i>heroism</i> , drinks her <i>potion of bear's endurance</i> , and activates raging song, using enhance weapons to make her and her allies' weapons +1 <i>shock weapons</i> .	
Base Statistics Without <i>heroism</i> , <i>potion of bear's endurance</i> , and enhanced weapons, the mad seeress's statistics are Senses Perception -1; hp 63; Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +6; Speed 30 ft.; Melee mwk longspear +11/+6 (1d8+6/×3); Con 12; CMB +10; Skills all 2 lower.	
STATISTICS	
Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 16	
Base Atk +6; CMB +12; CMD 23	
Feats Arcane Strike, Dodge, Improved Counterspell, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness	
Skills Acrobatics +4 (+8 when jumping), Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (nature) +17, Knowledge (religion) +17, Perform (oratory) +16, Perform (percussion) +16, Ride +4	
Languages Common	
SQ bardic knowledge +4, greater counterspell, lore master 1/day, rage powers, versatile performance (oratory, percussion)	



Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*; **Other Gear** +1 mithral chain shirt, mwk longspear, belt of giant strength +2, cloak of resistance +1, hand drum, 90 gp

OCHRE JELLY

This yellow-orange amoeboid creature slithers across the ground, pseudopods grasping ahead of its slow approach.

OCHRE JELLY CR 5

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 218

N Large ooze

Init -5; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Perception -5

DEFENSE

AC 4, touch 4, flat-footed 4 (-5 Dex, -1 size)

hp 63 (6d8+36)

Fort +8, **Ref** -3, **Will** -3

Defensive Abilities split; **Immune** electricity, mind-affecting effects, ooze traits, slashing and piercing damage

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

Melee slam +5 (2d4+3 plus 1d4 acid and grab)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (2d4+3 plus 1d4 acid)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 1, **Con** 22, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7 (+11 grapple); **CMD** 12 (can't be tripped)

Skills Climb +10

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Acid (Ex) An ochre jelly secretes a digestive acid that dissolves only flesh (not bone) when it strikes a foe—creatures not made of flesh (including most constructs and oozes, skeletal undead, plants, and incorporeal creatures) are immune to the ochre jelly's acid damage.

Split (Ex) Slashing weapons, piercing weapons, and electricity attacks deal no damage to an ochre jelly. Instead the creature splits into two identical jellies, each with half of the original creature's current hit point total, rounded down. A jelly with 10 hit points or fewer cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

PHYCOMID

This tangle of purple-capped mushrooms growing out of a nasty green sludge shudders and writhes, wafting tendrils of smoke.

PHYCOMID CR 4

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 210

N Small plant

Init +0; **Senses** tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+6 natural, +1 size)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

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

Immune acid, plant traits

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Ranged acid pellet +5 touch (2d6 acid plus spores)

STATISTICS

Str 5, **Dex** 10, **Con** 15, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 10 (can't be tripped)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Acid Pellet (Ex) A phycomid attacks by firing a glob of acid from one of its several mushroom-like stalks. This attack has a range increment of 10 feet. A phycomid can fire up to six acid pellets per minute—during rounds in which the fungus has no acid pellets, it has no method of attacking at all and must wait until its acid stores replenish in 4 rounds before continuing a battle.

Spores (Ex) Any creature that takes damage from a phycomid's acid pellet (or consumes even a small portion of the fungus) becomes exposed to the fungus's spores. These spores grow quickly in living creatures. This affliction is a disease effect, although its course runs much faster than most diseases and is more poison-like in its speed, and like a poison, the spores "burn out" after a short period. A creature that is slain by a phycomid spore infestation bursts open in 1d4 rounds as a fully grown new phycomid emerges.

Phycomid Spores: Disease—injury or ingested; *save* Fort DC 15; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Con damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

PSYCHEPORE

A mass of shell-like fungus grows so thick, it obscures the mass of plant matter beneath.

PSYCHEPORE CR 7

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5 198

N Medium plant

Init +3; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 85 (10d8+40)

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities psychotic musk; **DR** 5/slashing;

Immune plant traits; Resist fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 3 slams +13 (1d8+5 plus poison)

Ranged 3 razor conks +10 (1d8+5 plus poison)

Special Attacks poison, razor conk, visions

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 17, **Con** 16, **Int** 7, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 25

Feats Iron Will, Skill Focus (Stealth), Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Perception +12, Stealth +14

Languages Common (can't speak)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Slam or razor conk—injury, or spores—inhaled; save Fort DC 18; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d3 Wisdom plus visions; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based

Psychotic Musk (Ex) A creature that deals damage to a psychepore with a slashing or piercing melee weapon releases a cloud of spores, exposing the attacker to the psychepore's poison.

Razor Conk (Ex) A psychepore can launch three fragments of its razor-sharp fungal covering as a standard action. Treat these as ranged attacks with a range increment of 30 feet.

Visions (Ex) A creature affected by the psychepore's poison has its mind clouded with visions of alien intent. Any round the target fails its saving throw against the psychepore's poison, it must succeed at a second DC 18 Will save or become confused for 1 round. This is a mind-affecting poison effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

SOLDIER

This military-trained human is determined to catch his quarry.

GRIZZLED MERCENARY

CR 4

Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex 268

Human warrior 6

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor)

hp 51 (6d10+18)

Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk heavy flail +9/+4 (1d10+3/19-20)

or mwk halberd +9/+4 (1d10+3/×3)

or longspear +8/+3 (1d8+3/×3)

or morningstar +8/+3 (1d8+2)

or cold iron kukri +8/+3 (1d4+2/18-20)

Ranged javelin +6 (1d6+2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with longspear)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 9, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 18

Feats Diehard, Endurance, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Climb +0, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local) +0, Perception +4, Swim +0

Languages Common

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, alchemist's fire (2), holy water; **Other Gear** mwk half-plate, cold iron kukri, javelins (4), longspear, mwk halberd, mwk heavy flail, morningstar, *cloak of resistance* +1, antitoxin, sunrod, 325 gp

SELLSWORD

CR 7

Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide 283

Human fighter 8

N Medium humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 23 (+10 armor, +2 Dex, +3 shield)

hp 80 (8d10+36)

Fort +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +14/+9 (1d10+7/17-20)

or spiked gauntlet +11/+6 (1d4+3)

Ranged javelin +10 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +1)

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 23

Feats Cleave, Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved

Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Power Attack,

Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon

Specialization (bastard sword)

Skills Intimidate +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5,

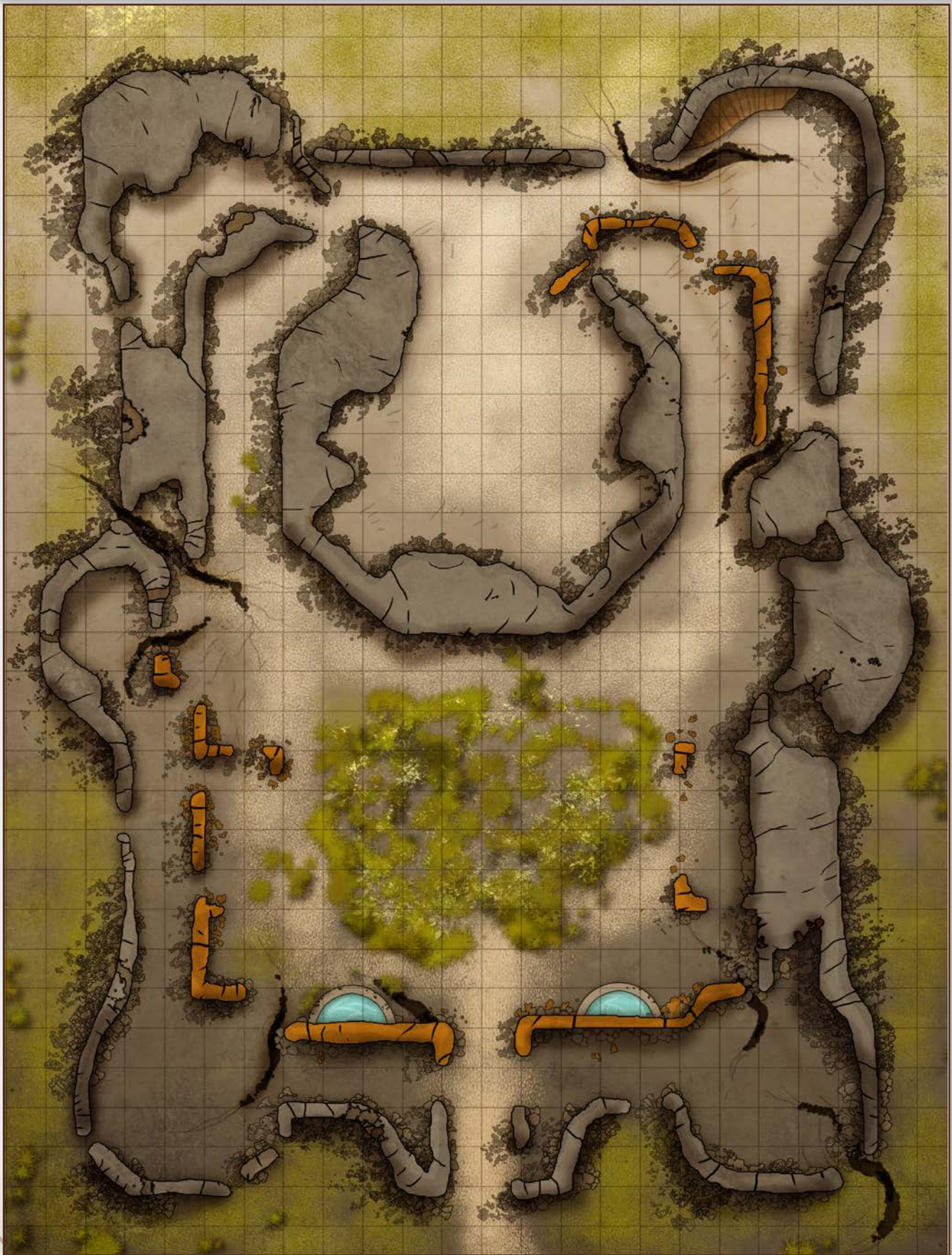
Perception +8, Profession (soldier) +5, Ride +8, Survival +10

Languages Common

SQ armor training 2

Combat Gear *potion of align weapon*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potions of cure light wounds* (2); **Other Gear** +1 *full plate*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, +1 *bastard sword*, spiked gauntlet, javelins (5), *cloak of resistance* +1, 40 gp





Pathfinder Society Scenario #9-03: On the Border of War

Event

Date

GM #

GM Character #

GM Name

GM Prestige Earned

- ☐ Dark Archive ☐ Silver Crusade ☐ Sovereign Court ☐ Liberty's Edge
☐ Scarab Sages ☐ The Exchange ☐ Grand Lodge
☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

Character #

Prestige Points

Character Name

- ☐ Dark Archive ☐ The Exchange ☐ Grand Lodge ☐ Liberty's Edge
☐ Scarab Sages ☐ Silver Crusade ☐ Sovereign Court

Character #

Prestige Points

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☐ Scarab Sages ☐ Silver Crusade ☐ Sovereign Court

Character #

Prestige Points

Character Name

- ☐ Dark Archive ☐ The Exchange ☐ Grand Lodge ☐ Liberty's Edge
☐ Scarab Sages ☐ Silver Crusade ☐ Sovereign Court

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Pathfinder Society Scenario #9-03: On the Border of War

Character Chronicle #

☐ Core Campaign

A.K.A.

Player Name

Character Name

Organized Play #

Character #

Faction

This Chronicle sheet grants access to the following:

House Orlovsky Steeds: Your character gains access to the Brevic Warmblood trait, which allows her to acquire a Brevic Warmblood as a mount. Brevic Warmbloods are a special breed of horses that has been influenced by Brevoy's latent draconic magic; they function as standard horse mounts for all purposes except that they have fire resistance 5. This benefit applies to both class-granted mounts and purchased horses. Brevic Warmbloods cost the same amount as standard horses for you. Brevic Warmblood is a mount trait, a category of trait introduced in *Pathfinder Player Companion: Knights of the Inner Sea*.

Your character may freely retrain one of her existing traits into Brevic Warmblood or select it with the Additional Traits feat. In addition, your other Roleplaying Guild characters may take this trait if you have a copy of this Chronicle sheet with you, representing House Orlovsky's favor with the Pathfinders.

Surtovan Dragonscale: Your connection to House Surtova makes it easier to acquire red dragonhide. You may cross this boon off your Chronicle sheet to purchase a suit of armor or shield made of red dragonhide at a 400 gp discount (minimum 0 gp).

Peacemaker of Brevoy: Your diplomacy and hard work have made you famous, and the Pathfinders are welcomed guests in Brevoy. All your characters have access to the trait Noble Born from the *Kingmaker Player's Guide*, treating it as a regional trait rather than a campaign trait. In addition, you may purchase the Country Estate vanity for 10 PP in the nation of Brevoy. This vanity originally appeared in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Pathfinder Society Field Guide*.

Country Estate: Life in the city allows only so much space to roam, and a limited amount of privacy. A country estate affords you a much larger, rural home, located in a nation of your choice. When in that nation, you gain a +2 bonus on Knowledge (geography) and Survival checks.

Subtier 5-6

belt of giant strength +2 (4,000 gp)
cloak of resistance +1 (1,000 gp)
ring of delayed doom (1 garnet remaining; 5,000 gp, limit 1; *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 292)
sporedream poison (500 gp, Poison—injury; *save* Fort DC 16; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1 Wis and confused for 1 round; *cure* 1 save; limit 2)
wand of restful sleep (6 charges; 90 gp, limit 1; *Advanced Player's Guide* 239)

Subtier 8-9

belt of giant strength +2 (4,000 gp)
cloak of resistance +1 (1,000 gp)
headband of alluring charisma +2 (4,000 gp)
periapt of health (7,500 gp)
ring of delayed doom (1 garnet remaining; 5,000 gp, limit 1; *Advanced Player's Guide* 292)
soothsayer's travel raiment (10,300 gp; this +1 *chain shirt* has the properties of *soothsayer's raiment* [*Advanced Player's Guide* 286]. Earning this item unlocks access to it on all of your characters of at least 5th level, as long as you include copy of this Chronicle sheet with the character's records)
sporedream poison (500 gp, Poison—injury; *save* Fort DC 16; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1 Wis and confused for 1 round; *cure* 1 save; limit 2)
wand of restful sleep (6 charges; 90 gp, limit 1; *Advanced Player's Guide* 239)

MAX GOLD	SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
	5-6	1,299	2,597
	SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
MAX GOLD	Out of Subtier	2,036	4,072
	SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
	8-9	2,774	5,547
MAX GOLD	SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
	—	—	—
	Starting XP		
EXPERIENCE	GM's Initials		
	XP Gained (GM ONLY)		
	Final XP Total		
FAME	Initial Prestige	Initial Fame	
	GM's Initials		
	Prestige Gained (GM ONLY)		
FAME	Prestige Spent		
	Current Prestige	Final Fame	
	Starting GP		
GOLD	GM's Initials		
	GP Gained (GM ONLY)		
	Day Job (GM ONLY)		
GOLD	Gold Spent		
	Total		

For GM Only

EVENT

EVENT CODE

DATE

Game Master's Signature

GM Pathfinder Society #