

PATHFINDER SOCIETY®

Year of Factions' Favor



IN THE GRANDMASTER'S NAME

By Jenny Jarzabski



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HOW TO PLAY

Pathfinder Society Scenario #9-21: In the Grandmaster's Name is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 3rd- through 7th-level characters (Tier 3-7; Subtiers 3-4 and 6-7). 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 PathfinderSociety.club.



Table of Contents

IN the Grandmaster's Name	3
Handout	17
Appendix	18
Maps	20
Chronicle Sheet	22

GM RESOURCES

In the Grandmaster's Name makes use of *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* (ACG), *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Players Guide* (APG), *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4*, *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Combat* (ISC), *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* (UC), and *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* (UE). 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* volumes and the *Codex* volumes are reprinted at the back of the adventure for the GM's convenience.

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IN THE GRANDMASTER'S NAME

By Jenny Jarzabski



Several months ago, Grandmaster Torch, the former Pathfinder who has been at constant odds with the Decemvirate since they left him to die, provided information to a cabal of the Society's most persistent enemies. Using information provided by Grandmaster Torch, the assassin Pasha Mulhia al-Jakri, the former Venture-Captain Thurl, the glabrezu Koth'Vaul, and the night hag Aslynn enacted a plan to besiege Absalom. The invasion ultimately failed, thanks in part to the Society's aid, and al-Jakri and Thurl became wanted criminals in numerous countries.

After the incident, the Society set its sights on al-Jakri. Working in concert with Absalom authorities, they were able to track her down, gather evidence of her various crimes, and alienate her dwindling allies. Everything was ready for her to be extradited to Absalom for trial. However, both the Society and Absalom's leaders recognized that capturing al-Jakri left her coconspirators free.

The Society concocted a plan to leave al-Jakri an opening to escape, knowing she would lead them to the other criminals. Using the same *crystal ball* al-Jakri once used to spy on her targets, the Society's spellcasters tracked her to the peaks of southern Druma, where she and Thurl have sealed themselves within a dangerous redoubt equipped with deadly traps, new allies, and lethal defenses against magical assault.

The Society hopes that by feeding these fugitives misinformation, al-Jakri and Thurl can be tricked into abandoning their current base and making a break for a less defensible location. To this end, the Society recently intercepted a team of Torch's couriers who were bound for Druma. The couriers planned to rendezvous with one of al-Jakri's few remaining informants, the Varisian con artist Emilio Bucsa, and hand off key intelligence. After reviewing the captured documents, the Society's scribes created convincing fakes that indicate both that al-Jakri's current location is unsafe, and that there are a few more promising locations to which she should relocate with Thurl. After assembling a team of Pathfinders to play the part of Torch's agents, it should have been a simple matter to find Emilio and hand off the files.

WHERE ON GOLARION?

In the Grandmaster's Name takes place in rural Druma, just outside the city of Kerse. To learn more about Druma and its major cities, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide*, available in bookstores and game stores everywhere and online at paizo.com.



It would have been simple, at least, if it were not for Emilio Bucsa's past actions in Druma. Eight years ago, the Kalistocrat Amynta Irel hired Emilio to investigate a rival Kalistocrat rumored to be involved in illegal business practices. Emilio instead took Amynta's payment, sold the intelligence to another party, and fled the country. He's avoided Druma ever since, yet he's returned now to serve al-Jakri's intelligence needs. That was the opportunity Irel needed. As Emilio waited for Grandmaster Torch's delivery at the Silver Spoon Inn and Tavern, Amynta Irel's enforcers cornered him and dragged him away to fulfill his debts.

In recent months, Amynta Irel's hobby as an amateur historian led her to investigate an unexplored set of ruins in Varisia rumored to contain vast quantities of treasure and magical knowledge. She believes that the key to accessing the site lies in the bloodline of an ancient Varisian family. As a happy coincidence, Emilio Bucsa's own heritage traces back



to that bloodline. She intends to hold Emilio hostage at her estate until she can travel to Varisia and use him to unlock the site, giving her exclusive ownership of the priceless treasures within.

SUMMARY

The PCs receive a letter from Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin urging them to travel to Druma in the guise of Grandmaster Torch's couriers and trick the informant Emilio Bucsa into delivering false intelligence to Thurl and Pasha Muhlia al-Jakri. They arrive at the rendezvous point only to discover that Emilio was recently kidnapped by the Kalistocrat Amynta Irel, who plans to hold him at her nearby estate until he repays his debt to her.

To complete their mission, the PCs need to infiltrate Irel's estate using force, stealth, or trickery. If the PCs choose to enter the estate through the front gates, they face a squad of Irel's Blackjacket guards. Sneaking in through the back door requires PCs to navigate a hedge maze populated by aggressive living topiaries.

As the PCs search Irel's manor for the hostage, they encounter Nayeli Rullus, Amynta Irel's loyal majordomo. The PCs must either trick, intimidate, or subdue her to gain access to the rest of the estate. The PCs eventually find Emilio locked in the wine cellar, which is protected by a deadly trap that triggers the release of carbon dioxide from wine fermentation vats. If the PCs successfully free Emilio, he asks that the group help him recover Irel's notes about a historical site in Varisia that she plans to unlock using his blood.

The documents in question are hidden in the library and guarded by a pair of powerful necrophidiuses. After the PCs defeat these constructs, they realize that Amynta Irel and her entourage have returned home early and are forced to flee the estate.

GETTING STARTED

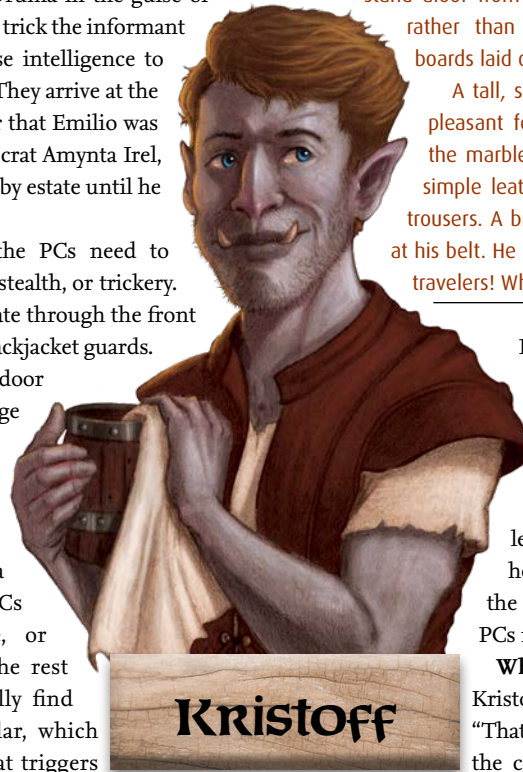
The PCs begin at the Silver Spoon Inn and Tavern, a roadside inn 10 miles west of Kerse that caters to business travelers and tourists. Allow the PCs to read Ambrus Valsin's letter (see page 17). Prompt the PCs to make a Perception check to spot Emilio Bucsa in the crowd. No matter how long the PCs wait, Emilio does not appear, as he is already in Amynta Irel's custody. At this point, encourage the PCs to ask patrons and staff about Emilio's whereabouts.

Read or paraphrase the following to begin the adventure.

The Silver Spoon Inn and Tavern fits the description given in Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin's letter. Its black marble bar top and gilded chairs are clearly intended to suggest an atmosphere of wealth and luxury, but the tattered seat cushions and faded wall tapestries betray a general slide into disrepair.

Patrons clad in jewels and fine clothing mill about the room, drinking and gossiping excitedly. A few white-clad individuals stand aloof from the crowds, nibbling at crusts of bread rather than partaking in the exquisite charcuterie boards laid out on polished ebony tables.

A tall, sandy-haired half-orc man with rough but pleasant features stands behind the bar, polishing the marble surface with a white cloth. He wears a simple leather jerkin over a loose canvas shirt and trousers. A brass tankard dangles from a leather strap at his belt. He grins and calls out in greeting: "Well met, travelers! What'll you be having, then?"



Bartender **Kristoff Valicho** (NG half-orc male cleric of Cayden Cailean 4) remembers Emilio as a regular customer. He also has a bit of information about local politics gained through his profession. If at least one of the PCs orders a drink (5 cp), he shares some of this knowledge with the group. Some possible questions the PCs may ask Kristoff are given below.

What do you know about Emilio Bucsa?

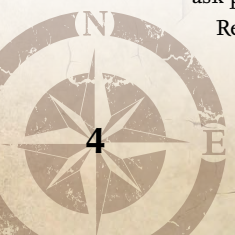
Kristoff stops polishing the bar and chuckles. "That scoundrel? I don't know where he got the coin to drink like he did, but Cayden bless him for it. He was tight-lipped about

his work, but I got the impression he was mixed up in some nasty business. I guess for someone like him that's just another day, another gold piece. He rented a room for a week, but toward the end of his stay he seemed nervous. Always watching over his shoulder, you might say. Didn't keep him from coming in for our daily sessions. Then three days ago he stopped showing up at the bar. Haven't seen him since."

Do you know where he went? "Rumor is some Kalistocrat had it out for him. Business deal gone bad most likely, or maybe he stole something from her. A troupe of Blackjackets busted in here on my night off and dragged him away. Criminal or not, nobody gets forced out of my bar unless I know about it. If I'd been here, he'd be sitting on this stool right next to you."

Do you know the name of the Kalistocrat? Kristoff furrows his brow in thought. "Now, I don't have confirmation, but some of my regulars say they saw Amynta Irel's insignia on the abductors' uniforms."

What can you tell us about Amynta Irel? "Her type doesn't come around my place much, but I know she's pretty high



up in the social order. She has an estate not far from here, out in the country. She likes her privacy.”

If the PCs further question Kristoff, he suggests the PCs talk to the regular customers who may have witnessed the abduction, then deflects the conversation to friendly small talk.

GATHER INFORMATION (DIPLOMACY) OR KNOWLEDGE (NOBILITY)

Based on the result of a Diplomacy or Knowledge (Nobility) check, the PCs might learn more about Amynta Irel. They learn all of the information corresponding to the DC equal to or less than the result of their check.

10+: Amynta Irel is a Kalistocrat who owns a vineyard estate 15 miles west of Kerse. Though she presides over several lucrative trade operations, she earns a significant portion of her income through the production and distribution of fine wine. Irel owns vineyards in several countries, including her native Druma.

15+: Amynta Irel was seen recently outside the Silver Spoon Inn and Tavern, where she unlawfully and forcefully took the Varisian traveler Emilio Bucsa into her own custody. Though popular opinion stands against Irel's vigilantism, other Kalistocrats understand the reasoning behind her actions and intend to ignore the situation.

20+: Irel's estate is heavily protected by patrols of Blackjacket guards, magical creatures, and deadly traps. However, Amynta Irel is currently attending to business in Kerse. She brought her fearsome personal bodyguard and a cadre of guards with her, leaving the estate less protected than usual.

25+: Emilio Bucsa betrayed Irel in a business deal eight years ago. Irel hired him to investigate a fellow Kalistocrat whom she suspected of illegal business practices. Emilio obtained evidence of the Kalistocrat's guilt but defaulted on his contract with Irel by selling the information to another party before disappearing with Irel's down payment. Amynta Irel became obsessed with collecting Emilio's debt. When he reappeared in Druma a week ago, she set her plans into motion and is currently holding him prisoner at her vineyard estate.

30+: Amynta Irel recently discovered that Emilio Bucsa's bloodline is directly tied to a historical site in Varisia. She plans to use him to access the site. Rumor has it that she commissioned an Osiriani wizard to create deadly constructs to guard her research about the location and methods to bypass the site's wards.

PLANNING THE HEIST

Allow the PCs time to plan their infiltration of Amynta Irel's estate. If the PCs choose to observe the estate to learn about its defenses, they notice that two guards dressed in traditional Blackjacket uniforms are always stationed at the front gate (area **A1**). Additional groups of two or three guards patrol the grounds at half hour intervals. The guards avoid the hedge

maze in the garden (area **B**), which leads directly to the rear of the manor.

The outside doors and windows are locked (Disable Device DC 28 in Subtier 3–4 and DC 32 in Subtier 6–7) and imbued with an audible *alarm* spell. Servants frequently come and go, typically through the front door. Though the same servant or guard is rarely seen twice, a middle-aged tiefling woman appears frequently, typically giving instructions to other servants or signing for deliveries.

The PCs have several different approaches to choose from when it comes to breaking into the estate. The back door is currently unlocked and unguarded, but it can only be accessed by traversing the hedge maze behind the estate. The front gate is well guarded, and PCs who take this route may choose to fight or trick the guards to gain entry. Some possibilities include posing as Irel's guests, prospective employees, or visitors interested in a tour of the grounds.

Encourage the PCs to consider their options, but remind them that Amynta Irel could return home at any time, so getting bogged down in the details of planning may detract from completing the actual mission.

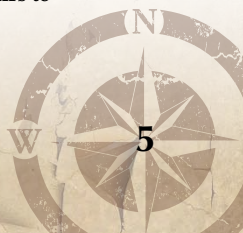
A. THE IREL ESTATE

Amynta Irel's rural estate nestles within a hillside vineyard. 10-foot-high stone walls (3 feet thick, Break DC 50, hardness 8, 540 hp, Climb DC 20) surround the manor and gardens, culminating in a wrought iron gate to the south (area **A1**). A stone walkway leads from **A1** to the double doors at the front of the manor, which open to area **A2**, the great room. The doors throughout the manor are constructed of sturdy rosewood (hardness 5, 20 hp, Break DC 23).

The manor itself, area **A**, is constructed of gold-veined white marble. Four pillars of the same marble support lofty arches above the intricately carved rosewood double doors leading into the house. All exterior doors and windows are locked (Disable Device DC 28 in Subtier 3–4 and DC 32 in Subtier 6–7), except for the back door in area **A3**. Ceilings throughout area **A** are 20 feet high and decorated with elaborate frescoes depicting the Prophecies of Kalistrade and the foretold Hour of Victory.

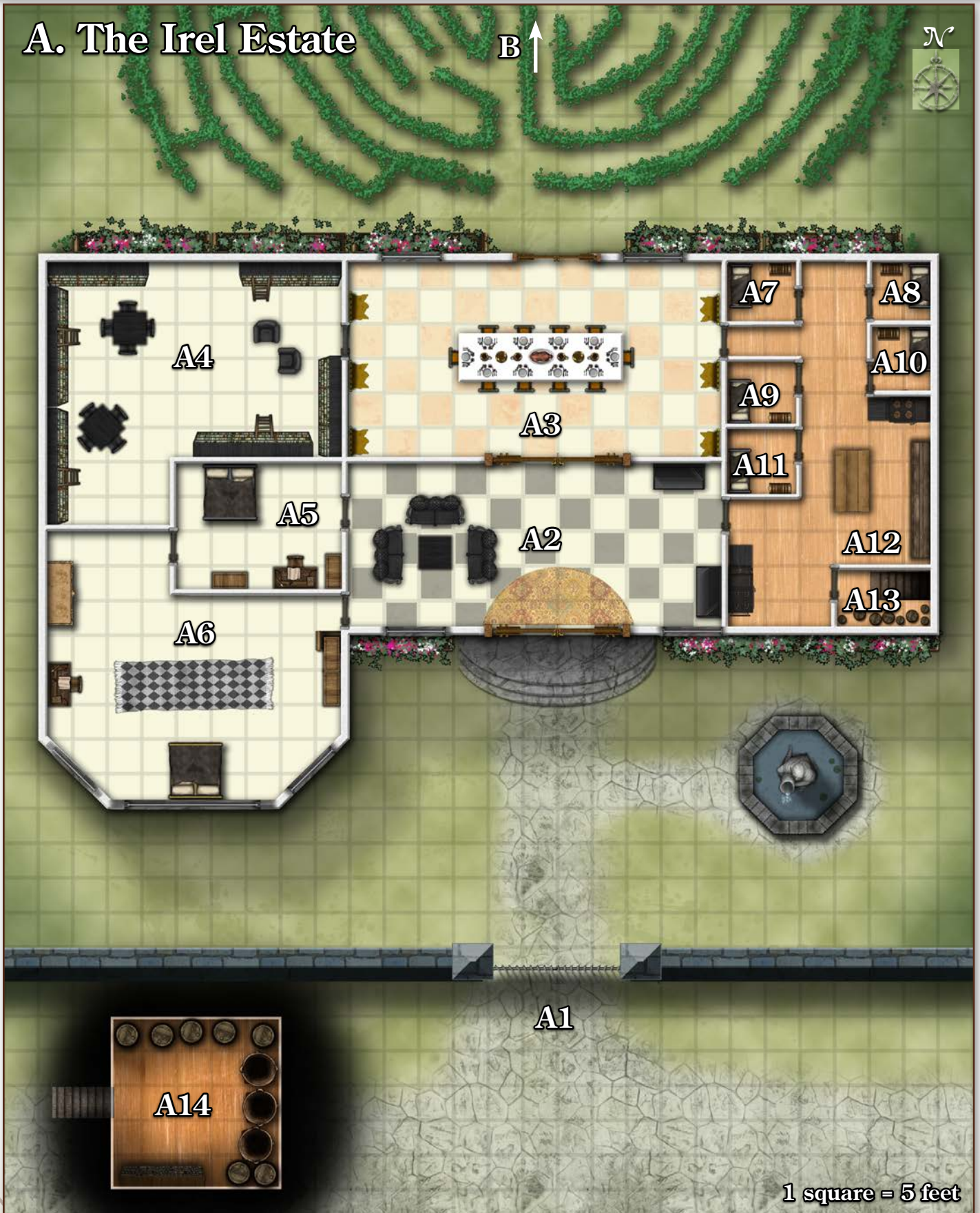
Area **A3** serves as the dining room. Doors lead from this room to the hedge maze in area **B**, while picture windows provide a view of the gardens. The west wing of the manor, areas **A4** through **A6**, are restricted to most guests and reserved for Amynta's personal use. Area **A4** is a library containing a vast array of rare scrolls, books, and other texts. Area **A5** serves as the majordomo's personal quarters and is adjacent to Amynta's own chambers in area **A6**.

In the east wing, areas **A7** through **A11** act as servants' quarters for Amynta Irel's live-in staff, while area **A12** is a workspace for Irel's personal chef to construct meals catered to her dietary restrictions. **A13** is a pantry that houses stairs to the wine cellar, area **A14**.



A. The Irel Estate

B ↑



A1. THE FRONT GATES (CR 6 OR CR 9)

The stone walls surrounding the estate grounds give way to a wrought iron gate molded into delicate patterns of intertwining grapevines. Beyond the gate, gold-veined white marble steps rise from the lush lawns to meet a grand building constructed of the same material. Atop the steps, four marble pillars support graceful arches that soar above an intricately carved rosewood double door.

The stone walls around the estate culminate in a gate, controlled by the guards currently on duty. The gate is locked (Disable Device DC 28 in Subtier 3–4 and DC 32 in Subtier 6–7).

Creatures: Two men dressed in the black uniforms of the Druman military stand guard on either side of the gate.

The guards have explicit instructions to stop any unauthorized intruders from accessing the estate, using deadly force if necessary. The PCs can attempt a DC 15 Bluff or Intimidate check (DC 20 in Subtier 6–7) to influence the guards, or a DC 17 Stealth check (DC 22 in Subtier 6–7) to avoid combat with the guards. If these checks fail, the guards insist the PCs depart and then attack if further provoked.

SUBTIER 3–4 (CR 6)

BLACKJACKET GUARDS (2)

CR 4

Male human fighter (Druman Blackjacket) 5 (*Pathfinder Campaign*)

Setting: Inner Sea Combat 36)

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 36 each (5d10+8)

Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3; +1 vs. compulsions

Defensive Abilities well-paid loyalty +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk halberd +12 (1d10+7/×3) or

rapier +10 (1d6+5/18–20)

Special Attacks weapon training (polearms +1)

TACTICS

Before Combat The Blackjacket guards spent time discussing strategy at the beginning of their shift, activating their Blackjacket tactics ability. The Blackjacket guards each drink their *potion of bull's strength*.

During Combat The Blackjacket guards charge the PCs, preferring to fight with their halberds. If necessary, the Blackjackets drop their halberds and attack with their rapiers. The two Blackjackets attempt to stay adjacent to one another whenever possible to benefit from their Coordinated Defense and Coordinated Maneuvers feats. If reduced to 15 hit points or fewer, a Blackjacket guard steps back and drinks his *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Scaling Encounter A1

To accommodate a group of four PCs, the guards have partaken of an improperly sealed cask of wine and have the sickened condition.

Morale The Blackjacket guards fight to the death.

Base Statistics Without their *potions of bull's strength*, the guards' statistics are **Melee** mwk halberd +8 (1d10+5/×3) or rapier +8 (1d6+3/18–20); **Str** 16; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

Feats Back to Back^{UC}, Coordinated Defenses^{APG}, Coordinated Maneuvers^{APG}, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Escape Artist +3, Intimidate +5, Perception +4, Stealth +1

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1, Blackjacket tactics

Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** agile breastplate^{UE}, mwk halberd, rapier, golden key

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blackjacket Tactics (Ex) Two or more Druman Blackjackets can spend 1 minute discussing strategy, then choose a single teamwork feat (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Players Guide* 150) at least one of them has. For a number of hours equal to the class level of the highest-level Blackjacket, the participants each gain the benefits of the selected feat even if they do not meet the feat's prerequisites. If a creature benefiting from this ability moves more than 30 feet away from any other participant, it loses all benefits of this ability until it is again within 30 feet. Creatures that do not have levels in this archetype can't benefit from this ability, and no creature can benefit from this ability more than once at any given time.

SUBTIER 6–7 (CR 9)

BLACKJACKET GUARDS (2)

CR 7

Male human fighter (Druman Blackjacket) 8 (*Pathfinder Campaign*)

Setting: Inner Sea Combat 36)

LN Medium humanoid (human)

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

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 69 each (8d10+28)

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

Defensive Abilities well-paid loyalty +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 halberd +15/+10 (1d10+8/×3) or

rapier +13/+8 (1d6+5/18–20)

Special Attacks weapon training (polearms +1)



Scaling Encounter A2

To accommodate a group of four PCs, the guards have partaken of an improperly sealed cask of wine and have the sickened condition.

TACTICS

Before Combat The Blackjacket guards spent time discussing strategy at the beginning of their shift, activating their Blackjacket tactics ability. The Blackjacket guards each drink their *potion of bull's strength*.

During Combat The first Blackjacket guard charges the PCs, taking advantage of the Distracting Charge feat to grant his ally +2 on his next attack. If possible, the second guard repeats this maneuver. The two guards prefer to fight with their halberds. If necessary, the Blackjackets drop their halberds and attack with their rapiers. The two Blackjackets attempt to stay adjacent to one another whenever possible to benefit from their Coordinated Defense and Coordinated Maneuvers feats. If reduced to 15 hit points or fewer, a Blackjacket guard steps back and drinks his *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Morale The Blackjacket guards fight to the death.

Base Statistics Without their *potions of bull's strength*, the guards' statistics are **Melee** +1 halberd +13/+8 (1d10+6/x3) or rapier +11/+6 (1d6+3); **Str** 17; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 23.

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25

Feats Back to Back^{UC}, Coordinated Defenses^{APG}, Coordinated Maneuvers^{APG}, Distracting Charge^{ACG}, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Escape Artist +7, Intimidate +7, Perception +6, Stealth +5

Languages Common

SQ amateurs!, armor training 2, Blackjacket tactics

Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** agile breastplate^{UE}, +1 halberd, rapier, golden key

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Amateurs! (Ex) When using the Blackjacket tactics ability, a Druman Blackjacket can include one or more creatures without levels in this archetype, but doing so reduces the duration of the effect to a number of minutes equal to the class level of the highest-level Blackjacket instead of a number of hours per level. If only Blackjackets are included in the effect, all Druman Blackjackets affected gain a +1 morale bonus on skill checks and saving throws for the duration of the effect.

Blackjacket Tactics (Ex) Two or more Druman Blackjackets can spend 1 minute discussing strategy, then choose a single teamwork feat that at least one of them has. For a number of hours equal to the class level of the highest-level Blackjacket, the participants each gain the benefits of the selected feat even if they do not meet the feat's prerequisites. If a creature benefiting from this ability moves more than 30 feet away from any other participant, it loses all benefits of this ability until it is again within 30 feet. Creatures that do not have levels in this archetype can't benefit from this ability, and no creature can benefit from this ability more than once at any given time.

Treasure: The golden keys carried by the guards unlock the gate and exterior doors to the estate.

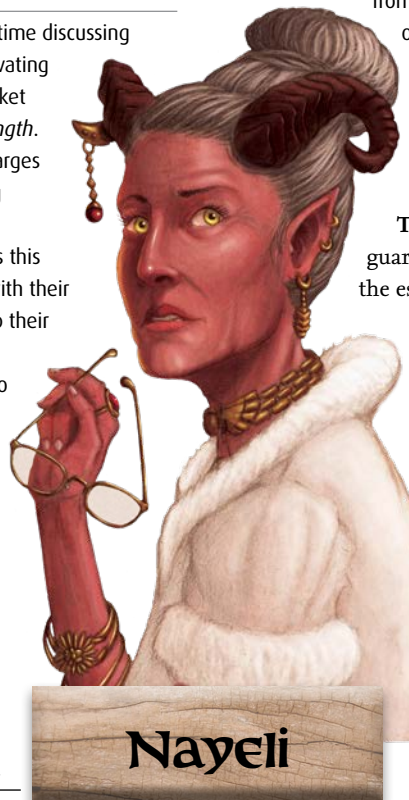
Development: Once the PCs deal with the guards, they are free to enter the estate through the front doors. Breaking down the door or picking the lock sets off the *alarm* spell and rouses the majordomo's suspicions. If the PCs knock on the door or use the key, a servant appears to greet them and invites them into area A2.

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

Subtier 3–4: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 221 gp.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 388 gp.

Subtier 6–7: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 555 gp.



A2. THE GREAT ROOM (CR 6 OR CR 9)

The white marble walls of this large room boast carved friezes depicting scenes of a whimsical vineyard harvest: dryads and nymphs tread the grapes while a satyr pours wine from a wooden cask. The floor is composed of polished white and gray marble tiles. Floor-to-ceiling picture windows on either side of the doors look out over the front lawns. To the west of the doors, black leather couches surround an ebony table. Rosewood doors to the north and west lead further into the manor. On the ceiling, a fresco of a man dressed in flowing white robes with a scroll clutched in his white-gloved hand presides over the room.

The great room lies beyond the front doors of the manor and acts as a reception area for guests and employees alike. This room is a decadent reminder of Amynta Irel's accumulated wealth, showcasing her main source of income through the wine-themed friezes on the walls.



The ceiling fresco here depicts the prophet Kalistrade offering his teachings to new followers and can be identified as such by succeeding at a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check.

Creatures: Majordomo **Nayeli Rullus** (LN female tiefling expert 5) currently oversees preparations for her employer's return this evening. Nayeli came to Druma 15 years ago to escape the racial persecution she endured in Cheliah. She first entered Amynta Irel's employ as a maidservant and quickly rose in the ranks to become her trusted personal attendant. Now she manages the entire estate. Nayeli enjoys her salary and luxurious quarters in the manor, but her loyalty to Irel surpasses any monetary value. Nayeli sees the younger woman as a daughter and attributes her own success in Druma to her employer's benevolence.

Nayeli follows the teachings of the prophet Kalistrade, seeing the adherence to law and order she learned in her native country ideally expressed in Druman society. She wears white satin gloves, and her white uniform is made of fine silks trimmed with fur and jewels.

Nayeli greets the PCs when they enter the great room, knowing that Amynta is not expecting guests today. While she is suspicious of the PCs, Nayeli politely inquires about their business at the estate. PCs who succeed at a DC 23 Bluff Check (DC 26 in Subtier 6–7) can convince Nayeli that they have legitimate reasons to access the manor. Alternatively, the PCs may threaten Nayeli with a DC 23 Intimidate check (DC 26 in Subtier 6–7). The PCs may also wish to interrogate Nayeli about Emilio's location. They may do so by succeeding at an additional DC 23 Intimidate check (DC 26 in Subtier 6–7). If the PCs succeed at either the Bluff or Intimidate check, Nayeli bows and offers her apologies for intruding in their affairs and returns to her tasks. If the PCs fail, she blows the silver whistle worn around her neck to summon two Blackjacket guards from areas **A9** and **A11**, who arrive in three rounds unless the PCs have already slain or otherwise subdued them. For PCs who approached the manor through the hedge maze rather than the front gate, she will blow her whistle if they enter the great room from the dining room (area **A5**) or make significant noise in the other rooms.

Even if the PCs successfully convince Nayeli of the legitimacy of their visit, certain actions will cause Nayeli to confront the PCs and ask them to explain themselves, after which she will summon the guards if she is not satisfied with their response. Nayeli responds to any attempt to enter areas **A5** or **A6** from area **A2** by informing the PCs that those rooms are off-limits; any further attempts to pass through either door prompt Nayeli to summon the guards. If the PCs are in any area of the estate other than area **A2** for more than 10 minutes, Nayeli will move towards the last room she saw them enter. If Nayeli discovers corpses, broken glass, or similar signs of violence, she immediately summons the remaining guards within the estate before retreating from the property. The outer perimeter of the estate is broad and

open with five groups of three Blackjackets each patrolling at regular intervals; if Nayeli retreats from the estate, these guards begin entering the estate searching for the PCs, with a new group of three Blackjackets entering the estate and searching for the PCs once every five minutes. If Nayeli finds the PCs in any other area of the house without discovering obvious signs of violence, the PCs have the opportunity to convince her that they are only performing tasks Amynta has already approved by succeeding at a DC 23 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check (DC 26 in Subtier 6–7). The DC of this check increases by +2 each time the PCs interact with Nayeli after the first.

SUBTIER 3–4 (CR 6)

BLACKJACKET GUARDS (2)

CR 4

hp 36 each (see page 7)

SUBTIER 6–7 (CR 9)

BLACKJACKET GUARDS (2)

CR 7

hp 69 each (see page 7)

Development: If the PCs use intimidation to deal with Nayeli, she waits until they leave the area to send a message to Amynta Irel, informing her that dangerous criminals are at the estate. If the PCs defeat the summoned guards, Nayeli attempts to flee to a safe location where she can contact her mistress. In both cases, Amynta Irel and her personal guards return immediately after encounter **B**. PCs who take measures to subdue Nayeli by using restraints, employing enchantment magic, or knocking her out can avoid Irel's early return.

Rewards: If the PCs do not resolve the situation with Majordomo Nayeli or defeat the Blackjackets, reduce each PC's gold earned by the following amount.

Subtier 3–4: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 221 gp.

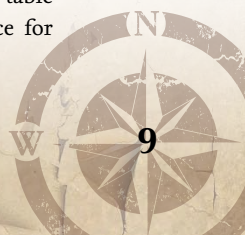
Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 388 gp.

Subtier 6–7: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 555 gp.

A3. DINING ROOM

A grand dining table carved of rosewood and surrounded by high-backed chairs occupies the center of the dining room. Golden cutlery and white silk napkins folded into elegant triangles grace the table. Two picture windows flank the southern wall, providing a lovely view of the gardens and hedge maze outside. Polished squares of pink and white marble tile the floor, and the ceiling above displays a triumphant fresco of white-clad humans bedecked in gold and jewels seated on thrones towering above the globe.

The dining room contains a large rosewood dining table positioned in the center of the room, allowing space for



Scaling Encounter A4

Remove the advanced simple template from each necrophidius to accommodate a group of four PCs.

guests and staff to circulate before and after dinner service. Two picture windows along the north wall provide a pleasant view of the gardens and hedge maze outside. Wooden doors in the north wall lead to area **B** and were left unlocked this morning by a careless maid.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check can recognize the ceiling fresco as a depiction of the Hour of Victory, the foretold time when followers of the Prophecies of Kalistrade will use their amassed wealth to “own” the world, granting a type of immortality to all true believers.

Creatures: Two human staff members dressed in black and white uniforms busily clean the room and set the table, but they ignore the PCs unless spoken to. If questioned, they know nothing about Emilio's presence within the manor and are eager to get back to work.

A4. LIBRARY (CR 6 OR CR 9)

The walls of this room are lined with ebony shelves housing thousands of books. Rolling golden ladders ascend the towering bookshelves. Overstuffed black leather chairs surround rosewood reading tables strewn with texts and scrolls in the western half of the room. The floor is covered in thick white carpet. Frescoes on the ceiling portray images of a white-robed human woman storing gold and jewels in a chest, walking past a group of beggars in rags, and sitting at a table decked with rich meats and cheeses but taking only a loaf of bread.

The library is accessible only through two entrances: the dining room and a secret door (Perception DC 30) hidden among the bookcases on the southern wall that connects to Amynta's personal chamber.

As a loyal adherent to the Prophecies, Amynta Irel believes that accumulating wealth is her highest calling and that obtaining knowledge is essential to achieving that goal. Since she is an amateur historian, many of the texts in Irel's library deal with Golarion's history and geography. The Kalistocrat uses the library for personal study and entertainment, but she allows employees and some honored guests to make use of her vast resources. Though Irel keeps a card catalog of available texts, searching for a specific book in this library is an arduous task. The location of Irel's personal notes does not appear in the catalog of texts.

PCs who succeed at a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check can identify the images on the library ceiling as depictions of the prophet Kalistrade's teachings, including conservation

of resources, avoidance of charity and material comforts, and adherence to dietary restrictions.

Creatures: A pair of advanced necrophidiuses purchased by Amynta Irel lay dormant in the library, guarding her collection of knowledge. Irel commanded the constructs to remain hidden unless someone attempts to remove her journal from the library, in which case they are to assassinate the target. The necrophidiuses remain perfectly still, hidden amongst the scrolls and bookcases near the entrance to area **A3**, only reacting if attacked or if anyone other than Amynta attempts to remove her journal from the southern bookshelf. PCs who succeed at a DC 27 Perception check (DC 30 in Subtier 6–7) notice the presence of the necrophidiuses, but this does not reveal any information about their purpose or directions.

SUBTIER 3–4 (CR 6)

ADVANCED NECROPHIDIUS (2)

CR 4

N Medium construct (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 292, 196)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

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

hp 36 (3d10+20)

Fort +1, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d8+6 plus paralysis)

Special Attacks dance of death, paralysis (1d4 rounds, DC 13)

TACTICS

Before Combat The necrophidiuses hide until the PCs attempt to exit the library with Amynta Irel's journal.

During Combat The first necrophidius to act attempts to surprise its opponents with a sneak attack, focusing its paralyzing bite on the PC carrying Irel's journal. Both necrophidiuses focus on whoever is in possession of the journal, using their dance of death ability to keep other PCs from intervening. The necrophidiuses defend themselves if attacked by a PC not in possession of the journal. Once their target is immobilized or drops the journal, they retaliate against whoever dealt the most damage to them. If the PCs abandon the journal and flee the library, the necrophidiuses do not pursue them.

Morale These mindless constructs fight to the death to carry out their master's instructions.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 21, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21 (can't be tripped)

Skills Stealth +17; **Racial Modifiers** +12 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dance of Death (Ex) A necrophidius can entrance opponents by swaying back and forth as a full-round action. All creatures within 30 feet who can see the necrophidius when it uses its

dance of death must succeed on a DC 15 Will save or be dazed for 2d4 rounds.

Paralysis (Su) Any living creature that is bitten by a necrophidius must succeed at a DC 13 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds.

SUBTIER 6–7 (CR 9)

GREATER ADVANCED NECROPHIDIUS (2)

CR 7

Variant advanced necrophidius (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 292, 196)

N Medium construct

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 52 (6d10+20)

Fort +2, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d8+7 plus paralysis)

Special Attacks dance of death, paralysis (1d4 rounds, DC 15)

TACTICS

Before Combat The necrophidiuses hide until the PCs attempt to exit the library with Amynta Irel's journal.

During Combat The first necrophidius to act attempts to surprise its opponents, focusing its paralyzing bite on the PC carrying Irel's journal. Both necrophidiuses focus on whoever is in possession of the journal, using their dance of death ability to keep other PCs from intervening. The necrophidiuses defend themselves if attacked by a PC not in possession of the journal. Once their target is immobilized or drops the journal, they retaliate against whoever dealt the most damage to them. If the PCs abandon the journal and flee the library, the necrophidiuses do not pursue them.

Morale These mindless constructs fight to the death to carry out their master's instructions.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 21, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 26 (can't be tripped)

Skills Stealth +17; **Racial Modifiers** +12 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dance of Death (Ex) A necrophidius can entrance opponents by swaying back and forth as a full-round action. All creatures within 30 feet who can see the necrophidius when it uses its dance of death must succeed on a DC 17 Will save or be dazed for 2d4 rounds.

Paralysis (Su) Any living creature that is bitten by a necrophidius must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds.

Treasure: One of the reading tables contains a *lesser book of extended summoning*^{UE} and the following scrolls: *grease* (2),

locate object, and *remove paralysis*. In Subtier 6–7, the reading table also contains the following scrolls: *black tentacles* and *screaming*. An ornate armor stand on the northern wall of the library displays a suit of full plate (+1 *full plate* in Subtier 6–7).

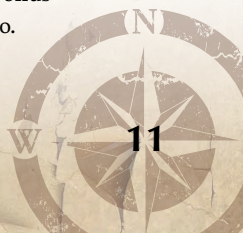
Amynta's journal, a loose-leaf parchment notebook bound in white leather, is hidden among the books along the southern wall of the library and can be located by PCs who spend at least 1 minute searching and succeed at a DC 21 Perception check (DC 25 in Subtier 6–7). If the PCs have not yet spoken to Emilio, they do not know the journal's true significance. However, even a cursory perusal reveals that the journal contains both sensitive information about Amynta's dealings and references to Emilio that indicate Amynta may have plans for the spy that go beyond simple revenge.

Development: If the PCs have not yet triggered encounter **A2**, the noise from their fight with the necrophidiuses will alarm Nayeli, and she will blow her whistle to summon the guards.

Once the PCs recover Irel's journal and rescue (or fail to rescue) Emilio, several developments occur that signal Amynta Irel's return to the estate. PCs who succeed at a DC 16 Perception check can hear the sound of multiple sets of footsteps and a woman's voice barking orders from another room. Assuming Emilio is still alive, he stops to listen and announces, "We have to leave, now. Irel is back, and she's brought reinforcements."

At this point, the PCs are no longer able to explore area **A** at their leisure. Facing Irel is beyond the intended scope of the scenario for the PCs, so the GM should make it clear in-game that Irel's entourage is beyond the PCs' capabilities to handle. The PCs may escape the estate through either the library window or the back door in area **A3**. If the PCs insist on remaining inside the manor to face Irel's entourage, Irel's personal bodyguard begins exploring the manor to seek out intruders (use the death initiate on page 18 or on page 209 of *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*). The bodyguard is accompanied by two Blackjacket guards (four Blackjacket guards in Subtier 6–7; see page 7). Amynta's entourage uses their physical power to subdue and capture the PCs before imprisoning them.

PCs can attempt to negotiate with Amynta for their release, though this negotiation is extremely difficult, requiring the PCs to succeed at a DC 40 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check. PCs may gain bonuses on this check by threatening to reveal details from Amynta's journal to the authorities, magically disguising Emilio with a spell or ability like *disguise other*, successfully avoiding harming Amynta's majordomo or guards up to this point, or telling Amynta that Kristoff Valicho at the Silver Spoon Inn and Tavern knows they were coming to see her and is already upset about her kidnapping one of his patrons. For each of these conditions (or equally compelling arguments) that the PCs meet, grant them a cumulative +2 circumstance bonus on their checks to negotiate with Amynta to let them go.



If the PCs fail to bargain with Amynta for their release and are unable to escape or defeat Amynta's guards, they are arrested and imprisoned by the Kerse authorities (see Conclusion on page 16).

Faction Notes: Grand Lodge PCs should recognize that the archaeological site detailed in Irel's notes is likely of interest to the Pathfinder Society. PCs who wish to make a copy of the notes have the opportunity to do so after leaving the estate.

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

Subtier 3–4: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 260 gp.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 366 gp.

Subtier 6–7: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 472 gp.

A5. MAJORDOMO'S CHAMBERS

Majordomo Nayeli's personal chambers are a mirror image in miniature of Amynta's chambers in Area A6, reflecting the same elegant austerity favored by her employer.

Treasure: A *wand of air bubble*^{UC} with 5 charges remaining is kept in a bronze case on the dresser next to Nayeli's bed. A wardrobe in Nayeli's room contains what remains of Emilio's confiscated gear: a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, a *scroll of bless*, a *scroll of burning hands*, a *scroll of cure light wounds*, a *scroll of magic missile*, two vials of alchemist's fire, a vial of holy water, a disguise kit, an everburning torch, a healer's kit, a light crossbow with 10 bolts, a set of thieves' tools (masterwork thieves' tools in Subtier 6–7), a thunderstone, and a blank wizard's spellbook, the first dozen pages of which are filled with nonsense scribbles, as though the owner were using it as a prop while pretending to be a wizard. PCs who succeed at a DC 24 Perception check discover a hidden compartment within the wardrobe containing a silver key set with a finely cut piece of jade. This key unlocks the manacles restraining Emilio in area B. The piece of jade is worth 100 gp (200 gp in Subtier 6–7).

Rewards: If the PCs do not search the majordomo's room, reduce each PC's gold earned by the following amount.

Subtier 3–4: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 219 gp.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 380 gp.

Subtier 6–7: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 408 gp.

A6. MASTER SUITE

The furnishings of this room are a dramatic departure from the opulence seen elsewhere in the manor. A four-poster bed carved of ebony stands before a curtained window to the south, while a desk and wardrobe of the same wood stand to the west and east of the room. The elegant decorations are limited to a black and white damask rug and a painting of the night sky on the ceiling.

The items in Amynta Irel's master suite are constructed of costly materials but reflect her subtle taste and abstinence from hedonism.

Treasure: A mahogany wardrobe on the eastern wall of the room contains a set of white ermine furs, two white satin royal outfits, and an assortment of jewelry worth 250 gp (2,000 gp in Subtier 6–7). In Subtier 6–7, a sapphire-studded tiara hidden in a drawer (Perception DC 25) is actually a *headband of alluring charisma* +2.

Rewards: If the PCs do not search Amynta Irel's room, reduce each PC's gold earned by the following amount.

Subtier 3–4: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 117 gp.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 325 gp.

Subtier 6–7: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 534 gp.

A7–A11. STAFF QUARTERS

These nondescript rooms each contain a pair of single beds, a washbasin, and chests of drawers. Searching the rooms yields a few personal belongings of little worth, including uniforms and personal toiletry items. Areas A9 and A11 are occupied by a single Blackjacket guard (see page 7) each, unless the majordomo summoned them to area A2.

A12. KITCHEN (CR 5 OR CR 8)

Marble countertops and cooking ranges constructed of living steel occupy this spacious kitchen. An island of the same glossy green metal provides a workstation complete with ebony and mahogany cutting boards and an impressive set of cutlery. Atop the workstation, finely chopped ingredients in glass measuring cups await attention from the chef. Pots and pans hang from hooks on the walls and ceiling. An alcove in the southeastern wall leads to the pantry.

This large kitchen is kept impeccably clean under the watchful eye of Amynta Irel's personal chef, a gnome named Zarzubroshtor Loquamethic, whom the kitchen staff refers to simply as "Chef." Chef prefers to personally see to important errands, such as procuring the freshest ingredients for his kitchen, and is out preparing for Irel's homecoming dinner.

Traps: Chef knows that the staff sometimes samples his dishes while he's away from his kitchen, and he is paranoid that someone might discover the precious original recipes he keeps locked in a drawer near one of the stoves. He frequently sets traps in various places around the kitchen to prevent intrusions. While staff members know to avoid the kitchen when Chef is absent, the PCs may trigger his latest trap, a devilishly rigged bellows loaded with concentrated nutmeg powder. While this trap is unlikely to permanently harm anyone who triggers it, the massive dose of nutmeg can cause intense stomach distress and hallucinations, serving as an effective deterrent for overly curious kitchen workers.

SUBTIER 3–4 (CR 5)

CHEF'S REVENGE

CR 5

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** manual

Effect poison cloud (nutmeg) (ingested, inhaled; *save* Fort DC 16; *frequency* 1/round for 5 rounds; *initial effect* nauseated for 3 rounds; *secondary effect* confused for 1 round, treating any result of 76 or higher as though it were a 51-75; *cure* 1 save); multiple targets (10-foot radius in front of stove)

SUBTIER 6-7 (CR 8)

CHEF'S REVENGE

CR 8

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

Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** manual

Effect poison cloud (concentrated nutmeg) (ingested, inhaled; *save* Fort DC 18; *frequency* 1/round for 7 rounds; *initial effect* nauseated for 3 rounds; *secondary effect* confused for 1 round, treating any result of 76 or higher as though it were a 51-75; *cure* 1 save); multiple targets (10-foot radius in front of stove)

Treasure: If the PCs search the kitchen, they find a set of cold iron culinary knives worth 100 gp in the drawer that function as a masterwork tool for the Profession (chef) skill. A locked drawer (Disable Device DC 25) near the stove in the southwestern part of the kitchen contains Chef's secret recipe book. PCs who take the recipe book gain the Chef's Secret Recipes boon upon successfully escaping the estate without being captured.

Rewards: If the PCs do not search the kitchen, reduce each PC's gold earned by 8 gp.

A13. PANTRY

Chef stores dry goods in the pantry. Sacks of flour and grains, barrels of cooking wine, and shelves containing root vegetables and dried herbs occupy this room. Stairs in the center of the room lead down towards the wine cellar in A14.

A14. WINE CELLAR (CR 6 OR CR 9)

Stone steps lead deep beneath the earth to a cool, dry room carved into the bedrock beneath the manor. Rows of wooden wine casks line the polished stone walls to the north and west of the stairwell. To the east, an impressive wine rack carved of rare polished woods displays tiers of wine bottles, their labels obscured by a thin layer of dust. To the north, directly facing

Scaling Encounter A14

To accommodate a group of four PCs, it takes 2 additional rounds for the gases from the vats to fill the room.

the entrance, three 10-foot-tall steel vats tower above the stone floor. A sweet, fruity smell hangs heavy in the air.

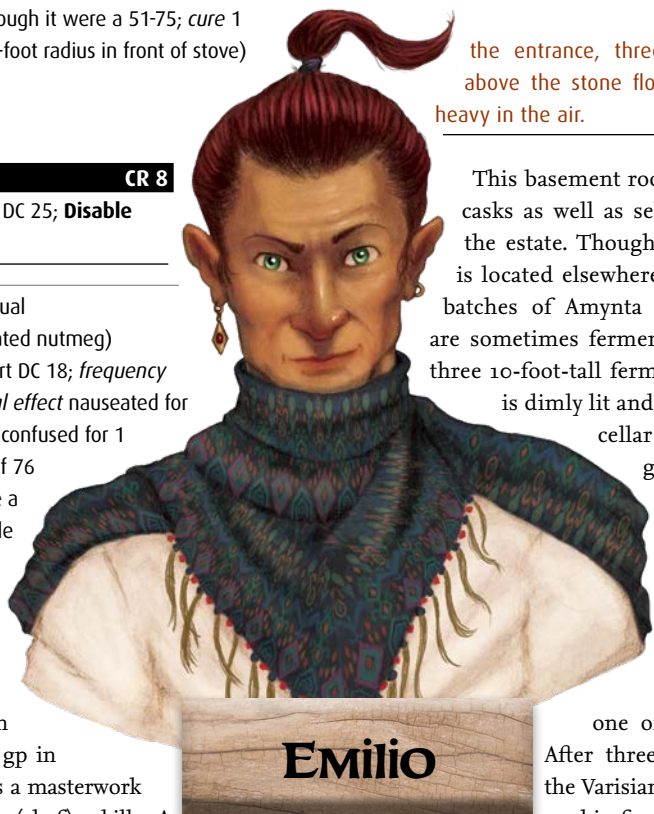
This basement room is used to store aging wine casks as well as select bottles for private use by the estate. Though the bulk of wine production is located elsewhere on the estate grounds, small batches of Amynta Irel's personal reserve wines are sometimes fermented here. The cellar contains three 10-foot-tall fermentation vats. The wine cellar is dimly lit and has a 15-foot-high ceiling. The cellar was carved out of the natural granite deposit beneath the manor, and the walls and floor are polished stone. This is the most utilitarian room in the manor and is devoid of decoration.

Creatures: Emilio Bucsa is handcuffed to the wall near one of the wine vats in the cellar. After three days of being held hostage, the Varisian con artist has all but given up on his freedom. The PCs' arrival renews

his hope for escape, tempered by the fear that they have triggered the deadly trap rigged to the cellar door.

Before he met Pasha Mulhia al-Jakri, Emilio was a common criminal who began as a simple pickpocket before rising to prominence in a Szarni crime family. Always chasing a bigger payout, he gradually made connections with more nefarious and powerful individuals. When the head of Emilio's family introduced him to Pasha Muhlia al-Jakri, the two became staunch associates, if not friends. Over the years Emilio carried out countless missions for al-Jakri, distinguishing himself by always worming his way out of incarceration and never betraying her trust.

On one such mission in Druma, he took a side job gathering intelligence about one of Amynta Irel's rival Kalistocrats, who she suspected to be guilty of unlawful business dealings. Emilio took her down payment and sold the intelligence to a third party before fleeing the country. Upon his recent return, Irel captured him. Yesterday, Irel explained to him that her years-long obsession with revenge led her to research an archaeological site in Varisia tied to Emilio's bloodline. She plans to bypass the site's magical wards using some of his blood.



EMILIO



DUPING EMILIO

For Emilio's statistics, use the charlatan (*NPC Codex* 145). To convince Emilio that they are agents of Grandmaster Torch, the PCs must succeed at at least two of the following checks: a DC 19 Disguise check, a DC 19 Bluff check, or a DC 11 Linguistics check to present forged identification documents (increase the DC of all of these checks by +2 for Subtier 6–7). If the PCs fail these checks, Emilio remains skeptical about the PCs' true identities and questions their motivation in getting a message to al-Jakri. At this point, PCs who succeed at a DC 14 Diplomacy or Intimidate check can persuade or scare Emilio into delivering the message anyway. Grant PCs who agree to help Emilio recover Amynta Irel's journal, or present it to him if they already have it, a +4 circumstance bonus on all of these checks.

If the PCs do not manage to convince Emilio of their identities, he agrees to take the documents to al-Jakri if the PCs help him steal Irel's journal from the library.

Once the PCs recover the journal, Emilio allows them to make a copy of the notes if he believes they are working for Grandmaster Torch. The PCs may trick Emilio into letting them keep the original notes if they succeed at an additional DC 19 Bluff check.

When the door opens, Emilio screams, "The air is poison! Hurry!" He then sucks in a deep breath and strains against his bonds. The manacles (hardness 10, 10 hp, Break DC 26) restraining Emilio can be broken or unlocked with the key from area A6 or by succeeding at a DC 25 Disable Device check (DC 30 in Subtier 6–7).

Traps: To prevent her prisoner from escaping or being rescued, Amynta Irel took advantage of the natural by-products of grape must fermenting in the vats here. A mechanical trap on the door triggers valves in the vats to open, releasing an excess of carbon dioxide into the room. Since Amynta doesn't want Emilio to die before she can use him to access the Varisian site, she warned him about the trap's existence. The trap can only be accessed and disabled from inside the basement.

SUBTIER 3–4 (CR 6)

VINTNER'S SORROW

CR 6

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 23; **Disable Device** DC 23

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** none

Effect The fermentation vats open, releasing a surplus of carbon dioxide into the room. The carbon dioxide fills the room in 5 rounds, making the air unbreathable. Creatures without an alternate oxygen source begin to suffocate (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 445).

SUBTIER 6–7 (CR 8)

VINTNER'S SORROW

CR 8

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

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** none

Effect The fermentation vats open, releasing a surplus of carbon dioxide into the room. The carbon dioxide fills the room in 5 rounds, making the air unbreathable. Creatures without an alternate oxygen source begin to suffocate (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 445).

Treasure: The wine rack to the east of the cellar's entrance contains several bottles of a particularly rare, exquisitely delicious, and dauntingly expensive vintage known as Encarthan Gold. PCs who succeed at a DC 20 Appraise check, or a DC 15 Profession (sommelier) check, can identify four bottles of Encarthan Gold that are each worth 75 gp (or four bottles of Encarthan Fishgold Rose worth 225 gp each in Subtier 6–7). PCs who succeed on this check also notice a pair of worn gloves resting on top of a rucksack near one of the vats; these are actually a set of *engineer's workgloves*^{UE} and a *handy haversack*. In Subtier 6–7 there is also a set of *marvelous pigments*^{UE} inside of the *handy haversack*.

Development: If the PCs trigger the trap, allow them to attempt a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check, or a DC 10 Profession (sommelier) check, to recognize the impending threat. The PCs have 5 rounds before they need to hold their breath or begin succumbing to the negative effects of the carbon dioxide filling the room. Emilio has a Constitution score of 10, and can hold his breath for 20 rounds before passing out. PCs who remain on the stairs are not affected.

If the PCs already have Amynta's journal, if they failed to successfully navigate the maze in area B, or if they allowed Majordomo Nayeli to escape and contact her mistress, Amynta Irel arrives home after they disarm or trigger the trap in the wine cellar. See the development section of encounter A4.

Once the PCs rescue Emilio from the wine cellar, he addresses them warily: "Well met. And to whom do I owe this rescue?" If the PCs claim to be agents of Grandmaster Torch, Emilio responds, "That would be a wonderful coincidence. What proof do you have of this claim?" See the Duping Emilio sidebar. Read the following text after the PCs make their introductions:

Emilio sighs. "That damned Kalistocrat really had it out for me. She came down here every day to rub it in my face that she finally caught me. As if I could forget! She let me in on a little secret, too." Emilio licks his lips and smirks. "She researched some ruins in Varisia chock full of treasure and magic. All she needs to trip the

wards is the blood of one of the ancient families—that's where I come in. She's planning to drag me out to Varisia and bleed me in some cave, then take everything for herself. That's how I'm supposed to pay my debt. But here you are, busting me out. I know where she keeps her notes, so let's nick 'em and take 'em back to the boss."

As long as Amynta and her entourage have not yet returned, Emilio insists on visiting the library to search for Amynta's journal. If Amynta Irel returns early, he curses his rotten luck and begs the PCs to leave without the journal, assuring them it's not worth throwing their lives away.

Faction Notes: Grand Lodge PCs may be especially interested in gaining Emilio's trust by maintaining their disguises as agents of Grandmaster Torch.

Rewards: If the PCs do not locate the expensive wine bottles along with the gloves and haversack, reduce each PC's gold earned by the following amount.

Subtier 3–4: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 458 gp (or by 33 gp if they found only the gloves and haversack).

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 642 gp (or by 50 gp if they found only the gloves and haversack).

Subtier 6–7: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 825 gp (or by 67 gp if they found only the gloves and haversack).

B. THE HEDGE MAZE (CR 6 OR CR 9)

Inside the stone perimeter wall are emerald-green hedges pruned to a uniform height and width. The foliage is planted in gently curving patterns that radiate from an unseen central point. To the south, a white and gold marble mansion towers over the maze.

To the north of Amynta Irel's estate is the hedge maze. Though it appears to be a cosmetic addition to the gardens and vineyards around the manor, the maze functions as an important part of Irel's defenses. The uniformly pruned hedges of the maze stand 10 feet tall and form a circular pattern around a central open area. The entrance to the maze is located to the north (as depicted in the Irel Estate map on page 6), but it extends for several acres behind the estate. The 5-foot-thick thorny hedges can be breached by slow work with edged weapons. Chopping away at the walls of the maze creates a passage 1 foot deep for every 10 minutes of work.

Creatures: Two living topiaries (three assassin topiaries in Subtier 6–7) stalk the hedge maze. They serve as part of Amynta Irel's personal security, freeing up the guards to focus their patrols around the front and sides of the house. The topiaries are loyal to the estate gardener, a druid who created them and frequently provides them with a diverse variety of plants to assimilate. The topiaries have explicit instructions to attack anyone who ventures into the maze without asking for safe passage in Sylvan.

Scaling Encounter B

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

Subtier 3–4: Apply the young creature simple template to the living topiaries.

Subtier 6–7: Remove the poison from the topiaries' attacks.

Hazard: Navigating the hedge maze is difficult. The PCs must succeed at three DC 16 Survival checks (DC 21 in Subtier 6–7) to find their way through the maze. Having a compass or *wayfinder* provides a +2 bonus on these checks. PCs who mark their surroundings in some fashion (such as using cloth markers or some other means of indicating the turns they have taken) receive an additional +2 bonus on these checks. PCs who succeed on at least 2 of these checks traverse the maze in an hour and have ample time to search the estate before Amynta Irel returns. If the PCs do not succeed on at least 2 of these checks, they spend 1d4 additional hours lost in the maze, and Amynta Irel arrives with her entourage after the PCs face the encounter in area B.

SUBTIER 3–4 (CR 6)

LIVING TOPIARIES (2)

CR 4

hp 42 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 181)

TACTICS

Before Combat The topiaries observe the PCs' behavior in the maze, using their innate abilities to follow them at a distance. If the PCs suspect they are being followed, the topiaries use their sculpt shape ability to blend in with the hedges until the PCs leave the area, then teleport to the new location, attempting to hamper the PCs' progress through the maze. The topiaries attack after the PCs attempt their second Survival check.

During Combat The topiaries attempt to surprise PCs by leaping out of the surrounding hedges. When reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, the topiaries use their assimilate ability to heal themselves.

Morale If reduced to 10 hit points or less, a topiary attempts to flee using its hedge stride ability.

SUBTIER 6–7 (CR 9)

ASSASSIN TOPIARIES (3)

CR 6

Variant living topiaries (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 181)

N Medium plant

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

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

hp 59 each (7d8+28)

Fort +11, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2



DR 5/slashing; **Immune** plant traits

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +8 (1d8+4 plus poison)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +4)

Constant—*pass without trace*

3/day—*hedge stride*

TACTICS

Before Combat The topiaries observe the PCs' behavior in the maze, using their innate abilities to follow them at a distance. If the PCs suspect they are being followed, the topiaries use their sculpt shape ability to blend in to the hedges until the PCs leave the area, then teleport to their new location, attempting to hamper the PCs' progress through the maze. The topiaries attack after the PCs make their second Survival check.

During Combat The topiaries attempt to surprise the PCs by leaping out of the surrounding hedges. When reduced to 30 hit points or lower, the topiaries use their assimilate ability to heal themselves.

Morale If reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, a living topiary attempts to flee using its hedge stride ability. Living topiaries that successfully escape use their assimilate ability to heal back to full.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 19, **Int** 6, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip)

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Power Attack

Skills Escape Artist +10, Perception +6, Stealth +9 (+15 in undergrowth); **Racial Modifiers** +8 Escape Artist, +2 Stealth, +6 Stealth in undergrowth

Languages Common, Sylvan (can't speak)

SQ assimilate, hedge stride, poisonous

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Assimilate (Ex) As a full-round action, a living topiary can consume undergrowth or bushy plant matter it's currently touching and incorporate that material into its form. It can do this at a rate of 5 cubic feet per round, healing 1d8 points of damage each time.

Hedge Stride (Sp) This ability functions as tree stride, permitting the living topiary to teleport from one area of brush or hedges to another area of similar vegetation within 1,500 feet.

Poison (Ex) This living topiary was constructed using poisonous plants. A successful attack exposes its victims to *terinav root*: *save* Fort DC 16; *frequency* 1/minute for 6 minutes; *effect* 1d3 Dex damage; *cure* 1 save.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs successfully escort Emilio Bucsa out of Amynta Irel's estate, he expresses his gratitude for their help. Once outside the estate, the PCs have an opportunity to convince

Emilio to take the documents to al-Jakri if they have not done so already. As long as Emilio believes the PCs are acting on Grandmaster Torch's behalf, he also provides them with a safe passage token that will allow them to bypass the mystical wards around al-Jakri and Thurl's stronghold. If Emilio believes the PCs are not actually following Grandmaster Torch's orders, he assures his rescuers that al-Jakri will get the message, but keeps his suspicions to himself and does not provide them with the safe passage token. In this case, he returns to al-Jakri and Thurl with a warning to question the source of the intelligence. PCs may attempt a DC 24 Sense Motive check to sense that Emilio does not completely trust them; PCs who confront Emilio over this realization find that Emilio is willing to strike a deal, offering to pass their message along in good faith in exchange for 1,000 gp (3,000 gp in Subtier 6–7). If the PCs have Amynta's journal, Emilio is willing to reduce the price of his bribe by half if the PCs also relinquish the journal to him. If the PCs successfully bribe Emilio, he gives them the safe passage token as a sign of good faith.

The PCs may send a message to Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin reporting the success of their mission. They have the option to return to Kristoff's inn or seek other accommodations; if they relay the story of their daring rescue to the barkeep, room and board is on the house. A day later the PCs receive a reply from Valsin congratulating them on a job well done, with orders to enjoy a well-deserved vacation—though preferably not in Druma.

Upon returning to her estate, Amynta Irel is displeased to discover her prisoner, and possibly her personal research, are missing. She files a formal complaint with Kerse officials and mobilizes a force of Blackjackets to find those responsible for the theft. So long as the PCs escaped cleanly, the Pathfinder Society can shield them from Irel's vengeance.

If a PC is arrested, the Pathfinder Society sends a representative to Kerse to secure their freedom. Any items or gold the PC obtained during the course of this scenario are confiscated, including Chef's secret recipe book. The fines and Pathfinder Society intervention cost the PC 5 Prestige Points, 2,000 gp, or a combination of the two by substituting 400 gp for every Prestige Point not spent. If the PC is unable to pay the cost of release, mark that character as dead; the PC spends too long in Kerse's prisons to continue contributing to the campaign in a meaningful way.

REPORTING NOTES

If the PCs successfully tricked or bribed Emilio Bucsa, check box A on the reporting sheet. If their disguises failed and they did not bribe Emilio, check box B.

PRIMARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

The PCs succeed at their primary goal by escorting Emilio safely from Amynta Irel's estate and convincing him to deliver

the documents to Thurl and al-Jakri. PCs who do so gain 1 Prestige Point and the Sommelier's Private Selection boon.

SECONDARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

If the PCs fulfill at least two of the following conditions, they succeed at their secondary success condition: tricking or subduing the majordomo, recovering Irel's notes about the Varisian site from the library, and maintaining their disguises as agents of Grandmaster Torch while dealing with

Emilio. PCs who successfully complete both the primary and secondary success conditions for this scenario earn 1 additional Prestige Point and gain the Society Infiltrator boon.

FACTION NOTES

If the PCs successfully recovered Amynta's journal and maintained their disguises as agents of Grandmaster Torch, each Grand Lodge faction PC earns the Emilio's Family Treasure boon.



HANDOUT: Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin's Orders

Pathfinders,

As you may know, we recently discovered the location of two of the Society's old enemies: ex-venture-captain Thurl and the assassin Mulhia al-Jakri. Attacking them directly is out of the question, at least for now. First, we need to flush them out of the dangerous redoubt Thurl created in Druma. Luckily, we captured a group of agents working for none other than Grandmaster Torch. These agents revealed that they were on their way to pass off intelligence to one of al-Jakri's trusted informants, a Varisian man named Emilio Bucsa. That's where you come in. Play the part of Torch's messengers and meet with Emilio at the Silver Spoon Inn in Druma. I am providing you with false documents that indicate al-Jakri's base is unsafe and suggest a better location. If we can force al-Jakri and Thurl to relocate, we should be able to apprehend them before they embed themselves too deeply in a new hideout.

Disguise yourselves and travel to the inn, then convince Emilio to deliver the forged intelligence. Do whatever you need to do to earn his trust—just get the documents into al-Jakri's hands. Send word as soon as you complete this task so that we may begin preparations for the attack.

I await your successful report,
Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin



APPENDIX: STAT BLOCKS

The following creatures appear in this scenario.

DEATH INITIATE

These monks deal swift and dispassionate death to those who threaten or cross their monastery.

DEATH INITIATE

CR 12

Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex 209

Human monk 9/assassin 4

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 21, flat-footed 19 (+2 armor, +1 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 monk, +2 natural, +2 Wis)

hp 88 (9d8+4d8+22)

Fort +9, **Ref** +14, **Will** +10; +2 vs. enchantments or poison

Defensive Abilities improved evasion, uncanny dodge;

Immune disease

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +15/+10 (1d10+1 plus 1d6 electricity) or mwk quarterstaff +11/+6 (1d6+1) or flurry of blows (unarmed strike) +16/+16/+11/+11/+6 (1d10+1 plus 1d6 electricity)

Ranged +1 *shuriken* +16/+11 (1d2+2) or

flurry of blows (+1 *shuriken*) +17/+17/+12/+12/+7 (1d2+1)

Special Attacks death attack (DC 16), flurry of blows, sneak attack +2d6, stunning fist (10/day, DC 18), true death (DC 19)

TACTICS

Before Combat The assassin drinks her *potion of barkskin*, attempts to study her victim for 3 rounds, and drinks her *potion of haste*.

During Combat The assassin sidles up to her mark and makes her death attack with a Stunning Fist attack. She then retreats to throw flurries of shuriken.

Base Statistics Without *barkskin*, the assassin's statistics are **AC** 23, touch 21, flat-footed 17.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 21, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 31

Feats Deadly Aim, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Extra *Ki*, Improved Unarmed Strike, Nimble Moves, Point-Blank Shot, Step Up, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (shuriken, unarmed strike)

Skills Acrobatics +21 (+42 when jumping), Bluff +6, Climb +11, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +6, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (geography, local, nature) +5, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perception +18, Sense Motive +12, Stealth +21, Swim +7

Languages Auran, Common, Infernal

SQ fast movement, hidden weapons, high jump, *ki* pool (8 points, magic), maneuver training, poison use, slow fall

40 ft., wholeness of body

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of haste*; **Other Gear** +1 human-bane shuriken (5), +1 shuriken (20), adamantite shuriken (10), cold iron shuriken (10), masterwork quarterstaff, belt of physical might +2 (Str, Dex), bracers of armor +2, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, shock amulet of mighty fists, 235 gp

LIVING TOPIARY

This lumbering topiary has the rough shape of an elephant, complete with brambly limbs and tusks.

LIVING TOPIARY

CR 4

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4 181

N Medium plant

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 42 (5d8+20)

Fort +10, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

DR 5/slashing; **Immune** plant traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +6 (1d6+4)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +4)

Constant—*pass without trace*

3/day—hedge stride

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 19, **Int** 6, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18 (22 vs. trip)

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Skills Escape Artist +10, Perception +6, Stealth +9 (+15 in undergrowth); **Racial Modifiers** +8 Escape Artist, +2 Stealth (+8 in undergrowth)

Languages Common, Sylvan (can't speak any language)

SQ assimilate, move through hedges, sculpt shape

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Assimilate (Ex) As a full-round action, a living topiary can consume undergrowth or bushy plant matter it is currently touching or otherwise in contact with and incorporate that material into its form. It can do this at a rate of 5 cubic feet per round, healing 1d8 points of damage each time it uses this ability. If the topiary is at maximum hit points, this ability has no effect.

Hedge Stride (Sp) This ability functions as *tree stride*, but rather than allowing for teleportation from tree to tree, it permits the living topiary to teleport from one area of brush or hedges to another area of similar vegetation within 1,500 feet.

Move through Hedges (Ex) A living topiary may move



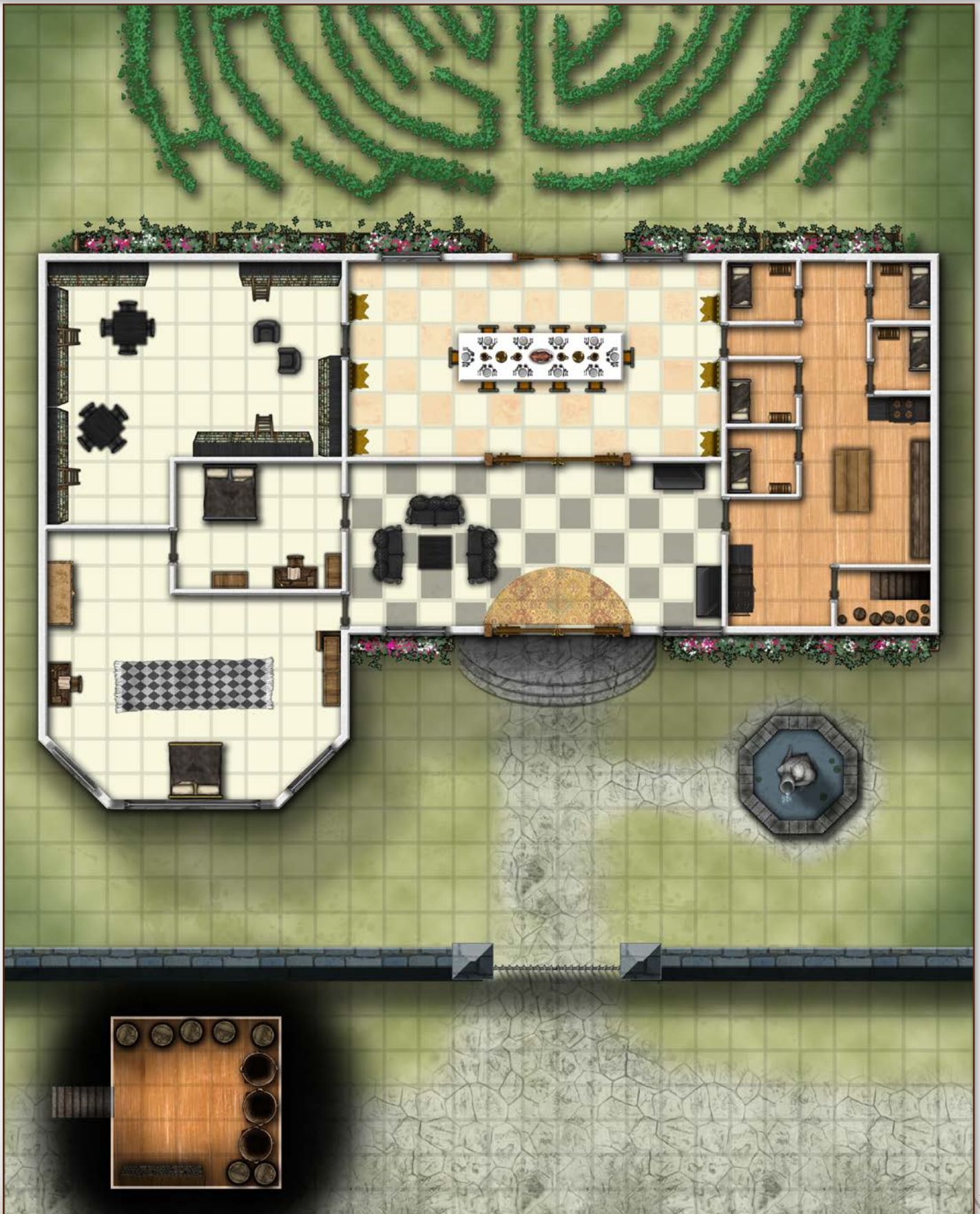
through any mass of brambles or other dense plant growth without penalty. It must begin and end its turn outside of the mass.

Sculpt Shape (Ex) As a standard action, a living topiary can alter itself to take on the basic form of any creature,

including humanoids, animals, and even more exotic creatures such as aberrations.

The change is purely cosmetic, and does not change its size, grant it any special powers, or alter its abilities.





PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO

Pathfinder Society Scenario #9–21: In the Grandmaster's Name

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 ☐ Concordance
☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

Character # _____

Prestige Points ☐

Character Name _____

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

Character # _____

Prestige Points ☐

Character Name _____

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

Character # _____

Prestige Points ☐

Character Name _____

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

Character # _____

Prestige Points ☐

Character Name _____

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

Character # _____

Prestige Points ☐

Character Name _____

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☐ Scarab Sages ☐ Silver Crusade ☐ Sovereign Court ☐ Concordance

Character # _____

Prestige Points ☐

Character Name _____

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Character # _____

Prestige Points ☐

Character Name _____

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

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Pathfinder Society Scenario #9-21: In the Grandmaster's Name

Character Chronicle #

☐ Core Campaign

A.K.A.

Player Name

Character Name

Organized Play #

Character #

Faction

This Chronicle sheet grants access to the following:

☐☐☐ **Chef's Secret Recipes:** You have found Chef's fiercely protected secret book of recipes, which includes techniques for using spices to draw out the maximum flavor and benefits of almost any drink or dish. Whenever you drink a potion or extract of 3rd level or lower with a variable numeric effect, you can check a box next to this boon as a swift action to maximize the benefit received (for example, when drinking a *potion of cure light wounds* that would normally restore 1d8+1 hit points, you could check a box next to this boon to heal the maximum possible amount of 9). Alternatively, you can check a box next to this boon when stopping to eat to grant you and up to five allies a +1 alchemical bonus on Fortitude saves for the next 24 hours.

☐☐☐ **Emilio's Family Treasure (Grand Lodge Faction):** As thanks for rescuing him, Emilio Bucsa has gifted you with a vial containing a drop of his blood and copies of Amynta's notes on the location of his ancestral treasure. Since Emilio has well-founded concerns that Amynta could have spies watching for him at the site, he has left the recovery of this treasure to you. You may spend your downtime to check one of the boxes that precedes this boon. Upon checking the third box, you uncover the ancient Varisian cache, earning you a number of gold pieces equal to 100 × your current character level and restoring up to 2 expended Prestige Points as your archaeological findings are reported to the Society.

Society Infiltrator: Your expert infiltration of Amynta's estate has impressed the Society, which provides you with a special dispensation to aid you in similar endeavors in the future. Characters with this boon can purchase disguise kits at half price. This reduction in cost does not stack with any other boons or abilities that reduce the cost to purchase disguise kits, and disguise kits obtained in this manner cannot be sold for more than was spent to acquire them under any circumstances.

☐☐☐ **Sommelier's Private Selection:** Despite your discretion, at least one of Amynta's business rivals appears to have learned of your raid on her estate. You have received three bottles of a rare and potent vintage as congratulations. As a standard action, you may check one of the boxes next to this boon to draw and drink a bottle of this refined beverage, healing yourself for 1d8 hit points per 2 levels you have (maximum 5d8). The effects of this beverage may be maximized using the Chef's Secret Recipes boon.

Subtier 3-4

engineer's workgloves (3,000 gp; *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 234)
lesser book of extended summoning (750 gp; *Ultimate Equipment* 283)
wand of air bubble (5 charges, 400 gp; *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 222)

Subtier 6-7

engineer's workgloves (3,000 gp; *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 234)
headband of alluring charisma +2 (4,000 gp; *Ultimate Equipment* 248)
lesser book of extended summoning (750 gp; *Ultimate Equipment* 283)
marvelous pigments (4,000 gp; *Ultimate Equipment* 310)
wand of air bubble (5 charges, 400 gp; *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 222)

SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
3-4	640	1,280

SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
Out of Subtier	1,114	2,227

SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
6-7	1,587	3,173

SUBTIER	<input type="checkbox"/> Slow	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal
—	—	—

MAX GOLD	Starting XP
	GM's Initials
	XP Gained (GM ONLY)
	Final XP Total

FAME		
	Initial Prestige	Initial Fame
		GM's Initials
	Prestige Gained (GM ONLY)	
	Prestige Spent	
	Current Prestige	Final Fame

GOLD		
	Starting GP	
		GM's Initials
	GP Gained (GM ONLY)	
		GM's Initials
	Day Job (GM ONLY)	
	Gold Spent	
Total		

For GM Only

EVENT

EVENT CODE

DATE

Game Master's Signature

GM Pathfinder Society #