

# PATHFINDER®



## Agents of Edgewatch

—Adventure Path—

# PLAYER'S GUIDE

By Patrick Renie



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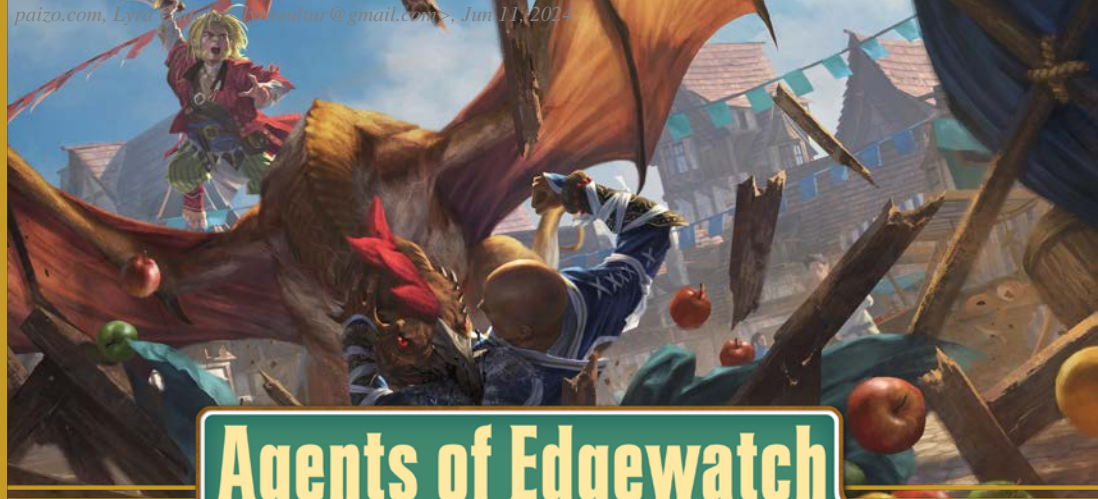
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## **Agents of Edgewatch** —Adventure Path—

# **PLAYER'S GUIDE**

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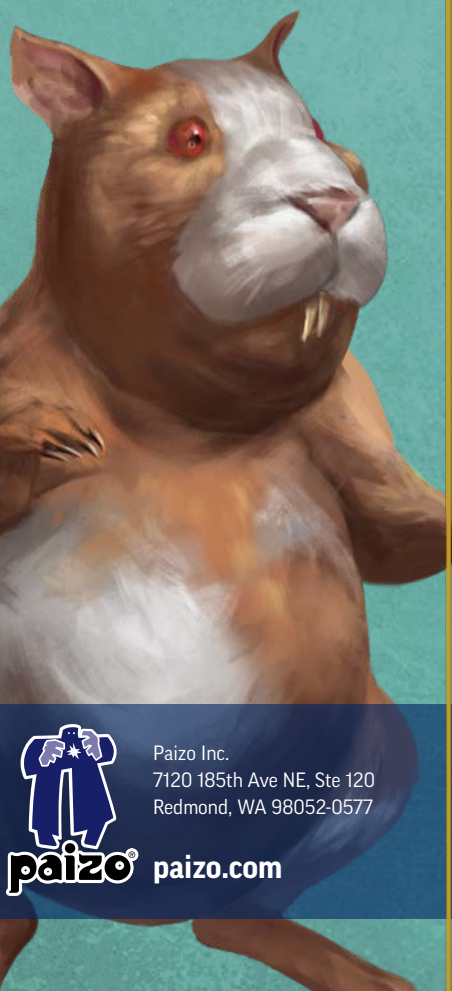
The Agents of Edgewatch Adventure Path centers around the player characters in their roles as newly enlisted members of the city watch. The characters start their careers resolving minor disputes but eventually become the city's only hope against an evil power. Since this Adventure Path assumes the characters are city guards, the campaign (including this player's guide) makes frequent reference to aspects of law enforcement and policing—themes that might hew closely to real-world situations and might make some readers uncomfortable.

If you are reading this player's guide because you're considering playing through the Agents of Edgewatch Adventure Path, talk to your Game Master about how they'll handle themes of law enforcement throughout the campaign. As always, the consent of everyone at the table is mandatory for a safe and fun play experience, so it's important that you discuss any concerns you have about this Adventure Path's subject matter with the rest of your group. If your group is interested in the Adventure Path's other themes but one or more members don't want to roleplay as city watch, you can eliminate that aspect of the campaign by using the suggested changes listed under Playing without Law Enforcement on page 3.

Additionally, Agents of Edgewatch presents scenarios that fall into the realm of horror. This includes depictions of serial killers, body horror, torture, nonconsensual voyeurism, violence against children, and bioterrorism (including a suicide bombing), humanoid experimentation, self-harm, animal cruelty, and mental illness.

This Adventure Path is intended to be an action-packed romp through a fantastical metropolis full of danger and excitement, not an analysis of or mirror for real-world matters of law and justice. Nonetheless, you and your friends might not enjoy the situations or conversations that arise as a result of your unusual roles in this campaign or the horror elements. Remember that a fun game involves enthusiastic consent from everyone at the table, especially when discussing or roleplaying themes that might closely resemble sensitive issues from the not-so-simple real world. What one person might consider an opportunity to discuss real-life ethical dilemmas might be an upsetting or traumatic situation for another.

Ultimately, it is your choice whether or not you wish to participate in this Adventure Path, as written or modified. We at Paizo wish you a safe and fun gaming experience no matter what type of campaign you decide to play.



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Welcome to the Agents of Edgewatch Adventure Path!

As a player in this campaign, you'll get to take on the exciting role of a city guard in Absalom, the City at the Center of the World. You'll be responsible for mediating interpersonal disputes before they become violent, protecting the people of your city from nefarious crooks and rampaging monsters, and arresting criminals who flout Absalom's laws. With the safety of the city in your hands, you'll need to muster bravery, wit, and heart in order to see that justice is fairly dealt.

The Adventure Path kicks off at the outset of the highly anticipated Radiant Festival, Absalom's once-a-century world fair. It's your first day as members of the Edgewatch, the newly formed guard unit responsible for ensuring the safety of not only Absalom's residents but also the countless visitors attending the festival. Your hands might seem full enough at first with just the matters of the fairgrounds in the partially restored Precipice Quarter, but as the campaign progresses, you'll quickly find yourself visiting many other parts of the city in order to pursue an increasingly dire investigation. If you're looking for adventures full of high-octane action, intriguing NPC interactions, and a sprawling urban backdrop, then you've come to the right Adventure Path.

## CREATING CHARACTERS

In this campaign, players take on the responsibilities of actual city guards, so some of the time-honored traditions of player characters might need to be adjusted to accommodate for your unique role as law keeper.

First and foremost, your character should strive to uphold the law. This Adventure Path is not appropriate for evil characters or those with no regard for justice. The adventures' events assume that you are an agent of justice protecting the public first and foremost, not a double-crosser or an abuser of power. There is room in the campaign for an officer who sometimes bends the rules, but such characters should do so to ensure the safety of the people of Absalom and do right by them.

## ALIGNMENTS

Since this Adventure Path is designed for characters who honestly want to improve their city, lawful good is an obvious choice for characters' alignments, and the most appropriate. Neutral good officers are also common in Absalom, since many join the city watch's ranks with the goal of helping and protecting their communities. These officers typically uphold the spirit—rather than the letter—of the law. They might refuse to arrest those who steal for food, for example, and instead focus on catching those who steal for greed. A lawful neutral agent could also be effective at their job, as long as their

## PLAYING WITHOUT LAW ENFORCEMENT

Not everyone is interested in roleplaying as officers of the law in a Pathfinder game. Fortunately, it is a relatively simple matter to remove the law enforcement themes completely from this Adventure Path without altering the story at its core. After all, the point of Agents of Edgewatch isn't to force you into uncomfortable roles, but to tell a story of up-and-coming heroes who quickly discover that they are the only people capable of saving the city of Absalom from certain doom. If this is the route your fellow players and your Game Master would like to pursue with Agents of Edgewatch, consider the following points as you create your character. (Direct your Game Master to the sidebar on page 4 for Game Master-specific suggestions.)

- Pick a character background from the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* rather than one listed here. Use the backgrounds and details on Absalom in this player's guide as inspiration for which district of Absalom your character hails from. The rest of the advice under Creating Characters is still relevant for creating any player character that adventures in Absalom.
- Rather than newly hired rookie law officers, your party consists of up-and-coming adventurers who have been invited to attend the Radiant Festival by the centennial fair's planning committee. The committee hopes that the reputations of such heroic adventurers will deter criminals from preying on a distracted populace.
- Your character won't need to report to Edgewatch Headquarters or seek permission from neighboring precincts to patrol their districts, but might wish to visit the city watch leaders on occasion for advice or intel.
- Instead of turning over seized evidence to the precinct for bounty rewards, your character can return lost or stolen items to their rightful owners for monetary rewards, and sell found treasures to merchants or collectors.
- Whether you are playing the campaign as members of the city watch or not, the events of the campaign assume that your characters are dedicated to protecting the people of Absalom and bringing villains to justice, pursuing peaceful resolutions to conflicts first, and you will still have to reckon with the city's criminal justice system if you choose a path of wrongdoing or flaunt Absalom's code of conduct.

personal creed isn't at odds with the laws they're paid to uphold.

Chaotic and evil characters are not appropriate for this campaign.

## ANCESTRIES

Humans are by far the most common ancestry in



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## ADVICE FOR GAME MASTERS

Due to the sensitive themes of this Adventure Path, you as the Game Master should keep the following points in mind as you run Agents of Edgewatch:

- Never push your players to engage in combat if the situation can be resolved peacefully.
- Encourage PCs to attempt to resolve encounters diplomatically before resorting to violence.
- Refer to the Special Rules For This Campaign sidebar on the next page, which supersedes any rules or suggestions in the Adventure Path text (particularly the rule about all damage being nonlethal).

If your group wishes to remove the law enforcement themes from this campaign (see the sidebar on page 3), you will need to modify some of the specific scenarios in each adventure as written. To that end, consider making the following changes to the campaign as a whole.

- Re-imagine the NPCs who populate the guard precincts as fellow adventurers or leaders of various guilds. Absalom's many independent factions are always looking for bounty catchers and treasure hunters to stifle crime and uncover long-lost fortunes in their corner of the city. For example, instead of describing Grospek Lavarsus as the lieutenant of Edgewatch Headquarters, you might have him instead be a high-ranking member of the Radiant Festival's planning committee, in which case he would still have a vested interest in Absalom's safety and would be able to give the player characters leads on crimes to solve.
- As they solve mysteries and apprehend suspects, the player characters will still garner much public acclaim, so their gradual rise to fame can largely be kept as written.
- NPCs won't necessarily feel obligated to automatically comply with the player characters' requests, since the characters have no actual legal authority. In such cases, NPCs might still work with the player characters out of a respect for their previous heroic deeds or out of the hope that the adventurers can help make the city a safer place. Roleplay accordingly.

Absalom, to an even-larger degree than in the world of Golarion at large. Absalom's oldest bloodlines trace their familial roots to other major civilizations that have risen (and often fallen) over the millennia, including Taldor, Osirion, and Kelesh, making Taldans Garundi, and Keleshite the most common ethnicities for native Absalomians. Constant international trade and a near-constant stream of immigrants means that humans from just about every corner of the world—from insular Nidalese to any of the many ethnic groups of the Mwangi Expanse to Erutaki and Tians—can be found somewhere in Absalom, though naturally some

of these groups are rarer than others. Any and all of these humans might be found among the Edgewatch.

Halflings make up most of Absalom's non-human citizenry. Indeed, Absalom hosts one of the largest concentrations of halflings in the world, and so halfling officers are highly sought after among guard precincts. Other playable ancestries of note include goblins (who are becoming more incorporated into Absalom society), gnomes (who have much to enjoy amid the ceaseless hustle and bustle of the city), and dwarves (many of whom form lucrative trading organizations for their own benefit and that of their familial homelands). Some elves call Absalom their home, especially those who pursue study at any of the city's vast libraries or academies, though these are the exception rather than the rule.

Of course, in a city as massive as Absalom, people of any and all ancestries can be found wandering its streets, though anyone playing a character of an ancestry other than those mentioned above may find few others of their kind among their precincts or the people they're charged with protecting.

## CLASSES

Good law officers come from all walks of life and have a broad range of specialties. Champions and fighters make up the majority of rank-and-file guards—champions are skilled at peacefully resolving conflicts, and members of both classes are strong and hardy in case they must protect the city from physical threats. Bards, rogues, and (of course) investigators make excellent detectives and undercover agents, and bards in particular are often skilled at de-escalation; a large number of ex-cons who have turned their lives around and joined Absalom's guard forces come from these classes. Magic users are ever in high demand—wizards in particular, with their penchant for diligent study and tendency to take an intellectual view of social matters, can hardly be bested when it comes to knowledge and application of Absalom's byzantine laws and ordinances. Alchemists often hold these skills just as well. Sorcerers, with their incredible powers of personality, make for excellent de-escalators. Many precincts regard clerics as natural mediators who can evoke the trust of citizens, and so brave members of various clergies are recruited as expert negotiators or as neutral arbiters of civil disputes; a number of priests-turned-officers have earned reputations for effective cross-examination methods. Many oracles, witches, and sorcerers maintain good relations with their local precincts and sometimes serve as diviners for hire, particularly in cases where the trail has gone cold or the crimes contain some element of occult significance.



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The most uncommon—though not necessarily unknown—law officers in Absalom include druids, who typically join the Lotus Guard in the Ivy District; barbarians, of whom Captain Runewulf, leader of the Graycloaks, is a notable example; and swashbucklers, most of whom find good company among the relatively rough-and-tumble Harbor Guard.

### LANGUAGES

This Adventure Path assumes characters will attempt to peacefully resolve conflicts first, so having mastery of an array of languages is advantageous. Common is the official language of Absalom, though the huge variety of people who dwell in the city ensures that there are at least a few speakers of just about every language on Golarion. Since humans are the predominant ancestry in Absalom, an array of regional languages are in common use, including Osiriani, Mwangi, Skald, Tien, and Vudrani, though a fair number of people also use the many non-human languages found in Absalom, such as Halfling and Goblin. Criminals with connections to monstrous elements might obscure their deeds by using rare languages like Draconic, Aklo, or Necril.

### RELIGIONS

With an entire city quarter dedicated to religions from all around the world, Absalom is more welcoming of a wide variety of religions than most places in the world. In times since past, Arodenism was the most common religion in Absalom, but with the city's patron god now vanished, other major human religions have risen to fill the vacuum. Chief among these creeds are those of the Ascended—Cayden Cailean, Iomedae (herself Aroden's former herald), and Norgorber—the gods who, having bested the Test of the *Starstone*, rose to divinity right in the spiritual heart of Absalom.

It may come as a surprise that worship of evil gods such as Norgorber (and even Zon-Kuthon or Rovagug) is legal within Absalom. Freedom of religion is a cornerstone of Absalom's body of law, but believers are still beholden to the city's many other laws and cannot perform illegal activities as part of religious rites. This means that while zealots of evil gods can congregate and proselytize, Norgorberites can no more practice wanton theft than Kuthites can torture the unwilling.

While members of Absalom's city watch come from a variety of spiritual backgrounds, most honor lawful deities like valiant Iomedae or jurisprudent Abadar. Minor deities—including many of the empyreal lords, primal inevitables, and even some psychopomp ushers—also find followers among the city watch. Since Absalom's guards strive to uphold the law, worship of just about any lawful good deity makes sense for the spiritually inclined,

### SPECIAL RULES FOR THIS CAMPAIGN

As noted to Game Masters in the first volume of this Adventure Path, Agents of Edgwatch modifies Pathfinder's default rules in several important ways.

First, as city guards, your party's player characters are all assumed to be trained in nonlethal conflict resolution. This means that, during combat encounters, your character is always dealing nonlethal damage; you are never allowed to deal lethal damage. You take no penalty to attack rolls for dealing nonlethal damage, and all types of damage you deal (whether from weapon attacks, spells, or even poisons) are nonlethal unless you're attacking a creature immune to nonlethal damage. You gain no bonuses or added benefits for making attacks using weapons with the nonlethal weapon trait. As usual for nonlethal damage, when you reduce a creature to 0 Hit Points using nonlethal damage, the creature falls unconscious instead of dying.

Second, as long as you are wearing your uniform, you are generally considered to be in possession of any tools necessary to secure suspects you have knocked unconscious. Suspects generally can't wake up and escape while you defeat any remaining combatants, for example. You can freely obtain more essential gear (such as handcuffs for arresting suspects) during any time you have downtime at Edgwatch Headquarters.

Third, you can never abuse or harm innocent civilians. If your Game Master puts you in a situation in which you must fight, you can safely assume that your opponents are determined to kill you and that your best means of apprehension is through combat. As written, the Adventure Path will never force you into combat with anyone other than creatures determined to kill you.

whereas gods of chaos make it difficult to square one's day job with their beliefs. For the agnostic and atheistic, on the other hand, many allies can be found among the ranks of the Ascendant Quarter's Graycloaks, who are famously nonreligious and whose leaders argue that only a secular guard could fairly watch over a district with people from so many different religions.

### AGENTS OF EDGEWATCH BACKGROUNDS

As a newly transferred member of the Edgwatch, you have already spent some time in one of Absalom's guard units. The following backgrounds represent your previous training and association with one of these factions. Nearly all of Absalom's various law officers live in the same district where they work, so your choice of background likely also determines which city quarter you call home. Some backgrounds also provide you with a circumstance bonus to certain skills while interacting with members of your old guard precinct and other



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related individuals. Finally, each background includes a flavorful thematic “hook” for what kind of officer you might be; though these personality details are of course optional, you might find one inspiring enough to build an entire character concept around!

In addition to fleshing out your character history and providing statistical benefits, the backgrounds that follow influence how you are perceived by the other guard factions in Absalom and may come into play during various parts of this Adventure Path. That said, if you prefer to instead choose a background from the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*, the following are the most suitable choices for this campaign: barrister, bounty hunter, criminal, detective, guard, merchant, noble, prisoner, or street urchin.

## EX-CON TOKEN GUARD

### BACKGROUND

Not everyone starts life on easy street—your own experience is testament to that. You took a wrong turn at some point early on and became a career criminal. Perhaps you were a petty pickpocket, or maybe you’ve even murdered someone. Either way, your crimes landed you with a transformative prison sentence in the Brine prison. Only then did you realize that something needed to change. After your release, you

dedicated yourself to helping other downtrodden individuals and those forced to resort to crime to survive. You joined the Coins District Guard, but soon learned that this precinct was a haven for the very corruption you sought to undo. Your efforts at reform never took root and you feared that your decision to become an officer of the law was a huge mistake.

You transferred to the Edgwatch, the Precipice Quarter’s new precinct, in the hope that you might meet others who sought to help—not exploit—Absalom’s misguided.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Dexterity or Charisma, and one is a free ability boost.

You’re trained in the Thievery skill and your choice of Legal Lore or Underworld Lore. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks to interact with Token Guards and convicted criminals such as prison inmates. You gain the Pickpocket skill feat.

## GODLESS GRAYCLOAK

### BACKGROUND

You were a member of a church once, and you saw some things among Absalom’s religious elite that put you off piety for good. Maybe it was one too many beggars turned away at the temple’s front door, or maybe it was a high-ranking priest’s consistent abuses of power. What got to you most, though, was that according to just about every belief system out there,





sinner and saints, priests and paupers were all alike in one key way: they never saw retribution or accolades until buried 6 feet under. You wanted more from Absalom. You wanted more from the world. You wanted justice now, on this plane, not in some indeterminate afterlife. So you left the church and wandered the city, a ghost of your former self.

You finally found a like mind in Captain Runewulf, "the Unbeliever," whose reputation and similar distaste for religion inspired you to join the Graycloaks. As a sworn protector of the Ascendant Court, you didn't differentiate between Sarenites or Pharasmians, Iomedaeans or Norgorberites; if you saw someone in danger, you put your life on the line to save them, whatever their place within or outside a church.

Your good record has earned you a transfer—temporary or not, the choice is yours—to the newly formed Edgewatch, where you'll use your authority to guard the lives of not just Absalomians, but all who have come to your grand city to experience its wonders. Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Constitution or Wisdom, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in the Religion skill and your choice of a specific religion Lore skill (such as Iomedae Lore or Norgorber Lore). You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks to interact with Graycloaks, priests, and clerics. You gain the Quick Identification feat.

## GRIZZLED MUCKRUCKER

### BACKGROUND

You've served on the Muckruckers, the unofficial guards of the flooded Puddles district. The pay's no good, the conditions are squalid, and you've seen things during your time on the force that've made you question your career entirely. Perhaps you joined the group out of a sense of duty to your fellow Absalomians, or maybe you felt an obligation to help restore your apocalyptic home district to some semblance of normalcy. Either way, the traumas you've endured, the double-crossers who've betrayed you, the wretched monsters that have crawled out of the muck to assail you—it's enough to turn an officer to weary cynicism or self-destruction through merciful drink.

Thankfully, you found an out: an invitation to transfer to the newly formed Edgewatch. You accepted the offer in the hope that some fresh experience in a new district, surrounded by new people, might reignite the hope and passion you felt for the job so long ago.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Constitution or Charisma, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in the Survival skill, as well as either Labor Lore or Underworld Lore. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks to interact with Muckruckers, mercenaries, and adventurers. You gain the Experienced Tracker skill feat.

## HARBOR GUARD MOONLIGHTER

### BACKGROUND

The Harbor Guard isn't known for being the most honorable

## REPORTING FOR DUTY

At the start of the Agents of Edgewatch Adventure Path, you receive your first assignment as a rookie member of the newly established Edgewatch, a specially formed precinct tasked with ensuring the safety of visitors to Absalom's Radiant Festival in the Precipice Quarter. As part of your first mission, you'll meet your fellow squad-mates (the other player characters), ensuring an instant hook and reason for you all to work together.

Of course, each of you comes to the Edgewatch with your own personal backgrounds and agendas, and some of you might even know each other from previous years of working together in another of Absalom's precincts (particularly if you're using the Agents of Edgewatch backgrounds). Before beginning, make sure to talk with one another to decide if you have some prior connections or are meeting each other for the first time.

precinct in town. A few years after you joined the force, you became disillusioned by the rampant corruption within the precinct and the district at large. One night, you stumbled on an ad for a local monster hunter's guild. You joined on a whim, but fell in love with the swashbuckling lifestyle of an independent bounty hunter. You've since earned quite a reputation for your nocturnal adventures; everyone still knows that you're a Harbor Guard, but stories of your dungeon-delving adventures have long overshadowed that facet of your life. Unfortunately, long nights of monster-hunting have negatively impacted your performance at your day job, so maybe it wasn't a surprise when your supervising officer put in a transfer request for you, spelling the end of your plucky nighttime antics with that particular guild.

Despite the decline in your performance, Lieutenant Lavarus of Edgewatch sees potential (and even, maybe, a bit of himself) in you. You're eager to be on a new unit and for the chance to bring your monster-hunting skills to a district that has been plagued by such supernatural beasts for far too long.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Strength or Constitution, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in the Athletics skill and your choice of Sailing Lore or Hunting Lore. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks to interact with Harbor Guards, ship captains, and freelance adventurers. You gain the Quick Jump skill feat.

## LEARNED GUARD PRODIGY

### BACKGROUND

For some, the nuts and bolts of keeping the peace are practically second nature. Such is the case for you, a member of the Learned Guard with an incredible mind for investigation as well as a gift for understanding magic. You probably aren't a hit with your peers, who find your intellect and natural gift of deduction perhaps a bit off-putting, but when left to your

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### RELEVANT LORE SKILLS

Practically every officer worth their salt has at least a little training in Legal Lore. Even those who lack this skill are sufficiently trained in Absalom's code, though, so although helpful, being trained in the skill isn't mandatory. For agents who frequently go undercover or deal with shady informants, Underworld Lore can unlock stores of useful intel. Urban Lore, while broad, might prove useful for resolving everyday dilemmas in the city or coming up with quick solutions to common metropolitan problems. Of course, common Lore skills can all be surprisingly helpful in solving the myriad cases that come across an officer's desk, and Lore specialties related to particular professions—such as Games Lore, Guild Lore, Library Lore, Sailing Lore, or even Milling or Tanning Lore—might prove abundantly useful while working with (or investigating) Absalom's commoners and aristocrats.

Specific local lore, such as Absalom Lore, often comes in handy, and such intimate knowledge of the city usually marks a clear divide between the well-liked (or at least tolerated) local constabularies and imported law keepers from abroad. Hyper-specific local lore (such as Docks Lore or Precipice Quarter Lore), while not as broadly applicable, can also earn an officer in a hurry some much-needed trust and cooperation from residents.

own devices you excel, and you get along well with professors and mages such as those who work in Forae Logos or the Arcanamirium.

After no shortage of debating the pros and cons, you decided to transfer to the Edgewatch precinct. Sure, you have a keen understanding of the theories and principles behind law enforcement, but you've reasoned that in order to be a truly effective guard you'll need some first-hand experience in a high-risk area nabbing suspects and protecting innocents—all the while taking fastidious notes and writing your grand thesis on the merits and shortcomings of Absalom's laws.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Intelligence or Wisdom, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in your choice of the Arcana or Occultism skill, as well as Legal Lore. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks to interact with Learned Guards and with academics such as librarians and scholars. You gain the Recognize Spell skill feat.

### POLITICAL SCION

### BACKGROUND

Like your parents and your parents before them, you initially followed the long path toward politics from an early age. Your close association with Absalom's upper echelons put you in touch with the city's various military or special operations units—the First Guard, the Wave Riders, the Varlokkur—though you avoided any actual duty with these groups.

Thanks to your strict upbringing and the connections of your family, you soon became a lauded and highly respected member of Absalom's political elite. But you couldn't stifle a certain feeling that you were destined for more than simply filling the pointed shoes of your forebears. Despite your easily earned accolades and a relatively cushy life as a young lawyer or councilmember, you sought to do more with your diplomatic training and not live out the exact same life as your ancestors.

Your decision to transfer to the Edgewatch has rubbed your traditionalist family the wrong way, and they've cut off the financial aid they've provided you your whole life. But you don't care—you know you're doing the right thing by taking on the rough jobs of a low-ranking guard, and you're ready to shine based on your own merits, not those of your lofty kin.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Constitution or Intelligence, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in the Diplomacy skill and Legal Lore. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks to interact with members of Absalom's political establishment. You gain the Hobnobber skill feat.

### POST GUARD OF ALL TRADES

### BACKGROUND

Not all cops are passionate about their jobs. For some, the pursuit of justice is just another way to pay the bills. Honestly, it was probably the Post Guard's generous time-off policy that drew you to their service, and during your yearly sabbaticals you've dabbled in hobbies as diverse as fishing, baking, or even stand-up comedy. Even while on duty, you're probably idly fiddling with a lucky coin or practicing magic tricks with a deck of cards. You probably irritate your fellow guards a bit with your non sequiturs, casual attitude, and tendency to daydream, but results don't lie, and more often than not you prove your worth when the chips are down.

For all the excitement of guarding Absalom's Postern Gate, the Post Guard wasn't really the right fit for someone as distractible as yourself, so your boss put in a "promotion" for you to transfer to the newly formed Edgewatch. You're all for the reassignment, since it will put you smack in the middle of the most entertaining and diverse gathering of the century, the Radiant Festival.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Dexterity or Intelligence, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in the Performance skill, a Lore skill of your choice, and you gain a bonus language. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks to interact with Post Guards. You gain the Dubious Knowledge skill feat.

### SALLY GUARD NEOPHYTE

### BACKGROUND

You joined the Sally Guard, Westgate's guard precinct, at an early age, bringing with you the requisite steel armor, sword, and lance, though your gear is of dubious make. The other





guards may have suspected that you were a novice with less combat experience than them; if so, you proved their suspicions on your first day of training when your mount immediately threw you in the mud. A supervisor took mercy on you and offered to transfer you to another guard unit in the city, promising that you'd have a place on the Sally Guard when you decided you were ready for the challenge.

Biting your lip in shame, you took the Edgewatch reassignment in order to gain the experience necessary to go back to your home district with your head held high. You'll prove them wrong, one way or another, and show everyone that you *can* protect the ones you hold most dear.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Constitution or Wisdom, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in the Nature skill and your choice of Hunting Lore or Stabling Lore. You start out with a riding horse, as well as a suit of shoddy half-plate armor, a shoddy longsword, and a shoddy lance (see page 273 of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* for the rules on shoddy items).

## SLEEPLESS SUNS STAR BACKGROUND

Among your fellow guards who patrol the Foreign Quarter, you're something of a big deal. Your good work and big personality have made a big enough splash that word has gotten out about your status as a rising star among the watchdogs of Absalom. Your popularity has also earned you the trust of many citizens of the Foreign Quarter.

Your laudable performance has earned you a transfer to the newly formed Edgewatch in the Precipice Quarter, where you'll put your formidable reputation to good use by patrolling the Radiant Festival and ensuring the safety of Absalom's most vulnerable visitors.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Wisdom or Charisma, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in the Society, plus either Gladiatorial Lore or Genealogy Lore. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks to interact with members of the Sleepless Suns and residents of the Foreign Quarter. You gain the Multilingual skill feat.

## UNDERCOVER LOTUS GUARD BACKGROUND

It's a well-known secret that for every playhouse in the Ivy District, there's an underground criminal element lurking somewhere in the shadows. To get intel on the occultists, assassins, and thieves' guilds that pull the strings of power in the Ivy District, the Lotus Guard trains some of the best undercover agents and operatives in all of Absalom. You're one such agent, and you've put your life on the line more times than you can count by getting close to the Ivy's most dangerous criminals. Your risky missions and thrill-seeking derring-do have earned you many accolades—but also no shortage of enemies.

You transferred to the Edgewatch after your cover was unexpectedly blown and you needed a safe place to lie low away from the Ivy District. With your mastery of disguise and your ability to confidently converse with criminal masterminds, it won't be long before you've made yourself an indispensable undercover operator in this precinct as well.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Intelligence or Charisma, and one is a free ability boost.





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# ABSALOM

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1 MILE





You're trained in the Deception skill, Art Lore, and Underworld Lore. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks to interact with Lotus Guards and high-ranking criminals like guild masters, gang leaders, and mob bosses. You gain the Charming Liar skill feat.

## ABSALOM

The City at the Center of the World is the heart of the Inner Sea region as well as the Agents of Edgewartch Adventure Path. As one of Absalom's most promising law keepers, you'll spend the entirety of the campaign in this metropolis, so it behooves you to get to know your city. While it's certainly possible to play a character who hails from another land, you'll get the most out of this Adventure Path if your character has lived in Absalom at least long enough to get to know some of the people in the district you've come to call home.

## ABSALOM AT A GLANCE

With nearly five millennia of history behind its walls, Absalom is a monument to civilization, both good and bad. It has withstood countless sieges and stood tall while entire nations around it rose and fell. Even after the death of its founder and patron deity Aroden, the city has continued to flourish economically, culturally, and technologically.

Most recently, the city successfully staved off two incredible assaults—one known as the Fiendflesh Siege in 4717 AR and a shocking attack from the lich-king Tar-Baphon, the Whispering Tyrant, 2 years later. It was during the chaos of the former siege that the city's current primarch, Lord Gyr of Gixx, mysteriously went missing. In response, the Grand Council named Wynsal Starborn siege lord of Absalom, which bestowed upon him broad emergency powers as well as the title and responsibilities of acting primarch. Starborn has remained in power since the Fiendflesh Siege, and with no sign of the true primarch anywhere, it seems unlikely that the siege lord's de facto leadership, for better or worse, will change any time soon.

## THE RADIANT FESTIVAL

The centennial celebration known as the Radiant Festival is a time-honored tradition in Absalom. It was originally conceived in 1620 AR to celebrate the anniversary of the thwarted Radiant Siege on Absalom 1 year before, and the original festival was such a success that it was held again 100 years afterward. Since then, it has expanded and changed forms numerous times. Now, the fair is a celebration of Absalom's role as a leader of the region and brings in visitors from all over Golarion. The 31st centennial Radiant Festival, which

would have been held on 4620, was canceled due to the death of Aroden, the city's patron deity, not 15 years prior, the city still reeling from the loss. Now, it has been 200 years since the last Radiant Festival, and the city's citizens are excited to reestablish this amazing, once-in-a-lifetime event.

The Radiant Festival is best known for the incredible exhibits, performances, and markets brought in from other societies around the world. Representatives from every continent (and even other planes!) meet under the banner of Absalom to celebrate the ingenuity of their different peoples, show off their latest technologies, and boost business for various trades new and old. People from around the world use the Radiant Festival as an opportunity to announce new discoveries and inventions both revolutionary and mundane, making it an incredible spectacle where never-before-seen marvels are unveiled and shared with the world. The fair is a celebration of ingenuity and cooperation, and thus while many diverse groups are welcome (including, for the first time, goblin tribes), any groups who have shown themselves to be violent or otherwise a threat to peace are forbidden from attending.

This year's Radiant Festival promises to be unlike any before it, since the Festivals Committee, with the support of the Grand Council, has decided that the ruined Precipice Quarter will be the locus of the 4720 AR celebration. To accommodate the festival, legions of mercenaries, work crews, and even powerful wizards have been hired to clear a wide swath of the haunted quarter and transform it into a suitable fairground. What seemed at first like an overly ambitious dream finally came to pass late in the summer of 4720, when workers finished their preparations, the fair finally opened, and tourists flocked to the previously inhospitable quarter in droves. Although rumors persist that the Festivals Committee cut corners or hired contractors of dubious motive to accomplish their incredible feat, no one has argued with the impressive results of all the hard work.

The Radiant Festival's grand exhibits this year include incredible gyroscopic towers built by representatives of Vudra, a stunning ornate temple from Minkai called the Dragonfly Pagoda, a moving castle built by Kelish engineers, and a massive digging machine called Graveraker made by the gifted Arcadian engineer Wakeiwa Atikak.

## THE EDGEWATCH

With the revival of the Precipice Quarter, the Grand Council created a new (and temporary) city watch unit for this formerly derelict district: the Edgewartch, whose first order of business would be to help ensure the safety of attendees to the Radiant Festival and to stave off any



## PLAYER'S GUIDE



wrongdoing during this tremendous occasion. Precinct captains from around Absalom contributed their finest new recruits as well as several hardened veterans to the Edgewatch, much to the excitement of some and the dismay of others. So far, training and preparations have been a success, and the Edgewatch seems poised to pull off its impossible mission. If all goes according to plan and the city can retain its tenuous hold on the scarred district, the Edgewatch will continue to operate after the Radiant Festival and work to restore long-lasting peace and stability to the Precipice Quarter.

### CITY DISTRICTS

Absalom is divided into 11 proper districts, plus outlying regions and quarters that fall beyond the scope of official district lines. The following summaries of each district are paraphrased from the forthcoming book *Pathfinder Lost Omens: Absalom, City of Lost Omens*. For more information on Absalom and its residents, refer to that book.

#### Ascendant Court

Viewed by many as the heart of Absalom, the Ascendant Court is home to the Starstone Cathedral, where any comer might someday join the other ascended gods. Surrounding the massive temple are a dizzying array of shrines, churches, and other holy places, where faithful from all manner of religions pay tribute. Within this district, one can find adherents or sites dedicated to many under-represented or persecuted religions, since Absalom is tolerant of all theologies (as long as worshippers respect the laws of Absalom first, of course).

#### The Coins

Those looking to take advantage of Absalom's reputation as a grand bazaar go to the Coins, a bustling mercantile quarter that hosts an almost endless array of shops, wares, and independent traders. Within merchant houses, whole caravans can be bought and sold and the fortunes of cities may be made and lost, all while unscrupulous brokers make high-stakes bets or manipulate prospective outcomes.

#### The Docks

The Docks district serves as the main avenue onto or off of the Isle of Kortos and a hub of both international trade and immigration. Absalom's port of entry is hardly a peaceful haven for newcomers, however. Thirsty sailors work out their aggression at the district's numerous tap houses, visitors from places such as Cheliah and Andoran routinely pick fights to address centuries-long international rivalries, and run-of-the-mill criminals

prey on any arrivals who look like easy pickings. The Docks extends offshore, too: Pilot Island is best known as the site of the immense Absalom Lighthouse as well as the Harbormaster's Grange, an administrative hub where Absalom's harbor pilots fraternize and tax collectors set rates or suss out mounds of paperwork. Farther out in Kortos Bay looms a fleet of six impressive ebony ships shrouded in a perpetual magical fog—the Black Whale, Absalom's supposedly inescapable seaborne prison complex.

#### Eastgate

Eastgate is a quiet residential district with several iconic landmarks, including the Postern Gate, Blue Tower, and Green Ridge Watchtower. The Green Ridge neighborhood is known as the main site of druidic activity within Absalom, centered around a massive fig tree called the Grand Holt. Many creatures—from benevolent fey to nefarious aberrations—convene at the Grand Holt in order to honor (or glean power from) the ancient, sprawling tree. For all its sleepy charm, Eastgate is also home to nefarious secrets—namely, a large number of entrances to Absalom's buried Undercity.

#### Foreign Quarter

The opportunities of Absalom draw residents from across the world to the city's Foreign Quarter. The largest district enclaves are home to immigrants from Andoran, Cheliah, Osirion, Qadira, Taldor, and even far-away Vudra. Other Absalomians frequent this district to attend rousing events at the Irorium, to train at one of the many dojos or fighting schools in the area, or to request assistance or information from Pathfinders stationed at the towering Grand Lodge of the Pathfinder Society.

#### Ivy District

Absalom's old arts district is known for the flowering trees along its every road and countless stunning homes. Many of the Inner Sea region's most influential plays and musical performances make their debut in one of the many theater halls, opera houses, and tea houses within the Ivy District. Performers can learn from the very best at the notable bardic colleges, while adventurers and nobles store valuables in the Vault of Abadar. Anyone in need of a custom magic item can also find many options for commission in this quarter, since the Ivy District is home to many of the city's most talented specialty artisans and independent crafters.

#### Petal District

The grandest homes of Absalom's rich and powerful line the stately streets of the Petal District; in death,





important guild members and other Absalomian notables are entombed here in the enormous Spiralcross Cemetery. Non-residents come to the Petal District to study at the oldest school of magic in Absalom, the College of Mysteries, or to beseech mercenaries at one of the district's many hunting lodges-turned-adventurers' guilds. Lurking just beneath the surface of the Petal District's serene guise, nobles and power brokers meet to conduct much of the city's unspoken "Shadow War" in prolonged bouts of spycraft and treachery.

### Precipice Quarter

Formerly called Beldrin's Bluff, this ruined quarter was once one of Absalom's most beautiful and vibrant districts. In its prime, it featured ancient magical towers, brightly colored homes, and resplendent parks, but all of that was turned to rubble after an earthquake all but destroyed the sector 2 decades ago. The quake sheered entire cliffs from the district and cast countless historical monuments—to say nothing of lives—into the harbor and the Docks, leaving the quarter so ruined that it was abandoned to the undead and strange magic that arose in the disaster's aftermath. Only in recent years have sustained efforts been made to tame the ruins and start rebuilding. The reconstruction efforts gained considerable steam after the district was chosen as the site of this summer's Radiant Festival.

### The Puddles

Always Absalom's poorest district due to its propensity for flooding, the Puddles sank even deeper during the same earthquake that turned Beldrin's Bluff into the Precipice Quarter. Now, many of the streets in the Puddles are partially submerged most—if not all—of the time. The district's former central green has become a tidal lagoon filled with monstrous fish and parts of washed-up shipwrecks, many still containing sunken treasure. A vast tunnel network called the Siphons serves as the literal criminal underground for the quarter's smugglers, many of whom end up in the Brine, Absalom's largest and foulest prison. The Puddles' self-proclaimed law enforcers, the so-called Muckruckers, do little to alleviate wrong-doing, and the same might be said of the second-rate agents of the Starwatch stationed in nearby Fort Tempest, who don't include the Puddles in their official jurisdiction. Perhaps nowhere else in Absalom are citizens so left to fend for themselves than in this waterlogged district.

### Westgate

Westgate is home to many of the best-established non-noble families in Absalom, many of which have lived here in luxurious townhouses for multiple generations.

Westgate is home to Absalom's westernmost point of entry by land, the Sally Gate, which is also the garrison and mustering point for the city's mounted unit, the Kortos Cavalry. Westgate's many traditionalists and old-money pundits strongly dislike the disorder and revolutionary edicts that have marked recent years in Absalom, and some politically minded Westgate residents are stumping for a return to the old ways. Many of the district's neighborhoods are rumored to hold the secrets of powerful families, and wild speculations circulate about what historic relics might be unearthed during the ongoing construction of Westgate's new second sewer system.

### Wise Quarter

The Arcanamirium, with its soaring towers, and the Forae Logos, with its majestic domed roofs, are but two of Absalom's many repositories of knowledge. These institutions and countless other libraries, schools, and museums—not to mention the many press outlets and publishing imprints, both reputable and unabashedly tabloid—give the Wise Quarter its name. While the Wise Quarter is best known for its historical landmarks, newer establishments such as the Blakros Museum have grown rapidly in renown in recent years, and the Blakros Museum in particular has procured noteworthy items of incredible variety for visitors to study. The Wise Quarter is also a vital place of governance—it is the seat of Absalom's Grand Council and home to the Absalom Mint.

### Outskirts

The towns of Copperwood, Dawnfoot, Shoreline, and Westerhold cluster outside Absalom's walls near major gates. Copperwood and Westerhold consist mostly of homes for support staff and families of workers in nearby parts of Absalom, while many of the guards and administrators stationed in Starwatch Keep call Dawnfoot home. The suburb of Shoreline houses sailors, local fishers, and unpleasant businesses such as tanneries, but it's also a hot spot for smugglers and troublemakers who want to trade with Absalomians while avoiding the hefty fees and taxes imposed by the city's harbormaster. In times of siege or conflict, the residents of Copperwood, Shoreline, and Westerhold withdraw into Absalom's gates, while residents of Dawnfoot evacuate into Starwatch Keep.

### Undercity

Absalom has been besieged, rebuilt, and built over repeatedly for thousands of years. As a result, many layers of streets and buildings have ended up below what is now the surface city. The tortuous byways





of the Undercity now serve as service tunnels, secret passages, or sewers for the citizens above and ramshackle subterranean villages for the people brave (or desperate) enough to call the region home. Entrances to the Undercity span the entirety of Absalom proper, ranging from roughly hewn tunnels dug out from under ornate tombstones to fine stone passages and stairwells hidden beneath simple padlocked cellar doors.

The Undercity's many regions are variously claimed by azarketi outcasts, undead criminals, kobolds, and people who simply fit nowhere else in Absalom. The deepest layers contain ruins from the time of Absalom's emergence as well as intentionally hidden sites such as the Labyrinth of Absalom, a mythical maze in which, legend has it, Aroden defeated a terrible eons-old creature drawn up from below when he raised the Isle of Kortos from the ocean floor.

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