

# PATHFINDER®



## Stolen Fate

ADVENTURE PATH

### THE CHOOSING

By Ron Lundein





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# Stolen Fate

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# Stolen Fate

Just over a century ago, reality itself changed forever. Within the Inner Sea region, events like the opening of the Worldwound, the manifestation of the perpetual hurricane known now as the Eye of Abendego, and the unexpected death of the god Aroden shook nations and tested faiths, but the tumultuous events were not only limited to this part of Golarion. The collapse of the Lung Wa empire in Tian Xia, the uprising of an army of aberrations across the Open Bridge of Vudra, the failure of Myth-Speaking traditions in Iblydos, and the withering of the Veins of Creation in Arcadia all upended those locales as completely as eternal hurricanes, Abyssal portals, and deific deaths did in the Inner Sea. But these disasters, as horrible as they were, paled against the simple fact that, from that day

forward, prophecy no longer could be trusted. This reality-spanning transformation is what gave the Age of Lost Omens its name.

It was this loss of prophecy that compelled a norn triumvirate called the Harrowing Three to undertake the creation of a powerful artifact—the *Deck of Destiny*. This artifact, they hoped, would correct the cosmic disaster and place destiny itself back on a predictable path. The norns could not accept the idea that fate itself had been stolen, but had their plan succeeded, it would have resulted in the loss of free will for all.

## Using This Adventure Path

This Adventure Path chronicles the PCs' journey from 11th level to the absolute height of power at

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20th level. These three volumes, together with the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder Bestiaries* 1–3, *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide*, and additional supplemental rules in the *Pathfinder Reference Document* (available online at [paizo.com/prd](http://paizo.com/prd)), present everything you need to run the Adventure Path. This includes the adventures themselves, articles to enhance the campaign’s setting, and the Adventure Toolbox, which presents new creatures to fight, key NPCs to interact with, and a wealth of new rules options the PCs can gain access to.

To play in this campaign, a player should have a copy of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* as well as the *Stolen Fate Player’s Guide*, a free supplement downloadable from [paizo.com](http://paizo.com). In addition, this campaign makes heavy use of an in-world deck of cards used for fortune-telling and magic rituals—the harrow. The *Stolen Fate Player’s Guide* includes methods by which you can randomly determine draws from a harrow using dice or a regular deck of playing cards, but using an actual *Pathfinder Harrow Deck*, available from [paizo.com](http://paizo.com) or at most game stores, can enhance the immersion in your game.

## Campaign Background

The story of Stolen Fate begins approximately 120 years ago, at the dawn of the Age of Lost Omens, when prophecy itself seemed to die. While divination magic continued to function as it always had, prophecies that claimed to predict the future failed, one after the other—most dramatically when the prophesied return of the god Aroden failed to come about after the god himself died. Since then, the very nature of prophecy grew unreliable and unpredictable—the prophecies that did come true seemed to do so almost accidentally, and far more of them simply never came to pass at all. Those who had built their lives around anticipating prophesied events or studying these foretold futures were forced to adjust their world views or have their beliefs shattered. Yet believed there was still an opportunity to set things right.

## The Harrowing Three

At the dawn of the Age of Lost Omens, a triumvirate of norns (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 184)—**Fabrina the Spinster** (the triumvirate’s Maiden), **Hala the Rod** (the Mother), and **Diskrasia the Sharp** (the Matriarch)—took grave offense at what they regarded as an unthinkable distortion of reality: the failure of prophecy. Regarding the other disasters occurring across the world as little more than symptoms or side effects of the assault on fate, they debated how to repair the damage, soon coming to the conclusion that

while they could not mend the past, they could “heal” the future.

The norns quickly settled on a plan to combine two different but equally potent sources of divination: their own fey nature and the harrow, a deck of playing cards used by people throughout the Inner Sea region. The trio envisioned a special harrow deck they dubbed the *Deck of Destiny* and decided to call themselves the Harrowing Three. The project took them just over a century to finish, with each card in the deck requiring raw quintessence harvested from across the Great Beyond. Once the *Deck of Destiny* was completed, the Harrowing Three turned to the task of finalizing their plans. They knew they’d have but one chance to set the future in stone. If their plan worked, there would never be a need to use such magic again, and if it failed, retribution against Pharamsa for daring to usurp her mantle would surely mean their end.

And so the Harrowing Three took more time debating and preparing. The *Deck of Destiny* had been constructed to perform a harrowing spread requiring all 54 cards that would set the future of the entire multiverse. To be used in this way, every card in the deck must be laid out in a set of 3 concentric circles, each containing 18 cards. The innermost circle would represent the past, the central the present, and the outer ring the future. If the Harrowing Three were right—if they’d constructed the *Deck of Destiny* correctly and if the harrowing was properly performed—this would seal fate. The future foretold by the deck wouldn’t be just a possible future, but the future, for all time. And, the Three hoped, prophecy would work once more.

The Harrowing Three were wrong. The *Deck of Destiny* isn’t quite powerful enough to set every future in stone, but it’s more than powerful enough to wreak great havoc if it were to fall into the wrong hands.

## The Unmatched

The Harrowing Three were not the only ones who raged against the death of prophecy. In 4648 AR, an exile from Cheliax named Garron founded a group called the Harbingers of Fate, a secret society who believed that the events at the onset of the Age of Lost Omens were some sort of divine mistake. Lord Garron taught his followers the *Book of 1,000 Whispers*, a tome that detailed numerous prophecies that were supposed to have occurred since the Age of Lost Omens began. Lord Garron believed this book told the true history of Golarion as it should have happened, and with the aid of his growing cult, he set about trying to bring these prophecies to pass,

believing that if he could make them happen, reality would course correct.

Lord Garron died before seeing anything come of the Harbingers of Fate, but his daughter Arodeth took up his mantle and led the group into the new century. Her focus increasingly fell upon the final prophecies in the *Book of 1,000 Whispers*, which were predicted to occur in 4714 AR. When that year passed with nothing from the book coming true, the Harbingers of Fate imploded, its members turning on each other in a fit of bitter frustration that ultimately, like the predictions from the *Book of 1,000 Whispers*, had very little impact on the world at large. Arodeth would survive these events, but in the years that followed, the Harbingers of Fate began a quick slide into obscurity, their legacy amounting to little more than a curiosity of recent history.

But not everyone has forgotten. One bitter and disillusioned man, an exiled Chelaxian aristocrat named **Drustan** (LE male human tyrant), only grew more frustrated by the failure of the Harbingers' cause. In the following years after the cult's implosion, Drustan fled the Isle of Kortos and headed north, hoping to avoid persecution while simultaneously seeking a new way to "fix" the Age of Lost Omens. He eventually found himself in Varisia, where he met a mysterious woman named **Raven Nicoletta** (NE female human harrower).

Raven explained to Drustan that she had foreseen his arrival and that their meeting was destined, and as proof, she revealed to him her own discoveries—for she had learned of the Harrowing Three and that they were seeking to "heal the cosmic wound" in the world. Unlike the Harbingers, who sought to fix the past, the Harrowing Three looked forward, hoping to fix the future. To Drustan, this reversal was a revelation, and he pledged his services to Raven when she asked him to accompany her even further north to seek out the norns. In short order, the pair tracked the Harrowing Three down and offered their services—yet from the start, Raven and Drustan had their own plot in mind.

By this time, the Harrowing Three had completed all the individual cards from the *Deck of Destiny*, but the norns needed an equally impressive case to hold them within while they prepared for the final harrowing. The norns took Drustan and Raven into their service and sent them to gather various rare components for the deck's powerful container. While they served, the two bided their time, delighting in the irony at how their plot against those who would seek to know the future continued to go unnoticed. Raven impressed on the norns her own skill with the harrow and increasingly became an integral part of

their final preparation for the activation of the *Deck of Destiny*, allowing Drustan more freedom to gather additional allies. Chief among these was a violent warlord and mercenary leader who was so obsessed with the harrow that he'd adopted the name of one of the deck's most infamous apocryphal cards, the "Prince of Wolves," as his own.

## THE SCATTERING

As the time for the Harrowing Three's fate-fixing harrowing drew nearer, Raven, the Prince of Wolves, and Drustan secretly formed their own alliance. Calling themselves the Unmatched (believing themselves to be unhindered by any fate, magical harrow or otherwise), they had bided their time long enough. They knew what the *Deck of Destiny* was theoretically capable of, and if they could seize control of the artifact at just the right moment, they could stack the deck in their favor to ensure their own glory and power. As the Stolen Fate Adventure Path is about to begin, the Unmatched show their hand and try to steal the *Deck of Destiny* for themselves, mere moments before the Harrowing Three begin the process of setting the future "right."

The norns were unprepared for the betrayal but certainly not defenseless. They quickly realized what the Unmatched were hoping to do, and in a desperate ploy, the Harrowing Three cut the ties between each of the *Deck of Destiny*'s individual cards. In a flash, all 54 cards of the deck scattered across Golarion, each landing somewhere unknown to the Harrowing Three. The Unmatched were not prepared for this tactic, and panicking in the face of the combined wrath of the norn triumvirate, wisely fled to regroup and recover. The Harrowing Three let them go, feeling a loss of confidence as they were forced to grapple with the simple truth that they, in their obsession with knowing the future, were ignorant to the treacheries of the present.

As for the cards, they were scattered to places or people of great mystical power and potential. Some were drawn to regions or individuals whose themes matched the cards. Other showed up in entirely unexpected places, and in a few cases, with individuals who themselves were fated to play key roles in the continuing story—the PCs.

Which is when our story begins.

## Adventure Path Summary

In Stolen Fate, the Harrowing Three attempt to activate the *Deck of Destiny* when the Unmatched—a group of villains who covet the artifact and wish to use it to remake fate into something that benefits

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only them—attempt to steal the deck. In the resulting chaos, the deck becomes scattered, its cards spreading out across Golarion and leaving both the Harrowing Three and the Unmatched with only a tiny fraction of the cards each. Yet as these two opposing groups scramble to regain control of the *Deck of Destiny*, some of the cards fall into the hands of the PCs, who eventually may become the saviors of fate itself.

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Pathfinder Adventure Path

#190, Levels 11–13

When the PCs discover strange magical harrow cards in their possession, a compelling vision draws them to the city of Absalom, where they soon learn the true nature of these magical cards. With fate seeming to push the PCs toward gathering more of these cards, it won't be long before they trigger the creation of a brand-new demiplane associated with the cards—the Harrow Court. As the PCs continue to collect the scattered cards, they learn that a villainous opposing group known as the Unmatched has the same goal and ultimately come face-to-face with one of their members on the legendary Storval Stairs of Varisia.

## THE DESTINY WAR

By Chris Sims

Pathfinder Adventure Path #191, Levels 14–17

With potentially a third of the *Deck of Destiny* now in the PCs' hands, their hold over fate and the power of the Harrow Court grows. Yet their success has not gone unnoticed, and another agent of the Unmatched, a man who calls himself the Prince of Wolves after one of the harrow's most infamous apocryphal cards, leads his demonic minions against them in an invasion of the Harrow Court. After the Prince of Wolves' bold attack, the PCs must seek out and use another legendary artifact, the *Deck of Harrowed Tales*, to retaliate and secure even more cards from the *Deck of Destiny*.

## WORST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS

By Luis Loza

Pathfinder Adventure Path #192, Levels 18–20

With the defeat of the Prince of Wolves, the PCs have likely gathered a majority of the *Deck of Destiny*, and

triumph almost seems certain. That is, until disaster strikes when the most powerful of the Unmatched, Raven Nicoletta, steals the PCs' cards from under their noses. At this point, the norns of the Harrowed Three reveal they have been manipulating the PCs all along as their unwitting agents in gathering the cards, and they offer their aid in tracking Raven down—as long as the PCs promise to let them “heal the cosmic wound of Stolen Fate” when all is said and done. Whether the PCs agree to this is up to them to decide, but doing so would rob the PCs, along with anyone who can make choices, of free will.

## Key Names

There are several important NPCs, locations, and items to keep track of in this Adventure Path. The most important are compiled here for reference.

**All-Seeing Hajeck:** A doomed harrower whose involvement with the *Deck of Destiny* begins with her death.

**Arodeth:** A disillusioned mercenary leader who once tried to alter history.

**Deck of Destiny:** A deck of harrow cards created for the purpose of setting all futures in stone and giving those who use it power over destiny.

**Deck of Harrowed Tales:** A legendary harrow deck used to create the Harrowed Realm.

**Diskrasia the Sharp:** The matriarch norn of the Harrowing Three.

**Drustan:** An exiled Chelaxian noble; one of the Unmatched.

**Fabrina the Spinster:** The maiden norn of the Harrowing Three.

**Hala the Rod:** The mother norn of the Harrowing Three.

**Harrow Court:** A demiplane that rises from the *Deck of Destiny* as the PCs begin to rebuild the artifact.

**Harrowed Realm:** A demiplane based on the stories associated with the traditions of the harrow.

**Harrowing Three:** A triumvirate of norns, creators of the *Deck of Destiny*.

**Prince of Wolves:** A dangerous Abyssal mercenary; one of the Unmatched.

**Raven Nicoletta:** A powerful harrower; the most dangerous of the Unmatched.

**The Unmatched:** Three treacherous agents of the Harrowing Three who covet the *Deck of Destiny* for themselves.

**Zellara Esmeranda:** A ghost whose fate is bound to the harrow.



### Deck of Destiny



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## **Chapter 1: Luck of the Draw .....** 8

Drawn to the metropolis of Absalom by the magical harrow cards they've acquired, the PCs investigate a murder and follow leads to find a harrow card proprietor named Dieral Myrnese before the devils on his heels get to him!

## **Chapter 2: Scattered Stories .....** 22

Now that the PCs have gathered enough cards, their magic flows together to fashion an entirely new realm: a demiplane called the Harrow Court. Within the Harrow Court, six portals open that lead the PCs to the next six cards from the *Deck of Destiny* they are fated to recover.

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The Harrow Court pinpoints a concentration of harrow cards at the Storval Stairs, a titanic series of steps that connect lowland Varisia to the Storval Plateau. Control of the stairs changes often—it's currently in the hands of a mercenary band, as are several more cards from the *Deck of Destiny*.

## **COMING TOGETHER**

As described in the *Stolen Fate Player's Guide*, the PCs start this Adventure Path having each come into possession of a single card from the *Deck of Destiny*—cards that grant visions of and compulsions to visit a certain shop in Absalom's Grand Bazaar.

The assumption is that the cards they received are *The Brass Dwarf*, *The Empty Throne*, *The Paladin*, and *The Rabbit Prince*. If you have fewer than 4 PCs, give the leftover cards to Drustan at the end of the adventure. If you have more than 4 PCs, award the additional PCs with either *The Locksmith* or *The Mountain Man* (removing either card you use from Part 3 of this adventure).

If you have more than 6 PCs, work with your players to determine which PCs start with cards—those who don't should have strong ties to those who do so that they're compelled to accompany card-carrying PCs.

You could also simply grant these additional PCs cards selected from this or other adventures in *Stolen Fate*. If you do, you'll need to adjust the encounters that no longer have their associated card (and may need additional volumes beyond this one for a card's rules). If you grant additional cards, avoid granting any from the suit of Star before the PCs recover *The Carnival*, as doing so could trigger an early trip to the Harrow Court!

## **ADVANCEMENT TRACK**

“The Choosing” is designed for four characters.

**11** The characters begin this adventure at 11th level.

**12** The characters should be 12th level before they first enter the Harrow Court.

**13** The characters should be 13th level before journeying to the Storval Stairs.

The characters should reach 14th level by the time they complete the adventure.

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## Chapter 1: Luck of the Draw

All-Seeing Hajeck lived a life full of magical schemes, wild successes, and improbable failures. After a stint as a harrower in a traveling carnival that saw her fall under the influence of the *Deck of Harrowed Tales* (a powerful magical harrow deck that plays a larger role in the next adventure), Hajeck moved on to ply her trade in Absalom, where she gained ownership of a small game store called “Three Moves Ahead.” She’s had a mystical association with the harrow ever since her experiences with the *Deck of Harrowed Tales*, so when a strange card appeared in her shop one evening, she knew it to be a significant portent. The Vision was a harrow card she knew well, but this one didn’t belong to any deck she’d ever seen. Certain that it was from a unique deck, Hajeck closed her shop to spend time

investigating the card in her front room, where she had floor space to sketch out occult diagrams and consult her eclectic collection of maps and charts. As she began to piece together the clues, her magical investigations caused *The Vision* to resonate with other cards in the region. It is this resonance that causes the PCs to experience the strange pull toward Absalom’s Grand Bazaar at the start of this campaign.

Hajeck was startled to learn that other magical cards were in the region—while she only received vague sensations from those held by the PCs, another card appeared to fairly close to her. This was a card that appeared in the collection of Dieral Myrnese, an itinerant merchant who sold harrow cards (both authentic and faked) and associated items from his

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## CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

At the prompting of their harrow cards, the PCs are all drawn to a game shop in Absalom to meet someone who's also received a card. This unfortunate recipient is already dead, but clues point the PCs toward a harrow card purveyor named Dieral Myrnese. The PCs must ask around Absalom's Grand Bazaar, meeting all manner of interesting characters and helping with their problems, before they gain the clues pointing them to Dieral's hideout in an abandoned forge. Devils and mercenaries hound the PCs' investigations, and the mercenary leader also discovers Dieral's hideout, leading to a dramatic showdown.

mobile shop, the Harrow Barrow. Hajeck had avoided getting to know Dieral, as she didn't want her connection as a harrower easily traced and, truth be told, she considered the showy and gregarious Dieral to embody the worst elements of fortune-telling hucksters (like herself, although she couldn't admit it). Hajeck wasn't sure whether Dieral even knew he'd acquired one of these special harrow cards; with his jumbled collection of harrow-themed paraphernalia, Hajeck doubted it.

Hajeck decided to wait in Three Moves Ahead for the time being, suspecting that these travelers with their cards were coming to her but not realizing she would soon be entertaining much more unwelcome guests.

## Getting Started

If you're running *Stolen Fate* as a continuation of an established campaign, the task of getting the party together and establishing their backstories is already done for you. But if you're running *Stolen Fate* as a new campaign, and if your players have created brand new 11th-level characters, you'll want to give the players time at the start of the first session to work out how they know each other—or if they're meeting each other for the first time.

The *Stolen Fate Player's Guide*, a free PDF available at [paizo.com](http://paizo.com), is meant to help you and your players answer these questions in addition to providing context and advice for what sorts of characters are most appropriate for this campaign.

As this Adventure Path begins, each PC discovers on their person a strange card from the harrow, its appearance among their belongings a mystery. See Coming Together on page 7 for a list of which cards appear here—which PC starts with which card can be discussed among the players, or you as the GM can simply assign them as you wish (since these cards can be traded freely, the ones each PC starts with is mostly cosmetic). As soon as a PC touches the card, they receive a clear vision in their mind of the storefront of Three Moves Ahead. The vision also reveals to the PC where this store is located in the Grand Bazaar of Absalom and imparts a strange urge to travel there. Though they don't know why they feel compelled to visit the shop, the fact that all the PCs received the same vision at the same time they discovered their own strange card should have the players wondering if something magical involving the harrow awaits them at Three Moves Ahead.

## MOTIVATING THE PCS

*Stolen Fate*'s plot is not something the PCs are assigned to investigate by an NPC. Instead, this Adventure Path relies initially on curiosity to compel the PCs to investigate further. Where did this strange magical card come from? What can it do? What lies in wait at the location of their shared visions? As the second part of "The Choosing" begins, the PCs learn that the cards of the *Deck of Destiny* have been scattered and that powerful evil forces seek them for their own nefarious designs. While the PCs won't initially know what these evil forces are planning, or even who they are, the quest to gather up as much of the *Deck of Destiny* as they can remains the core plot of this campaign. The longer the PCs play *Stolen Fate*, the more invested in protecting destiny the PCs should become, so that their own desires become their most compelling motivation for continuing the campaign.

However, some groups might need additional motivation. If you find your players are hesitant to heed the visions and clues the *Deck of Destiny* provides, or if they get distracted by one of the unexpected locations their

## THE HEROES' ADVANTAGE

The many methods used by the Unmatched to track down the missing cards are effective but hardly all-encompassing, and the fact that these methods initially miss the cards that come into the PCs' possession is a fatal flaw that gives the PCs a significant head start over their enemies. Whether this is merely an element of chance or an active intervention by fate itself is left to the imagination—feel free to lean into one choice or the other as you wish if the players become intrigued at how the Unmatched were able to track down Hajeck and Dieral but took a bit longer to discover the PCs themselves.

quest sends them, consider having the Harrowing Three, one of their agents, or even the *Deck of Destiny* itself serve as a mysterious patron to nudge the PCs along the plot. Visions or dreams can also fill the role of the classic “quest-giving NPC.” It can be helpful to use these visions to impress upon the PCs that powerful enemies with nefarious plans seem to have a growing interest in gathering the cards for themselves, but take care not to reveal too many of the plot twists and surprises in store for the players to discover later in the campaign!

## Three Moves Ahead

Staying put at Three Moves Ahead proves to be a fatal mistake for Hajeck. As described in the Campaign Background, the Unmatched know quite a lot about the *Deck of Destiny* and have been working to collect its cards to reassemble the deck and control the future. Drustan, a disaffected lieutenant in a mercenary group called the Band of Blades and master of several devils, learned that two of the cards had found their way to Absalom. He instructed his second-in-command, a violent mercenary captain called Vharnev the Butcher, to reclaim them while Drustan tracks down a different card, *The Mountain Man*, in northwestern Varisia.

Vharnev sent a pair of devils to recover the card at Three Moves Ahead while he focused on tracking down the Harrow Barrow and its owner. The devils arrive at the shop not long before the PCs, finding Hajeck and painfully questioning her, but they underestimate her willpower and overestimate her endurance. Hajeck died from their cruel ministrations before they got much of anything from her. At the start of the adventure, the devils are still searching the shop for the card they've been told was in her possession.

Use the map on the inside cover for this area. As the PCs approach the shop, read or paraphrase the following.

---

The Grand Bazaar is crowded with shops. This one, flanked by a flower shop and an open-air meat vendor, is caught between smells both floral and savory. A sign above the door reads “Three Moves Ahead,” with images of dice and game pawns. The shop appears to be closed.

Three Moves Ahead is currently unlit, but it's not as abandoned as it appears. A character who listens for activity in the apparently empty shop hears creatures moving around with a successful DC 25 Perception check. These are the two devils searching the shop. Anyone announcing their presence (such as by knocking at the door) alerts the devils that they might soon be interrupted.

The front door is slightly stuck but not locked; a sturdy shove as an Interact action opens it without need for an Athletics check.

### A1. GAME ROOM

**MODERATE 11**

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The shop consists of a single wide room. A few shelves hold dice games and card decks, while private gaming rooms to the west sit beyond open curtains. Chalk lines cover the floor of the room, some of them smeared beneath the body and blood of a dead Varisian woman.

**Creatures:** Before the characters can look around the room, the devils take action. These devils assume—correctly—that the PCs' arrival is in some way linked to the chalk drawings on the floor, so they're ready to fight. The ferrugon engages in melee as quickly as possible, assuming it can physically overpower the PCs with ease and saving its magic for emergencies. The osyluth is a bit more circumspect and remains at a distance if it can, casting *zone of truth* and then using Stygian Inquisitor to interrogate the PCs about whether they have harrow cards, whether they know the owner of this shop, and where the shop owner keeps her harrow cards. The devils fight to the death.

### FERRUGON

**CREATURE 12**

Page 86

**Initiative** Perception +22

### OSYLUTH

**CREATURE 9**

*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 73

**Initiative** Perception +21

**Hajeck's Corpse:** The body is that of All-Seeing Hajeck, slain by the two devils. Her possessions were roughly searched and dumped in the blood pooling around her body. Her upper arm bears a very recent tattoo that looks like an architect being struck by

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lightning (an image often associated with The Vision, a side effect of the card that came into Hajeck's possession recently).

Characters of a level appropriate for this adventure might have ways of questioning Hajeck despite her death. *Talking corpse* allows the PCs to interrogate her remains, while a *call spirit* ritual could contact her actual spirit. In such a case, Hajeck can provide some of the information in the first few paragraphs of this chapter and describe the sudden and surprising attack of the devils here in her shop, but beyond pointing the PCs toward Dieral, she has little more to reveal to them.

**Chalk Map:** The chalk lines on the floor form a rough map of Absalom that Hajeck was working on just before she was killed. She was tracing the locations of other *Deck of Destiny* cards in the city. The PCs' path through the city is immediately evident, tracing the route they took to Three Moves Ahead. More subtle markings indicate the meandering path though the Grand Bazaar that Dieral Myrnese took with the Harrow Barrow; identifying those markings requires a successful DC 25 Perception check or a DC 20 Society check. For each round of combat in this room, increase the DCs by 2 as the chalk marks are scuffed by footwork or collateral damage from attacks or spells. With a successful check, a PC can identify the locations of Historia Reliquary, Kraken's Ink Tattoo, and Reclaimed Paradise, all of which have been indicated with marks but without context as to what the marks mean. If the PCs can speak with Hajeck's spirit or corpse, they may learn that Hajeck suspected more information about the strange card might be found at these locations, but she hadn't yet had the opportunity to investigate further.

**XP Award:** If the characters discover the three locations in the chalk map, award them 30 XP.

## A2. OFFICE

The door to this room has a small opening at a human's eye level, revealing the office beyond. The office is a mess, with piles of paperwork and incomplete games covering every surface. A messy cot indicates that someone's been sleeping here for the past few days.

As noted in Treasure on page 12, as soon as the PCs enter the office, the mental pull of their shared vision flares up again, revealing to them the location of *The Vision* in this room.

**Office Clues:** The office is an eclectic mix of records and personal effects from the game store's previous owner and Hajeck's things. She never got rid of her

### ALL-SEEING HAJECK

All-Seeing Hajeck first appeared in the standalone adventure *The Harrowing*. If your players are familiar with Hajeck or if having her appear in this adventure wouldn't make canonical sense at your table (for example, if you've previously run *The Harrowing* for your group), you can replace her role as an ill-fated shopkeeper in this adventure with any NPC of your choice.

In any event, as this adventure begins, Hajeck's soul is in a state of limbo, held in a sort of stasis by *The Vision*. Once the PCs begin the next adventure, she manifests in the Harrow Court, but until this point all attempts to resurrect her or otherwise restore her to life fail, as her soul (at this time) has no desire to return to life. Full details on Hajeck's fate and potential future appear in the next adventure.

predecessor's stuff, just simply moved her things in and made use of whatever was at hand. The resulting jumble is therefore confusing to look through. Amid various business records, unfinished puzzles, boxes of clothes, and incomplete or broken games, the PCs can find several ordinary harrow decks that Hajeck stashed around the room.

The most significant clue, however, is a business ledger jammed awkwardly onto a shelf. Its matching ledgers are all tucked away in a box under the desk. When *The Vision* card came into her possession, Hajeck grabbed the first thing at hand—this ledger—and jotted down her initial revelations and suspicions. The last few pages of the ledger contain Hajeck's summary of the meaning of *The Vision* (that it's the chaotic neutral card of Intelligence, and that it represents abstruse knowledge, sudden insight, or instability) and her suspicions that more cards from the same deck must be somewhere out there in the world. She noted that one Dieral Myrnese, owner of the Harrow Barrow, might know more. The Harrow Barrow isn't a shop but a traveling business whose proprietor wanders throughout the Grand Bazaar and (at times) elsewhere in Absalom. These notes also indicate a few nearby people who have a close connection with Dieral: Erikanesh runs a reliquary, Arhan owns a tattoo shop, and Clemeth owns a scrapyard. If the PCs successfully interpreted the map in area A1, they can connect each of these people to their shops without a check; otherwise, the PCs must succeed at a DC 20 Society check (or spend a little time asking around the Grand Bazaar) to make the connection.

**Treasure:** *The Vision* is tucked in between pages in the ledger. Finding the card would normally be somewhat difficult without scanning for magical auras, but the PCs, who've already been granted guiding visions by the card, automatically know where to look for it once they enter this room.

Elsewhere in the room are four scrolls: a *scroll of quench* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 223), a *scroll of heroism* (6th level), *scroll of slow* (6th level), and a *scroll of telepathic bond*.

**XP Award:** For discovering the names of the three locations and their proprietors, award the PCs 30 XP. Award them 60 XP for recovering *The Vision*.

## The Investigation Begins

With the clues from Three Moves Ahead, the PCs can investigate the shops Dieral is known to frequent. The three shops are described below, along with their proprietors. This investigation makes use of the influence subsystem found on pages 151–153 of the *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide*. A single round of attempting to influence a shopkeeper takes 1 hour to complete. Each shopkeeper grants rewards after gaining a certain number of Influence Points with that person, as noted in their influence stat blocks. Once the PCs earn 8 Influence Points with a shopkeeper, they know that shopkeeper has given out the most relevant clue they have. Note that if the PCs take too long, they may attract unwanted attention—see Assassin Attack on page 17 for more details.

All three shops are located in the Grand Bazaar of Absalom's Coins District. They aren't far apart, but the near-constant press of the crowds means it takes about a half hour to travel from one shop to another.

### INITIAL RESEARCH

At the start of this campaign, the PCs are hardly low-level adventurers who lack their own skills and resources. Rather than follow up directly with the clues they discover at Three Moves Ahead, some PCs may instead cut to the proverbial chase and use their own abilities and methods to track down Dieral. If the PCs do so, they may well miss out on the opportunity to make additional contacts, earn additional rewards, and gain additional XP from visiting the three sites detailed on the following pages—in this case, you can keep these locations handy in case the PCs decide they want to go check them out later! If the PCs do make use of methods like those outlined below, make sure to award them equal amounts of XP to what they would have learned by visiting the three locations—you shouldn't punish the party for being resourceful and skilled enough to skip portions of the adventure

where they otherwise would have earned notable XP awards, after all!

**Gathering Information:** If the PCs decide to simply ask around the Grand Bazaar and use their skill at Diplomacy to track down Dieral's location, they can attempt to Gather Information in the marketplace. While many people have heard of Dieral or have noted his unique magical cart, the PCs should also take note of just how well the man's managed to maintain an air of mystery about him. An attempt to Gather Information takes 2 hours and requires a DC 30 Diplomacy check. With a success, the PC learns that Dieral is known to have associated with one of the three shopkeepers listed below, while on a critical success, the PC learns instead one of the clues they would have otherwise learned via successfully influencing a shopkeeper. On a critical failure, the PC learns nothing, but they accidentally attract the attention of their enemies, who soon thereafter organize an attack on the party (see Assassin Attack on page 17).

**Using Magic:** Spells like *locate* heightened to 5th level can be an excellent resource when attempting to divine the location of a hidden target or person—within limitations. *Locate* not only requires the PC to be within 500 feet of Dieral but also to have met him in the first place, so for the initial attempt to track him down, this specific option is likely unusable. Other spells, like *scrying*, have a greater chance of success, but whether or not the PCs can learn enough information from scrying Dieral to figure out where he's at is up to you. Ultimately, if the PCs are struggling with other avenues of the investigation and you feel like they've hit a wall, allowing them to learn where Dieral's location via some kind of magical assistance is a good idea. However, if they attempt *scrying* early, consider having the PC observe Dieral interacting with a visual clue that instead leads them to one of the three shopkeepers detailed below.

### HISTORIA RELIQUARY

Erikanesh (LN agender lizardfolk anthropologist) is the founder and owner of one of the largest antique shops in the Grand Bazaar. They're a serious and studious academic with striking knowledge about Avistani antiquities. Erikanesh might seem dismissive or even rude to people who don't seem to appreciate historical subjects, but they're engaging and witty when among fellow scholars.

Historia Reliquary is a pleasant, orderly shop lit by glass globes containing *continual flames*, with historical relics on display in cases. The shop is as much a museum as it is a store; Erikanesh keeps the entrance

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hung with black cloth to deter casual browsing and charges 1 silver piece just to enter their shop. Once customers are inside, Erikanesh is reluctant to let them leave so long as the antiquarian can drone on about the history of various pieces. Fresh rolls and tea are complimentary to all visitors, and Erikanesh is just as fussy about preparation of these treats as in the meticulous organization of the shop's wares.

Erikanesh's deep knowledge about Avistani history includes the harrow, as Varisians have inhabited Avistan since long before Earthfall. The antiquarian has a solid familiarity with each card of the harrow and what they symbolize—although Erikanesh insists that, from a purely academic perspective, fortune telling is “unscientific nonsense.” Still, Erikanesh has fostered a good working relationship with Dieral Myrnese, as some truly rare finds sometimes make their way into the Harrow Barrow among the dross. Erikanesh therefore always makes time for Dieral when he visits with his gaudy, wheelbarrow-mounted “shop” in the hopes of finding something of historical importance—a card used in a reading for an important historical figure, for example. The prices Erikanesh pays for these historical cards keep Dieral coming around, despite the lizardfolk’s snooty demeanor.

Erikanesh heard Dieral discussing a truly unique card, one both powerfully magical and historically significant, and they’re eager to determine just what that card might be. Unfortunately, Erikanesh is extremely hesitant to speak to just anyone about Dieral’s cards or even to speculate on Dieral’s location, for fear someone might try to acquire this special card before Erikanesh gets the opportunity to examine and make an offer for it.

If any PC is an expert or better in a Lore skill related to an Avistani location or about history more broadly, Erikanesh takes an initial liking to the party. In this case, the PCs automatically gain 1 Influence Point after their first meeting with the antiquarian and don’t have to pay the admission fee thereafter. Otherwise, Erikanesh insists on collecting the admission fee each time they seek to enter Historia Reliquary.

The PCs can engage in up to five Influence rounds per day with Erikanesh (either sequentially or split up among multiple visits), because the antiquarian likes to talk. After that, however, Erikanesh has too much work to do for any further meaningful discussion. If

a character critically fails at an attempt to Influence Erikanesh more than 3 times, that PC may no longer attempt to influence them.

More information about Historia Reliquary and its proprietor appears on pages 28–29 of *Pathfinder Lost Omens Grand Bazaar*.

## ERIKANESH

UNIQUE LN MEDIUM HUMANOID LIZARDFOLK

Antiquarian and proprietor of Historia Reliquary

**Perception** +17

**Will** +19

**Discovery** DC 23 Academia Lore, DC 30 Perception, DC 28 Society

**Influence Skills** DC 26 Academia Lore (to discuss educational opportunities), DC 26 Deception (to imply some false connection to Dieral), DC 30 Diplomacy (to indicate honest appreciation of Erikanesh’s knowledge), DC 28 Intimidation (to warn Erikanesh to back off from Dieral), DC 28 Society (to leverage social connections the antiquarian appreciates)

**Influence 2** The antiquarian likes talking to the characters and reveals that they know Dieral fairly well, as Erikanesh likes purchasing antique harrow cards of special significance from the gregarious merchant (although Erikanesh doesn’t have any right now). Erikanesh then steers conversation to some of their wares and goes so far as to press one of them upon the PCs, believing they’ll carry—and thus, effectively advertise—the antiquarian’s historical relics. The party receives either an *amaranthine pavise* (*Grand Bazaar* 30), a *greater staff of final rest* (*Grand Bazaar* 30), or a *cape of the mountebank* embroidered with vibrant patterns for free, as they prefer. If the PCs can’t agree on a choice, Erikanesh defers to whichever PC succeeded at the Influence check that brought the group’s total to this threshold. The PCs gain 60 XP.

**Influence 4** The antiquarian gossips about some of the other proprietors in the Grand Bazaar, including those Dieral seems to know best: Arhan Benimaya at Kraken’s Ink Tattoo and Clemeth Falk at Reclaimed Paradise. Erikanesh considers both individuals to be utterly lacking in academic discipline or good business sense. This gossip gives the PCs a +1 circumstance bonus to attempts to Discover for both of these individuals.

**Influence 6** Realizing that the PCs are people with insight and wealth, Erikanesh invites them to shop at any time. The PCs gain access to all uncommon wares sold by Historia Reliquary (*Grand Bazaar* 30–31). Erikanesh admits that dealing with Dieral can be somewhat



**Erikanesh**

wearying, as his mobile shop is filled with a lot of useless clutter, but the occasional rare finds make entertaining Dieral worthwhile. In fact, Erikanesh recently heard that Dieral had come into possession of a particularly rare harrow card. The PCs gain 60 XP.

**Influence 8** Erikanesh feels they can trust the PCs with information they know about where to find Dieral. Unfortunately, it isn't much; Erikanesh only knows that the Dieral said he's been living somewhere in the Eastgate district of the city. The PCs gain 80 XP.

**Resistances** Erikanesh considers the harrow and those who believe in its mystical reputation to be a bit silly. Bringing up harrow cards when taking an Influence action increases the DC of that check by 2.

**Weaknesses** Erikanesh likes long-winded discussions with clients. If a character using Academia Lore or Diplomacy to Influence Erikanesh is willing to extend the time of the current social round from 1 hour to 4 hours, reduce the DC of that check by 2.

**Background** Erikanesh grew up in the Mwangi Expanse and graduated with distinction from the Magaambya before traveling to Absalom.

**Appearance** Erikanesh is a tall, blue-skinned lizardfolk who dresses fashionably with no thread out of place.

**Personality** Arrogant, long-winded, methodical

## KRAKEN'S INK TATTOO

Kraken's Ink Tattoo is an old business in the Docks district, but the shop's secondary stall in the Grand Bazaar sees a good deal of business. **Arhan Benimaya** (NG male human tattoo artist) is a skillful artist who takes on the more complex jobs while leaving the minor piercings and simple tattoos to his able assistant, **Nara** (NG female kobold artist). Market policy demands that stall owners spend a certain amount of time in the Grand Bazaar per month, so that's where he is when the PCs look for him. He finds the liveliness of the enormous market exciting but a bit overwhelming at times; he likes to lose himself in the detailed work of his craft, taking comfort from his ever-present dog, Apple.

The timbers of the sturdy wooden shop retain the salty smell of the ocean, as they were mostly recovered from an old ship, an effect that makes sailors or fishers feel comfortable making the trek from the Docks district. Another factor that lends the shop a waterfront feel is Arhan's boyfriend **Brine** (CG male azarketi laborer), who is usually hanging around, fresh

from his work in the sea. Nara's and Brine's constant good-natured teasing of the other provides a delightful background burble in the shop.

Kraken's Ink Tattoo is a friendly, laid-back place that does brisk business. The shop sells numerous wares in addition to tattoo and piercing services, all of which are either Nara's artistic renderings of tattoo designs or bartered goods that Arhan takes in trade for his work.

Arhan knows and likes Dieral Myrnese, primarily because the variety of harrow cards Dieral brings with him provide endless artistic inspiration for Arhan's designs. Brine has taken to giving Dieral severe glares when he comes around, as well as teasing Arhan about having a crush on the handsome elf. Arhan hasn't seen Dieral in a while and doesn't know where to find him. Arhan would like to help the PCs locate Dieral, but he doesn't realize that he holds an important clue to doing so.

Arhan's business is doing quite well, which unfortunately means he's unable to spend a lot of time talking with the PCs. The PCs can engage in up to three Influence rounds per day with Arhan (either sequentially or split up among multiple visits) before he's simply too busy to give them any more time. A character who critically fails at an attempt to Influence Arhan twice in a row annoys him and may no longer attempt to Influence him.

More information about Kraken's Ink Tattoo and its proprietor appears on pages 36–37 of *Lost Omens: Grand Bazaar*.

## ARHAN BENIMAYA

UNIQUE	NG	MEDIUM	HUMAN	HUMANOID
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Tattoo artist and proprietor of Kraken's Ink Tattoo

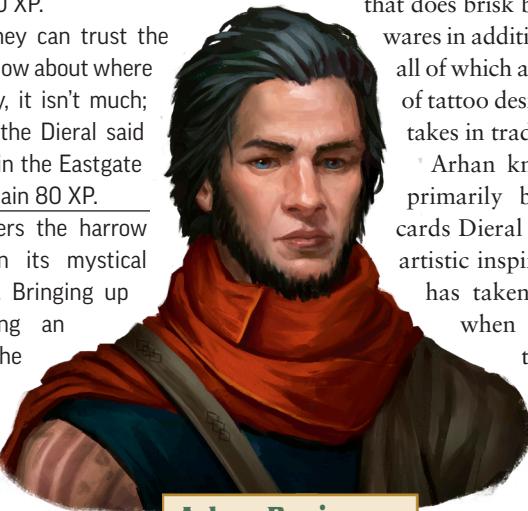
**Perception** +18

**Will** +18

**Discovery** DC 23 Art Lore, DC 28 Perception, DC 26 Scribing Lore, DC 30 Society

**Influence Skills** DC 28 Arcana (to discuss magical tattoos or harrow cards), DC 26 Crafting (to discuss ink and tool creation), DC 30 Deception (to insinuate some information regarding Dieral), DC 28 Diplomacy (to ask about Dieral openly and honestly), DC 26 Intimidation (to deliver threats about Dieral)

**Influence 2** Arhan discusses how much he knows and likes Dieral, and how his unusual harrow cards are great inspiration for tattoo designs. He hasn't seen Dieral in a few weeks, which he suddenly realizes



**Arhan Benimaya**

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is an unusually long time. In addition, Arhan is now willing to take the PCs as customers and offers to sell magical tattoos to them. The PCs gain access to the tattoos sold by Kraken's Ink Tattoos (*Grand Bazaar* 38), and to the *familiar tattoo* and *warding tattoos* from *Pathfinder Secrets of Magic* (pages 164 and 165). The PCs gain 30 XP.

**Influence 4** Arhan believes the PCs to be good people, worthy of the magical protection his tattoos provide. He agrees to scribe a *greater enveloping light tattoo* (*Grand Bazaar* 38) upon anyone who wants one free of charge (up to one per PC). If the PCs have told Arhan about their encounters with devils, he offers to instead scribe a *fiend warding tattoo* (*Secrets of Magic* 165) on anyone who prefers that tattoo. Arhan thinks about some other contacts in the Grand Bazaar who Dieral has mentioned in the past: Erikanesh at Historia Reliquary and Clemeth Falk at Reclaimed Paradise. He gives some suggestions about how to best talk with these people. These suggestions gives the PCs a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation checks used as Influence actions for both of these individuals. The PCs gain 60 XP.

**Influence 6** Arhan shares some of his secret processes, providing the PCs with access to the Tattoo Artist skill feat (*Secrets of Magic* 164) and Arcane Tattoo, Ornate Tattoo, and Virtue-Forged Tattoo human ancestry feats (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Character Guide* 11, 13, and 14). Arhan can help one PC retrain into one of these feats each day, although this takes an entire day. At this point, Arhan considers the PCs to be worth enticing as repeat customers. He offers them a permanent 10% discount on all uncommon wares sold by Kraken's Ink Tattoos. The PCs gain 30 XP.

**Influence 8** Arhan offers a clue that might help the PCs find Dieral. When looking over a book of tattoo images, Dieral remarked that one of the images reminded him of the sign above a safe place he knows. It's where he'd go if he were ever in trouble. It takes Arhan a few minutes to find that image, but he shows it to the PCs: that of a stylized horse in profile. Arhan apologizes that it's not much, but he hopes that the clue is helpful. The PCs gain 80 XP.

**Resistances** Arhan relies upon the support of his friends and allies. If a character tries to influence Arhan while he's alone (that is, while Apple, Brine, or Nara aren't around, as is often the case during off-hours or after dark), increase the DC to Influence by 2.

**Weaknesses** Arhan can best focus while he works. If one of the characters agrees to get a tattoo during the Influence round—whether a moderate piece costing only 2 gp up to one of the magical tattoos available to them once they reach 2 Influence Points—reduce the DC of checks to Influence in that round by 2.

**Background** Arhan was born in Cheliax but came to Absalom during adolescence, first sketching travelers for coppers to help feed his family and ultimately becoming a tattoo artist at Kraken's Ink Tattoo.

**Appearance** Arhan is a small, dark-haired man with kind eyes and a body covered with tattoos in a variety of styles.

**Personality** Patient, shy, sympathetic

## RECLAIMED PARADISE

Reclaimed Paradise is a walled scrapyard in the Grand Bazaar. Although scrap yards have a reputation as noisy, dirty businesses, **Clemeth Falk** (N female orc mechanic) keeps her yard from getting too dirty and often employs magic (such as *telekinetic haul* or *silence*) as needed to avoid bothering her neighbors when particularly loud tasks must be performed. Clemeth has a reputation as being more than an exceptional mechanic: she works hard to mend people, too, particularly those who seem to be the most broken. She likes talking with her clients about the tough times they've had, hoping to give them some insights about how to mend damaged relationships, overcome self-defeating doubts, and more. Clemeth employs several hands to help with all the work of fixing vehicles, reducing irreparable machines to spare parts, and cobbling together useful contraptions. These employees are all healthy, happy, and seem to really love their work. They've quickly learned Clemeth's prohibitions on lying, stealing, or cheating, and how those who break these rules are lucky if they're only ejected from Reclaimed Paradise for life.

Clemeth has an intense focus on good health. She's constantly rearranging the scrap in her walled compound to create obstacle courses that take exceptional physical skill to navigate effectively. She trains on her courses every day and encourages her employees to do the same (and her customers, while they're waiting for repairs to be completed). Clemeth doesn't consider it a failure if someone can't overcome her latest obstacle course, but instead nearly always uses it as an opportunity to instruct them on how to practice physical fitness and think more quickly on their feet.

Clemeth and Dieral Myrnese are unlikely friends. Dieral needed his wheelbarrow fixed one day, and Reclaimed Paradise had the right resources for the job. Dieral assumed that the shop was only for people with large, complicated vehicles like clockwork boats or iron-plated carriages, but Clemeth insisted that she could have his broken wheelbarrow fixed within the time it'd take for Dieral to give an honest effort on her obstacle course. Dieral succeeded on his first try with a mixture of luck and skill. The orc mechanic

was impressed, and she's been fine-tuning Dieral's wheelbarrow ever since. She hasn't seen him in a while, though, and worries a bit about what's happened to him.

Clemeth has plenty of assistants to help her with her work, but she prefers to keep a hands-on approach that doesn't leave a lot of time for idle chatter. The PCs can engage in up to four Influence rounds per day with Clemeth (either sequentially or split up among multiple visits) before she can't spare them any more time.

A PC who critically fails three checks to Influence Clemeth in the same day can no longer attempt to Influence her.

More about Reclaimed Paradise appears on pages 74 to 75 of *Grand Bazaar*.

## CLEMETH FALK

**UNIQUE** N MEDIUM HUMANOID ORC

Mechanic and proprietor of Reclaimed Paradise

**Perception** +16

**Will** +20

**Discovery** DC 23 Engineering Lore, DC 26 Labor Lore, DC 29 Perception, DC 27 Society

**Influence Skills** DC 26 Athletics (to demonstrate physical fitness), DC 26 Crafting (to discuss repair work), DC 28 Deception (to invent a fabrication about Dieral), DC 26 Diplomacy (to openly talk about the PCs' problems), DC 30 Intimidation (to threaten Clemeth for information)

**Influence 2** Clemeth tells what she knows about Dieral. She hasn't seen him in a while but notes that Dieral talked a lot about other friends in the Grand Bazaar, including Erikanesh at Historia Reliquary and Arhan Benimaya at Kraken's Ink Tattoo. Clemeth recounts what she's heard about these people, stating that it seems easy to lie to Erikanesh ("that stuffy lizard sure likes a story, even if it isn't true—maybe especially if it isn't true.") and that Arhan appreciates good workmanship ("We agree on the value of working with tools, but there's something fishy about him other than the smell of his shop.") These are clues to some of the easiest Influence skills to use against these people (Deception and Crafting, respectively). The PCs gain 30 XP.

**Influence 4** Clemeth offers a chance for the PCs to try out her latest obstacle course in the scrapyard—a gauntlet of pivoting blades, greasy ladders, and



**Clemeth Falk**

unstable platforms. A PC can try to navigate the obstacle course instead of making an Influence skill check in subsequent Influence rounds. Doing so requires successfully Running the Obstacle Course (page 17). The first time a PC succeeds, Clemeth nods in respect then opens up further about Dieral, expressing some worry about how he obsessed over his collection more than she considered healthy. He told her more than once that if he ever found a really rare, magical card, he'd consider giving up his card-peddling business. He thought for a minute, though, and admitted that if he did get a very powerful magic card, dangerous people might be after it, too. Clemeth laughed off Dieral's worry, poked his bony shoulder, and told him that was a good reason to get into better shape. She's now worried that her friend is in real danger and hopes the PCs can help him. The PCs gain 60 XP. If at least one PC completes the obstacle course, increase this reward to 90 XP.

**Influence 6** Clemeth provides access to all the wares in Reclaimed Paradise (*Grand Bazaar* 76-77) at a permanent 10% discount, although the PCs aren't likely to have much use for vehicles in this Adventure Path.

**Influence 8** Clemeth remembers that Dieral seemed familiar with some of the specialty repair tools he saw her using. She expressed surprise—as he didn't seem like someone good with his hands—and Dieral made a dismissive comment about an abandoned forge that he'd go to if he ever got into trouble. Clemeth hopes that clue will help the PCs find him. The PCs gain 80 XP.

**Resistances** Dishonesty is one of the few things that shake Clemeth's calm. If a PC fails when using Deception to Influence Clemeth, that PC increases the DC of all subsequent Influence attempts with her by 2.

**Weaknesses** Clemeth doesn't like to admit her bias, but she's partial to those who are well-muscled. Any PC with a Strength of 15 or higher reduces the DC of their Influence actions by 1.

**Background** Clemeth proved so adept at engineering that the previous owner left the shop to her. She's made the entire scrapyard more efficient, with happier employees, and she can afford to be selective about the clients she accepts.

**Appearance** Clemeth is a tall orc in extraordinarily good shape. She wears a comfortable uniform complete with all the necessary safety gear of her trade: goggles, knee pads, thick gloves, and a heavy leather apron.

**Personality** Chatty, honest, independent

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## RUN THE OBSTACLE COURSE

### EXPLORATION | MOVE

You attempt to navigate the obstacle course Clemeth set up in the Reclaimed Paradise Scrapyard. Attempt a DC 26 Acrobatics check, a DC 26 Athletics check, then a DC 28 check using your choice of Acrobatics, Athletics, or Perception. Regardless of the check, each is a 1-minute activity. You successfully navigate the obstacle course once you earn 3 Obstacle Course Points without taking a break between checks. If you attempt this activity more than 4 times in a row, you become fatigued.

**Critical Success** You earn 2 Obstacle Course Points and gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your next check to Run the Obstacle Course.

**Success** You push forward on the course and gain 1 Obstacle Course Point.

**Failure** You earn no Obstacle Course Points and must attempt a DC 28 Reflex save. If you fail, you wrench a muscle or otherwise hurt yourself and become enfeebled 1 for 1 hour.

**Critical Failure** You lose 1 Obstacle Course Point and twist an ankle or otherwise seriously hurt yourself, becoming enfeebled 2 (a successful DC 28 Reflex save reduces this to enfeebled 1).

## ASSASSIN ATTACK

### MODERATE 11

At Drustan's direction, the mercenary group known as the Band of Blades is also seeking Dieral Myrnese, yet they're taking steps to maintain secrecy about their involvement. As this adventure begins, only one member of the Band of Blades is active in Absalom—Vharnev the Butcher. The PCs encounter Vharnev in due time, but they may well attract his attention earlier should they critically fail at an attempt to Gather Information or if they haven't learned where Dieral is within 7 days of this adventure's beginning. When the PCs first catch Vharnev's attention, he doesn't initially suspect they possess cards from the *Deck of Destiny* but does consider them meddlers. You can also use attacks from his hired mercenaries as needed to liven up play or to provide the PCs with new chances to pick up additional clues that might have fallen out of reach.

These attacks can occur anywhere in the city, either in a place the party is staying, a deserted alley, or an open plaza, and as such no map for this encounter is provided—feel free to design one of your own, use a map of a city location from another adventure you own, or use one of the many urban-themed Flip-Mats available at [paizo.com](http://paizo.com).

**Creatures:** The Band of Blades' leader, Arodeth, has a fraught history with Absalom, and as such, she hopes to keep any involvement in the city hidden for now.

Furthermore, her posting to Absalom is under Drustan's command—he's not even technically supposed to be operating in the area as far as Arodeth is concerned. As a result, Vharnev the Butcher is under orders to not reveal his affiliation with the Band of Blades and has been supplied with all the funds necessary to hire as many mercenaries as he needs to achieve the Band's goals in Absalom, thanks to Drustan.

When an attack occurs, a group of four hired assassins strike at the PCs; some with arrows from rooftops and others in melee as they dart out from alleyways. A mercenary assassin reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points flees or surrenders. If captured and interrogated, these mercenaries can reveal the name of the man who hired them (Vharnev the Butcher), but they don't know of his ties to the Band of Blades or that he reports to Drustan. They can also reveal to the PCs that the man who hired them wanted the assassins to search the PCs for any harrow cards, and if they found any, to keep them safe until they could bring them back to Vharnev. Asked where or how they intend to meet with Vharnev, the assassins shrug, saying "He always contacted us. If we'd found those cards on your bodies, he'd have arrived soon after." They can confirm that Vharnev can use magic, but that he's also an intimidating soldier as well.

## MERCENARY ASSASSINS (4)

### CREATURE 9

RARE NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Human assassin

**Perception** +17

**Languages** Common

**Skills** Acrobatics +19, Athletics +17, Deception +15, Society +17, Stealth +19, Survival +15, Thievery +19

**Str** +4, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +2, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

**Items** +1 composite shortbow (20 arrows), +1 leather armor, simple injury poison (4 doses, 2d4 poison damage), +1 striking rapier

**Swift Sneak** The assassin can move their full Speed while Sneaking.

**AC** 27; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +19, **Will** +15

**HP** 155

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ rapier +20 (deadly d8, disarm, finesse, magical), **Damage** 2d6+9 piercing

**Ranged** ♦ shortbow +20 (deadly d10, magical, propulsive, range increment 60 feet, reload 0), **Damage** 1d6+9 piercing

**Poison Weapon** ♦ (manipulate) **Requirements** The assassin wields a piercing weapon and has a free hand;

**Effect** The assassin applies a poison to the weapon.

**Sneak Attack** The assassin deals an extra 2d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

**Gaining the Clue:** One of the assassins carries a short directive to attack the PCs before returning to the search for Dieral Myrnese. The directive contains a clue of your choice to Dieral's location that the PCs haven't yet managed to discover.

## Stirrup & Barding

Once the PCs have all three clues, they'll know that Dieral's "safe place" is an abandoned forge in Eastgate marked with an image of a stylized horse in profile. At this point, a successful DC 25 Society check or DC 20 Absalom Lore check is enough for a PC to confirm the one location that matches all three clues—Stirrup & Barding. If the PCs instead attempt to use these clues to Gather Information, a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check provides this information.

Once a farrier who made little more than horseshoes, Abreth Myrnese came into a substantial inheritance and expanded her business to encompass all kinds

of other blacksmith needs for horses: tack, barding, and even the occasional chariot. She received several lucrative contracts from the Post Guard, Eastgate's neighborhood guard, which possessed a small cavalry but nevertheless wanted it outfitted well, and her business expanded. She bought a failing stable called Stirrup & Saddle, renamed it Stirrup & Barding, and settled in to a busy and well-compensated life.

Yet Abreth became increasingly uncomfortable working for law enforcement, as she had many friends in Eastgate's criminal underworld. She didn't want to simply cancel her contracts for fear of what retribution the Post Guard might bring upon her and her friends, so she disappeared one day along with her most recent payments. The Post Guard simply went looking elsewhere for work and Stirrup & Barding was left abandoned.

Dieral thought of his cousin's comfortable stable when he realized he was being pursued by unknown forces. He was initially delighted to find a strange card among his wares—*The Carnival*—but it almost immediately gave him visions of being pursued. This was a genuine warning from the card, but it's the nature of *The Carnival* to be cryptic and strange, so Dieral couldn't get any specific information about his pursuers no matter how many harrow readings he attempted.

Dieral hadn't seen Abreth for years, but he believed she'd shelter him and his wheelbarrow while he figured out this next move. He was surprised to find Stirrup & Barding shuttered, but that didn't stop him from breaking in and making it his hiding place anyway. He's been lying low there ever since.

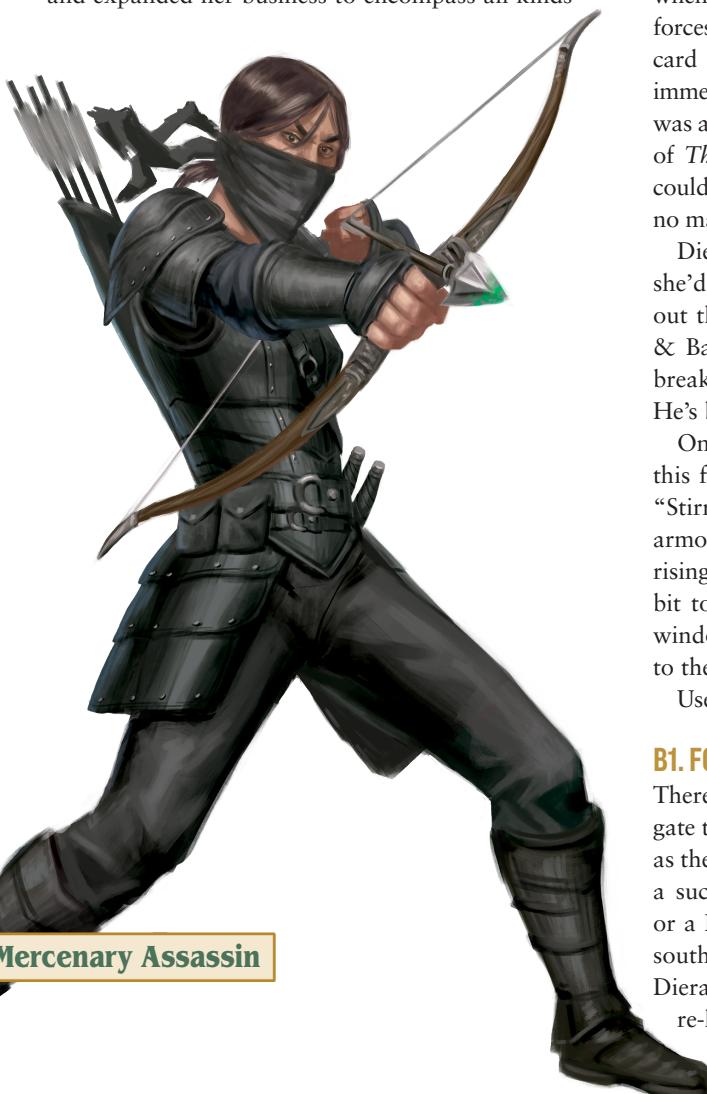
One part stable and one part blacksmith shop, this forlorn stone and thatch building has the words "Stirrup & Barding" painted above a picture of an armored horse facing the street. The massive chimney rising from the structure emits no smoke and lists a bit to the side as though in danger of collapse. The windows are shuttered, and weeds fill the small corral to the side and behind the building.

Use the map on the inside front cover for this area.

### B1. FORLORN FORGE

There are several entrances to Stirrup & Barding. The gate to the paddock and the front double door, as well as the windows, are all barred. Opening them requires a successful DC 20 Thievery check to Pick a Lock, or a DC 20 Athletics check to break them open. The southern door to the forge appears to be locked, but Dieral broke this lock to get in a few days ago and re-hung it here. Upon anything other than cursory examination, it's clear that this lock is broken, and the door opens easily.

**Mercenary Assassin**



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The stable's interior is dim and drafty. Several supplies are stacked in one corner, near a cold fireplace with an enormous anvil next to it. A few blacksmith's tools hang on the wall. A small door to an interior room has a bit of light beneath it. A large wheelbarrow sits near this door. Its lower half is a complex clockwork-like contraption with a single large metal wheel and a pair of handles affixed with leather straps, and its upper half appears to be a colorful miniature shop with its walls and roof line set with dozens of hinges and latches.

If the PCs make noise here, Dieral puts out his light and remains silent, hoping that whoever it is will go away.

The light comes from the storage room (area B3) where Dieral is hiding, since he keeps an *everburning torch* in the windowless room. The complicated wheelbarrow itself is, of course, the eponymous Harrow Barrow. A closer examination reveals that the “shop” built on top of the wheelbarrow incorporates several dozen small images—54 in all, each referencing one of the classic 54 cards of the harrow. The wheelbarrow is in fact a complicated set of drawers and cabinets that can be opened and closed—many of which contain valuables (see Treasure below), but all of which are currently locked. Dieral carries the key, but a character who succeeds at a DC 30 Thievery check can Pick a Lock on any of these. The lower portion of the wheelbarrow is fitted with a set of clever gears and clockwork machinery that allows a single person to haul the heavy contraption around with relative ease. The Harrow Barrow itself is 16 Bulk, but it counts as only 8 Bulk when one engages the device’s clockwork machinery.

**Treasure:** A +2 striking mithral longspear has fallen behind the stack of supplies in the southwest corner of the room. Its head is marked with the symbol of the Post Guard, Eastgate’s neighborhood guard. A vanishing coin hangs with the tools on the wall.

The Harrow Barrow itself is a cunning contraption worth 60 gp, although it’s well-known to belong to Dieral, and if the PCs steal it, so they may have trouble selling it at any market in Absalom! The Harrow Barrow contains a staggering amount of relatively valueless gaudy accessories for harrow readings, including a large number of harrow-inspired works of art and tiny sculptures. In all, this collection is worth a total of 45 gp.

## B2. WEEDY PADDOCK

The wide, weedy paddock next to Stirrup & Barding has a sturdy wooden fence and a gate to the main road. A single donkey lazily chews the weeds within.

Abreth left the paddock empty, but an enterprising neighbor decided to keep his donkey there a few days ago when he realized Abreth was gone. The donkey can confirm that a man with wheelbarrows sometimes comes and goes from the building, assuming the PCs use methods like *speak with animals* to establish meaningful communication. The donkey was particularly amused to see a human hauling a barrow rather than employing something like a donkey—amused, and more than a little thankful to see at least one person who understands what it’s like to be a beast of burden.

## B3. TOOL STORAGE

**SEVERE 11**

This room is lined with shelves containing scraps of metal and various tools. Some of the shelves have been cleared to make room for a few piles of clothes, some food and wine bottles, and several stacks of harrow cards.

This is where Dieral Myrnese has been hiding out; he’s been biding his time by performing non-stop harrow readings in an attempt to seek guidance, but also peeking through cracks in the wall whenever he hears anything in the street outside. He rarely sleeps more than an hour at a time and is currently fatigued as a result. Dieral’s fears about being chased are legitimate but have been enhanced after being affected by *The Carnival*, which he keeps hidden in a secret pocket in his vest at all times.

Dieral isn’t sure who or what is after him—for all he knows it’s the PCs themselves, and as soon as they confront him here, he shrieks in panic and begs for mercy. His lack of sleep, healthy food, and opportunities for personal hygiene over the past few days have certainly left him in a sad state, but a successful DC 25 Perception check is all that’s needed for a character to determine that Dieral seems legitimately afraid of being chased by something and isn’t particularly dangerous himself.

If the PCs are peaceful and calm in their demeanor, Dieral’s initial panic at being discovered slowly fades—he’s a talkative individual, and being alone for even a few days without anyone to interact with has been hard on him. If a PC can soothe his nerves by speaking calmly for a minute and making a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check, Dieral sighs in relief and admits that he’s not sure who’s after him, but ever since he found “that card” he’s been sure that it was only a matter of time before “they” catch up with him.

At this point (or any other moment you feel is sufficiently dramatic), just before Dieral can reveal

more information, his fears are proven true as Stirrup & Barding is attacked.

**Creatures:** Vharnev the Butcher, agent of the Band of Blades and commander of the devils and assassins, discovers where Dieral has been hiding at about the same time as the PCs. While the PCs first begin talking to the Harrow Barrow proprietor, Vharnev strikes.

Each of these mercenaries attacks from a different direction, if possible. Vharnev himself comes



charging through the double door from the street in the northeast of area **B1**, while his assassins drop in through the thatch roof near the supplies in the room's southwest corner. They're accompanied by an uniila devil named Havvzi, who enters through the front door just south of area **B3**. Havvzi has taken on the refreshingly straightforward task of nudging Vharnev to corruption with increased magical power. Vharnev wears the uniila's *witch token* as an amulet, as described in his stat block below.

If the PCs have encountered any assassins earlier in the adventure, this group knows a little bit about their meddling and expects to find them here; otherwise, they're surprised to find that Dieral has allies.

Dieral cowers and hides during the fight, counting on the PCs to save him—he only takes part in the fight if there's no other option, and even then, he does his best to escape rather than defeat any foes.

Vharnev fights to the death to defeat the PCs, confident in the uniila's magical support. He prefers to use Sudden Charge and fight whichever PC looks like the biggest threat.

Havvzi focuses on any obvious arcane spellcaster in the group, trying to kill that person first (if the party has no arcane spellcaster, the uniila instead targets an occult, divine, or primal spellcaster, in that order). The uniila fights to the death as long as Vharnev lives, but if the Butcher is slain or obviously defeated and the uniila is reduced to 50 HP, it flees via *dimension door* and goes into hiding somewhere in Absalom—whether the PCs encounter Havvzi again in this campaign is up to you.

The assassins like to flank foes when possible. They fight to the death so long as Vharnev is up and fighting; once Vharnev is defeated, any assassin reduced to fewer than 30 HP flees.

## VHARNEV THE BUTCHER

## CREATURE 10

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID TIEFLING

Male tiefling human mercenary (*Pathfinder Bestiary 262*)

**Perception** +14; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Infernal

**Skills** Arcana +19, Athletics +21, Intimidation +20, Society +19, Stealth +15

**Str** +5, **Dex** +1, **Con** +2, **Int** +3, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +4

**Items** +2 striking wounding battle axe, +1 half plate, steel-colored bird feather token, uniila witch token

**AC** 29; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +18, **Will** +18

**HP** 180

**Attack of Opportunity** ↗

**Defensive Charm** ↗ (abjuration, arcane, manipulation)

**Trigger** Vharnev is the target of a ranged attack;

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**Effect** Vharnev quickly traces a defensive rune between himself and the source of the ranged attack, giving him a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ battle axe +23 (magical, sweep), **Damage** 2d8+11 slashing plus 1d6 persistent bleed

**Arcane Spontaneous Spells** DC 26, attack +18; **5th** (2 slots) magic missile, weapon storm; **4th** (2 slots) dispel magic, phantasmal killer; **3rd** (2 slots) earthbind, haste; **Cantrips** (5th) acid splash, dancing lights, electric arc, prestidigitation, telekinetic projectile

**Sorcerer Bloodline Spells** DC 26, 2 Focus Points; **5th** ancestral memories (*Pathfinder Core Rulebook* 402), extend spell (*Core Rulebook* 404)

**Sudden Charge** ♦♦ Vharnev Strides twice and makes a melee Strike.

**Uniila Witch Token** Vharnev bears the uniila's witch token in the form of an amulet with Mahathallah's rune-ringed eye symbol. Vharnev's spells lower than 5th level count as 1 level higher for the purpose of being counteracted and counteracting other spells. Once per day, Vharnev can activate the token to cast confusion (DC 29).

## HAVVZI

Uniila devil (page 87)

**Initiative** Perception +21

## CREATURE 10

### MERCENARY ASSASSINS (3)

Page 17

**Initiative** Perception +17

## CREATURE 9

### DIERAL MYRNSE

**UNIQUE** N MEDIUM ELF HUMANOID  
Male elf fence (*Gamemastery Guide* 210)

**Initiative** Perception +11

**Skills** Fortune-Telling Lore +15

## CREATURE 5

**Treasure:** Dieral gives *The Carnival* to the PCs, as he's decided that it's not healthy for him to continue to possess it. He's also found two moderate salamander elixirs here, which he presumes his cousin used when working on particularly hot items in the forge. He gives them to the PCs as well with his thanks for saving him.

In the event that the PCs capture Vharnev alive and attempt to interrogate him (or use methods like *talking corpse* to interrogate his remains), they may be able to learn a bit about the Band of Blades, including that he works for Drustan. Even if he's slain, a PC who examines Vharnev's steel-colored *bird feather token* can attempt a DC 35 Society check to recognize the significance of this magic item as a token often carried by agents of the Band of Blades.

**XP Award:** Grant the PCs 60 XP for recovering *The Carnival*. In addition, if Dieral survives the encounter (or if he's slain but the PCs restore him to life), grant the PCs an additional 60 XP.

## Facing Destiny

Fortunately for the PCs, Vharnev isn't particularly dutiful in keeping his superiors up to date on his progress, and for their own part, Drustan and the other Unmatched are keeping their focus elsewhere for the time being. Even if Vharnev escapes, he'll more than likely just try to ambush the PCs again in the future rather than risk punishment for failure. As a result, the PCs should have plenty of time as this part of Stolen Fate ends to rest, recover, and further investigate the strange cards they've discovered.

Dieral is assumed to be their primary source of information at this point. Although he knows precious little about the individual cards beyond *The Carnival*, he does know that the cards belong to a greater whole—a powerful collection known as the *Deck of Destiny*. Asked how he knows this, he fearfully recounts his nightmares of being pursued by a man in demonic armor, a hulking werewolf, and a monstrous black bird, all of whom taunted Dieral that the glories of the *Deck of Destiny* were not meant for him. (These three tormentors are, of course, the *Deck of Destiny* symbolizing the three Unmatched.)

Dieral further explains to the PCs that he's tried to sell, discard, and even destroy *The Carnival* in countless ways, only to fail each time and find the card returned to him—if the PCs ask for the card, he gratefully gives it to them but fully expects it to return to him within a few moments. When it doesn't, he's shocked, amazed, and more than anything else, relieved. He'll have no explanation for why possession of *The Carnival* doesn't instill in the PCs a sense of being pursued, other than to ruminate that perhaps they, unlike him, are destined for the artifact's power. Regardless, he's convinced that if all of the cards in the deck are gathered in one place, the resulting collection will likely have much greater powers. The fact that he doesn't recognize *The Carnival* (or any of the other cards the PCs may have collected, should they share that information with him) makes Dieral think that either the *Deck of Destiny* itself is remarkably ancient and forgotten, or unusually recent in its construction.

If Dieral was slain during the fight and the PCs lack the means to restore him to life, the information he provides them could come from one of the other NPC shopkeepers the PCs befriended earlier in the adventure, or more simply, by reading about this information in journals Dieral kept and carried.



Daniel  
22

## Chapter 2: Scattered Stories

That the *Deck of Destiny*'s ability to manifest the Harrow Court is a side effect of the artifact's power speaks to its potency. Not even the Harrowing Three suspect the artifact is capable of such wonder, but soon after the PCs gain *The Carnival* from Dieral, something astounding happens, for at this point, the PCs should own six cards—one from each suit.

This close proximity of six cards from each suit is all that's needed to trigger the formation of the Harrow Court. Once Dieral hands over *The Carnival*, the PCs each experience a sudden and potent vision.

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A sudden sense of vertigo overwhelms you as a thunderous sound fills the air of what must be a colossal deck of cards being shuffled. The world around you flickers and fades as

images of a new reality, viewed as if in a series of rapidly flashing pages flipping over and over, manifests before you. This vision shows a sprawling valley surrounded by impossibly tall mountains. Within the valley lie forests and swamps, deserts and plains, and a massive lake. At the valley's heart sits a lonely castle atop a low hill, surrounded by a village. A sudden sense of homesickness seems to rise up from that castle, and then, just as quickly as it began, the vision comes to an end.

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Any character in the immediate vicinity understands at once the truth—by bringing together a card from every suit, a new reality has been created. Further, each PC instinctively understands how they can enter this new reality and knows its name—the Harrow Court.

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## The Harrow Court

At this point, the plot of Stolen Fate depends on the PCs taking the initiative to enter the Harrow Court for the first time. The article on page 69 of this volume presents rules for this demiplane, including how the PCs can come and go from the Harrow Court and how they can build upon the realm's reality by recovering and investing cards from the *Deck of Destiny*. Once the Harrow Court forms, the cards the PCs carry impart to them the methods by which they can enter the Harrow Court—a revelation that none of the others who carry cards from the *Deck of Destiny* receive even a hint of.

Since the campaign won't proceed until the PCs enter the demiplane, the PCs should use their cards to Enter the Harrow Court soon—if they seem hesitant to do so, you can use Dieral or other shopkeeper allies to encourage them to investigate, or perhaps ply them with additional visions to compel them forward. The Harrow Court is intended to develop into a sort of home base for the PCs to take advantage of, as well as a staging ground for them to launch numerous forays into the world as they continue to track down cards from the *Deck of Destiny*.

Once the PCs step into the portal created by the Enter the Harrow Court activity, they appear in the grand hall of a sprawling castle called Harrowheart. Proceed with the boxed text for the following section.

### THE GRAND HALL

The bare stone walls of this cathedral-like chamber are draped with cobwebs and dust. No furnishings adorn the immense hall, while the ceiling above arches up to a height of nearly a hundred feet. Dozens of stained glass windows, each depicting a different scene from the Harrow, allow light to stream into the dusty chamber, and several wooden doors allow exit in all of the room's walls but one. This wall instead features six shallow alcoves filled with swirling gray mist. Each alcove is framed by an elegantly carved archway featuring decorations from the six suits of the Harrow—hammers, keys, shields, tomes, stars, and crowns.

As the PCs arrive within the Harrow Court, they instinctively understand the nature of the realm. Take some time to explain to the players what the Harrow Court is—a creation formed from the cards they've discovered—and that they can expand upon it by finding more cards and “epitomizing” them into the Harrow Court. Explain to the PCs the effects of the epitomes they may have just activated by entering the Harrow Court with any of the *Deck of Destiny* cards they have invested.

If the PCs head through any of the doors, they can move on to explore the rest of Harrowheart or the realm beyond—refer to the article beginning on page 71 if they do so. If instead they are intrigued by the six arches, proceed with The Six Arches on page 24.

### EXPLORING THE COURT

The exploration of the Harrow Court takes place entirely in exploration and downtime mode, and the amount of time the PCs spend here is largely up to them. As they continue to enhance the demiplane by recovering and incarnating more cards from the *Deck of Destiny*, they'll not only gain more opportunities and support from their personal demiplane, but the simulacra that dwell within grow more numerous.

## CHAPTER 2 SYNOPSIS

The PCs enter the Harrow Court, a demiplane created by the *Deck of Destiny*. Within the Harrow Court, they receive leads on where to find six more cards. Each of these cards is scattered across Golarion, but the Harrow Court delivers them to a safe site near each. The PCs meet rebels in the Halana Theocracy, a naga vampire in Nagajor, an army of aberrations in Vudra, a puzzling monolith in Iobaria, mayhem in a Chelaxian theater, and an earnest shrine keeper in the Mwangi Expanse. The order of these encounters is up to the PCs, but there's adventure to be found at each far-flung site!

## GETTING DISTRACTED

The locations the PCs visit in this chapter are spread across Golarion. While this allows the PCs to experience a wide range of regions, it doesn't allow for much additional detail, and if your players become distracted by the opportunity to explore a new region, they may attempt to travel beyond the confines of the following six encounter areas. If they do so you have a choice—you can either roll with it and allow the distraction to develop as you see fit (possibly derailing the plot of the Stolen Fate Adventure Path), or you can rule that soon after the PCs have managed to secure control over the region's card from the *Deck of Destiny*, they are automatically pulled back into the Harrow Court. This option can be presented to PCs who are curious as the artifact doing its best to try to keep the PCs focused—you can also lean on the use of additional visions, as detailed in the section on page 9 about motivating the party, to remind the PCs that there's a greater issue at hand.

If you don't have the PCs automatically return to the Harrow Court, the assumption is they Enter the Harrow Court on their own soon after acquiring each of the six cards they're after.

At first, the Harrow Court is sparsely populated, with the castle of Harrowheart being attended by a single servant who struggles to keep up with cleaning and cooking duties, and the surrounding village consisting of dilapidated buildings housing only a few squatters and vagrants. Feel free to give these initial folk interesting personalities and appearances as you see fit—by drawing upon your players' preferences and tropes they enjoy, you can make the Harrow Court feel even more like home to them. One potentially interesting place to draw from is allies or even foes who the PCs have lost on previous adventures—but note that when they appear in the Harrow Court, they are in part drawn from the memories of those PCs and are not actual allies and enemies brought back to life!

With each card the PCs epitomize, the demiplane grows more alive. More servants work in Harrowheart, whose chambers become progressively cleaner, comfortable, and outfitted with grander decor. The village grows more sound and inviting, while its occupants grow into larger groups of happier citizens. And throughout the realm, wildlife grows more plentiful, be it butterflies in the gardens, birds in the skies, or animals both domesticated and wild.

Give the PCs all the time they need to become accustomed to the Harrow Court and to trust it as a safe place to rest and relax, but once they turn their attention to the six arches in the Grand Hall, they'll realize where they need to go from here to continue chasing down the cards of the *Deck of Destiny*.

## THE SIX ARCHES

The PCs are likely to be intrigued by the six mist-filled arches in the Grand Hall first before they move on to explore the rest of the Harrowed Court. These six arches are each attuned to the six suits of the Harrow, and as soon as any PC approaches an arch, the mists grow clear and display a region in Golarion, as if the archway were actually an exit from the building into another place.

A character who approaches the arches automatically understands that each one is a one-way portal back to somewhere on Golarion. The portals themselves are physical manifestations of the *Deck of Destiny*'s need to return to a full collection, and in order to facilitate the recovery of these cards, the portals indicate to the PCs which cards in each suit their destinies are "most comfortable" with at any point in time. In effect, the portals direct the PCs toward cards that they have the best chance at retrieving. As the PCs recover cards, gain experience, and grow more powerful, the portals point toward increasingly difficult goals.

While the precise location that an active portal leads to may not be obvious to all, the card that lies beyond the portal is. When a character approaches an active portal, the name and imagery of the card that lies beyond manifests in their mind. As with the location the portal leads to, the location of the card in question is not revealed, but the PCs at least know which card they're seeking out—and thus, once they find it, that their task in that area is complete.

At this point in the campaign, all six arches are active, and as the PCs investigate, they become aware that the cards in question are (in order from left to right as they appear in the six arches) *The Big Sky*, *The Juggler*, *The Trumpet*, *The Snakebite*, *The Silent Hag*, and *The Theater*. Each of the short adventures in which the PCs seek out these cards are detailed through the remainder of this chapter. The order in which the PCs seek out these cards is left to them—once a card is collected, that archway fills once more with mist and becomes inactive. Only once the PCs have gathered all six of these cards do the arches activate again, at which point proceed to Chapter 3 of "The Choosing."

### **The Big Sky**

When the PCs peer through the Arch of Hammers, they observe a forest clearing dominated by a few fallen

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trees (area C1). A character who studies the plant life visible can attempt a DC 30 Nature or appropriate Lore check to identify the species as being common to the northwestern reaches of the Deadshot Lands in Arcadia. (Reduce this DC to 15 for characters who are from or are familiar with Arcadia.)

## THE DEADSHOT LANDS

The Arch of Hammers deposits the PCs at the edge of a forest in the Halana Theocracy—a nation on the continent of Arcadia far to the west of Avistan and the ruined continent of Azlant. Halana is, unfortunately for its oppressed human and tengu denizens, an overbearing theocracy devoted to the demon lord Pazuzu. The Windborne Theocrats that rule the land enforce their erratic will with elite soldiers called Mivanians. Mivanians maintain control through two primary means—their notorious alliances with avian demons, and their tight control over access to deadly firearms. The Mivanians are opposed by groups of scrappy rebels who plot the overthrow of the brutal demonic regime and secretly stockpile caches of guns in preparation for uprising. They want nothing other than the right to rule their land free of fiendish dictators.

The Mivanians (and, indeed, the ruling Windborne Theocrats) claim control of Halana's skies as their divine right. It was therefore not a surprise to the Mivanian fiend Zashuvin when a magical card called *The Big Sky* came into her possession. Zashuvin doesn't know anything about the Harrow or the *Deck of Destiny*, but she knows power when she sees it. Prompted by the card's arrival, Zashuvin has decided to send her Mivanian troops (vrocks and tengus) to find and quash a rebel group. Zashuvin might be making a critical mistake, though, especially if the PCs aid the rebels.

### C1. FOREST EDGE

LOW 12

Old trees hanging with ivy and moss provide deep shadows, but the trees end at a rolling plain of waving grass so green that it almost glimmers in the bright sunlight. A few clouds scud across the bright blue sky, while a deadfall provides something of a defensive bulwark along the side of the clearing closest to the plains beyond.

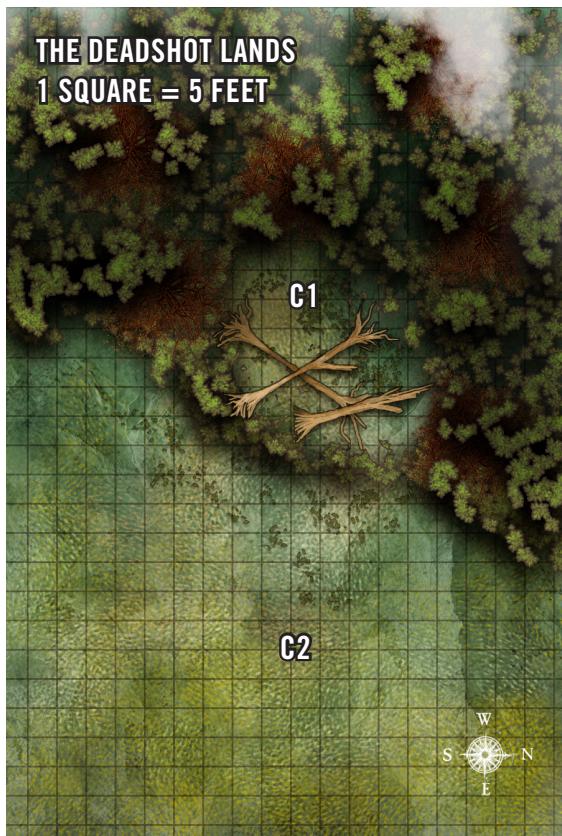
**Creatures:** Several people cluster beneath a fallen tree, cautiously looking out over the plain while obviously protecting a large mound of bulging sacks. These are a group of fifteen human and tengu rebels led by an elderly, dun-feathered tengu named Skawnak, whose home and family were burned by Mivanians a decade ago. When the PCs appear at the western edge

## LANGUAGE BARRIERS

During many of the encounters in this chapter, the PCs travel to a wide range of locations across the face of Golarion, and communicating with those they encounter may at times be a problem. For example, when seeking *The Big Sky*, the PCs travel to Arcadia, where the Common tongue is not Taldane, but instead Razatlani. Language barriers represent a potential problem to PCs not familiar with some of the cultures and people they'll be encountering in this chapter, which may not be to the liking of all groups—particularly those who don't feature PCs with a wide range of languages or access to magic like *tongues*. Before proceeding with this part, look through the various languages spoken by friendly NPCs and compare that to those spoken by the PCs. If there's not many languages shared in common, and if the PCs don't have access to spells like *tongues* or *comprehend language*, consider adding a *wand of tongues* to one of the items the PCs discover in Chapter 1 of this adventure, or adjust the languages spoken by NPCs as needed. You could even change the activated power of a card like *The Vision* so that instead, that card allows the player to cast *tongues* once per day. In the end, you should be using this diversity of language as a feature—as a way to quickly showcase the wide range of areas the PCs visit in these short encounters—not as a way to introduce frustrating game play to your table.

of the clearing, the rebels don't immediately notice them. If the PCs don't announce themselves, though, Skawnak spots them within a round of their arrival and, with a startled cry, orders his soldiers to arms.

Since the PCs aren't wearing the Mivanian insignia (a taloned claw over a dark cloud), the rebels don't immediately attack, but trickery and deception are a staple of Windborne agents, as one might surmise from a theocracy devoted to a demon lord of temptation. As the rebels split their focus on the PCs and the skies above, watching for any hint of airborne demonic assault, Skawnak demands the PCs identify themselves. Fortunately, his natural knack with languages and his studies of realms beyond the Deadshot Lands (where he hopes to discover workable tactics against demons) help him establish communication quickly if no PC speaks Tengu. After addressing them first in Tengu, and upon regarding their attire a bit more closely, he addresses them again in another language he thinks the strange visitors might speak (using Taldane, Halfling, Elven, or Sylvan as makes sense).



Skawnak doesn't suspect the PCs are Mivanian agents, thanks to his experience with their minions' methods, but he's certainly not ready to openly embrace these strangers as friends. When he demands the PCs identify themselves, give the characters a chance to do just that. Depending on how they do so, they'll need to either Lie (DC 24 Deception), Make an Impression (DC 20 Diplomacy), or Coerce (DC 24 Intimidation) Skawnak. His initial attitude is indifferent.

Skawnak is flabbergasted at any claims the PCs have of hailing from the Inner Sea region—in a way, he's more accepting of an explanation that they're visiting from a demiplane. He's also something of an expert in sussing out Mivanian machinations, which certainly helps the PCs establish their good intentions. The other rebels are plainly in awe of the PCs' timely and obviously magical arrival, but Skawnak does his best to remain unruffled and put on a calm demeanor, so as to keep his soldiers' confidence.

As long as he's satisfied that the PCs aren't here to do him or his soldiers harm, Skawnak informs them that they're behind enemy lines—he and his soldiers are preparing to cross the open fields to the west, hopefully without being spotted by the enemy's airborne patrols. If he's made helpful, he'll even reveal to the PCs that the reason they're hoping to cross the field unseen is

because they're smuggling weapons to allies to the east a few miles away. The problem facing the rebels is that there's more aerial activity over the field than they'd anticipated, and they're at a loss as to how to make it across the open terrain without getting caught.

Skawnak doesn't know anything about the Harrow and hasn't seen any Harrow cards, but if the PCs mention *The Big Sky*, he points suspiciously at the bright blue sky above the plain. "That's the biggest sky there is, and our enemies command it."

### REBELS (15)

### CREATURE 3

Human and tengu trackers (*Gamemastery Guide* 219)

**Initiative** Perception +13

### SKAWNAK

### CREATURE 4

**UNIQUE** **NG** **MEDIUM** **HUMANOID** **TENGU**

Tengu bounty hunter (*Gamemastery Guide* 227)

**Initiative** Perception +14

**Languages** Abyssal, Elven, Halfling, Razatlani, Sylvan, Taldane, Tengu

### Mivanian Ambush

**Creatures:** Before the PCs get too far into their conversation, a band of Mivanians who have been tracking the rebels through the forest finally pinpoint their location, approaching from the north on the ground (rather than from above—the direction the rebels have been more closely watching). This group consists of four tengu soldiers and their commander, Raskus—a brutal and scarred tengu with glorious wings. Each Mivanian carries a strange *spike launcher* gun made from manticore parts called a beastgun (*Pathfinder Guns & Gears* 154). They seek to kill everyone present, preferably from a distance. They take turns activating their *spike launcher*'s volley of spikes while the others fire at anyone hampered or immobilized by that shot. Utterly devoted to the Windborne Theocracy, all of the Mivanians fight to the death.

The rebels know that they're severely outclassed by these soldiers, and take cover in the deadfall as the ambush begins, relying upon the PCs to save them.

### RASKUS

### CREATURE 10

**UNIQUE** **CE** **MEDIUM** **HUMANOID** **TENGU**

Male tengu commander (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 310)

**Perception** +18; low-light vision

**Languages** Abyssal, Razatlani, Tengu

**Skills** Acrobatics +21, Athletics +19, Intimidation +19, Religion +18, Stealth +21

**Str +3, Dex +5, Con +2, Int +0, Wis +2, Cha +3**

**Items** +1 leather armor with Mivanian insignia, manacles,

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spike launcher (20 spikes; Pathfinder Guns & Gears 156), +1 striking rapier

**AC** 29; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +21, **Will** +18

**HP** 175

**Snap Shot** **Requirements** Raskus holds a loaded spike launcher; **Trigger** A creature within 30 feet of Raskus uses a move action, makes a ranged attack, or leaves a square during a move action it's using; **Effect** Raskus attempts a spike launcher Strike against the triggering creature. This Strike doesn't contribute to his multiple attack penalty, and his multiple attack penalty doesn't apply to this Strike.

**Speed** 25 feet, fly 25 feet

**Melee** **rapier** +22 (deadly d8, disarm, finesse, magical), **Damage** 2d6+11 slashing

**Melee** **beak** +21 (finesse), **Damage** 2d4+11 piercing

**Ranged** **spike launcher** +22 (backstabber, fatal d12, kickback, magical, range increment 120 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 2d8+9 piercing

**Divine Innate Spells** DC 26; **4th** blindness, earthbind

**Go for the Eyes** **Trigger** Raskus critically hits with a beak Strike; **Effect** Raskus attempts to peck out his victim's eyes. The target must attempt a DC 29 Fortitude save.

**Success** The target is unaffected.

**Failure** The target is blinded for 1 round.

**Critical Failure** The target is blinded until healed to its maximum Hit Points.

**Opportunistic Attack** Raskus's Strikes deal an additional 3d6 damage to any foe that has a reduction to its Speed, is blinded, or is immobilized.

**Quick Spiker** Raskus requires only 1 action, rather than 2 actions, to reload a spike launcher. He can change his grip on a spike launcher easily, improving its fatal aim d12 trait to fatal d12. (These changes are incorporated into its ranged Strike, above.)

## MIVANIAN SOLDIERS (4)

## CREATURE 8

UNCOMMON CE MEDIUM HUMANOID TENGU

Tengu soldier (Pathfinder Bestiary 310)

**Perception** +17; low-light vision

**Languages** Abyssal, Razatlani, Tengu

**Skills** Acrobatics +17, Athletics +18, Intimidation +15, Stealth +17, Survival +15

**Str** +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +4, **Int** -1, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +1

**Items** leather armor bearing Mivanian insignia, manacles, spike launcher (20 spikes; Pathfinder Guns & Gears 156), +1 striking rapier

**AC** 27; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +15, **Will** +13

**HP** 140

**Snap Shot** As Raskus.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** **rapier** +19 (deadly d8, disarm, finesse, magical), **Damage** 2d6+10 slashing

**Melee** **beak** +18 (finesse), **Damage** 2d10+10 piercing

**Ranged** **spike launcher** +18 (backstabber, fatal d12, kickback, magical, range increment 120 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 2d8+7 piercing

**Go for the Eyes** As Raskus, but DC 26.

**Quick Spiker** As Raskus.

**Treasure:** The rebels would gladly take the Mivanians' *spike launchers*, but they don't mind if the PCs take any (or all) of them as spoils of their victory.

## Plotting the Crossing

After the fight, Skawnak presents the rebels' key problem: none of them have crossed this plain before. They know the grasses conceal a veritable maze of hidden gullies, and the rebels had been attempting to pick out a path when the PCs arrived.



Raskus

Skawnak asks if the PCs can help them identify a route from the forest's edge. He's convinced that Mivanian patrols from substantially higher in the air will spot them if they don't have a safe path. Careful observation of the grass and the wind reveal the network of hidden gullies, most of which lead to dead ends but some of which lead to a deeper, safer gully a few miles away.

Determining a safe way for the rebels to cross the plains requires three successful secret checks. Any combination of DC 32 Perception checks, DC 30 Nature checks, or DC 28 Survival or Plains Lore checks suffices. If the characters think to get a higher view (such as from the forest treetops) or use divination magic to help, they gain a +1 circumstance bonus to their checks (although Skawnak doesn't want them to venture into the plains until they've plotted a route). Ask the players which characters are making which checks and secretly note how many of the checks succeed—each PC gets one opportunity to attempt such a check. If the PCs use a tactic that can ensure stealth across the plains (such as with enough *invisibility* effects) or that allows the rebels to bypass the 2,000-foot-wide distance entirely (such as by using *teleport*), they automatically earn 3 successes regardless of their skill check results.

**XP Award:** Award the PCs 20 XP for each successful check to plot a route across the plains, to a maximum of 60 XP.

## C2. PERILOUS PLAINS

**MODERATE 12**

Regardless of the number of successes the PCs attain, Zashuvin soon spots the player characters thanks to her connection to *The Big Sky*. She and two vrocks under her command cast *dimension door* to arrive near the PCs, as they seem to be the biggest threats present, but the timing of when they attack (as well as the rebels' fate) depends on the number of successes the PCs achieved.

**1 success or less:** The rebels are spotted soon after they enter the plains, and become directly involved in the fight.

**2 successes:** The rebels get a head start. If the PCs are accompanying them, they become directly involved in the fight. If the PCs stayed behind, the rebels are attacked (and are likely slaughtered) if the PCs don't defeat Zashuvin and her vrocks.

**3 or more successes:** The rebels hunker down and hide or make it to safety. The PCs are still attacked by Zashuvin and her vrocks, but the rebels themselves escape notice and are never in any danger, regardless of the fight's resolution.

**Creatures:** The vrocks swoop into melee right away,

alternating their spore clouds and stunning screeches with melee attacks, while Zashuvin hangs back in the air, 30 feet from the ground, and casts spells such as *fear* and *divine lance*. If the fiends notice the rebels, the vrocks focus on them at the start of combat and attempt to use a Dance of Ruin on them, but if the PCs focus their attacks on the vrocks, the demons abandon this tactic and treat the PCs as the primary targets, attacking rebels when the opportunity presents itself. All of the fiends fight to the death.

## ZASHUVIN

**CREATURE 11**

Female hurlilu (page 88)

**Initiative** Perception +21

**Items** *The Big Sky*, ruby religious symbol of Pazuzu worth 750 gp

## VROCKS (4)

**CREATURE 9**

*Pathfinder Bestiary 78*

**Initiative** Perception +18

**XP Award:** When the characters claim *The Big Sky* from Zashuvin, award them 60 XP. If at least half of the rebels survive, grant them an additional 30 XP. In any event, Skawnak is eager to put some distance between the site of this conflict and his group, and so he bids the PCs luck before hastening to the east toward their still quite distant destination.

## The Juggler

When the PCs peer through the Arch of Keys, they look out over a forested mountainside with an ocean on the horizon. A PC who studies the plant life and terrain visible can attempt a DC 25 Nature or appropriate Lore check to identify the region as the Terwa Uplands in the Mwangi Expanse. A critical success allows the player character to pinpoint the location as being near the peak of Mount K'Walder, the second-highest peak in the Terwa Uplands. Once the PCs step through the portal, being able to get a full 360-degree view of the region reduces this to a DC 15 check. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Religion check notes that K'walder is sacred to Balumbdar the World-Shaker, the god of great size, megafauna, and strength.

## SHRINE TO BALUMBDAK

From a daunting mountainside elevation of thousands of feet, an ocean studded with islands commands the view to the west, while to the east stretches out an expanse of thick jungle. The slope below hosts a cloud forest, its trees poking up through a layer of swirling mist, while a narrow path winds down and out of view into the fog.

# The Choosing

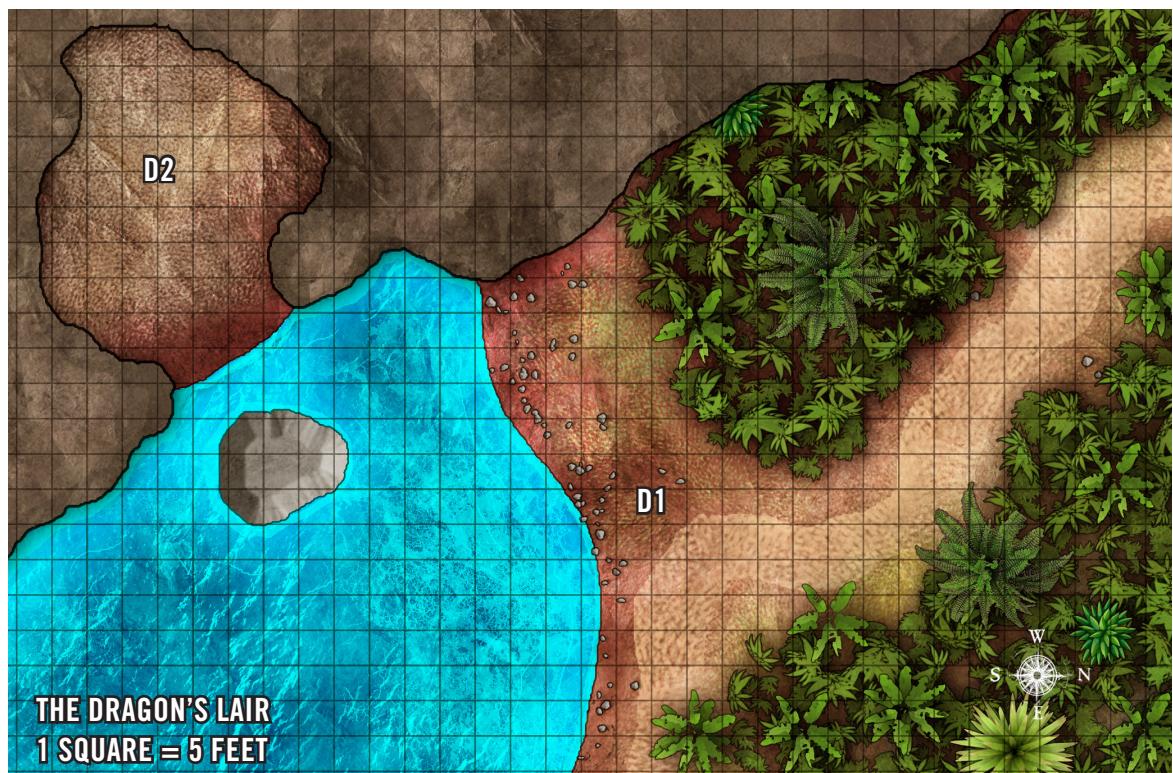
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Once the PCs step through the portal and look around, they'll swiftly discover that the portal itself manifested in the mouth of a cliffside cave entrance, with the peak of Mount K'walder looming high above. Once the portal vanishes, they can see that the cave entrance leads into an enormous space inside the mountain. This cathedral-like space stretches in a rough circle about 100 feet in diameter. Its smooth walls run in irregular arcs punctured by fissures and sporadic shafts that allow the daylight in so that the whole is well lit. Much of the wall space features huge, simple murals in bright colors, mostly of megafauna and towering trees against a backdrop of high mountains. A portrayal of Balumbdar himself as an immense, heavily tattooed, brown-skinned man with thick muscles, rolls of fat, and a pleasant expression covers the wall opposite the cave entrance. The shaft of light illuminating the wall makes Balumbdar look even bigger, tricking the eye to make him look larger than even this massive cavern could contain. A second shaft of light falls on a stone altar directly in front of this dynamic portrait. Slowly gyrating through loops in the air above the altar is a single object: *The Juggler*.

A successful DC 15 Religion check to Recall Knowledge identifies the imagery on the walls and confirms this cave as being a shrine to Balumbdar. The shrine itself is occupied by a single man named **Blegkenu the Pious** (N male Mbe'ke dwarf ascetic 11).

As the shrine's keeper, he welcomes visitors in his quiet, warm voice, apparently not startled or unsettled at the brief appearance of a strange portal at the entrance to his shrine. At least as wide as he is tall, Blegkenu claims to be "the largest dwarf in the Terwa Uplands." Dressed in sandals and a thin, sky-blue tunic tied with a rope, Blegkenu seems impervious to the somewhat chilly temperature within the shrine.

Blegkenu offers visitors water and lumpy biscuits the size of coconuts. He's happy to talk about himself, Balumbdar, and the harrow card that slowly turns above the altar. While he's not a spellcaster, and thus can't provide much in the way of magical support, he's very well-versed in his faith and has an extensive knowledge of the region—if the PCs haven't figured out where they are, he can inform them. Blegkenu speaks slowly, as though carefully considering his words. Likely questions the PCs pose, along with Blegkenu's replies, are as follows.

**Who are you?** "Well, they call me Blegkenu the Pious. I'm not saying I deserve that name, but that's what they call me. It's because I live up here in this shrine day and night to pay homage to my god, Balumbdar. I never forsake him."

**Who is Balumbdar?** "Why, he is the god of huge things! He protects the biggest animals, the highest peaks, the tallest trees, the largest boulders. He Who Is Massive understands the significance of weight and

strength, the might that comes from size alone. The elephants and dinosaurs and other enormous beasts are sacred to him, as are great mountains and massive trees.” (Balumbdar is further described on page 134 of *Pathfinder Lost Omens: Mwangi Expanse*.)

**How long have you lived here?** “Oh, I don’t know exactly—three decades? Four? I imagine some of you weren’t even born when I first ascended this sacred peak.”

**Did you build this shrine?** “No, it existed long before my time. I have only improved it by smoothing the walls and painting them and adding some of the gaps so the light can shine in. My masterpiece is this portrait of Balumbdar.”

**Why do you have that card?** “It appeared here! I found it there above the altar one morning several weeks ago. It’s very magical—and I suspect it has powers far beyond floating in circles! I’ve been seeking the prayer that will bring it to life. But look! See how immense the juggler on the card is? Look at the size of the things he tosses about so casually! What could this be but a sign from the World-Shaker? Marvelous! This juggler must be a herald of my god. I just need the right prayer to bring him forth.”

**Can we have the card?** “Well, you could try to take it, but I don’t know that you’ll have much luck.” (Indeed, the Juggler card is impossible to claim. While it appears to float weightlessly, its weight is extraordinary, and attempts to pick it up or move it fail as though it were extraordinarily heavy. Any attempt to block its path above the stone simply causes the card to change its course—or simply to float in place. Despite its apparent weight and mass, the card won’t actually damage anything that gets in its way or attempts—and fails—to move it.)

**What would it take for us to get the card?** “I’ve been thinking a lot about that. Surely you recognize the card for what it is—a card from the Harrow. This card in particular, it’s from the suit of Keys. A key must be the key, wouldn’t you think? I think if I had a big key, especially a certain very specific key, I could complete my prayer. At that point, it wouldn’t matter whether I had the card or not, and I suppose you could take it.”

### The Dragon’s Key

Blegkenu’s theories and personality may come off to the PCs as a bit eccentric, but there’s more to his theory than



**Blegkenu**

mere guesswork. Once he mentions the “big key,” he reveals to the PCs that he’s seen just such an enormous key not so long ago. The good news is that the key isn’t far, but the bad news is that the key is part of the hoard of a nefarious cloud dragon who lives in the valley to the south. This dragon, Blegkenu explains, is named Sedisserax. Exiled from the dwarven sky citadel of Cloudspire years ago after she destroyed several historical statues and relics, the dragon’s spent the last several decades “moping and fuming” in her remote lakeside lair. Blegkenu knows the route to her lair and admits he’s visited Sedisserax several times: “She may be bitter and cantankerous, but she’s majestically massive and gloriously gigantic, and has given me many insights

into the lifestyles of larger life over the years.” Blegkenu warns the PCs that Sedisserax is vicious and spiteful, and usually eats those who travel too close to her valley—she’s traditionally suffered Blegkenu’s visits because the dwarf never approaches too closely, is properly respectful, and (Blegkenu suspects) because she’s guilty about her past and sees the chance to speak to a dwarf as, perhaps, an opportunity to find forgiveness. Each time he visited her, he noted a singular element of her treasure—an immense key “almost as large as my arm.” The dragon grew angry when, on his latest visit, Blegkenu asked to examine the key. She attacked him in response, and while Blegkenu thanks “Balumbdar’s mercy” for his fortunate escape, he’s positive that he’s no longer welcome in her lair. If the PCs could secure that enormous key and bring it back here for him to meditate upon, Blegkenu is certain the mystery of the card will be revealed.

Characters who succeed at a DC 25 Arcana, Nature, or relevant Lore check recall that a large number of cloud dragons make the Terwa Uplands their home. Each dragon takes a particular valley for their own, usually nesting in the tallest tree or near a mountain pool. Most of them are allies and friends of the Mbe’ke dwarves, so Sedisserax’s crimes must have been shocking and severe to merit banishment. On a critical success, the PC recalls hearing something of those crimes—destruction of sacred relics simply to get to the “treasures” she was convinced were hidden within. There were no such treasures inside the destroyed relics, but when the rulers of Cloudspire confronted her, she reacted with violence and was driven from the sky citadel.

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Blegkenu notes that Sedisserax's attitude has earned her trouble, and he's long suspected her end would come in the form of a group of dragonslayers. If the PCs can secure the enormous key without killing her, that's fine, but the dwarf warns the PCs that he'd be shocked if the dragon stops to talk before she tries to eat the PCs.

When the PCs are ready to set out, Blegkenu gives them directions to Sedisserax's lair. "Follow the trail from my cave down the mountainside until you reach a lake. The trail heads off to the east from there, but to the west, along the lake shore, is a cave entrance—her home." These simple directions are more than enough, but it's still a 2-hour hike down the mountainside to the lake in question. In the time since his last visit, though, Sedisserax has encouraged some additional guardians to take up residence upon the lakeshore, potentially giving the PCs a nasty surprise as they arrive at area **D1**.

## D1. LAKESHORE

**LOW 12**

The thick, squat trees of this bowl-shaped valley grow densely together. A deep blue lake lies here, the trail turning upon reaching its shore and winding off to the east. A cliff rises from the lake's western shore, and a large cave entrance is visible at the base. A jagged rock protrudes from the lake's surface not far from the cave entrance.

**Creatures:** After she grew enraged at Blegkenu's last visit, Sedisserax lured a trio of dangerous plants to her lakeshore from deeper in the jungle to serve as guardians and organic alarms. These three flowering vine-like plants grow among the foliage on the lakeshore and are known as oppalis. The luck-eating plants rise up to attack anything that approaches the lakeshore, using Stealth to roll initiative. The sound of their trumpet blasts is more than enough to alert Sedisserax, who reacts as detailed below in area **D2** once the PCs defeat the oppalis, which fight until they are destroyed.

## OPPALIS (3)

**CREATURE 10**

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**Initiative** Stealth +23

## D2. SEDISSEURAX'S LAIR

**MODERATE 12**

**Creature:** Sedisserax spends most of her time coiled among her treasures at the back of her cave, but the sound of combat at area **D1** is more than enough to alert her. She doesn't join a fight in progress against the oppalis, but instead watches from the darkness within the cavern, observing the PCs and their tactics

and actions until they attempt to approach the cave or make it apparent that they're here looking for her or something in her hoard.

Sedisserax is not inclined to talk. She instead hurtles from her cave as dramatically as she can to perch atop the rock protruding from the lake. She shrieks, "Thieves and trespassers! You will pay with your lives!" as she attacks, seeing in their equipment wonderful new treasures to add to her hoard.

Sedisserax opens combat with her breath weapon, then launches into melee; she loves the feel of tearing flesh beneath her claws. The dragon is overconfident but not suicidal; if reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points, she uses Cloud Form and flees, hiding in the valley mist until the PCs go away. If the cost of her survival is the loss of her hoard to the PCs, that's a price she's willing to pay.

As she's initially hostile, it's unlikely that the PCs have the time to use Diplomacy to strike up a conversation with the dragon. Magic or mercy might make a difference here; if she tries to flee but is unsuccessful, she gives up her hoard (key included) in return for her life. Sedisserax has long felt guilt at how she left things with Cloudspire, and at your option, the way in which the PCs treat her if they spare her life may well have unexpected results (see Treasure below).

## SEDISSEURAX

**CREATURE 14**

Female adult cloud dragon (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 90)

**Initiative** Perception +28

**Treasure:** Sedisserax's horde contains an eclectic variety of treasures. Many belonged to the dwarves of Cloudspire, and a few have monetary value: the cracked head of a dwarven statue, a tower shield bearing rusted patches in unusual shapes, and a massive iron key (6 Bulk) to a long-lost dwarven door. It is this key that Blegkenu is seeking, and coincidentally is one of the items the dragon stole from Cloudspire that earned her exile from the sky citadel. A PC who examines the key and makes a successful DC 35 Dwarven Lore (or other appropriate Lore) check to Recall Knowledge notes the ancient key's construction suggests its original use for a vast door found in a sky citadel. A critical success on the check allows the PC to recall a tale of a large key going missing from Cloudspire, but that the details of the event were hushed up.

In addition to the enormous key, the dragon's hoard consists of a suit of +1 *resilient standard-grade cloud dragonhide armor* (which protects against electricity damage). Fashioned from the skin of one of Sedisserax's enemies, it is her prized possession. The hoard also includes a +2 *striking darkwood club*, a greater tanglefoot