

SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER SOCIETY



The Year of **Battle's Spark**

Scenario #7-04
Levels 3-6

Sulfuric Negotiations

By Matt Morris



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GM Resources

Campaign Home Page: pathfindersociety.club

Books: *Pathfinder Player Core*, *Pathfinder Player Core 2*, *Pathfinder GM Core*, *Pathfinder Monster Core*, and *Pathfinder NPC Core*

Maps: *Pathfinder Flip-Mat: City Sites Multi-Pack*, *Pathfinder Flip-Mat: Showtime Multi-Pack*

Online Resource: Pathfinder Reference Document at paizo.com/prd

Scenario Tags

Scenario tags provide additional information about an adventure's contents. For more information on scenario tags, see the *Guide to Organized Play: Pathfinder Society* at <https://lorespire.paizo.com/>.



Summary

The PCs attend a meeting of Absalom's Grand Council to help ensure peace while the councilors discuss what actions, if any, to take during the battle movements between Andoran and Cheliax. While all the meeting's attendees are important, the presence of the staff of the Chelaxian embassy unnerves the general public, sparking rumors that one among them may have something sneaky up their sleeves. It's up to the Pathfinders to keep the peace and make sure that anything untoward planned for the meeting is thwarted and brought to the attention of the people of Absalom!

HOW TO PLAY

- PLAY TIME: 4-5 HOURS**
- LEVELS: 3-6**
- PLAYERS: 3-6**

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Adventure Background

Since the movements of Andoran and Cheliox on the town of Breachill, now colloquially referred to as “the Battle of Hellknight Hill,” tensions have been rising across Avistan, including among the politicians of Absalom. Considering the wide makeup of the city’s citizens, the High Council of Absalom has chosen to call an emergency meeting to discuss the effects of this burgeoning war and how the city should take a stand. In order to have a fair discussion, an invitation was extended to the staff of the Chelaxian embassy, to offer their opinions and allow the leadership of Absalom to consider all angles. **Lord Gulv Tevineg** (scheming male ambassador) of Cheliox immediately took up the invitation and insisted on the attendance of his wife and daughter, as well as one of his trusted human guards within the embassy, and, of course, their special administrative guest from Egorian, **Lady Val Haltrax** (charming female human bureaucrat).

Unknown to the embassy staff, Val Haltrax is actually **Valgrothis** (calculating female gylou spy), a handmaiden devil sent by Queen Abrogail II to keep an eye on the embassy staff and ordered to do anything possible to weasel her way into the good favor of Absalom’s politicians. Upon receiving the invitation, Valgrothis saw this as a unique opportunity: eliminate the Tevineg couple, place herself as a wounded heroine trying to save everyone, possibly eliminate some of Absalom’s leadership, all in a staged attack by “Andoren saboteurs.” As both husband and wife are at the center of a split in Asmodean worship in Absalom, Valgrothis is of the opinion that such an attack will bind together the Asmodeans and loyal Chelaxians, while also make Andoran seem like nation willing to perform extremist attacks on other nations to get what they want.

Meanwhile, within the Chelaxian Embassy, Lady Xansippe Tevineg sees her own opportunity: the chance to embarrass her estranged husband in front of a dozen powerful witnesses. Intensely dissatisfied with her life since Lord Gulv returned from Cheliox after years of service abroad, Lady Xansippe knows that she must take public action to avoid retribution from her well-connected spouse and his patrons in House Thruene.



Chun Hye-Seung

WHERE ON GOLARION?

“Sulfuric Negotiations” takes place in Absalom, the City at the Center of the World. Beginning at the Grand Council Hall in the Wise Quarter, the PCs safeguard an important diplomatic meeting, then escort an official to the Church of Asmodeus in the Ascendant Court. For more information about Absalom, see *Pathfinder Lost Omens Absalom, City of Lost Omens*.

STARSTONE ISLE



Getting Started

The PCs receive a letter from Ambrus Valsin to introduce them to the adventure background. (Give players **Handout #1: Letter from Ambrus Valsin**, found on page 22.) The letter invites them to meet Captain Chun Hye-Seung of the First Guard at a side entrance to the Grand Council Hall in the Wise Quarter. The short journey from the Grand Lodge in Absalom’s Foreign Quarter to the Grand Council Hall is entirely uneventful. Read or paraphrase the following to get the adventure underway.

Waiting in front of the impressive double doors of the Grand Council Chamber’s side entrance stands Captain Chun Hye-Seung, a dark-haired human woman wearing the First Guard’s uniform and sporting a cracked set of engineer’s goggles hanging around her neck.

“Pathfinders, welcome!” the Commander Militant of Absalom shouts as she waves exuberantly. “Glad to see my back up has arrived. The First Watch is like a poppet wizard right now—short staffed!” She laughs at her own joke, then pulls herself together to continue. “In all seriousness, with tensions rising in the city, the great houses angling for position, refugees

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arriving daily, and everyone screaming for the High Council to make some decisions, I've been scrambling to ensure security.

"The Council has called an emergency meeting to discuss the Andoran-Cheliox conflict, examine how the outbreak of war might affect the city, and establish the correct position for Absalom to take. If all goes well, I hope that the council will be able to make a statement soon. We've been hearing from all of the affected groups, to ensure that we come to a fair and fully informed decision. Today, we've invited the Chelaxian embassy to attend our session and present their case.

"The Chelaxian ambassador, Lord Gulv Tevineg, not only accepted the invitation, but he also insisted on bringing part of his household to the meeting. Considering how delicate the situation is, and the political power wielded by his family, I thought we could use a little security—and Ambrus Valsin owed me a favor, so here you are."

Captain Chun smiles encouragingly. "I'll need you to safeguard the ambassador and his family when they arrive, guard the side entrance during the meeting to see that we are not disturbed, and see the embassy staff on their way when the meeting concludes. The ambassador and his family may have some small requests for you, but you're not here as their servants. Oh, and please be polite and professional toward them, regardless of your feelings about Cheliox. You could cut the tension in the city right now with a rusty dogslicer, and I know there are many in Cheliox that are already none-too-fond of the Pathfinder Society. But Ambrus assured me that you were the best agents available for the job. Think of it as an exciting little challenge, like wrestling a cinder dragon or disabling an *annihilation sphere*!

"Any questions?"

Chun happily answers any questions that she can, paying particular attention to PCs with interesting firearms, gadgets, or other technological gear.

Who will we be guarding? "Along with the ambassador himself, you'll be responsible for his wife, Lady Xansippe Tevineg. They call her 'Beloved of Asmodeus,' and she's the head of the Lord of Darkness' church here in the city. If anything, she's more politically connected than her husband, particularly in Absalom. They're bringing one of their daughters, Lady Seichya Tevineg, and her personal bodyguard, Adrius. Lady Seichya is the warden of a prison called The Brine in the Puddles District. They're also bringing a newly arrived envoy from House Thrune, the ruling family of Cheliox, named Lady Val Haltrax. I haven't met her, but my sources tell me she's charming and easy to work with."

What about the delegation from Andoran? "The High Council met with the Andoran delegation yesterday, and they brought their own security, a team of Eagle Knights."

Who is on the High Council, and what is its role? "The High Council controls the major departments of the city of Absalom and makes vital decisions for the city, which are then carried out by the Primarch. There are a dozen members on the council these days, but it's unlikely you'll meet more than a handful of them today. Council members are generally successful merchants, respected religious figures, and well-connected nobles."

Why are we at the side entrance? "We want to avoid bringing attention to the delegation. As I'm sure you are aware, people inside and outside Absalom have strong feelings about this meeting."



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Why does Ambrus Valsin owe you a favor? “I recommended a good barber to him: Old Nine-Finger Glix, down in the Coins. Sharpest razor in the business.”

Devil Lore, Religion, or Society (Recall Knowledge)

A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Religion or Society check or a DC 16 Devil Lore check to Recall Knowledge might know more about the infernal nation of Cheliox. A failure grants no information, and a critical success grants the additional information in the critical success entry. Remember that these checks should be rolled secretly.

Critical Success The current military crisis between Cheliox and Andoran was initiated by Cheliox's assassination of an Andoran official on a diplomatic mission. Both sides are wary of further targeted killings.

Success Queen Abrogail Thrune II leads the nation of Cheliox with support of the god Asmodeus, the ruler of Hell. While Cheliox has considered the neighboring country of Andoran a rebel province of its empire for more than 100 years, fallout from the death of the battle god Gorum has transformed this lingering hostility into an open military conflict.

Critical Failure Chelioxian diplomats are notorious for breaking their word and failing to honor the agreements they sign.

Absalom Lore, Politics Lore, or Society (Recall Knowledge)

A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Society check or a DC 16 Absalom Lore or Politics Lore check to Recall Knowledge might know more about the Chelioxian Embassy. A failure grants no information, and a critical success grants the additional information in the critical success entry. Remember that these checks should be rolled secretly.

Critical Success Rumors swirl that the atmosphere at the embassy has become increasingly tense since Lord Gulv recently returned to Absalom after 20 years of serving abroad at the Chelioxian royal court.

Success The Chelioxian Embassy is located in a former temple to Aroden in the heart of the Ascendant Court. Lord Gulv Tevineg, the Chelioxian ambassador to Absalom, lives and works at the embassy. His powerful and highly politically connected wife, Scion Lady Xansippe of House Tevineg, serves as the High Priestess of Absalom's Church of Asmodeus.

Critical Failure The embassy is staffed almost entirely with minor fiends and hellspawn nephilim.

Devil Lore or Religion (Recall Knowledge)

A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Religion check or a DC 16 Devil Lore check to Recall Knowledge might know more about the worship of Asmodeus and his fiendish servants. A failure grants no information,

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Players who have strong ties to the conflict between Andoran and Cheliox, such as membership in the Eagle Knights or Hellknights, should be reminded that they are representing the Pathfinder Society during this mission, regardless of their other loyalties. While Captain Chun acknowledges these conflicts, she assures the PCs that a peaceful meeting has the best chance of defusing the conflict, minimizing chaos in the region, and saving many, many lives. She also promises the guard duty will not require them to forswear any oaths they have taken.

and a critical success grants the additional information in the critical success entry. Remember that these checks should be rolled secretly.

Critical Success Not all worshippers of the Prince of Darkness support House Thrune of Cheliox. The Church of Asmodeus in Absalom frequently welcomes worshippers at odds with the Chelioxian government, such as nephilim, halflings, and dissidents. Some supporters of House Thrune even consider the Church's worshippers heretics. (Remind PCs of this information when they reach the Church of Asmodeus.)

Success Asmodeus, ruler of Hell, is the patron of contracts, tyranny, pride, and oppression. A god of rigid structures, Asmodeus revels in bringing order to the world and crushing any dissent. He, and his fiendish servants are well-known for tempting mortals into bargains where they trade their souls for worldly power, knowledge, or standing.

Critical Failure Despite their fiendish patron, Asmodean lawyers are welcome in most cities of the Inner Sea because of their expertise in contract law.

Hero Points

Once the PCs have finished their preparations, remind them that they each have 1 Hero Point available.

A. Grand Council Hall Antechamber

After answering the PCs' questions, Chun gives them a dossier she has written containing descriptions of the members of the Chelioxian Embassy and select members of the High Council staff (Give the players **Handout #2: Chun's Dossier** on page 22). She also entrusts them with two instant spies (*Pathfinder Guns & Gears* 70), telling the PCs they'll help “keep an eye on things.”

“I'll leave you to settle in,” she says, opening the doors to the anteroom. “You can wait here; everyone will be arriving shortly. In the meantime, I'll send some of the members of the High Council to meet you. I'm sure it would make them feel safer if you presented yourselves as competent and professional, so please try to impress them. It will reflect on my judgment if you don't! The council is twelve members, but these four expressed special interest in meeting you.”



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Once they've finished speaking with Chun, the party is free to explore the antechamber that they have been set to guard. The furnishings are opulent and well-constructed, with several couches, chairs, and small tables where those waiting to appear before the Grand Council can sit and gather themselves. The ceiling here is 20 feet high, and the area is brightly illuminated by magical lighting. Majestic double doors lead to the street, flanked by two less impressive, but still sturdy, doors used by guards and servants. Stairs on each side of the entranceway lead up to a gallery that is 10 feet above the ground floor. Should PCs search the area, they find nothing suspicious or out of the ordinary.

The High Council Staff

Once the Pathfinders have examined the area, or after one minute, Chun returns with the staff of the High Council who will be in attendance for this important meeting. Each staff member has a gift for the ad hoc guards, should they decide the Pathfinders are worthy of it, and the Pathfinders have an opportunity to impress each staff member, potentially earning useful information and tools. The PCs can choose one of their number to attempt a skill check to impress each staff member, using one of the skills listed in the staff member's description; the other Pathfinders may assist the check. Staff members maintain a guise of strict neutrality when speaking to the Pathfinders, wary of souring the negotiations before they begin.

Starwatch Captain

A woman with storm-gray hair cropped to a sensible length enters the antechamber, her spotless uniform emblazoned with the badge of the Starwatch. From her swagger, it seems she'd be more at home on the deck of a ship than the halls of the Grand Council. "My thanks, Pathfinders," she brusquely offers. "With conditions as they are, I'm sure Captain Chun can use every able body to guard this circus."

Asilia of Gyr (loyal female human ranger), the popular captain of the Skywatch, is responsible for the security of Absalom and sets priorities for the Skywatch's investigations. PCs can attempt to impress her with a DC 18 (DC 20 for levels 5–6) Athletics, Acrobatics, Sailing Lore or Warfare Lore check. On a success, she adds, "Difficult enough to keep peace in the city without all of this outside interference. If the Council doesn't make a decision about the crisis soon, we'll have trouble in the streets. I think this scroll is in the standard guard kit; I wouldn't want you without it." She offers the successful party a *scroll of revealing light* (a *scroll of heroism* for levels 5–6).

First Lady of Laws

A stately woman dressed in a long, black gown sweeps hurriedly across the antechamber. Gilded images of scarab beetles, popular among Osirian

followers of Pharamasma, feature prominently on the magnificent golden pectoral and circlet she wears. Without preamble, she says, "Remember: though you are temporarily authorized to assist the First Guard, your authority here is limited, Pathfinders. I don't want to hear of any incidents of wanton violence or property destruction."

One of the most politically powerful figures in the city, **Lady Neferpatra of House Ahnkamen** (preoccupied female human judge) is Absalom's highest judicial authority. In addition to overseeing the courts, she directly rules on any matters where lower courts have deadlocked, and she oversees the training of all the city's magistrates. In addition to her secular duties, Lady Neferpatra serves as one of Pharamasma's senior clergy in the city. PCs can attempt to impress her with a DC 18 (DC 20 for levels 5–6) Medicine, Religion, or Legal Lore check. PCs with a chronicle sheet from *Pathfinder Society Scenario #6-16: The Heart of the City* automatically succeed at this check. On a success, she adds, "House Tevineg is the most powerful of the Chelaxian houses in the city, giving Lord Guly more independence than most ambassadors. I would be surprised if he and his wife do not have their own small plots brewing today. I've found it's best to be prepared for such things." She offers the party a vial of *holy water* (two vials of *holy water* for levels 5–6).



Neferpatra

Keeper of Secrets

A dark red cloak with a voluminous hood swirls around the tall nephilim man who examines the group with piercing yellow eyes. "Well, Pathfinders! And not a cursed artifact to be seen. What a pleasant change of pace," he chuckles. "I know you'd rather be out raising Cayden's own ruckus, but there are few people I trust more for discretion than Ambrus Valsin. I know you'll do him proud."

Responsible for protecting Absalom's magical secrets, and for destroying or quarantining magical threats to the city, **Muar Gauthfallow** (kindly hellspawn nephilim human spell lord) is very familiar with the Pathfinder Society from working with the Vigilant Seal, a faction within the Society dedicated to securing dangerous artifacts. PCs can attempt to impress him with a DC 17 (DC 19 for levels 5–6) Arcana, Nature, Occultism, Religion, or Curse Lore check. On a success, he adds, "Both sides in this conflict are tampering with *warshards*. The less we have to do with those, the better. These hotheads haven't considered the consequences of turning bits of a dead god into weapons. Here are some safer inventions, as my thanks for serving guard duty." He offers the party a *low-grade alloy orb* (two *low-grade alloy orbs* for levels 5–6).

Diplomatic Minister

The most catching thing about Ferridan Severus's appearance is his penetrating gaze, followed by his fine noble's clothing despite how young

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he appears for a High Council member. His energetic stride quickly carries him across the room. As he nears, it becomes clear that the gold buttons at his neck and wrist are carved with the key of Abadar.

"Please, try to stay out of the way, Pathfinders," a fine line of tension forms between the man's eyebrows. "These deliberations could not be more serious." He leans forward slightly. "And you should know, there are spies everywhere."

Ferridan Severus (fastidious male human spymaster) manages Absalom's cadre of ambassadors serving around the Inner Sea and beyond. He also receives clandestine reports from spies throughout Absalom's international sphere of influence. PCs can attempt to impress him with a DC 19 (DC 21 for levels 5–6) Diplomacy, Society, or Politics Lore check. On a success, he adds, "Honestly, I opposed the motion to invite you here, Pathfinders. These are extremely delicate negotiations, and your organization is not popular inside Cheliah. You seem, however, to be competent. I suggest you learn as much as you can about your charges, and about how things currently stand in Cheliah. This should aid you." He remains cool toward the Pathfinders as he passes them a moderate silvertongue mutagen (two moderate silvertongue mutagens for levels 5–6).

Development: After speaking with the Pathfinders, the staff returns to the Grand Council Chamber to prepare for the summit. Captain Chun asks that, once the delegates have arrived, the Pathfinders avoid disturbing the council chamber unless there is a "legitimate and pressing emergency." She trusts the agents' collective judgment to determine what that constitutes.

Event 1: The Meeting Gathers

Moderate

Soon after the Pathfinders are left alone, the Chelaxian embassy's staff arrives outside the Grand Hall in a carriage, but unruly and frightened groups of Absalomian citizens have gathered to try to disrupt the meeting.

A roar of many raised voices penetrates the double doors of the antechamber from the street outside. A muffled voice roars, "Stand back!" but the discontented murmurs become even louder. There's a resonant thud as something heavy strikes the chamber's doors from outside.

On the street outside, a grand (and, luckily, sturdy) coach has drawn up with the Chelaxian embassy staff inside. The carriage is surrounded by angry and frightened citizens who received word the Grand Council would meet with the diabolists. Once the Pathfinders open the door, the crowds turn their attention to the new targets.

Levels 3–4

UNRULY CROWD (2)

Page 14

Stealth +5 (trained)

HAZARD 3

Levels 5–6

VIOLENT CROWD (2)

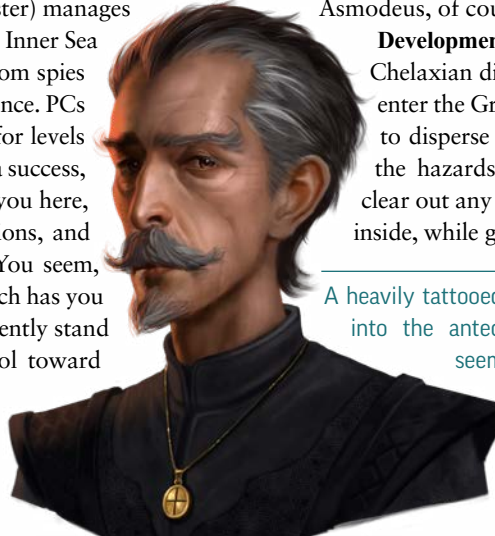
Page 18

Stealth +12 (trained)

HAZARD 6

Reward: If the PCs succeed in calming the crowds, Lady Xansippe is very pleased and offers to fully heal them—through the power of Asmodeus, of course.

Development: Once the hazards are disabled, the Chelaxian diplomatic staff emerge from their carriage and enter the Grand Council antechamber. (If PCs use violence to disperse the crowds, or if they are not able to disable the hazards, two beleaguered Starwatch guards appear, clear out any remaining crowd, and escort the ambassadors inside, while gently berating the PCs as "amateurs.")



Lord Gulv Tevineg

A heavily tattooed nephilim guard leads the Chelaxian delegation into the antechamber, wary eyes on every corner and a seemingly permanent frown on their face. Close on their heels, a regal woman in her mid-30s with an uplifted chin follows. She silently measures everyone she sees with steely eyes and thin, pursed lips.

"I will go inside to make sure they are prepared for our arrival," the striking, raven-haired woman wearing plain clothing who follows next offers. She looks younger than the rest of her companions, and has a slightly dusky complexion. With a bow of her

head and a charming half-smile, she glides across the floor to the Grand Council Hall's inner door and slips inside.

Finally, a mature couple stops in the center of the anteroom, surveying their surroundings.

"What's this, Pathfinders as guards?" the husband asks. Frown lines crease his face, though his dark hair is full and his clothing fine. A large medallion featuring the arms of the Chelaxian royal house hangs around his neck. "You are more fit for Seichya's prison than for escort duty," he sneers as he gestures dismissively at the group.

"Now, now, Gulv," the woman at his side lays a hand on his arm, the gold pentagrams on her long black gown clinking together softly. "Don't be hasty. Pathfinders have many admirable qualities: ambitious, curious, tenacious. They'll go to almost any lengths to uncover a secret." She smiles wryly, and adds, "And they're ruled by a conspiracy of masked figures. You can't ask for much more than that." Her husband grunts but says nothing further.

This is the PCs' only chance to really speak with Lady Xansippe and Lord Gulv Tevineg, though Gulv is impatient with them and seems annoyed to be spoken to by his perceived lessers. Some possible questions follow.

Why are you meeting with the High Council? Gulv snorts loudly at this question. "As though it's not obvious. Absalom has long enjoyed a... friendship with Cheliah. It would be a shame if a powerful city chose to turn its back on an equally powerful ally in this time of turmoil and warfare."

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Who is your companion? Here Xansippe's smile falters momentarily and a dark look crosses her face before smoothing out. "Lady Val Haltrax, my *darling* husband's new assistant, sent to him by his **dear** friend, Queen Abrogail. She's quite **friendly** and **very** helpful." Each time she emphasizes a word, she lightly squeezes Gulv's arm, prompting him to give her an irritated look.

Is the Church of Asmodeus supporting this conflict? This immediately sets off a small bickering match between the married couple, with Xansippe finally dropping Gulv's arm and hissing an insult at him in Diabolic. Finally, Gulv straightens his vest and looks at the PCs. "Her Royal Highness knows that the church is considering all options. My wife is the Beloved of Asmodeus, so clearly, she knows best." Even as his words seem polite, a dark sarcasm drips in his tone.

Once the Pathfinders have finished, the couple, shooting each other venomous looks, once again lock arms and sweep into the Grand Council Hall.

Event 2: Sulfuric Assassination Severe

After approximately thirty minutes of uneventful waiting, Lady Xansippe and Lord Gulv emerge from the eastern door on the upper gallery. They're locked in heated conversation, but from their posts, the Pathfinders are unable to discern anything more than angry tones. PCs can attempt DC 18 Perception checks to overhear the conversation, DC 19 Stealth checks to creep closer, or DC 19 Thievery checks to surreptitiously place and activate an instant spy. (Increase the DCs by 2 for levels 5–6.) On a success, they overhear Lady Xansippe say, "You and Abrogail have both gone too far this time. You'll destroy everything I've built. People will flee our Dark Prince instead of taking his hand. You never should have left the capital!" On a critical failure, or if PCs cast a spell without the Subtle trait, Lady and Lord Tevineg shoot the Pathfinders venomous looks and retreat inside the Grand Council Hall. Once the two of them have finished their fight, there's a rumbling noise, prompting them to return to the Hall.

Wrapped up in their personal and political conflicts, Xansippe and Gulv are unaware that his assistant Lady **Val Haltrax** (charming female human bureaucrat) is secretly a gylou, a cunning handmaiden devil. She's using her position to establish a spy network within Absalom, allowing her to gather intelligence about what allies they may be taking and what benefits Andoran may be reaping during this conflict. To sow chaos, throw suspicion on the enemies of Cheliox, and draw attention away from the embassy where her agents are currently acting, she has briefly disguised a group of diabolic agents as possible Andoren assassins, though the magic is imperfect. Haltrax was unable to warn her agents about the Pathfinder guards, so they are surprised to see the party in the antechamber when they cast *magic passage* to enter the premises.

With a whoosh of displaced air and a scatter of brick dust, a 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall archway appears in the western wall of the upper gallery. A figure clad in a tattered blue uniform, accompanied by a what looks to be a golden hound, brandishes a shining dagger with a hand guard shaped like eagle's wings and shouts, "Death to tyranny! For the Common Law and freedom! Houses Tevineg and Thrune must fall!"

The sight of the PCs is enough to cause the attackers to pause, and the smell of sulfur and burning hoof prints become clear. The devils drop their temporary disguises and immediately launch into battle with the Pathfinders, clearly reveling in the chance to spill blood instead of dance around like freedom-loving puppets. The devils, bored of subtle spy work and spoiling for combat, fight to the death, refusing to give an inch to the PCs. Use the map on page 9 for this encounter.

Levels 3–4

VORDINE

CREATURE 5

Pathfinder Monster Core 87, art on page 24

Initiative Perception +12

Illusory disguise (3rd) As human Andoran assassin.

HELL HOUND

CREATURE 3

Pathfinder Monster Core 194

Initiative Perception +9

Illusory disguise (3rd) As guard dog.

Levels 5–6

COARTI

CREATURE 7

Pathfinder Monster Core 87, art on page 25

Initiative Perception +12

Illusory disguise (3rd) As human Andoran assassin.

VORDINE

CREATURE 5

Pathfinder Monster Core 87, art on page 24

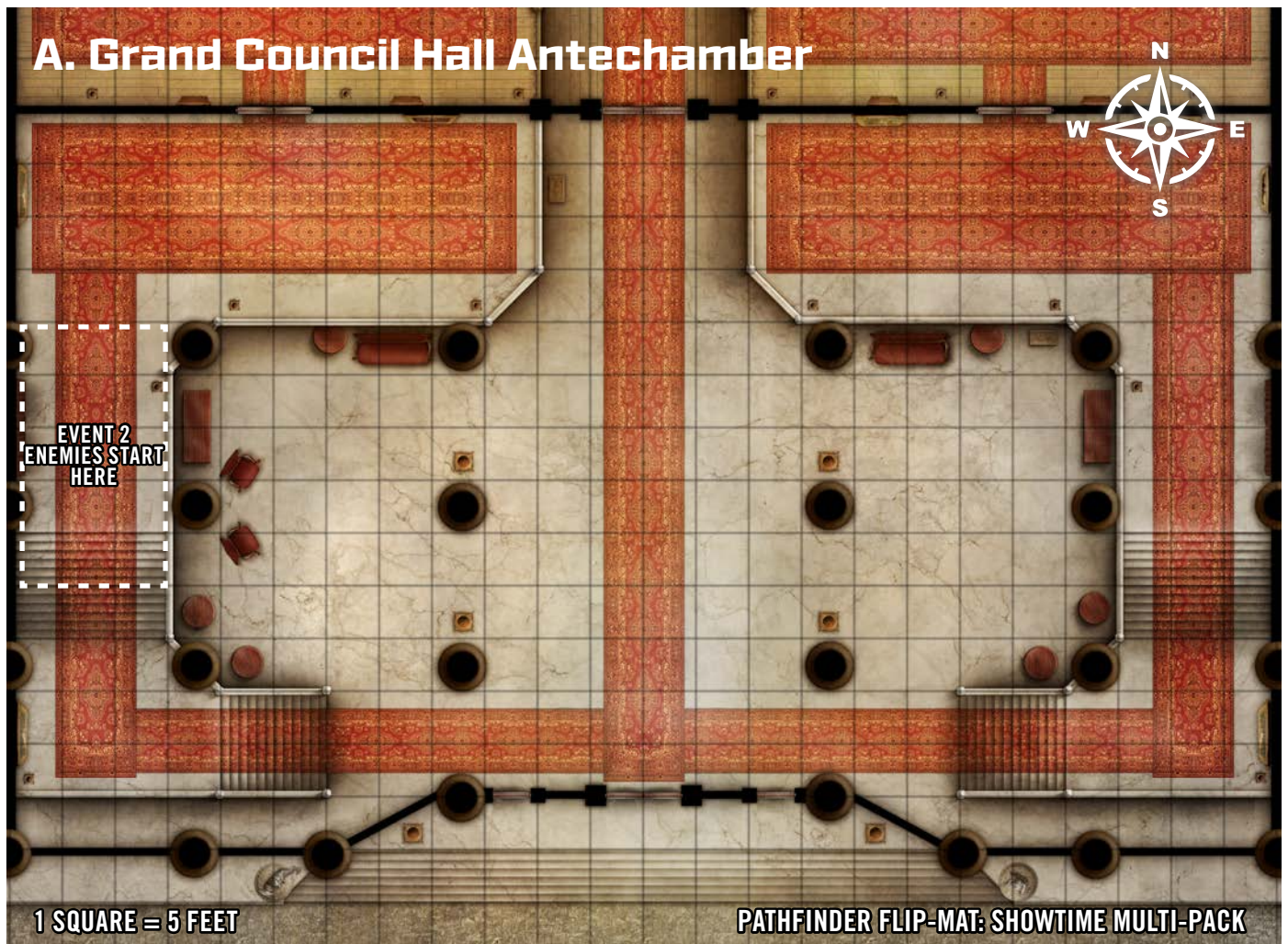
Initiative Perception +17

Illusory disguise (3rd) As human Andoran assassin.

Reward: The assassins carry an ornate dagger with eagle motifs etched on the blade and a guard shaped like up swept wings: it's a +1 *striking dagger*. (For levels 5–6, it's a +1 *striking returning low-grade silver dagger* instead.)

Development: After the attackers are defeated, PCs can examine their corpses in an attempt to figure out what's going on. If a PC succeeds at a DC Perception check to Search the bodies, they find a small note, detailing the time and place of the meeting, signed by someone named Valgrothis. Captain Chun and Lady Val Haltrax emerge from the chambers at the commotion. Chun compliments the Pathfinders on their efficacy as guards, while Val examines the bodies. Chun also fusses over the hole in the wall before examining it, declaring that it, "should only last an hour," and fetching a pair of brass stanchions will a velvet rope between them to cordon off the area. While she's busy setting up the ropes, Val turns to the Pathfinders and gives them a thin smile. "It's so good that you were here to protect Lord Tevineg against these rogue agents." If the PCs attempt to prod her for any information, she plays cool, giving a shrug and explaining that Hell, and therefore Cheliox, are places where the ambitious must make daring choices to see upward movement. After a moment, she excuses herself as council servants remove the remains of the attackers.

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Event 3: Pushing Papers

Low

After another approximately thirty minutes of waiting, the somewhat quiet is interrupted when a human dressed in black and red messenger's livery suddenly appears in the middle of the antechamber. Lady Xansippe's personal messenger, a scrawny human man named Tranio, has used an *invisibility potion* to avoid the crowds outside the council hall and a *shrinking potion* to slip under the door, but unfortunately for him, both effects wear off just as he reaches the center of the antechamber! After pleading for the PCs not to harm or detain him, he claims that he's Lady Xansippe's personal servant, here on an important mission for her. He won't tell the PCs what he's there to deliver—an extremely large, tasteless, and ugly portrait of Lord Gulv Tevineg, exaggerating some of his most disliked features. Xansippe ordered that the painting be delivered to her and Lord Gulv the moment it was completed, especially if they were with important guests, as a way to humiliate him and undercut his social standing with Absalom's political elite.

The PCs can attempt a DC 16 Perception check to Sense Motive; DC 16 Society check to recognize the messenger's uniform as that of a formal servant of House Tevineg, likely in the direct employ of

Scion Lady Xansippe; DC 16 Intimidation check to encourage the messenger to reveal more information; or DC 14 Heraldry Lore check to recognize his uniform (increase the DCs by 2 for levels 5–6). If the PCs earn at least as many successes as half the number of players, they are sure the messenger is authentic. If the PCs successfully overheard the argument during Event 2, grant them 1 automatic success. If the PCs succeed, Tranio sighs and gently pulls at the paper on the portrait, revealing the hideous caricature of Lord Gulv. The PCs now get to make a choice: let him into the meeting per Lady Xansippe's orders, or help Lord Gulv save face.

Tranio insists on getting into the meeting, possibly triggering combat. (Lady Xansippe has claim on his soul contract, so he fights to unconsciousness, if necessary.) If combat triggers, use the map above, with the PCs and messenger starting in the middle of the antechamber.

Levels 3–4

DIABOLICAL MESSENGER

Page 15

Initiative Perception +12

CREATURE 4

Sulfuric Negotiations

Levels 5–6

SPY

Pathfinder NPC Core 15

Initiative Perception +14

Reward: If the PCs let him through peacefully, the messenger rewards them with a *shining symbol* of Asmodeus. (For levels 5–6 he instead gives them a *diplomat's badge* with the House Tevineg arms.)

Development: The messenger thanks the PCs and enters the Grand Council Chamber to deliver his package. If the Pathfinders engage in combat with the messenger, Chun rushes out of the council chamber just as the messenger is reduced to 0 Hit Points and stabilizes him, gasping, “Lady Xansippe told me to expect a messenger, oh no!” Lord Gulv follows after her, curious at the combat and catches sight of the portrait, immediately turning beet red and glaring at Lady Xansippe, who pointedly turns to Seichya and starts a loud conversation about the weather.

B. The Roads of Absalom

One hour after the encounter with the messenger, Captain Chun emerges from the meeting.

“Well done, Pathfinders! The Council has decided that Absalom will not be drawn into the conflict between Cheliox and Andoran. The counselors believe there is simply too much to be lost here at home. Such conflicts are never without consequences for the belligerents, no matter how noble we might think their intentions.”

“There is one more favor I would ask of you, one more complication that needs to be dealt with: Lady Xansippe Tevineg had a stupendously ugly painting of her husband sent to, well, her husband! We’re all a bit shocked (though none as much as Lord Gulv, I bet). Would you ride escort on her carriage to the Church of Asmodeus in the Ascendant Court? She hopes that leaving separately will make things less awkward for her family. And, well, maybe some time apart will calm down whatever tension there is between them and prevent her husband from figuring out his immediate revenge. Though she is very resourceful, we don’t want her in any danger. It could severely upset the political situation! And... be a terrible inconvenience.”

Lady Xansippe sweeps out of the council chamber, a faint smile on her face. “What an unusual day we’ve had, Pathfinders. I find I need to make some time for prayerful reflection. And celebration.” She adds, breaking into a wolfish grin.

Once the PCs agree to help, the party can board Lady Xansippe’s personal carriage, which is waiting outside. There is room for all the Pathfinders to cling on guardrails on the outside of the coach; Large PCs can ride on the carriage’s rear.

CREATURE 6

To the side, Lord Gulv can be seen watching his daughter Seichya being helped into his carriage by her bodyguard. If the portrait was delivered, he refuses to even look in the Pathfinders’ direction. If they prevented its delivery, he gives them small nod.

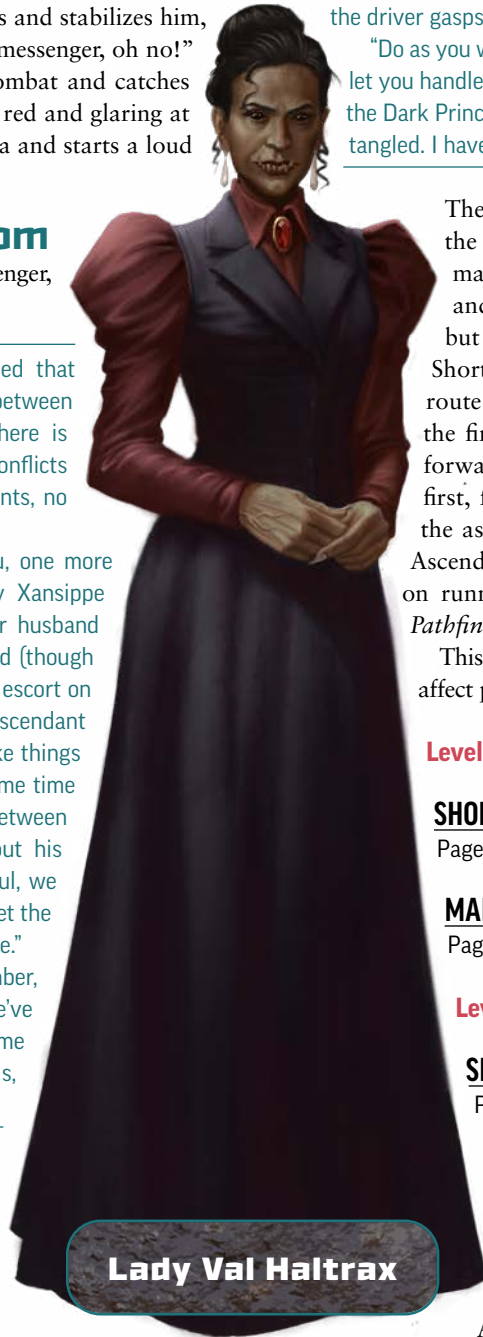
B1. Under Attack!

Moderate

Mere blocks away from the Grand Council Hall, the coach driver shouts in alarm as a crossbow bolt zips in front of his nose.

“Which way, Pathfinders?!” the driver stammers. “I could cut through the markets, but the way is narrow and crowded. Or we could try to outrun these hidden attackers on the main road. Longer route, but safer driving!” the driver gasps.

“Do as you wish,” Lady Xansippe calls from inside the coach. “I will let you handle this challenge. The political consequence of calling on the Dark Prince’s power amid a crowded street could become quite... tangled. I have every confidence in you.”



Lady Val Haltrax

The PCs must help the driver navigate safely to the Church of Asmodeus. They have a moment to make a choice: Take a short cut through the bumpy and crowded marketplace or take the longer, but smoother, main roads to the temple. Only run Shortcut or Main Roads below, depending on the route the PCs choose. The assassins begin the chase on the first Obstacle one round after the PCs and move forward at one Obstacle per round. The players move first, followed by the assassins. The chase ends when the assassins catch up to the PCs or the PCs pass the Ascendant Court Bridge Obstacle. For the full rules on running a Chase encounter, see pages 192–195 of *Pathfinder GM Core*.

This chase encounter has now map, but success here will affect positioning and preparation time in Encounter B2.

Levels 3–4

SHORTCUT

Page 16

CHASE 5

MAIN ROADS

Page 16

CHASE 5

Levels 5–6

SHORTCUT

Page 20

CHASE 7

MAIN ROADS

Page 20

CHASE 7

Development: The ambushers eventually corner the PCs, either in front of the Church of Asmodeus or in the narrow streets of the city.

Sulfuric Negotiations

B2. The Attempt on the Priestess

Severe

A squad of Andoran dissidents catches up to the party and makes an attempt to kill Lady Xansippe. Should the PCs reach pass the Ascendant Court Bridge obstacle in Encounter B1, they may position themselves as they like in the area east of the temple (**Area 1**). They have 1 round to prepare before the assassins arrive. Should the assassins catch up with them during the chase, they begin combat in **Area 2**, with enemies at each end of the alleyway, and immediately roll initiative.

Levels 3–4

WEAK MUSKETEER (2)

Pathfinder NPC Core 5, 77, art on page 25

Initiative Perception +8

CREATURE 2

STREET MUSICIAN (2)

Pathfinder NPC Core 125

Initiative Perception +9

CREATURE 2

Levels 5–6

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

Pathfinder NPC Core 115

Initiative Perception +15

CREATURE 6

ELITE MUSKETEER (2)

Pathfinder NPC Core 5, 77, art on page 25

Initiative Perception +14

CREATURE 4

Reward: Priests from the Church award the PCs for the valuable protection they have provided to Lady Xansippe, gifting them a jeweled pentagram pendant and a statue of a grinning phistophilus carved from ebony worth 15 gp (40 gp for level 5–6).

Development: If the PCs are losing badly, Lady Xansippe will step in to end the combat, but she'll be irritated with the PCs and worried about the consequences. If the PCs triumph, Lady Xansippe sweeps inside with wry thanks and a comment that she is off to reflect on her “wifely duties” which she seems to find very funny.

Two acolytes emerge from the temple, **Sildras** (weirdly cheerful agender nephilim priest) and **Kistre Stillbrook** (stoic female halfling priestess). The two thank the PCs repeatedly for keeping Xansippe safe and ask them if there are any services or information that they can provide. The clerics offer that they are experts in Asmodeus's works in Absalom, the Chelaxian Embassy, and the Church of Asmodeus. The priests tell PCs that the Church in Absalom has always been a more accepting place for “worshippers like them” than mainland Chelax. (They are also able to share any information from the success and critical success Recall Knowledge entries from the opening of the adventure, if asked.)

The clerics suspect that the freedom and power enjoyed by Lady Xansippe is envied by Queen Abrogail, though they seem reluctant to say more. PCs can attempt a DC 16 Diplomacy or Religion check to encourage them to share more information. (Increase the DCs by 2 for levels 5–6.) On a success, the priests reveal that Gulv had been traveling for decades, and that Lady Xansippe resented his return. They also share that they have a bad feeling about Lady Val Haltrax, who, it's rumored, was sent by Queen Abrogail herself to function as a minder. On a critical success, Kistre glances around herself before offering the PCs a note in Val's handwriting, signed “Valgrothis.”

Conclusion

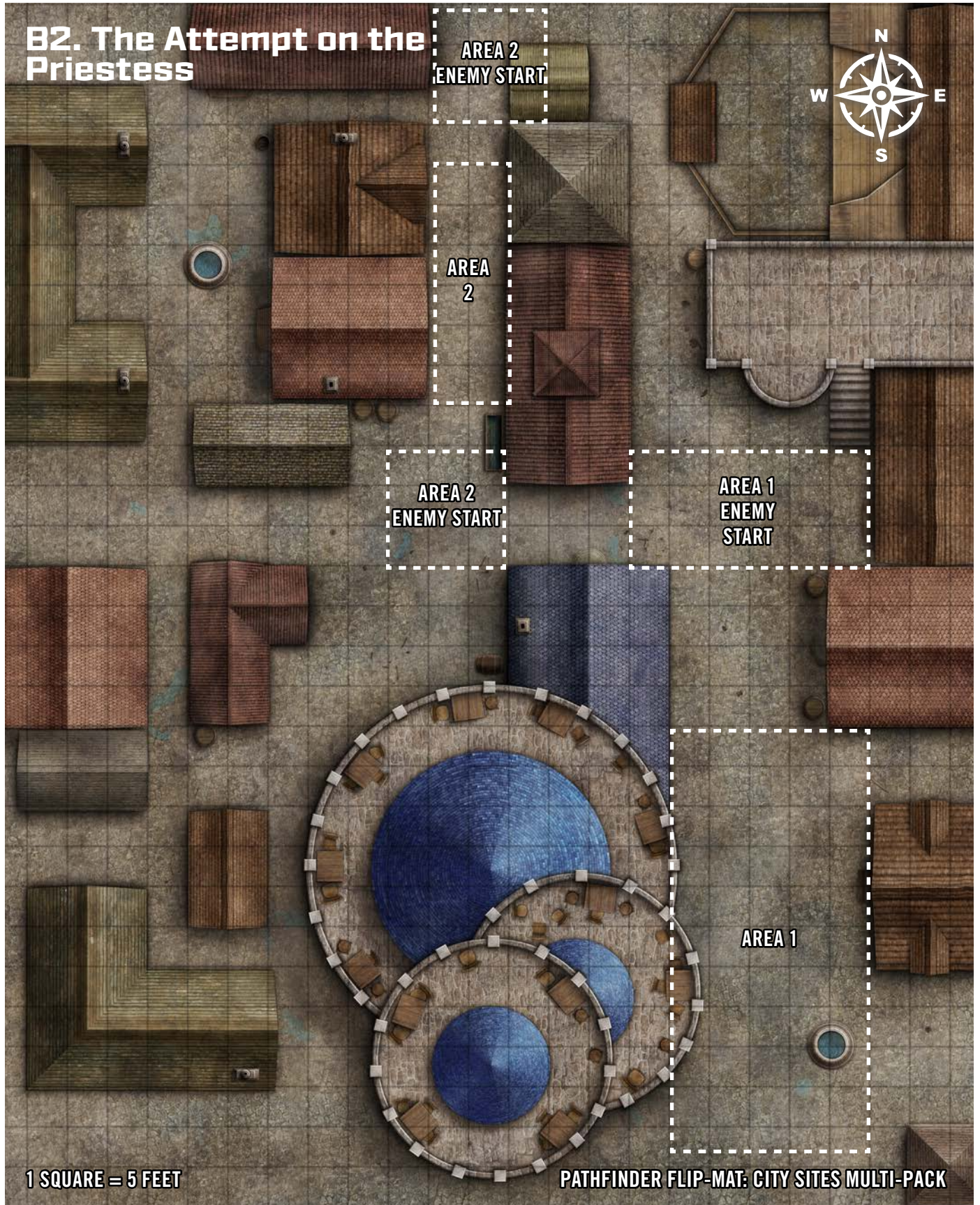
After leaving the Church of Asmodeus, the PCs return uneventfully to Chun to report. She thanks them again and says that she must report the attack to the High Council. Captain Chun warns PCs that some will see them as interfering with Chelaxian affairs. She promises to also send a full report along to Ambrus Valsin and tells the PCs to watch out for shrubs on the way back to the Grand Lodge, as they might be “am-bushes.”



Musketeer

Sulfuric Negotiations

B2. The Attempt on the Priestess



Sulfuric Negotiations

Additionally, if the PCs helped Lord Gulv save face by preventing Lady Xansippe's messenger from delivering the awful painting, he arranges to have them sent *authorized* runes inscribed with the crest of House Tevineg. (For levels 5–6, they are instead sent *wounding* runes.)

Reporting Notes

If the PCs allowed the painting to be delivered, check box **A**. If the PCs prevented Lord Gulv from being embarrassed, check box **B**. If the PCs learned that Val Haltrax is Valgrothis, check box **C**.

Primary Objectives

The PCs complete their primary objective if they successfully protect the meeting of the High Council from being disrupted and escort Lady Xansippe to the Church of Asmodeus. Doing so earns each PC 2 Reputation with their chosen faction.

Secondary Objectives

The PCs complete their secondary objective if they disperse the crowds in Event 1 without violence and accomplish at least one of the following: Allow Lady Xansippe's messenger to do his job in Event 3, impress at least 3 of the High Council staff, or learn the additional information from the acolytes of Asmodeus.



Kistre Stillbrook

Sulfuric Negotiations

Appendix 1: Level 3-4 Encounters

This appendix features the short stat blocks for preexisting creatures and full stat blocks for custom creatures appearing in this scenario. Short stat blocks will include an annotation for the book they originally come from, typically *Pathfinder Monster Core* or *Pathfinder NPC Core*. These encounters are written for four 3rd-level PCs. If your group has a different composition or size, refer to the scaling sidebars to adjust the encounters for your group. Some scaling sidebars reference the elite or weak adjustments. Rules for these adjustments appear on pages 6–7 of *Pathfinder Monster Core*. If a creature is marked “(0),” don’t include it in the encounter unless otherwise specified (likely from the scaling sidebars).

Event 1 (Levels 3-4)

UNRULY CROWD (2)

HAZARD 3

COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTAL

Stealth +5 (trained); Characters automatically detect this hazard when they open the door to the Grand Hall.

Description Concerned citizens shout slogans about the dangers of dealing with Cheliox and throw bricks at Chelioxian sympathizers.

Disable Succeed at two of the following checks in any combination: Athletics DC 20 (trained) to confiscate dangerous debris, Diplomacy DC 20 (trained) to calm the crowd, Intimidation DC 18 (untrained) to scare the crowd away, Will DC 22 (trained) to maintain a brave and confident demeanor; an effect such as *calm* that can target an area counts as one automatic success.

AC 19, **Fort** +12, **Ref** +12

HP 44

There They Are! **Trigger** A creature opens the door to the Grand Hall;

Effect The unruly crowd rolls Initiative.

Routine **Trigger** The unruly crowd uses an action to chant a Catchy Slogan if it is not already benefiting from the effect. It uses Shake Confidence once per turn and uses its remaining actions for cobblestone Strikes.

Catchy Slogan (auditory, emotion, linguistic) All the hazards in a 30-foot emanation gain a +1 status bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls.

Shake Confidence (auditory, emotion) The unruly crowd targets a creature within 30 feet. The creature must attempt a DC 20 Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and immune to Shake Confidence for 24 hours.

Success The creature becomes frightened 1.

Failure The creature becomes frightened 2.

Critical Failure The creature becomes frightened 2 and stupefied 1.

Ranged cobblestone +12 (range increment 30 feet), **Damage** 2d6+5 bludgeoning

SCALING EVENT 1

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

10-11 Challenge Points: Replace one unruly crowd with one rowdy crowd.

12-13 Challenge Points: Replace both unruly crowds with two rowdy crowds.

14-15 Challenge Points: Add one rowdy crowd to the encounter.

16-18 Challenge Points (5+ players): Replace one unruly crowd with one rowdy crowd and add one rowdy crowd to the encounter.

ROWDY CROWD (0)

HAZARD 4

COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTAL

Stealth +7 (trained); Characters automatically detect this hazard when they open the door to the Grand Hall.

Description Concerned citizens shout slogans about the dangers of dealing with Cheliox and throw bricks at Chelioxian sympathizers.

Disable Succeed at two of the following checks in any combination: Athletics DC 22 (trained) to confiscate dangerous debris, Diplomacy DC 22 (trained) to calm the crowd, Intimidation DC 20 (untrained) to scare the crowd away, Will DC 24 (trained) to maintain a brave and confident demeanor; an effect such as *calm* that can target an area counts as one automatic success.

AC 21, **Fort** +14, **Ref** +14

HP 48

There They Are! **Trigger** A creature opens the door to the Grand Hall;

Effect The rowdy crowd rolls Initiative.

Routine **Trigger** The rowdy crowd uses an action to chant a Catchy Slogan if it is not already benefiting from the effect. It uses Shake Confidence once per turn and uses its remaining actions for cobblestone Strikes.

Catchy Slogan (auditory, emotion, linguistic) All the hazards in a 30-foot emanation gain a +1 status bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls.

Shake Confidence (auditory, emotion) The rowdy crowd targets a creature within 30 feet. The creature must attempt a DC 22 Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and immune to Shake Confidence for 24 hours.

Success The creature becomes frightened 1.

Failure The creature becomes frightened 2.

Critical Failure The creature becomes frightened 2 and stupefied 1.

Ranged cobblestone +14 (range increment 30 feet), **Damage** 2d8+5 bludgeoning

Sulfuric Negotiations

Event 2 (Levels 3–4)

VORDINE

CREATURE 5

Pathfinder Monster Core 87

Illusory disguise (3rd) As human Andoran assassin.

HELL HOUND

CREATURE 3

Pathfinder Monster Core 194

Illusory disguise (3rd) As guard dog.

GIANT BAT (0)

CREATURE 2

Pathfinder Monster Core 40

Illusory disguise (3rd) As giant eagle.

Event 3 (Levels 3–4)

DIABOLIC MESSENGER

CREATURE 4

UNCOMMON

MEDIUM

HUMAN

HUMANOID

Perception +12

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +12, Deception +14, Diplomacy +12, Intimidation +12, Absalom Court Lore +14, Society +12, Stealth +14, Thievery +12

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

Items dagger (4), disguise kit, fine clothes, leather armor, +1 rapier, thieves' toolkit

AC 21; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12

HP 70

Speed 25 feet

Melee ✦ rapier +15 (deadly d8, disarm, finesse, magical), **Damage** 2d6+5 piercing

Melee ✦ dagger +14 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+5 piercing

Melee ✦ fist +14 (agile, finesse, nonlethal, unarmed), **Damage** 1d4+5 bludgeoning

Ranged ✦ dagger +16 (thrown 10 feet), **Damage** 1d4+5 piercing

Hidden Blade ✦ **Frequency** once per round; **Effect** The diabolic messenger draws a weapon and then Strikes with it. The target of the Strike is off-guard against the attack.

Sneak Attack The diabolic messenger deals an extra 1d6 precision damage to off-guard creatures.

HOMUNCULUS (0)

CREATURE 0

Pathfinder Monster Core 200

PIPEFOX (0)

CREATURE 2

Pathfinder Monster Core 265

WEAK SPY (0)

CREATURE 5

Pathfinder NPC Core 5, 15

SCALING EVENT 2

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

10–11 Challenge Points: Add one giant bat to the encounter.

12–13 Challenge Points: Add one hell hound to the encounter and apply the elite adjustments.

14–15 Challenge Points: Add an additional vordine to the encounter.

16–18 Challenge Points (5+ players): Add one vordine and one hell hound to the encounter.

SCALING EVENT 3

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

10–11 Challenge Points: Add one homunculus to the encounter.

12–13 Challenge Points: Add one pipefox to the encounter.

14–15 Challenge Points: Replace the diabolic messenger with a weak spy and add one pipefox to the encounter.

16–18 Challenge Points (5+ players): Add an additional diabolic messenger to the encounter.

Sulfuric Negotiations

Encounter B1 (Levels 3–4)

Shortcut

WANDERING GLAZIER **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 19 Athletics to lean into a turn, DC 17 Nature to guide the horse, DC 21 Reflex to avoid the breaking glass.

Two glaziers are crossing the street with a huge pane of glass, ready to install it in a shop's front window.

Special On a failed check, a PC takes 2d10 slashing damage.

FABRIC EMPORIUM **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 17 Crafting to trim the cloth, DC 16 Thievery to quickly untie clotheslines, or an attack against AC 19 that deals slashing damage.

The carriage careens through the hanging draperies, bolts of cloth, and yards of fabric hung around a market stall.

Special On a failed check, a length of fabric thoroughly winds around the PC, causing them to take a -5 foot penalty to their Speed (to a minimum of 5 feet) until they spend one round of the chase or three actions afterward unwinding themselves.

HEDGE WITCH'S STALL **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 17 Arcana, Nature, or Occultism to counteract the unleashed magic, DC 21 Will to resist the errant spells.

The carriage nudges the wall of a vendor selling cures and curses, accidentally smashing several vials and activating a bevy of magic items.

Special On a failed check, the PC bumps a cursed bauble, causing them to become frightened 1 until they spend one round of the chase or three actions afterward to compose themselves.

ASCENDANT COURT BRIDGE **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 19 Survival or Perception to find the quickest path, DC 21 Intimidation to clear the crowd, DC 21 Nature to spur the horse through the throng.

Carts, carriages, and would-be worshipers crowd the bridge to the Ascendant Court, slowing the carriage.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B1

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

12–15 Challenge Points: Add one Chase Point to each obstacle.

14–18 Challenge Points: Increase the DCs on all checks by 1.

Main Roads

QUICK TURN **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 18 Acrobatics to maintain balance, DC 18 Athletics to shift the weight of the cart, or DC 16 Reflex to hang on.

The carriage veers onto the main road and rapidly accelerates.

COBBLESTONE CROSSING **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 18 Survival to follow the smoothest path, DC 18 Society to recall an alternate route, or DC 16 Fortitude to fight off motion sickness.

An old, poorly paved cross street rattles the carriage and the teeth of its passengers with bumps and stomach-churning lurches.

WANDERING FOOD CART **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 19 Athletics to shove the cart out of the way, DC 20 Deception to distract the crowd, or DC 18 Intimidation to convince the cart owner to move along.

A large crowd has gathered around a vendor selling steaming meat on a stick, blocking the roadway.

PROCESSION OF THE HOPEFUL **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 18 Performance or Religion to blend into the procession or DC 20 Society to remember the Hopefuls' typical route to the Cathedral.

A religious procession winds its way toward the Starstone Cathedral, its members singing, waving banners, and chanting prayers to their would-be god.

CUT OFF! **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 20 Intimidation to scare off the attackers, DC 16 Nature to calm the animals, or DC 18 Stealth to avoid the ambush.

Assassins pop out of a side street, intent on spooking the horses and stopping the carriage.

ASCENDANT COURT BRIDGE **OBSTACLE 3**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 18 Survival or Perception to find the quickest path, DC 20 Intimidation to clear the crowd, DC 20 Nature to spur the horse through the throng.

Carts, carriages, and would-be worshipers crowd the bridge to the Ascendant Court, slowing the carriage.

Sulfuric Negotiations

Encounter B2 (Levels 3–4)

WEAK MUSKETEER (2)

Pathfinder NPC Core 5, 77

CREATURE 2

STREET MUSICIAN (2)

Pathfinder NPC Core 125

CREATURE 2

MUSKETEER (0)

Pathfinder NPC Core 77

CREATURE 3

MAGE FOR HIRE (0)

Pathfinder NPC Core 82

CREATURE 3

SCALING ENCOUNTER B2

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

10–11 Challenge Points: Replace the weak musketeers and one of the street musicians with musketeers.

12–13 Challenge Points: Replace the weak musketeers with musketeers and add one musketeer to the encounter.

14–15 Challenge Points: Replace the weak musketeers with musketeers and add one musketeer and one street musician to the encounter.

16–18 Challenge Points (5+ players): Replace the weak musketeers and street musicians with musketeers and add two mages for hire to the encounter.

Sulfuric Negotiations

Appendix 2: Level 5-6 Encounters

This appendix features the short stat blocks for preexisting creatures and full stat blocks for custom creatures appearing in this scenario. Short stat blocks will include an annotation for the book they originally come from, typically *Pathfinder Monster Core* or *Pathfinder NPC Core*. These encounters are written for four 5th-level PCs. If your group has a different composition or size, refer to the scaling sidebars to adjust the encounters for your group. Some scaling sidebars reference the elite or weak adjustments. Rules for these adjustments appear on pages 6–7 of *Pathfinder Monster Core*. If a creature is marked “(0),” don’t include it in the encounter unless otherwise specified (likely from the scaling sidebars).

Event 1 (Levels 5–6)

VIOLENT CROWD (2)

HAZARD 6

COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTAL

Stealth +12 (trained); Characters automatically detect this hazard when they open the door to the Grand Hall.

Description Concerned citizens shout slogans about the dangers of dealing with Cheliox and throw bricks at Chelioxian sympathizers.

Disable Succeed at two of the following checks in any combination: Athletics DC 25 (trained) to confiscate dangerous debris, Diplomacy DC 25 (trained) to calm the crowd, Intimidation DC 23 (untrained) to scare the crowd away, Will DC 28 (trained) to maintain a brave and confident demeanor; an effect such as *calm* that can target an area counts as one automatic success.

AC 24, **Fort** +17, **Ref** +17

HP 56

There They Are! **Trigger** A creature opens the door to the Grand Hall;

Effect The unruly crowd rolls Initiative.

Routine **Trigger** The unruly crowd uses an action to chant a Catchy Slogan if it is not already benefiting from the effect. It uses Shake Confidence once per turn and uses its remaining actions for cobblestone Strikes.

Catchy Slogan (auditory, emotion, linguistic) All the hazards in a 30-foot emanation gain a +1 status bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls.

Shake Confidence (auditory, emotion) The unruly crowd targets a creature within 30 feet. The creature must attempt a DC 25 Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and immune to Shake Confidence for 24 hours.

Success The creature becomes frightened 1.

Failure The creature becomes frightened 2.

Critical Failure The creature becomes frightened 2 and stupefied 1.

Ranged cobblestone +17 (range increment 30 feet), **Damage** 2d8+9 bludgeoning

SCALING EVENT 1

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

19–22 Challenge Points: Replace one violent crowd with one murderous crowd.

23–27 Challenge Points: Replace both violent crowds with two murderous crowds.

28–32 Challenge Points: Add one murderous crowd to the encounter.

33+ Challenge Points (5+ players): Replace one violent crowd with one murderous crowd and add one murderous crowd to the encounter.

MURDEROUS CROWD (0)

HAZARD 7

COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTAL

Stealth +12 (trained); Characters automatically detect this hazard when they open the door to the Grand Hall.

Description Concerned citizens shout slogans about the dangers of dealing with Cheliox and throw bricks at Chelioxian sympathizers.

Disable Succeed at two of the following checks in any combination: Athletics DC 27 (trained) to confiscate dangerous debris, Diplomacy DC 27 (trained) to calm the crowd, Intimidation DC 25 (untrained) to scare the crowd away, Will DC 30 (trained) to maintain a brave and confident demeanor; an effect such as *calm* that can target an area counts as one automatic success.

AC 26, **Fort** +19, **Ref** +19

HP 60

There They Are! **Trigger** A creature opens the door to the Grand Hall;

Effect The rowdy crowd rolls Initiative.

Routine **Trigger** The rowdy crowd uses an action to chant a Catchy Slogan if it is not already benefiting from the effect. It uses Shake Confidence once per turn and uses its remaining actions for cobblestone Strikes.

Catchy Slogan (auditory, emotion, linguistic) All the hazards in a 30-foot emanation gain a +1 status bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls.

Shake Confidence (auditory, emotion) The rowdy crowd targets a creature within 30 feet. The creature must attempt a DC 27 Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and immune to Shake Confidence for 24 hours.

Success The creature becomes frightened 1.

Failure The creature becomes frightened 2.

Critical Failure The creature becomes frightened 2 and stupefied 1.

Ranged cobblestone +19 (range increment 30 feet), **Damage** 2d10+9 bludgeoning

Sulfuric Negotiations

Event 2 (Levels 5–6)

COARTI

Pathfinder Monster Core 87

Illusory disguise (3rd) As human Andoran assassin.

CREATURE 7

VORDINE

Pathfinder Monster Core 40.

Illusory disguise (3rd) As human Andoran assassin.

CREATURE 5

HELL HOUND (0)

Pathfinder Monster Core 194

Illusory disguise (3rd) As guard dog.

CREATURE 3

Event 3 (Levels 5–6)

SPY

Pathfinder NPC Core 15

CREATURE 6

PIPEFOX (0)

Pathfinder Monster Core 265

CREATURE 2

PORACHA (0)

Pathfinder Monster Core 269

CREATURE 4

ELITE SPY

Pathfinder NPC Core 5, 15

CREATURE 7

SCALING EVENT 2

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

19–22 Challenge Points: Add one elite hell hound to the encounter.

23–27 Challenge Points: Add one elite vordine to the encounter.

28–32 Challenge Points: Add one elite hell hound and one elite vordine to the encounter.

33+ Challenge Points (5+ players): Add an additional coarti and vordine to the encounter.

SCALING EVENT 3

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

19–22 Challenge Points: Add one pipefox to the encounter.

23–27 Challenge Points: Add one poracha to the encounter.

28–32 Challenge Points: Replace the spy with an elite spy and add one poracha to the encounter.

33+ Challenge Points (5+ players): Add an additional spy to the encounter.

Sulfuric Negotiations

Encounter B1 (Levels 5–6)

Shortcut

WANDERING GLAZIER **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 21 Athletics to lean into a turn, DC 19 Nature to guide the horse, DC 23 Reflex to avoid the breaking glass.

Two glaziers are crossing the street with a huge pane of glass, ready to install it in a shop's front window.

Special On a failed check, a PC takes 2d10 slashing damage.

FABRIC EMPORIUM **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 19 Crafting to trim the cloth, DC 18 Thievery to quickly untie clotheslines, or an attack against AC 21 that deals slashing damage.

The carriage careens through the hanging draperies, bolts of cloth, and yards of fabric hung around a market stall.

Special On a failed check, a length of fabric thoroughly winds around the PC, causing them to take a –5 foot penalty to their Speed (to a minimum of 5 feet) until they spend one round of the chase or three actions afterward unwinding themselves.

HEDGE WITCH'S STALL **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 19 Arcana, Nature, or Occultism to counteract the unleashed magic, DC 23 Will to resist the errant spells.

The carriage nudges the wall of a vendor selling cures and curses, accidentally smashing several vials and activating a bevy of magic items.

Special On a failed check, the PC bumps a cursed bauble, causing them to become frightened 1 until they spend one round of the chase or three actions afterward to compose themselves.

ASCENDANT COURT BRIDGE **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 31 Survival or Perception to find the quickest path, DC 23 Intimidation to clear the crowd, DC 23 Nature to spur the horse through the throng.

Carts, carriages, and would-be worshippers crowd the bridge to the Ascendant Court, slowing the carriage.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B1

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

23–32 Challenge Points: Add one Chase Point to each obstacle.

33+ Challenge Points: Increase the DCs on all checks by 1.

Main Roads

QUICK TURN **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 20 Acrobatics to maintain balance, DC 20 Athletics to shift the weight of the cart, or DC 18 Reflex to hang on.

The carriage veers onto the main road and rapidly accelerates.

COBBLESTONE CROSSING **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 20 Survival to follow the smoothest path, DC 20 Society to recall an alternate route, or DC 18 Fortitude to fight off motion sickness.

An old, poorly paved cross street rattles the carriage and the teeth of its passengers with bumps and stomach-churning lurches.

WANDERING FOOD CART **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 21 Athletics to shove the cart out of the way, DC 22 Deception to distract the crowd, or DC 20 Intimidation to convince the cart owner to move along.

A large crowd has gathered around a vendor selling steaming meat on a stick, blocking the roadway.

PROCESSION OF THE HOPEFUL **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 20 Performance or Religion to blend in to the procession or DC 22 Society to remember the Hopefuls' typical route to the Cathedral.

A religious procession winds its way toward the Starstone Cathedral, its members singing, waving banners, and chanting prayers to their would-be god.

CUT OFF! **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 2; Overcome DC 22 Intimidation to scare off the attackers, DC 18 Nature to calm the animals, or DC 20 Stealth to avoid the ambush.

Assassins pop out of a side street, intent on spooking the horses and stopping the carriage.

ASCENDANT COURT BRIDGE **OBSTACLE 5**

Chase Points 3; Overcome DC 20 Survival or Perception to find the quickest path, DC 22 Intimidation to clear the crowd, DC 22 Nature to spur the horse through the throng.

Carts, carriages, and would-be worshipers crowd the bridge to the Ascendant Court, slowing the carriage.

Sulfuric Negotiations

Encounter B2 (Levels 5–6)

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

Pathfinder NPC Core 115

CREATURE 6

ELITE MUSKETEER (2)

Pathfinder NPC Core 5, 77

CREATURE 4

SCALING ENCOUNTER B2

To adjust for the PCs' overall strength, use the following Challenge Point adjustments. These adjustments are not cumulative.

19–22 Challenge Points: Add one elite musketeer to the encounter.

23–27 Challenge Points: Add one captain of the guard to the encounter.

28–32 Challenge Points: Add one elite musketeer and one captain of the guard to the encounter.

33+ Challenge Points (5+ players): Add two captains of the guard to the encounter.

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Appendix 3: Game Aids

HANDOUT #1: LETTER FROM AMBRUS VALSIN

Pathfinders,

We find ourselves in a sticky situation today. The High Council of Absalom has requested the Society send a squad of reliable, level-headed agents to act as guards at a special event. This request is not terribly unusual, but the nature of the event, and the political connections of its attendees, render this an extremely delicate mission.

We have been called to provide security for members of the Chelaxian Embassy as they attend an important hearing before the High Council, one connected to the ongoing conflict between their country and the state of Andoran.

In case you have been on missions far afield, or deep in other research, let me get you up to speed on the situation: The devil-worshipping government of Cheliox and the neighboring egalitarian democracy of Andoran have long been at odds. Since the death of Gorum, both nations have scrambled to recover warshards fallen from the dead god, heightening their conflict. A squabble over the precious relics recently erupted in the country of Isger, sandwiched between the two nations. Soon, open battle erupted between the Chelaxian army and the Eagle Knights of Andoran. Both nations have called in allies, fortified their borders, and conducted cross-border raids. Effects of the conflict have rippled across the Inner Sea region already, closing trade routes, dividing cities, and causing a great deal of political unrest.

The Pathfinder Society is no friend to the Chelaxian government, but the High Council of Absalom has the best chance of brokering an agreement to deescalate the conflict before it spreads into a regional war. We could save countless lives by making sure this meeting goes smoothly. Please, if you have personal feelings about the conflict, put them aside for today. There is no telling the toll a full-scale war would have on the civilians of the Inner Sea.

With Utmost Hope and Trust,
Ambrus Valsin

HANDOUT #2: CAPTAIN CHUN'S DOSSIER

Chelaxian Embassy Staff

Lord Gulv Tevineg: Chelaxian ambassador, recently returned to Absalom after years abroad in the diplomatic service.

Lady Xansippe Tevineg: Known as the "Beloved of Asmodeus." High Priestess of the Church of Asmodeus in Absalom, Scion Lady of House Tevineg.

Lady Seichya Tevineg: Their daughter, warden of the Brine Prison.

Adrius: Lady Seichya's personal bodyguard.

Lady Val Haltrax: A diplomatic envoy from Cheliox.

High Council Members

Captain Chun Hye-Seung: Commander Militant, Head of the First Guard, snappy dresser, sparkling conversationalist (well, she tries!), brilliant inventor.

Asilia of Gyr: Captain of the Starwatch. Coordinates Absalom's internal security from the Starwatch Keep or her ship, the *Hurricane Wings*.

Scion Lady Neferpatra of House Ahnkamen: First Lady of Laws. Juggles oversight of Absalom's courts with duties as a priestess of Pharasma and as matriarch of one of the city's oldest and most powerful houses.

Muar Gauthfallow: Absalom's Keeper of Secrets and Fourth Spell Lord. Protects the city's magical secrets and safeguards against outside magic and cursed artifacts.

Ferridan Severus: The High Council's Diplomatic Minister. Manages ambassadors and agents all around the Inner Sea and gathers intelligence to protect the city and its interests.

Sulfuric Negotiations

Appendix 3: Game Aids



Chun Hye-Seung



Grand Council Hall

Asilia of Gyr



Neferpatra



Sulfuric Negotiations

Appendix 3: Game Aids



Lord Gulv Tevineg



Lord Gulv Tevineg

Lady Val Haltrax



Vordine



Sulfuric Negotiations

Appendix 3: Game Aids



Coarti



Musketeer

Kistre Stillbrook



Sulfuric Negotiations

Organized Play

Treasure Table

LEVEL	TREASURE BUNDLE
3	3.8 gp
4	6.4 gp
5	10 gp
6	15 gp

Treasure Bundles

- □ □ □ Area **A**, page 5: 1 Treasure Bundle for each of 4 counselors impressed, up to four Treasure Bundles.
- □ □ **Event 2**, page 8: 3 Treasure Bundles for defeating the devils.
- □ **Event 3**, page 9: 2 Treasure Bundles for negotiating with the messenger.
- **B2**, page 11: 1 Treasure Bundle for escorting Lady Xansippe to the temple.

CP Total	Level Range
8-14	3-4
16-18 (5+ players)	3-4
16-18 (4 players)	5-6
19	5-6

Challenge Points

Challenge Points are a system for scaling the difficulty of encounters appropriately for groups of mixed size and level. Total up the number of Challenge Points your group has.

- 3rd-level PCs = 2 points each
- 4th-level PCs = 3 points each
- 5th-level PCs = 4 points each
- 6th-level PCs = 6 points each

Now use the table above to determine which level range is appropriate for your PCs. Level 3-4 encounters appear in Appendix 1, and level 5-6 encounters appear in Appendix 2.

Elite Adjustment

To apply the elite adjustment, make the following changes to a creature's statistics:

- Increase the creature's AC, attack modifiers, DCs, saving throws, and skill modifiers by 2.
- Increase the damage of its Strikes and other offensive abilities by 2. If the creature has limits on how many times or how often it can use an ability (such as a spellcaster's spells or a dragon's breath), increase the damage by 4 instead.
- Increase the creature's Hit Points based on its starting level (see the table below).

Starting Level	HP Increase
1 or lower	10
2-4	15
5-19	20
20+	30

Weak Adjustment

To apply the weak adjustment, make the following changes to a creature's statistics:

- Decrease the creature's AC, attack modifiers, DCs, saving throws, and skill modifiers by 2.
- Decrease the damage of its Strikes and other offensive abilities by 2. If the creature has limits on how many times or how often it can use an ability (such as a spellcaster's spells or a dragon's breath), decrease the damage by 4 instead.
- Decrease the creature's Hit Points based on its starting level (see the table below).

Starting Level	HP Decrease
1-2	-10
3-5	-15
6-20	-20
21+	-30

Sulfuric Negotiations



Event Reporting Form

Date _____ Event Code: _____

Location _____

GM Org Play #:	-2	GM Name:	GM Faction:
Adventure:			
Reporting Codes: (check when instructed, line through all if no conditions to report)			<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D
Bonus Faction Goal Achieved: <input type="checkbox"/> Envoy's Alliance <input type="checkbox"/> Grand Archive <input type="checkbox"/> Horizon Hunters <input type="checkbox"/> Radiant Oath <input type="checkbox"/> Verdant Wheel <input type="checkbox"/> Vigilant Seal			Reputation Earned:

Faction:				
Character Name:		<input type="checkbox"/> Envoy's Alliance <input type="checkbox"/> Radiant Oath	Dead? <input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Archive <input type="checkbox"/> Verdant Wheel	Infamy <input type="checkbox"/>	
Org Play #:	-2	Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Horizon Hunters <input type="checkbox"/> Vigilant Seal	Replay Used <input type="checkbox"/>

Faction:				
Character Name:		<input type="checkbox"/> Envoy's Alliance <input type="checkbox"/> Radiant Oath	Dead? <input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Archive <input type="checkbox"/> Verdant Wheel	Infamy <input type="checkbox"/>	
Org Play #:	-2	Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Horizon Hunters <input type="checkbox"/> Vigilant Seal	Replay Used <input type="checkbox"/>

Faction:				
Character Name:		<input type="checkbox"/> Envoy's Alliance <input type="checkbox"/> Radiant Oath	Dead? <input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Archive <input type="checkbox"/> Verdant Wheel	Infamy <input type="checkbox"/>	
Org Play #:	-2	Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Horizon Hunters <input type="checkbox"/> Vigilant Seal	Replay Used <input type="checkbox"/>

Faction:				
Character Name:		<input type="checkbox"/> Envoy's Alliance <input type="checkbox"/> Radiant Oath	Dead? <input type="checkbox"/>	
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Org Play #:	-2	Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Horizon Hunters <input type="checkbox"/> Vigilant Seal	Replay Used <input type="checkbox"/>

Faction:				
Character Name:		<input type="checkbox"/> Envoy's Alliance <input type="checkbox"/> Radiant Oath	Dead? <input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Archive <input type="checkbox"/> Verdant Wheel	Infamy <input type="checkbox"/>	
Org Play #:	-2	Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Horizon Hunters <input type="checkbox"/> Vigilant Seal	Replay Used <input type="checkbox"/>

Faction:				
Character Name:		<input type="checkbox"/> Envoy's Alliance <input type="checkbox"/> Radiant Oath	Dead? <input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Grand Archive <input type="checkbox"/> Verdant Wheel	Infamy <input type="checkbox"/>	
Org Play #:	-2	Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Horizon Hunters <input type="checkbox"/> Vigilant Seal	Replay Used <input type="checkbox"/>

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