



## ABSALOM

“As a venture-captain, I’ve dispatched Pathfinder agents all across the Inner Sea and beyond, and I can tell you for a fact that there’s no city better than Absalom. Here in the City at the Center of the World, a day at the market might turn up more priceless historical antiquities and magical treasures than a lucrative archaeological expedition anywhere else. The city is old. Osirion old. Aroden old. It’s been around since the beginning of the Age of Enthronment, gathering treasures, gathering secrets. The Pathfinder Society is based here for a reason: Absalom is the delve that never runs dry.

—Drandle Dreng, Venture-Captain of Absalom



The city of Absalom traces its origins back to the dawn of the modern age, which began with the city's founding by Aroden, the god of humanity. Since then, countless tyrants, empires, and godlings have attempted to claim it, but the "City Under Siege" has never fallen, and remains as integral to the trade and culture of the Inner Sea today as it was in the era of Old Taldor or the glory years of Chelixa. As far as modern history is concerned, Absalom has always stood astride the mountainous Isle of Kortos, and probably always will.

In the nearly 5,000 years since its founding, Absalom has attracted visitors from all over Golarion, and even some from the distant fringes of the Great Beyond. These travelers have brought secrets and wealth along with them, making Absalom one of the greatest sources of antiquities and lore that the world has ever known. Even today trade brings ships from the far harbors of the legendary eastern continents and the distant side of the Horn of Droon in southern Garund, flooding the metropolis with exotic ideas, diverse magical artifice, and enough political intrigue to inspire machinations from enemies both foreign and domestic. There's a lot going on in the Inner Sea's biggest city, and wise Pathfinders take every precaution before attempting to make the city their own.

The following guide (organized by the city's many districts) paints the "big picture" your character needs to know to perform her Pathfinder duties here in the order's home city, but nothing compares to getting out there and learning things the hard way.

## ABSALOM

N metropolis

**Corruption** +2; **Crime** +4; **Economy** +7; **Law** +2; **Lore** +5;  
**Society** +8

**Qualities** Academic, Holy Site, Magically Attuned, Prosperous,  
Strategic Location, Tourist Attraction

**Danger** +10

### DEMOGRAPHICS

**Government** council (Grand Council composed of 12-member High Council of major nobles, religious dignitaries, and merchants, and 49-member Low Council of district representatives, popular heroes, lesser priests, and so on. Major power is invested in the Primarch, who technically controls the Council but is in many ways also held in check by its powers.)

**Population** 303,900

### Notable NPCs

**Lord Gyr of House Gixx**, Primarch of Absalom, Protector of Kortos (N male human rogue 13)

**Goodman Hugen**, High Councilor, First Harbormaster, Scion Lord of House Candren (NG male human fighter 9/expert 3)

**Asilia of Gyr**, Captain of the Starwatch, commander of the warship *Hurricane Wings* (N female human ranger 10)

**Nuar Spiritskin**, "The Minotaur Prince of Absalom," influence peddler (CN male minotaur oracle of heavens 9)

**Brythen Blood**, High Curator of the College of Mysteries (N male human sorcerer 16)

**Ambrus Valsin**, Venture-Captain, Chamberlain of the Grand Lodge (LN male human rogue 4/sorcerer 6)

**Aram Zey**, Venture-Captain, Master of Spells (N male human wizard 11)

**Kreighton Shaine**, Venture-Captain, Master of Scrolls (CG male elf diviner 7/lore master 3)

**Marcos Farabellus**, Venture-Captain, Master of Swords (CG male human fighter 6/rogue 4)

**Drandle Dreng**, Venture-Captain (NG male human rogue 8)

**Shevala Iorae**, Venture-Captain (N female human sorcerer 8)

### MARKETPLACE

**Base Value** 25,600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 170,000 gp;

**Spellcasting** 9th

**Minor Items** availability varies by district, but virtually all items are available if one knows where to look; **Medium Items** 4d4 items; **Major Items** 3d4 items

## ASCENDANT COURT

The geographical and metaphorical heart of Absalom, the Ascendant Court is the centerpiece of the city's religious faith and the hub of its great thoroughfares. Piety is the order of the day here, but as just about every cult has its own definition of faith, the Ascendant Court is just as diverse (and in its own way, dangerous) as any of Absalom's districts. The district's populace ranges from the poor, penniless wretches looking for something to believe in along the Avenue of the Hopeful to sanctimonious manor lords crowding in from the opulent Petal District, their personal palaces encroaching ever more closely on the holiest sites of their beloved gods. The district's guard, the Graycloaks, is composed entirely of incorruptible atheists sworn to protect the quarter against unrest.

**Chelish Embassy:** The City at the Center of the World was the center of Aroden's widespread cult, the destination of pilgrimages by countless adherents across the Inner Sea who sought to trod the streets that he had trod, and marvel in the works that he had achieved for the city in which he once dwelt. The greatest of Aroden's temples, the site of his mortal hall, stands at the edge of a massive plaza called the God's Market southeast of the Starstone Cathedral. But it is no longer Aroden's temple. Decades of decline in the cult and the disastrous earthquake of 4698 AR bankrupted the aged priests who maintained the site, and through a complex series of maneuverings the nation of Chelixa managed to purchase the damaged structure, which it soon established as its political embassy. Numerous minor dignitaries (including Paracountess Zarta Draldeen, a great friend of the Society's efforts in Chelixa) swarm the baroque building at all hours of the day and night.



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**Starstone Cathedral:** When the living god Aroden raised the *Starstone* from the depths of the Inner Sea, the whole of the Isle of Kortos came with it. Here, at the center of the city that grew up around it, on a tor perched at the center of a yawning chasm, the *Starstone* remains, protected by a massive structure of sweeping towers and treacherous dungeons. Legend claims that any hero who survives the dangers, guardian creatures, and psychological ordeals of the cathedral emerges as a god. Aroden himself, Cayden Cailean, Iomedae, and Norgorber all conquered the otherworldly mystery of the stone and gained divine immortality, and every day hundreds of truth-seekers, visionaries, prophets, and madmen flock to the district with audacious hopes to add their names to that august list.

**Temples:** The presence of the *Starstone* and importance of the city to the myths of so many religions has sprouted hundreds of places of worship in the Ascendant Court, ranging from tiny shrines honoring the spirits of distant Vudra to the cyclopean temples of major Inner Sea deities. Sites of particular interest to Pathfinder agents include the Seventh Church of Iomedae, Sarenrae's Temple of the Shining Star, the Counting House of Abadar, and the boisterous Cayden's Hall.

### THE COINS

The center of trade in Absalom and the city's noisiest and most crowded quarter is the Coins, a sprawling and boisterous district wherein the currency of a hundred nations is exchanged for goods from all corners of the world. Whether it's a relic of the ancient Jitska Imperium, a comb from distant Kaladay, or a common household slave, everything is available in the Coins—provided one is willing to pay the price. The district watch, often called the "Token Guard," takes a soft hand on criminal activity, and consequently pickpockets, bunco artists, and more serious threats like assassins, poisoners, and thugs abound, especially off the main thoroughfares.

**Clockwork Cathedral:** This mysterious building east of Misery Row is composed of heavy iron plates, interlocking gears, gothic arches, and sliding walls, giving it the appearance of a looming mechanical centipede with a clock tower on its back. The structure houses a vast academy dedicated to instruction in the mechanical arts, with special attention paid to the creation of constructs. A mysterious order of clockwork beings known as the Ruling Escarpment controls the academy's internal gears and mechanisms from hidden chambers deep within the structure's innards.

**Grand Bazaar:** The massive plaza at the heart of the Coins is one of the largest open markets in the Inner Sea region, and the beating heart of Absalom's retail economy. Here merchants from all over the world compete to hock their wares to wary natives and naive tourists alike, aided in their efforts by a parade of painted ladies, trained animals, gnome

illusionists, and other tricks of the trade. If one knows where to look (and whom to avoid), it's possible to find historical or even magical treasures among the common goods here, even spread out on the modest rug of a petty junk dealer. More exotic—and even highly illegal—goods are best acquired beyond the veils of the infamous Red Silk Route, a cordoned sub-market just beyond the boisterous tavern called the Saucy Wench near the center of the marketplace.

**Misery Row:** East of the Grand Bazaar, the structures of the Coins grow more ostentatious as they approach Eastgate. Here stands Misery Row, an elevated thoroughfare upon which are sold some of city's most coveted commodities—slaves. The sides of the stone platform bear barred windows that look in on squalid display pens accessed from above, the so-called "Slave Pits of Absalom."

**The Grand Dance Hall of Kortos:** At this ornate, round theater on the edge of Eastgate, the city's richest merchants and most ambitious nobles gather to control the economy of the Inner Sea before a backdrop of gyrating Vudrani dancers and gymnasts. Admission is free to those in the appropriate dress, but access to the hall's three balconies requires increasingly audacious fees the higher a guest ascends. The more prominent the figure or profitable the venture, the higher the balcony needed to access it.

### THE DOCKS

The gateway to Absalom is a combination of constantly shifting ships and cargo and cheap places for sailors to get drunk, fulfill their carnal desires, and sleep off the effects of both. A district of flophouses and warehouses, the Docks claims a largely transient population, and the local watch, the Harbor Guard, is more concerned with fraudulent shipping manifests than knife attacks in dark alleys, so travelers had best remain vigilant.

**The Shipyards:** Absalom boasts two world-class shipyards. The Devil's Own, near the center of the district, specializes in war galleys used by the city's navy and sold to markets throughout the Inner Sea. The calculating Lord Archych of House Dureanz, a loyal Chelaxian, skirts the legal line in his operations, openly employing the worst thugs and pushing around his considerable weight at every opportunity. His rival is the Sea King Shipyard's Goodmiss Alidane of House Candren, whose Andoren loyalties place her at odds with Archych's malevolent schemes. The machinations of these nobles and their supporters account for a great deal of the intrigue and underhanded violence that so often leaves puddles of blood on the city's doorstep.

### EASTGATE

A place of soaring towers and stately manors mixed with decidedly more modest villas and townhouses, Eastgate is a quiet residential district apparently free from the dangers and intrigues that plague the rest of the city.





**The Blue Tower:** Among the tallest buildings in all of Absalom (and easily the tallest in Eastgate), this tower of blue coral is topped with a lighthouse capable of illuminating the harbor. Along with the immense Spire of Nex on the northwest horizon, the Blue Tower is a landmark by which most natives of Absalom can easily gain their bearings as they take the journey from one end of the city to the other. The tower is home to the Winged Sandals, an order of dedicated messengers who worship Iomedae and deliver messages anywhere in the world.

**Evergreen Park:** Absalom's largest park is locked in an eternal spring thanks to a resident cult of Gozreh led by the mercurial young Lady Evigail of House Wycomb, who scarcely goes anywhere else. The cult maintains a small open-air shrine near the center of the park by its largest pool, where nervous sailors occasionally make offerings before setting off on important or particularly dangerous ocean voyages.

**Gilltown:** Lying just north of the Precipice Quarter at the southern end of the district, Gilltown is situated behind a line of cheap row houses and set into the sea-cavern-ridden bedrock. This squalid neighborhood is home to Absalom's largest community of the amphibious gillmen.

## FLOTSAM GRAVEYARD

The tangle of half-sunken ships, light towers, tiny islands, and naval keeps along Absalom's southern perimeter form a virtual district known as the Flotsam Graveyard. The region is the domain of the Pilot's Guild, which alone knows a safe route through the maze of wrecks, and the Starwatch, which protects the city from its headquarters upon the cliffs above; few outsiders ever venture here without their permission.

**The Black Whale:** The city consigns its most notorious or politically sensitive prisoners here, to a floating prison of six ships on the western edge of Absalom's harbor. Only the Grand Council holds a complete list of those interred here, and almost no one survives the squalid living conditions long enough to serve out their sentences. Because of the special nature of the Black Whale's guests and the dangerous knowledge they possess, guards must remain vigilant to keep people from breaking in, as well as from breaking out.

## FOREIGN QUARTER

In most of Absalom's neighborhoods, residents who lack formal citizenship face higher prices and punishing taxes. These ordinances are relaxed in the Foreign Quarter, a populous district buzzing with hundreds of languages and influenced by the diverse cultures of the Inner Sea. Whole city blocks have distinct Chelish or Osirian feels to them, as natives of those lands and their descendants gather in tight-knit communities. Sailors and visitors

coming in from the Docks crowd the district's numerous entertainment dens and taverns, while young dandies from the Petal and Ivy districts mix nightly with petty laborers in a common enthusiasm for debauchery.

**The Crimson Coin:** A bustling two-story tavern not far from the Irorium, the Crimson Coin swarms with gamblers, carousers, gladiators, and their raucous supporters. Outside the grounds of the Irorium, the tavern is the only legal place in Absalom to bet on arena battles, a monopoly ensured by district councilman (and retired gladiator champion) Torman Iates, who also happens to be the Crimson Coin's proprietor. When the arena is closed, patrons place urgent bets upon often-lethal bouts in the earthen pit at the center of the tavern, where for the fee of one gold coin anyone can attempt to last 60 seconds with the brutal house champion.

**The Grand Lodge:** The worldwide headquarters of the Pathfinder Society is situated within an immense walled fortress at the heart of the Foreign Quarter. Beyond a massive gate decorated with the Glyph of the Open Road lies a network of seven stone fortresses of different architectural periods, the largest of which—Skyreach—is an enormous, white, five-towered palace that sweeps high above the district, offering a commanding view of the city for the offices of the Decemvirate at its pinnacle. Numerous venture-captains keep offices within the lodge, training new recruits or meeting with teams of agents before dispatching them on missions within the city or throughout the Inner Sea and beyond. Once a year, Pathfinders from around the world converge here for the Grand Convocation, the site of boasting contests, information sharing, and competition.

**The Irorium:** The largest open-air arena in the Inner Sea region holds numerous fighting bouts each day on its 10-acre field. These affairs range from mock battles simulating important moments in history to desperate, carnage-filled battles with imported beasts. Gladiators are among Absalom's greatest celebrities, and the cheering crowds attest to the citizens' thirst for violent bloodsports. Named for the cult of fighting monks of Irori that inspired its construction centuries ago, the Irorium is a viscera-soaked, cheering testament to the appeal and power of battle.

## IVY DISTRICT

A place of beautiful gardens and manicured estates, the Ivy District also boasts the city's finest theaters, performance halls, and artist colonies. Here performers and artists live off of patronage or scrape by from meal to meal, all the while wearing the most expensive clothes and bathing themselves in the finest perfumes. Fashions and artistic movements that spark here can grow into fires that spread across the Inner Sea. Foreigners and Absalom natives alike flock to the district in search of entertainment, making the Ivy District one of the city's wealthiest.



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**The Ivy Playhouse:** Thespians from all over the world dream of performing upon the stage of Absalom's Ivy Playhouse. The theater's host, Alain Always, is also master of the Street Performers and Actors Guild, which houses itself in the playhouse. Members of the guild pay a fee for the license required to perform at all but the shoddiest of the city's venues, and rumors speak of grim punishments meted out to performers who violate the guild's bylaws.

**Vault of Abadar:** Each level of this polished obsidian temple of Abadar is set slightly askew from the one directly below, giving the impression of a precariously balanced building that could topple at any moment. In addition to religious services, the vault also offers moneylending and savings services, with goods entrusted to the temple kept safe within magically protected vaults, said to be the most trustworthy in all of Absalom. The temple's clergy quietly support a brutal vigilance committee known as the Brotherhood of Abadar, fierce opponents of the sort of lax morals and loose law enforcement that many in the district consider advantageous.

**The White Grotto:** Absalom's premiere bardic school is situated in a large manor house with several outbuildings and secluded rock gardens, with a winding creek meandering through the grounds. Students garb themselves in white accented with a color denoting rank (green for apprentices, blue for journeymen, and black for masters). Five conservatories teach dedicated courses on voice, drum, string, pipe, and script. The white-garbed virtuosos of the grotto are often invited to entertain at exclusive social functions in the highest echelons of Absalom society, making enrollment here an excellent cover for Pathfinder activity.

## THE PETAL DISTRICT

Absalom's wealthiest district looks down upon the rest of the city from its perch on Aroden's Hill. Brick-framed medians upon the district's broad avenues teem with colorful flora, giving the quarter its name. The grandest families and richest merchants of Absalom dwell in sprawling estates here, ever competing to outclass their fabulously wealthy neighbors.

**The College of Mysteries:** The oldest school of magic in Absalom traces its origins to the first pilgrims invited to the Isle of Kortos by Aroden. These diverse mystics pooled the esoteric and occult practices of their homelands to establish themselves as ruling powers in the city, eventually expanding their enterprise to instruct the children of the richest scions of Absalom in the magical arts. The most adept students are initiated into the Assembly of Enigmas, the academy's inner circle.

**Magpie Manor:** This ornate manor of marble and tile serves as both a private social club for the wealthy and cultured of the district and as a sort of retirement home for

some of the city's finest aging performers. Patronage costs 250 gp per month, allowing the member to bring a small number of guests, lounge in the manor's many dens and gardens, eat light fare, and listen to young performers perfect their art under the tutelage of old masters.

## PRECIPICE QUARTER

In better days the Precipice Quarter was Beldrin's Bluff, a carnival-like district of grand pavilions, museums, and stately manors situated around the three-towered cliffside demesne of the long-dead archmage Beldrin, a major figure of Absalom's early years. A terrible earthquake in 4968 collapsed many of the Bluff's structures. Whole city blocks sheared off the cliffs to topple into the harbor below, and thousands perished within the span of a few moments. The entire district was abandoned, its ruling council and city watch disbanded. Undead roam freely here, and no one is allowed into or out of the district between dusk and dawn.

**Arboretum Arcanis:** Beldrin himself erected this enormous crystal dome that once housed plants from all over Golarion and is still celebrated in popular song throughout the Inner Sea. The recent earthquake befouled the magical clouds that regulated the structure's weather, mutating the flora into twisted, hateful mockeries of their former forms.

**Beldrin's Tower:** One of Beldrin's original three towers still stands, perched on the edge of the drop to the sea, and groaning when hit by high winds. Rumor has it that objects of great value remain in the tower. Several Pathfinder expeditions have returned with treasures from the edifice, but none have discovered anything capable of returning sanity to the district Beldrin himself once loved so much.

**The Drownyard:** The Tri-Towers Yard was once the premier preparatory school for children of the rich and powerful, but the earthquake that destroyed Beldrin's Bluff brought forth a flood of sewage from below the school, and the building subsequently sank into a forgotten necropolis situated below it. Infused with necromantic energies from the ancient crypt, the spirits of the drowned children still wander the academy's sodden halls.

## THE PUDDLES

The Puddles has always been prone to flooding. Indeed, some of its structures are ships washed ashore and incorporated into local neighborhoods. But when the earthquake hit a decade ago, the Puddles sank a few critical inches, and now nearly the entire district is partially submerged. The center of the quarter is a festering lake—the so-called Little Inner Sea—and most businesses are calf-deep in water even at low tide. Those who can afford to relocate have done so, leaving only the poor, dishonest, and bullheaded to dwell within the damp, rotting structures that have not yet collapsed.



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**The Brine:** This imposing stone prison houses the common filth of Absalom, and ever since the floodwaters took over the Puddles imprisonment here has taken on the connotation of a slow but sure death sentence. A foot of water usually soaks the holding pens, and when the district floods further it brings raw sewage into the yard, quickly triggering pandemics of filth fever. Guards use catwalks to stay out of the muck, but prisoners are forced to stand, sit, and even sleep in it.

**The Siphons:** A vast series of semi-flooded tunnels under the district is home to criminals, smugglers, and scavenging monsters like chokers and even derros clambering up from almost-forgotten Darklands passages far below. The tunnels connect to sewers, ancient crypts, and even more esoteric chambers, many linked together by subsequent tunnels excavated over the centuries for illicit purposes. One of the best-known residents of the Siphons is the scheming information broker known as Grandmaster Torch, patron of the Shadow Lodge.

**The Stilt House:** The Grand Council has all but given up on the Puddles, placing it under the administration of a one-man district council named Haigen Topkick. This scheming figure also runs the district's informal city watch and its influential Salvagers' Guild, which gets a cut of all treasures scavenged here.

### WESTGATE

This mostly residential quarter is home to mid-tier merchants, common shopkeepers, and up-and-coming citizens who can't yet afford more expensive accommodation in the upscale neighborhoods of the Petal or Ivy districts. Businesses mix with townhouses and flathouses where the district abuts the Foreign Quarter, but Westgate grows more residential as one approaches the city wall, with smaller homes being replaced by modest manors and stately villas. Westgate's conservative district council and its stalwart watch, called the Sally Guard in honor of the Sally Gate leading to Westerhold and Shoreline, fiercely protect the quiet, well-behaved demeanor of the district, giving it a reputation as one of Absalom's sleepest, safest quarters.

**Guild of Wonders:** This unassuming, unmarked building of plaster and wood gives little outward indication of its true purpose as a den of assassins, spies, and saboteurs. By ancient decree, the Guild of Wonders is forbidden from practicing its arts in Absalom, but the guild's poisoned blades are known and feared throughout the Inner Sea. The guild's leader is Scion Lord Celedo of the Taldan House Morilla, whose cousin, Lady Gloriana, has shown a great deal of interest in the Pathfinder Society of late. Given the family's association with guild assassins, Pathfinder agents are encouraged to exercise great caution when dealing with her or any of the scheming nobles of this ancient family of expert manipulators.

### WISE QUARTER

Over the millennia since its founding, the city of Absalom has attracted learned scholars and voracious students, a tradition that continues in force to the current day. The Wise Quarter throngs with academics, housing some of the finest institutions of learning in the world. The district is so dedicated to learning that its watch, the Learned Guard, is tasked with protecting the librums of the Forae Logos library before even the safety of the quarter's people.

**The Arcanimirium:** Founded by the eldritch masters known as the Arclords of Nex after their ignominious exile from their southern homeland, the Arcanimirium is the largest and most prestigious school in the Wise Quarter, and one of the finest academies of arcane instruction in the known world. The Arcanimirium's focus is on practical magic, the ability to use spells and magical tools to accomplish direct, measurable results in the real world. All applications of arcane magic are welcome here, and many of the master students create specific magic items at the request of wealthy patrons or adventurers, padding the institution's coffers with plenty of platinum.

**Blakros Museum:** This former stronghold of a mad astrologer was once the seat of the enigmatic House Blakros, a matriarchy of influential nobles and artifact hunters. The basalt structure now houses the considerable Blakros collection, which includes numerous artifacts of dubious arcane origins that have caused no end of trouble for the Pathfinder Society. The museum's current curator, the unpleasant Nigel Aldain, is a former Society agent filled with disdain over what he sees as the organization's failings. The museum's exhibits change regularly, and loyal Pathfinder agents are encouraged to report information about new exhibits to their venture-captains as soon as they become aware of them.

**Forae Logos:** Also called the Wise House and the Library of Kortos, the Forae Logos houses the greatest collection of written lore west of the Pit of Gormuz. The Founding Law of Absalom, inscribed by the hand of Aroden himself, prohibits the removal of a single page of text without the unanimous consent of the High Council, which also requires that every book brought into the city be copied by the library's scribes. Although unevenly applied, over the centuries this law has resulted in tens of thousands of volumes covering a staggering variety of subjects.

### OUTER VILLAGES

Absalom's intrigues don't end at the city walls.

**Copperwood:** This modest town is the home of many of Absalom's laborers, simple tradesmen, and domestic servants. "Copperheads" often hire themselves out as guides or porters.

**Dawnfoot:** The imposing Starwatch Keep perched on the cliffs overlooking Absalom Harbor houses the law

enforcement and internal defense force that keeps peace within the city as a whole (as opposed to the First Guard of Azlanti Keep, which protects the city from external threats, and the district watches, whose jurisdiction does not extend beyond their quarters). The tightly knit military community of Dawnsfoot is home to the officers, families, and menials required to support Starwatch, which by ancient decree must be stationed outside the city walls.

**Shoreline:** What started as a simple fishing community has grown into a bustling home for artisans and laborers. Known for its pungent smells (tanneries and breweries abound) and the hard-working demeanor of its people, Shoreline may be nearly as poor as the Puddles, but at least it's dry.

**Westerhold:** This is the richest of Absalom's outlying towns. Lesser scions of some of Absalom's wealthier families have small estates here. Westerhold boasts the city's strongest concentration of dwarves as well as the region's most trustworthy and capable stables.

## SIEGE CASTLES

The decaying fortresses of would-be tyrants that encircle the city and dominate the Cairnlands to the north are known as siege castles. Very few of these locations are uninhabited, and many are known to contain vestiges of the armies that once had designs on the city, and still pose significant danger to those who would plunder their near-forgotten tombs. Interested Pathfinders are encouraged to contact Venture-Captain Shevala at the Grand Lodge, who maintains extensive notes on key siege castles and related locales. The legendary Durvin Gest's catalog of 31 siege castles in Volume 2 of the *Pathfinder Chronicles* remains the best historical reference on the subject.

**Asad's Keep:** Among the many crumbling siege towers littering the Cairnlands stands one of particular interest to many members of the Pathfinder Society—a Qadiran fortress known as Asad's Keep. Built centuries ago by the ambitious Taliq Asad, the sturdy structure sank into the earth around the time Asad's pitiful

efforts to take the city failed, but whether his failure led to the collapse or the loss of his bastion brought about his downfall remains unknown.

**The Fallen Fortress:** A very recent minor earthquake did little damage to the city itself, but proved to be the final insult to the siege castle Durvin Gest called the Grasping Tower, situated north of the city. The tremor managed to achieve what even Gest could not, toppling the location's massive eastern wing and allowing access to the structure for the first time in thousands of years.

**Pyramid of the Dog:** Situated on the beach south of Shoreline, with easy access to the Puddles, the Pyramid of the Dog is one of the closest siege castles to the city walls.

The decrepit structure is fashioned from four battered, ancient siege towers, three of which have collapsed inward toward the largest, forming a huge wreck. The Pyramid has had many inhabitants and many names over the centuries, but the name used now derives from its current "owners," a ruthless criminal gang known as the Warhounds.

**The Red Redoubt of Karamoss:**

A thousand years ago, the so-called "Machine Mage" Karamoss erected a looming crimson edifice north of Absalom from which to attack the city. Karamoss was a Numerian, and spent many years within the technological marvel known as the Starmount, where he must have learned to employ the mechanical artifice still active within the Redoubt. That artifice—if an agent could ever survive the attempt to plunder it—would be most useful to the Society, as all the Society's efforts to date in Numeria proper have met with dismal failure.

**Spire of Nex:** Situated 10 miles northwest of Absalom, the mile-tall Spire of Nex is visible on the horizon from almost any point within the city. In the city's early years, the archmage Nex erected the tower and filled it with numerous demiplanes pilfered from the Great Beyond, from which he drew the strange creatures and shadowy warriors that served in his army during his ill-fated invasion of the city. Almost no one has figured out how to enter the tower since Nex's defeat, but incalculable treasure must surely remain within.



LORD GYR