



SILENT TIDE™

BY MICHAEL KORTES

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PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO 01

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Pathfinder Society Scenario 01: Silent Tide is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for Tiers 1–2 (1st and 2nd level characters) and 4–5 (4th and 5th level characters.) This scenario is designed for play in Pathfinder Society Organized Play, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. This scenario is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the 3.5 edition of the world's most popular fantasy roleplaying game.

The OGL can be found on page 15 of this product.

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BY MICHAEL KORTES

Eight hundred years ago, a hidden armada of ships from Taldor floated off the coast of the Isle of Kortos like a thousand locusts, waiting for the signal to invade Absalom. The plan was simple, but deadly: When the misty weather of Desnus (May) took hold, a fifth column of infiltrators known as Black Echelon would weaken strategic defense points and destroy Absalom's warning system from within. Once their bloody mayhem was complete, the hidden saboteurs planned to signal the fleet, welcoming them to lay siege to a city now brought to its knees.

Prearranged signal lights were prepared for each phase of the offensive. A red flashing light was the sign for Black Echelon to poison Absalom's granary. A violet light with three pulses was the signal for a prearranged team to destroy the city's bell towers, and so on. But when the mists of Desnus descended, the prearranged signal lights never appeared. Unbeknownst to the hidden strike teams, the leaders of the Black Echelon infiltration cell were discovered and assassinated by brave heroes of Absalom. The signal lanterns lay dark, and the rest of Black Echelon sat idle. Several hours later, the fleet's hiding place was discovered. A quick counterattack by Absalom's navy ambushed the would-be invasion force and Taldor's armada was destroyed to the last mast. In the coming weeks, Absalom's constabulary rooted out the remaining hidden members of Black Echelon and put every last one to the sword.

The failed invasion mission, called the Silent Tide, would have amounted to little more than a cautionary footnote in a textbook of naval battles save for one crucial detail: Prior to entering Absalom, each member of the Black Echelon cell swore an ancient oath, known as the Binding Word. Black Echelon pledged to fulfill their duties, no matter the barrier, no matter the cost. And as recent events have begun to demonstrate, in this case, the power of the Binding Word compels these deadly saboteurs from beyond the pale.

When an elderly military historian named Yargos Gill acquires a copy of the ancient codebook detailing the signals for the Silent Tide, he replicates them on a lark. He soon watches in horror as Black Echelon rises from

the dead and begins to fulfill the tasks the spies swore to complete so very long ago. Even worse, the marines of the massive armada that now rest on the sea floor have also sworn the Binding Word. Once Black Echelon finishes its final task, the invasion force will rise and the Silent Tide will roll across the city, bringing death to all of Absalom.

Recognizing his own foolishness, Yargos tried to alert the city and avert disaster. But before he could hurl the codebook into the sea to abort the Silent Tide once and for all, a young crime lord named Nessian intervened. Nessian has a better plan for the codebook. He intends to manipulate the undead operatives and take advantage of the disruption their sabotage wreaks. As the bearer of the codebook, Nessian alone knows the lantern signal to abort. The codebook is his chance to blackmail the populace as he wishes and finally secure his place in Absalom's underworld.

Absalom is about to be invaded from beyond the grave. A group of intrepid Pathfinders is the only thing standing between Nessian and his lantern lights, before the launch of the Silent Tide.

SUMMARY

The PCs are dispatched by the Pathfinder Society to find Yargos Gill in hopes of securing an ancient tome he recently uncovered (the Silent Tide codebook). To cover his tracks, Nessian has sent a group of goons to kill Yargos, as well anyone else who might know about the Silent Tide codebook. The PCs intercept Nessian's minions, the War Hounders, just as they are about to shove Yargos and the rest of their chain gang of captives off a sea cliff. If the PCs cannot stop the goons in time, they may need to dive off the cliff and rescue the chained prisoners before they drown on the sea floor below.

If the PCs rescue Yargos, he tells them about the codebook and the need to stop Nessian. Their best bet to find Nessian is to inquire with Grandmaster Torch, a powerful information broker who understands the underworld of the Puddles District better than anyone. On their way to the Grandmaster's lair, however, deep in the distance, they witness a flickering red signal light. Yargos realizes that the light signals Black Echelon to launch a team of operatives

to poison Absalom's central granary, and the PCs must take a diversion to stop Black Echelon from tainting one of the city's most important food stocks.

After surviving their first encounter with the silent skeletal killers, the PCs proceed to meet with Grandmaster Torch. Unable to pay the information broker's fee, they must instead loan their expertise in exchange for the secret of Nessian's whereabouts. The Grandmaster has the PCs break into a series of stolen safes that he has recently acquired. If the PCs succeed, Torch holds up his end, revealing the location of Nessian's new base of operations hidden among a ruin of siege towers on the beach just outside of Absalom.

The PCs race to bring Nessian to justice, but may again be forced to make a detour to stop Black Echelon. This time the undead raiders are attempting to silence Absalom's famous Oathday pipe organ. If Black Echelon can stop the giant organ mid-song, the ensuing sudden silence will signal the fleet that the final moment to attack has come. The PCs must defeat Black Echelon again while at the same time ensuring that the morning prayer-songs are successfully completed.

Finally, the PCs can confront Nessian in his lair and bring him to justice. If the PCs can recover the codebook, Yargos finds the correct pattern of colored light to replicate the abort signal to ensure that Black Echelon understands the war is over and can return to the grave, ending any possibility of the Silent Tide once and for all.

Getting Started

Read or paraphrase the following to get the adventure underway:

Your boots squash with fetid water as you plod through the Puddles. A thick fog hangs in the air, seeming almost to caress the flesh with an unnatural chill. As you stand outside the Soggy Piper in a foot and a half of brackish brine, you try to recall what was so damned important to demand your presence in the half-flooded slum during Absalom's rainy season. You remember your meeting at the Lodge just a few hours earlier with your Venture-Captain, Adril Hestram.

A bear of a man with only a few teeth remaining in his head, he motioned you into the meeting hall with a casual wave of his grizzled hand. The human captain outweighs most of Absalom's half-orcs, and though a layer of beefy blubber coats his frame, those of you who have tangled with him in the Lodge sparring ring know that beneath this thin veneer of fat lies nothing but solid, steely sinew. Adril's wild beard wags to the ponderous shake of his massive head as he examines a scrap of ancient parchment on the table before raising his eyes to greet your gaze and speaking:

"Come in then, friends, and thank you for answering my summons so swiftly. The society is in need. An old and quite

penniless historian, a bespectacled wag-beard by the name of Yargos Gill has recently made a discovery in an old archive that we have a great interest in obtaining: an ancient codebook, left behind in the wake of one of Taldor's many failed attempts at invasion. This several-hundred-year-old text would prove an excellent addition to our collection, and must be preserved.

"Yargos makes his home in 'The Puddles,' Absalom's poorest district, suffering from a well-known reputation as a haven for lowlifes. Following an earthquake ten years ago, parts of the Puddles now rest below sea level, resulting in frequent and untimely flooding. Those who can afford not to live there—don't.

"The district is the stomping ground of pimps, harlots, addicts, knifers, and hoards of unseemly derelicts. It's never been a kind place, but recent reports reveal some new nameless terror on her waterlogged streets. Several persons claim to have seen cloaked, skeletal-like figures marching through an unnatural fog. Ill tidings indeed. Tracking down Yargos is now a priority—lest some yellow-toothed thug cut him down, or one of these strange wraiths carry him beyond the pale. Find him, fellow Pathfinders, and find the codebook. Your exploits will be recorded in the Chronicles if you succeed."

The memory fades as a fresh deluge of cold seawater rounds a bend in the lane and assaults your knees. After searching for Yargos at his favorite eatery, the Soggy Piper, you learned you just missed him. According to the Piper's staff, a gang of dangerous young tattooed toughs arrived ahead of you. They grabbed Yargos and several of his friends from their dinner table and dragged them to a nearby cliff at the edge of the Puddle District. The watch was called, but they will arrive too late, as they often do in the Puddles, when they bother to venture there at all.

It is early evening, the first Wealday of the month of Desnus, an old man is about to face some awful fate at the sea cliff known as Torsen's Maw, and you are no closer to finding the codebook Adril sent you for.

ACT 1: THE DROWNING DEPTHS

Six brash young toughs covered with tattoos of vicious, snarling dogs are prodding four terrified older men off the edge of a cliff into the sea. The prisoners are shackled together in a line with heavy chains, which shall surely drag them to the sea floor in short order should they tumble from the cliff's edge into the churning waters below.

Earlier today, Nessian dispatched a group of young initiates who have recently joined his gang of criminals, known as the War Hounders. He assigned them a simple mission: grab Yargos and everyone he's been talking to and dump them into the sea to drown. The six young War Hounders nabbed Yargos at the Soggy Piper along with the three men he was eating dinner with. The captives are:

1. Yargos, CG expert 2, hp 8, (military historian);
2. Tashen, NG commoner 1, hp 3, (tavern dish washer);
3. Ilmn, N commoner 2, hp 5, (soap maker); and
4. Samchar, N warrior 1, hp 5, (retired watchman).

Following the lead provided by the wait staff at the Soggy Piper, the PCs race to the edge of Torsen's Maw, a short stubby sea cliff, to intercept the War Hounders, which is where the adventure begins. There the PCs have a chance to rescue Yargos before he's hurled into the sea.

TIER 1-2

WAR HOUNDERS (6)

CR 1/2

Male human warrior 1

N Medium humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** Listen -1, Spot -1

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12

(+2 armor)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** -1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee sap +2 (1d6+1 nonlethal/x2) or

("Dog claw") spiked gauntlet +2 (1d4+1/x2) or

torch -2 (1d3+1 plus 1 point of fire damage)

Ranged light crossbow +1 (1d8/19-20)

TACTICS

During Combat The War Hounders seek to provide flanking for each other (or Nessian, if present). If they identify a spellcaster, they take a readied action to fire should the caster try to cast a spell.

Morale Fearful of Nessian's wrath, the War Hounders fight on until they only have a single ally left or they are down to their last hit point. Then they flee as fast as they can.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 11, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Feats Athletic, Animal Affinity

Skills Climb +5, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +2, Jump +3, Ride +2, Swim +3

Languages Common

Gear "Dog claw" (spiked gauntlet), sap, light crossbow, leather armor, *programmed tattoo* (a Nessian war hound pack fighting among themselves, see Appendix), torch, tindertwig

TIER 4-5

WAR HOUNDERS (THUGS)

CR 1

Male human warrior 2

N Medium humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** Listen -1, Spot -1

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12

(+2 armor)

hp 11 (2d8+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** -1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee sap +3 (1d6+1 nonlethal/x2) or

("Dog claw") mwk spiked gauntlet +4 (1d4+1/x2) or

torch -1 (1d3+1 plus 1 point of fire damage)

Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8/19-20)

TACTICS

During Combat The War Hounders seek to provide flanking for Nessian or each other. If they identify a spellcaster, they take a readied action to fire should the caster try to cast a spell.

Morale Fearful of Nessian's wrath, the War Hounders fight on until they only have a single ally left or they are down to their last hit point. Then they flee as fast as they can.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 11, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +3

Feats Athletic, Animal Affinity

Skills Climb +5, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +2, Jump +3, Ride +2, Swim +5

Languages Common

Gear "Dog claw" (masterwork spiked gauntlet), sap, light crossbow, leather armor, *programmed tattoo* (a Nessian war hound pack fighting among themselves), torch, tindertwig

Development: As soon as the War Hounders can act on round 1, the first War Hounder kicks the lead prisoner off the ledge. Since the captives are all chained together, everyone else is dragged over the cliff as well. The last prisoner, Samchar, manages to grab the ledge. The weight of the bodies plus the dangling chain is far beyond the aged warrior's strength, and Samchar can only hold the ledge for a single round. If one or more of the PCs can reach Samchar before the end of round 2, they can grab him and hold the chain in place with a DC 15 Strength check. Each consecutive check will haul one prisoner back up and over the ledge to safer ground.

If the PCs fail, the chained prisoners crash 35 feet into the water below. The weighted chain drags the prisoners down fast; they will hit the bottom of the sea floor by the end of round 3.

If one or more of the PCs can fight their way past the War Hounders, they can jump in after the drowning prisoners. Diving PCs require a successful DC 15 Swim or Tumble check to avoid taking damage from hitting the water; otherwise the PC takes 1d3 nonlethal damage from the crash into surf.

As the prisoners' shackles are of poor quality, a prisoner can be freed with either a successful DC 10 Open Locks check, or with a successful DC 15 Strength check to break

the chains. Alternatively, the chain can be severed over successive rounds (hardness 8, hit points 2), though it may need to be broken in at least two places to rescue prisoners in the middle of the chain. Each prisoner has a Constitution score of 10, and so after 20 rounds they need to begin making a DC 10 Constitution check to avoid drowning. For each successive round the DC increases by 1. (Refer to page 304 of the DMG for additional rules on drowning.)

If the PCs succeed in rescuing Yargos, he thanks them profusely. Even if the PCs neglect to ask, he soon tells them all he knows about why he was taken prisoner and the coming Silent Tide. By this point, Yargos has pieced together everything set out in the adventure's background section. In addition, Yargos recollects that the codebook has a master abort code—a signal that will end the entire operation. Unfortunately, without the book, he can't recall precisely what color and pattern will reproduce the master abort code. He urges the PCs to help him find Nessian and retrieve the codebook.

Rewards: If all of the War Hounders are defeated, reward each Tier thusly:

Tier 1–2

Give each player 53 gp.

Tier 4–5

Give each player 128 gp.

GUT WITHER POISON				
Type	DC	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage	Price
Ingested	14	1d6 Con	2d6 Con	150 gp

ACT 2: GUARDIANS OF THE GRAIN

Following Act 1, the PCs may well put their heads together to find a way to track down Nessian and find the stolen codebook. Yargos suggests they try Grandmaster Torch, a notorious information broker. However, regardless of whether the PCs pursue his lead or travel elsewhere to follow an alternate idea, shortly after they leave Torsen's Maw, have each PC make a Spot check (DC 10). If successful, they spot a red light flashing in a distinctive pattern from the top of a distant building, deep in the city.

“Nessian!” shouts Yargos. “He’s signaling Black Echelon—the undead! Six flashes of red—I remember that signal... By the gods! That’s the granary! Nessian has sent those monsters to poison the granary! C’mon! I don’t know how, but we’ve got to stop them—we’re the only ones who know what’s happening.”

Yargos explains that Black Echelon intends to lace the city's reserve grain supply with a foul and forgotten poison called Gut Wither. In the event of a siege, Absalom would be left without its granary and the city could face the threat of mass starvation in the coming months.

As the PCs approach, they find an eerie cold fog has suddenly descended on the adjoining streets and alley ways. When the PCs arrive at the massive granary, they find the three guards posted to protect the food depot are already dead. If the PCs dare to enter in an attempt to stop Black Echelon, consult the map and resolve the ensuing battle.

A. Outer Doors: There are three dead guardsmen here. The massive wooden door has already been forced open.

B. Antechamber: This room is empty. A PC who succeeds on a DC 10 Survival check detects a faint trail of blood leading from area A to area D. The blood trail was inadvertently left by the operatives in area B, but the blood itself belongs to the dead guardsmen in area A.

C. Southeast Silo: The blood trail continues from area B, growing fainter as it continues on to area D. The southeast silo is one of four grain storage chambers on the lower level of the granary. All four of the silos contain the following features:

- **Grain Swamp:** Much of the floor is covered in a sea of grain; treat each square marked with grain as difficult terrain. However, if a PC can succeed on a DC 10 Str check, they may move across a single square as though it were normal terrain (permit one check per square).
- **Flow Hatches:** The 10-foot-high ceiling is covered with flow hatches (marked on the map as white squares). When opened, grain from the upper levels pours down to refill the grain supply on the lower level. Leaping up to spring a hatch requires a DC 10 Jump check and will draw an attack of opportunity from adjacent opponents. Alternatively, a hatch release can be triggered with a reach weapon or a ranged weapon with a successful attack roll against AC 20. If a hatch is opened, anyone in the space below risks being struck by a cascade of grain. A successful DC 12 Reflex save enables the potential victim to immediately dive into an adjacent square and avoid the spilling wheat. Anyone failing is struck, taking 2d4 points of damage and getting held in place. On their turn they can attempt to pull themselves free (DC 10 Strength check) as a move action, otherwise they take another 2d4 points of damage.

D. Northeast Silo: Five Black Echelon operatives are here.

BLACK ECHELON OPERATIVES (5) CR 1/3 (TIER 4–5; CR 1)

hp 6 (TIER 4–5; hp 13); Appendix I

TACTICS

Before Combat Two stand guard, while a third unpacks 10 ceramic vials of Gut Wither (each vial is a dose) from an ancient rusted metal chest. Two more are lying in wait, hidden under

the grain at the points marked with an "X." Once the operatives spot the PCs, the first three attack immediately.

During Combat The operatives attack relentlessly. They are clever enough to try to trigger the flow hatches, if a PC stands directly underneath. The two buried operatives remain hidden and attempt to surprise the PCs on round 3. However, if a PC moves into a square adjacent to a hidden operative, he immediately erupts in an explosion of grain and attacks.

Morale Fearless undead with an oath to uphold, the operatives do not flee.

E & F. Southwest and Northwest Silos: Just like the eastern silos, these two silos contain a grain swamp and flow hatches. If the PCs linger here for long, the Black Echelon operatives in area C eventually discover them and attack.

Rewards: If all of the Black Echelon Operatives are defeated, reward each Tier thus:

Tier 1-2

Give each player 128 gp.

Tier 4-5

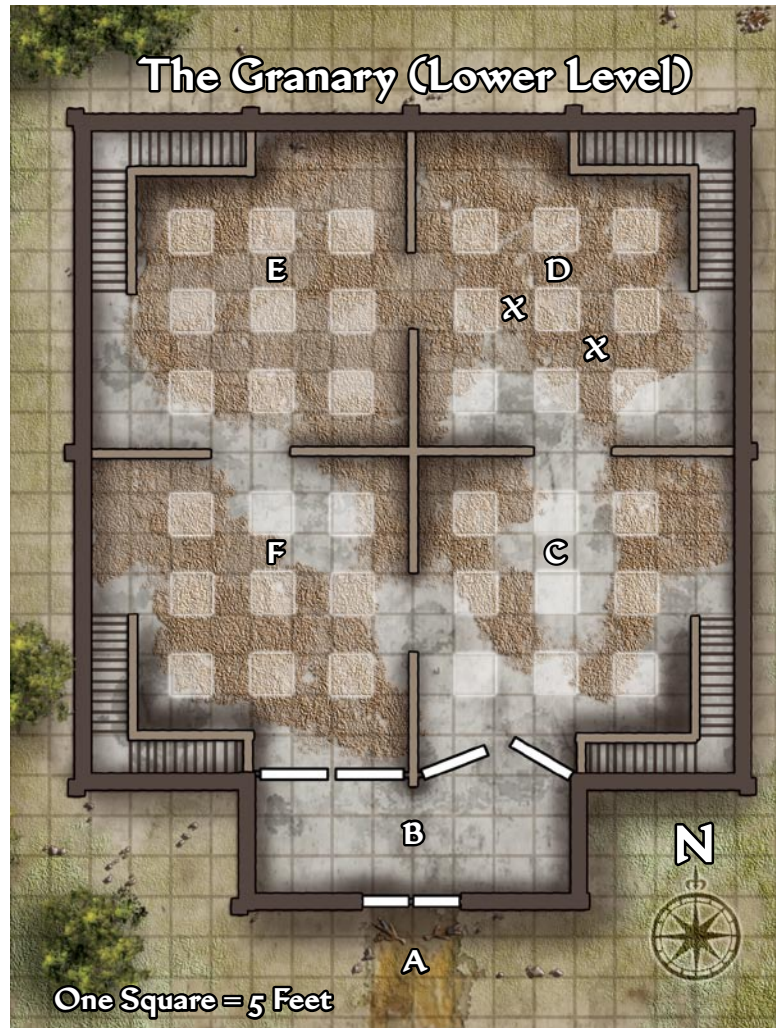
Give each player 283 gp.

Mission Note: Allow the Osirion faction members to recover at least 1 vial of Gut Wither to fulfill their mission objective. This does not change the reward value for this Act. Allow the Qadiran faction members to destroy at least 1 of the sickles wielded by the Black Echelon Operatives. You may also allow them to gather all of the sickles and quietly dispose of them.

ACT 3: THE SAFES IN THE SIPHONS

Desperate to find Nessian, Yargos takes the PCs into the sewer maze of the Puddle District, a waterlogged labyrinth of dangerously flooded tunnels known as the Siphons. There the PCs find the receiving room of Grandmaster Torch, one of Absalom's most notorious information brokers. Yargos warns the PCs that Grandmaster Torch has powerful friends and bodyguards and that they would be wise to keep their weapons sheathed.

After requesting an audience, the PCs are brought before the Grandmaster, a charming, soft-spoken man, but one whose entire body is covered in horrible burn scars. Grandmaster Torch (N male human bardic sage 6/rogue 5) lounges in a shallow pool nursing his scars while two servants gently recycle the water over his charred form. His two heavily armored, half-orc bodyguards remain close at hand. After a brief introduction, Grandmaster Torch concedes he does in fact know where the upstart Nessian has carved out his new base of operations. Torch is reluctant to sell the information, and the price to rat out a potential future underworld leader of Absalom is steep indeed: 6,000 gp, an amount the PCs are unlikely to be able to afford.



If the PCs attempt to bargain, flatter, or trick Grandmaster Torch, roleplay the session accordingly, permitting them to make any social skill checks they wish to attempt. They might also pique his interest if they attempt to sell him the Gut Wither poison from Act 2. If the PCs succeed in amusing or impressing Grandmaster Torch, or perhaps explain why for the good of Absalom he really ought to help them, he relents on his pricing and offers an alternate solution:

I've recently come into possession of a series of safes. Unfortunately, the safecracker I employed has turned out to be quite useless. If you can coax even three of the five safes open, I could be persuaded to disclose Nessian's location and dispense with my regular fee entirely. These chests are remarkably unique and I have the foreboding suspicion that, in this case, the receptacles just might be worth more than their contents, so I'd rather you didn't smash them open. Oh! One more thing: if my diviner warns me you have crossed me and stolen the contents, there will be repercussions.

If the PCs agree, they are directed to a side room where they can attempt to tackle Grandmaster Torch's safes in any order they like:

1. The Devil Dial

The lock of this iron cask contains a laughing devil's head.

THE DEVIL DIAL CR 1

Type mechanical; **Search** DC 8
Hardness 10; **hp** 30; **Break** DC 30

KEY

A successful Search check reveals that the devil's head can be turned in both directions, like a combination lock, but without numbers to act as a guide. A successful DC 18 Open Lock check enables a PC to slowly twist the metal head back and forth in the correct combination of seven separate positions, forcing the devil's head to release the lock. However, if the acting PC makes a successful DC 10 Listen check while operating the device, they detect a faint clicking as the lock's individual tumblers fall into place; a second successful Listen check (same DC) reduces the DC of the Open Locks check to DC 10. There is no penalty for failure and the PCs can retry as often as they need to.

CONTENTS

A lost treatise entitled "The Inward Facing Circle" written by Coganaris the Wracker, a famed Chelish devil-binder, along with *scrolls of protection from evil* and *protection from good*.

2. The Box of Golden Faces

This red box has been inset with a trio of golden faces: the first appears stern, the second angry, and the third fumes with hatred.

THE RAGE BOX CR 1

Type magical; **Search** DC 12
Hardness 5; **hp** 20; **Break** DC 25

KEY

Once the treasure chest of a barbarian king, this box is designed to slide open whenever someone employs the barbarian rage ability within 5 feet of the box (a rage spell will also suffice). Anyone who makes the above Search check should be permitted to make a Sense Motive check (DC 8). A successful result reveals that the box appears to react to intense negative emotion. Armed with this knowledge, a PC can crack the box's empathic code by projecting sufficient anger with a successful DC 12 Will save, Intimidate check, Use Magic Device check, or Perform (acting) check.

CONTENTS

A collection of ancient stone miniatures of a Viking army from the Land of the Linnorm Kings.

3. The Riddle Vault

The lid of this stone chest is covered with a relief of carved ivy.

THE RIDDLE VAULT CR 1

Type magical; **Search** DC 10
Hardness 8; **hp** 30; **Break** DC 28

KEY

A PC who succeeds on the Search check finds the individual letters of a riddle cleverly carved in between the leaves on the chest's lid. Provide the players with "Player's Handout One." If a PC speaks the answer to the riddle ("Dove") out loud, the riddle vault pops open.

CONTENTS

A collection of over 40 rare incenses along with a book of instruction. If burned in the proper combination, the incense collection can replicate a single use of incense of meditation.

4. THE SMOOTH STONE CHEST

This sealed stone chest has no visible lock or hinges. No decoration or writing of any kind can be found.

THE MIND LOCK CR 1

Type magical; **Search** —
Hardness 8; **hp** 30; **Break** DC 28

KEY

This chest contains no lock. While it can actually be opened simply by lifting off the lid, a permanent glamor tricks any who look upon it into thinking that the chest remains closed and sealed. A detect magic spell reveals there is illusion magic on the chest. Any PC can disbelieve the illusion with a successful DC 14 Will Save.

CONTENTS

A collection of material components for a wealth of spells (value 500 gp but 70 lbs. of weight)

5. The Holed Safe

A strange stylized writing wraps around the whole of this rectangular chest. Stranger still are the ten small pores that run along the box's lid.

THE SONG SAFE CR 1

Type magical; **Search** DC 10
Hardness 5; **hp** 20; **Break** DC 25

KEY

A PC who completes the Search check listed above discovers a hidden panel on one side of the box, but no means to open it. The strange lettering on the box is actually the notes to an ancient forgotten tune, something that will be deciphered with a DC 7 Bardic Knowledge check, Decipher Script check, or any music-related Perform check.

The pores on the safe are actually the openings of a simple wind instrument which has been built into the workings of the safe. Blowing on the first hole while covering the correct pattern of the remaining holes will enable a PC to replicate the upbeat song inscribed on the box. Correctly playing the song requires a DC 12 Perform (wind instrument) and causes the hidden panel on the box's side to iris open.



CONTENTS

A scroll collection of a complete symphony written by a Taldan master, now lost to time.

Development: If the PCs bring Grandmaster Torch three open safes with their contents, the information broker reveals that Nessian lairs in a new base of operations nicknamed the Pyramid of the Dog which he has carved out of a ruin of half-collapsed siege towers, just outside of Absalom. If the PCs bring the Grandmaster four open safes, he tips them 50 gp each. If they open all five for him, he makes it 100 gp each. As he sends the PCs on their way, he reminds them that should Nessian ever discover he disclosed this information, the Grandmaster would view that as “most unprofessional” and would “spread the word.”

ACT 4: THE HYMNS OF OATHDAY

At this point in the adventure, the sun begins to rise for Oathday and the PCs are likely headed for the Pyramid of the Dog outside of Absalom to stop Nessian before he can signal Black Echelon again. Unfortunately, while they are on the way, Nessian’s minions light yet another lantern. Any PC who succeeds on a DC 12 Spot check spies an interchange of flashing green and orange lights coming from the cliffs in the distance. Once again Nessian carefully plants his signals away from his lair to prevent anyone from zeroing in on his hideout’s location. If the PCs point out the signal, Yargos recognizes its significance instantly: it is one of the final and most important signals. Yargos explains that the lights will send a team of Black Echelon operatives to attack the Metro-Cathedral, an old church of Abadar. Although worshipers of Abadar have traveled to new parishes ever since the earthquake that laid low the Puddle District, the Metro-Cathedral still has one use: every Oathday morning, the priests of Abadar still play the ritual tune on the Metro-Cathedral’s giant pipe organ to remind all of Absalom to honor its pacts.

Yargos can explain that according to the codebook, when Black Echelon shuts down the giant organ in mid-tune, the sudden disruption becomes the signal for Silent Tide; the awaiting Armada is to approach to the city and begin its attack run.

Yargos urges the PCs to change course and race for the cathedral. If the PCs decide to go directly to Nessian’s lair instead, proceed to Act 5 of the adventure. If the PCs follow Yargo’s advice, run the encounter at the Metro-Cathedral. Normally, one would arrive to find a small group of initiate clerics of Abadar as they exercise their weekly duties of playing the morning hymns on the cathedral’s giant pipe organ. Unfortunately, today, by the time the PCs can arrive, only one lowly supplicant will remain (Maylitha Coincounter: LN expert 1, hit points

TIMING TIP

Act 4 can be skipped. If there is less than an hour to play in the session, for example, consider taking this Act out and proceeding directly to Act 5.

3) and she finds herself surrounded by Black Echelon operatives—the priests have all been slain.

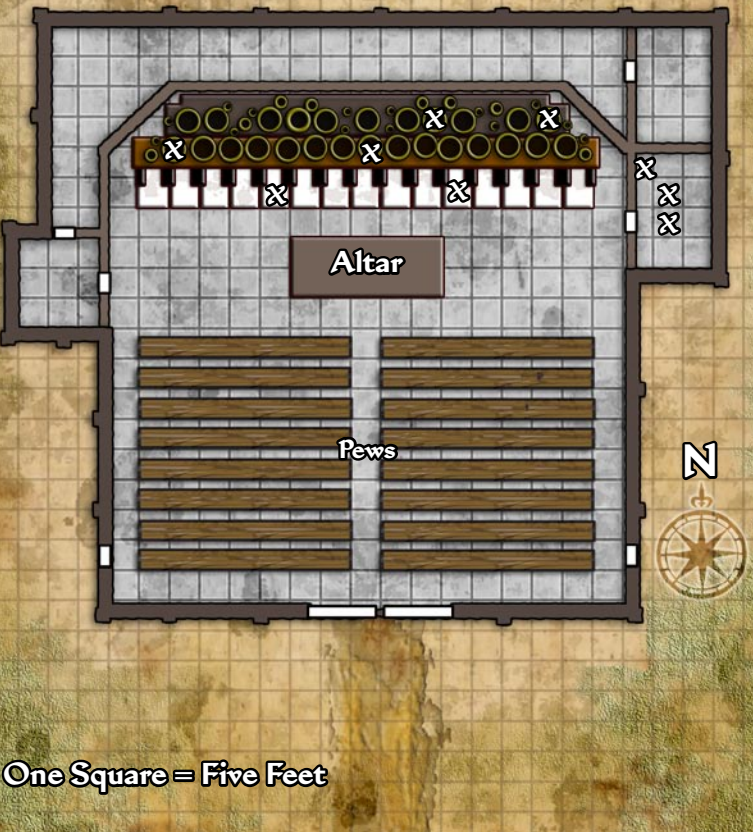
Black Echelon has a twofold plan: (1) by killing everyone in the cathedral, no one will be left to play the morning hymns; and (2) by placing themselves near the exit holes of the organ’s giant pipes, their silent auras will cancel out the music. Either way, they will signal the Silent Tide. As the PCs approach the cathedral, a magnificent tune will be playing. As the PCs get closer, the sound starts to break down and become patchy. Then a creepy moment ensues as the sound becomes a cacophony of off-key noise and then suddenly comes to an end. Yargos screams that they have to hurry and continue the music, lest the attack ensue.

Fighting Among the Keys

Keep the following in mind during this part of the scenario.

- The Metro-Cathedral’s massive organ is played by dancing upon the gigantic white keys. Traveling from white key to white key requires a DC 5 Jump, Tumble, or Perform (dance) check. The DC increases by 2 for each additional key someone attempts to cross in a given round.
- To play the more slender black keys, one either needs to stand on an adjoining white key and reach up and yank the key down with a DC 5 Strength check, or climb directly on top of the black key (Climb DC 10). Leaping from black key to black key requires a DC 10 or 20 Jump check depending on the distance between the keys as indicated on the map.
- Anyone who successfully depresses multiple keys in a round may also make a Perform (keyboard) check as a free action. A success of 10 or more contributes to the hymn and keeps the music alive. The higher the result, the more melodious and impressive the contribution. Provide each PC with a +2 circumstance bonus to their check for each key they manage to depress in a single round. If the same PC can further succeed on a DC 5 Knowledge (Religion) check, they can actually play the correct popular morning hymns.
- The organ keys are elevated 15 feet off of the ground. Anyone bull rushed off the keys falls to the stone church floor below, taking 1d6 damage.
- The organ keys connect to the 30-foot pipes above. When the PCs arrive, four Black Echelon operatives will have already climbed up the pipes to block the possibility of sound coming out. (There are not yet enough of them to block all of the pipes.) Climbing the giant twisting maze of brass pipes requires a DC 10 Climb check each round.

Metro-Cathedral



- As long as the organ continues to play, anyone of lawful alignment in the cathedral benefits from the effect of a bless spell. The bless effect kicks in as long as any key is depressed, whether it is truly musical or just a random key which is pushed down during the course of combat.

BLACK ECHELON OPERATIVES 9) **CR 1/3**
(TIER 4–5: CR 1)

hp 6 (TIER 4–5: hp 13); Appendix I

TACTICS

Before Combat The operatives begin at the points marked with X's. Four are already atop the pipes, blocking the sound from exiting with their silent auras. Two are on the keys, having just killed the dancing priests. Three more are in a prayer chamber to the side, after chasing off and killing the remaining priests. They will silently burst into the main cathedral on their turn. They either attack any would-be musicians or climb to block the pipe exit holes as needed.

During Combat The four operatives among the pipes attempt to stay put, blocking the sound exiting the pipes. They take cover from missile fire by trying to enmesh themselves among the jungle of pipes, increasing their AC to 17 while extending their protective mist. The others focus on slaying anyone on the keys, jumping from key-to-key if they must.

Morale Fearless undead with an oath to uphold, the operatives do not flee.

Development: If Black Echelon silences the organ for 15 consecutive rounds, they succeed in sending the signal for Silent Tide and the ghost armada will soon be launched. If the PCs destroy the operatives and keep the organ going (even if it's more of a musical disaster than a true hymn), the launch is averted. If Maylitha Coincounter survives (thanks to the PCs), she can also help play the hymn (she knows the tune well).

Rewards: If all of the Black Echelon Operatives are defeated, reward each Tier thus:

Tier 1–2

Give each player 5 gp.

Tier 4–5

Give each player 237 gp.

Mission Note: Allow the Qadiran faction members to destroy at least one of the sickles wielded by the Black Echelon Operatives. You may also allow them to gather all of the sickles and quietly dispose of them.

ACT 5: THE PYRAMID OF THE DOG

Let the players plan their PCs' approach. If the PCs succeeded in keeping the Metro-Cathedral organ playing in Act 4, they are no longer under time pressure and can hunt Nessian as they see fit. If Black Echelon silenced the organ's hymns, Silent Tide has been launched and, as Yargos explained, the PCS likely have less than 30 minutes before the ghost armada reaches the shoreline and Silent Tide begins. The PCs will need to find the codebook fast to secure the abort code.

Map Key: The Pyramid of the Dog

Nessian's decrepit lair is not a pyramid at all. Rather it consists of four ancient, battered siege towers, three of which have collapsed inward toward the largest, forming a giant, tepee-like wreck. Each leaning tower bears a makeshift guardhouse, providing an excellent vantage point for the War Hounder sentry posted inside. The center tower is Nessian's personal tower, and it is there that he can be found.

A. Broken Leaning Siege Towers

Each of these three towers contains a single War Hounder, along with an extra supply of 10 crossbow bolts. Because of the facing of his tower opening, a War Hounder can see and fire at only half of the battlefield at any given time. As

such, if the PCs choose their direction of approach carefully, only one or two War Hounders will be able to fire at them.

WAR HOUNDERS (3) **CR 1/2**
(TIER 4-5; CR 1)

hp 6 (TIER 4-5; hp 11); See Act I

TACTICS

During Combat The War Hounders raise the alarm and fire their crossbows from the tower openings, benefiting from cover.

Morale The War Hounders flee or surrender if Nessian is defeated.

B. Nessian's Workshop

The lower level of this tower acts as the War Hounders' central meeting area where Nessian doles out orders to his recruits. Two more War Hounders are here resting. If an alarm is raised by one of the camp's sentries, the War Hounders ready themselves to either melee with anyone who attempts to force their way inside or they follow Nessian outside, should he lead the charge to attack.

WAR HOUNDERS (THUGS) (2) **CR 1/2**
(TIER 4-5; CR 1)

hp 6 (TIER 4-5; hp 11); See Act I

TACTICS

During Combat If with Nessian, the War Hounders try to provide him with flanking. Otherwise their attacks are straightforward and undisciplined.

Morale The War Hounders flee if Nessian is defeated. If possible, they cut Marrow Chomper free to cover their escape (see area C).

The upper-level of the central siege tower is littered with the various-sized colored lanterns that Nessian has procured to trigger the Silent Tide. The codebook is hidden inside the workshop desk. It can be found with a DC 10 Search check. The book contains two items of particular note: (1) an indecipherable diagram on the final page (the location of an ancient Taldan wand cache—the clue for the Taldor faction members to recover); and (2) the abort code Yargos is so desperately seeking to end the Silent Tide.

A wide opening leads to a siege tower bridge, once used for traversing enemy walls. The bridge extends to the south and is 10 feet long. Nessian starts in this room as the PCs arrive on the map. Once he is alerted by sounds of battle, he joins the fray.

TIER 1-2

NESSIAN **CR 2**

Male human variant fighter 2

NE Medium humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** Listen -1, Spot -1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 12

(+2 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield)



BLACK ECHELON OPERATIVE

hp 15 (2d10+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** -1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee "Auger" mwk flail +5 (1d8+2/x2)

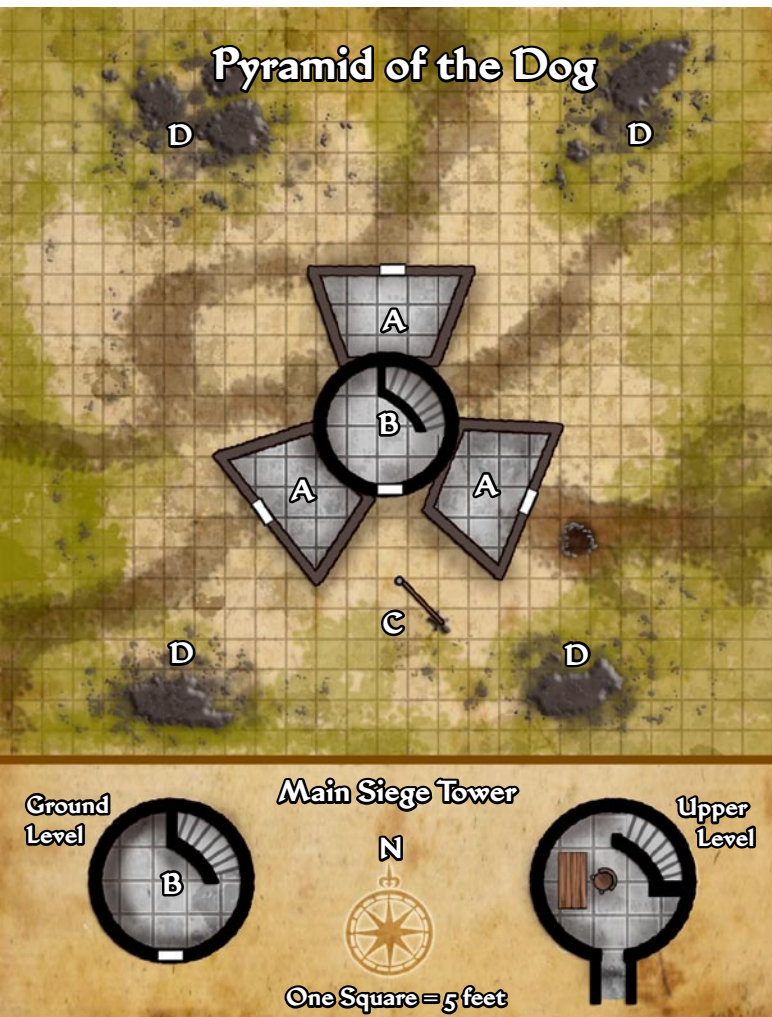
Ranged composite longbow +3 (Str +2) (1d8+2/x3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

Before Combat If Nessian knows the PCs are coming, he

consumes his potion of blur (granting a 20% miss chance for



2 minutes) and mage armor (increasing his armor bonus by a further +2 for 1 hour).

During Combat If he can, Nessian takes cover behind the side of the opening for the siege tower bridge and snipes at targets below with his bow. If he's denied targets, he rushes down the stairs, calls his War Hounders to him, and joins the melee with his flail and shield. Where possible, he takes a move action to perform a feint to deny his opponent his Dexterity bonus, triggering a sneak attack. If he fails, and must take a regular attack, he instead uses his Combat Expertise feat to maximum effect, taking a 2 point penalty to his attack roll.

Morale Nessian is a coward at heart. If all his minions are down or his hit points fall below 6, he flees. He is cagey enough, however, to take a withdraw action if it is safer.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 13
Base Atk +2; Grp +4
Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Feint
Skills Bluff +3, Climb +1, Craft (trapmaking) +2, Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Ride +2, Swim +2
Languages Common, Kelesh

Combat Gear acid flask, alchemist fire flask, *potion of blur*, *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of mage armor*, *scroll of cure moderate wounds* (2), *scroll of delay poison* (2), tanglefoot bag; **Other Gear** "Auger" masterwork flail, composite long bow (+2 Str), masterwork studded leather, heavy steel shield, *scroll of arcane lock*, smoke sticks (3), *programmed tattoo* (a fiery hellhound leaps at the viewer), jeweled earring (100 gp), 20 gp, 3 pp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Variant Fighter As a fighter class variant, Nessian has exchanged his fighter bonus feats in exchange for sneak attack progression.

TIER 4-5

NESSIAN

CR 5

Male human variant fighter 5
 NE Medium humanoid
Init +5; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 12
 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +3 shield)

hp 37 (5d10+10)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee "Auger" mwk flail +8 (1d8+2/x2)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +7 (Str +2) (1d8+2/x3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

Before Combat If Nessian knows the PCs are coming, he consumes his *potion of blur* (granting a 20% miss chance for 2 minutes) and *mage armor* (increasing his armor bonus by a further +1 for 1 hour).

During Combat If he can, Nessian takes cover behind the side of the opening for the siege tower bridge and snipes at targets below with his bow. If he's denied targets, he rushes down the stairs, calls his War Hounders to him, and joins the melee with his flail and shield. Where possible, he takes a move action to perform a feint to deny his opponent his Dexterity bonus, triggering a sneak attack. If he fails, and must take a regular attack, he instead uses his Combat Expertise feat to maximum effect, taking a 5 point penalty to his attack roll.

Morale Nessian is a coward at heart. If all his minions are down or his hit points fall below 15, he flees. He is cagey enough, however, to take a withdraw action if it is safer.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 14
Base Atk +5; Grp +7
Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative
Skills Bluff +6, Climb +1, Craft (trapmaking) +3, Intimidate +6, Jump +8, Ride +2, Swim +2
Languages Common, Kelesh
Combat Gear acid flask, alchemist fire flask, *potion of blur*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of mage armor*, *scroll of cure*

moderate wounds (2), scroll of cure serious wounds, scroll of delay poison (2), tanglefoot bag; Other Gear “Auger” masterwork flail, masterwork composite long bow (+2 Str), *screaming bolt*, +1 *studded leather*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, *scroll of arcane lock*, *smoke sticks (3)*, *programmed tattoo* (a fiery hellhound leaps at the viewer), *jeweled earring (100 gp)*, 20 gp, 3 pp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Variant Fighter As a fighter class variant, Nessian has exchanged his fighter bonus feats in exchange for sneak attack progression.

C. Dog Pole

The War Hounders’ favorite guard mutt and mascot, Marrow Chomper, is tethered to this massive pole.

MARROW CHOMPER

CR 1

hp 13; MM 272 (riding dog)

TACTICS

Before Combat Marrow Chomper is tied to a stake at point C on the map. Unless untied (Rope Use DC 5), she cannot go more than two squares from this point.

During Combat Chomper charges the nearest creature that isn’t a War Hounder.

Morale Chomper is hungry and ill-treated. She attacks savagely until reduced to a single hit point, whereupon she turns tail and flees.

TIER 4-5: Give Marrow Chomper two additional siblings: Scimitar and Dire Bitch.

D. Boulders

These massive beach rocks might provide cover for the PCs or allow them to skulk closer. Nessian keeps meaning to have them cleared, but he has still not gotten around to it.

Rewards: If all of the War Hounders and Nessian are defeated, reward each Tier thus:

Tier 1-2

Give each player 267 gp.

Tier 4-5

Give each player 619 gp.

CONCLUSION

Though few will be aware of their bravery, if the PCs stop the Silent Tide, they have saved Absalom from a potentially devastating attack. Better still if they have brought Nessian and his War Hounders to justice. If Nessian escapes, however, he will be sure to remember the PCs.

The PCs will have the thanks of Yargos and his friends, and they ensure that the PCs’ reputation within the Puddle District is deservedly enhanced. Unless the PCs have mistreated him, Yargos will prove to be a friend and ally that the PCs can rely upon in the future. Finally, if the PCs have not crossed Grandmaster Torch, he may prove to be a valuable future business contact.

Faction Missions

Cheliox Faction: PCs from the Cheliox Faction who obtain one or more skulls from defeated Black Echelons earn 1 Prestige Award.

Osirion Faction: PCs from the Osirion Faction who acquire at least 1 vial of Gut Wither poison in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Award.

Taldor Faction: PCs from the Taldor Faction who steal or copy the last page of the ancient codebook earn 1 Prestige Award.

Andoran Faction: PCs from the Andoran Faction who ensure Yargos Gill survives and win his favor, and also tell him the Eagle Knights wish to help him in his cause, earn 1 Prestige Award.

Qadira Faction: PCs from the Qadira Faction who destroy or disappear at least 1 of the sickles carried by the Black Echelons earn 1 Prestige Award.

APPENDIX: THE BLACK ECHELON, NEW MONSTER

These soundless cloaked assassins are shrouded in mist. Close-up, they appear to have no form of their own, as though the surrounding vapor animates their cloaks and weapons. There is, however, under the hood of each cloak, a floating human skull—a bleach-white, bony visage with empty eye sockets that somehow speak of the creature’s undying determination.

TIER 1-2

BLACK ECHELON OPERATIVE CR 1/3

NE Medium undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura Silence 5-ft. radius

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11

(+1 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 6 (1d12)

Fort +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities enshrouding mist, silent aura, undead traits; **DR** 5/slashing or bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft. (never runs or charges)

Melee ancient rusted sickle -1 (1d6-1) or claw +0 (1d4)

TACTICS

During Combat Black Echelon operatives seek to slowly close with their targets and slice them open. At least one will take a full round to extend its enshrouding mist to guard against ranged attacks. Repeating the tactics they employed in their former lives, Black Echelon operatives often work in pairs, with one encircling a target to establish flanking.

Morale Fearless undead, Black Echelon operatives stop at nothing until they complete their sworn mission.

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +0

Feats Skill Focus (Hide) and Skill Focus (Swim)

Skills Hide +3, Swim +3

Languages Black Echelon operatives do not speak, though they understand Common

SQ deliberate, enshrouding mist

Gear ancient rusted sickle, mist-soaked cloak

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Deliberate (Ex) After centuries of waiting, Black Echelon operatives are endlessly patient. They never charge or run.

Enshrouding Mist (Su) As a full-round action, a Black Echelon operative may expand the fog that swirls around its body. This creates a pea-soup fog which extends around the operative in a 30-foot radius, centered on its body as it moves. The mist replicates natural fog conditions (DMG 94): anyone attacking a target inside the mist receives a 20% miss chance. Attackers inside the mist who are adjacent to their opponents, however, do not suffer a miss chance. The mist affects both normal and dark vision alike, and the operative has no special ability to attack through its own mist. It suffers the same penalty should it attempt a ranged attack.

Silent Aura (Su) Black Echelon operatives are perfectly silent. Their silence dampens all noise in their own square as well as all adjacent squares, just as a silence spell. In addition, although it has no game effect, anyone caught within the silent aura has the creepy sensation that he is moving in slow motion. Treat an operative's silent aura as caster level 5 for the purpose of dispelling attempts.

TIER 4-5

ELITE BLACK ECHELON OPERATIVE CR 1 LEVELS 4-5

NE Medium undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura Silence 5-ft. radius

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13
(+2 armor, +1 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 13 (2d12)

Fort +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities enshrouding mist, silent aura, undead traits;
DR 5/slashing or bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft. (never runs or charges)

Melee mwk sickle +2 (1d6) or
claw +1 (1d4)

TACTICS

During Combat Black Echelon operatives seek to slowly close with their targets and slice them open. At least one will take a standard action to extend its enshrouding mist to guard

against ranged attacks. Repeating the tactics they employed in their former lives, Black Echelon operatives often work in pairs, with one encircling a target to create flanking.

Morale Fearless undead, Black Echelon operatives stop at nothing until they complete their sworn mission.

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +1

Feats Skill Focus (Hide) and Skill Focus (Swim)

Skills Hide +3, Swim +3

Languages Black Echelon operatives do not speak, though they understand Common

SQ deliberate, enshrouding mist

Gear mwk sickle, tattered black leather armor, mist-soaked cloak

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Deliberate (Ex) After centuries of waiting, Black Echelon operatives are endlessly patient. They never charge or run.

Enshrouding Mist (Su) As a standard action, a Black Echelon operative may expand the fog that swirls around its body. This creates a pea-soup fog which extends around the operative in a 30-foot radius, centered on its body as it moves. The mist replicates natural fog conditions (DMG 94): anyone attacking a target inside the mist receives a 20% miss chance. Attackers inside the mist who are adjacent to their opponents, however, do not suffer a miss chance. The mist affects both normal and dark vision alike and the operative has no special ability to attack through its own mist. It suffers the same penalty should it attempt a ranged attack.

Silent Aura (Su) Black Echelon operatives are perfectly silent. Their silence dampens all noise in their own square as well as all adjacent squares, just as a silence spell. In addition, although it has no game effect, anyone caught within the silent aura has the creepy sensation that he is moving in slow motion. Treat an operative's silent aura as caster level 5 for the purpose of dispelling attempts.

APPENDIX 2: NEW MAGIC ITEM

PROGRAMMED TATTOO

Aura faint illusion; **CL** 3rd

Slot none; **Price** 75 gp

DESCRIPTION

This body art plays out a repeating short scene of up to 30 seconds in length. The image does not have sound, smell, texture or temperature.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, 4 ranks in Craft (tattoo), *silent image*; **Cost** 37 gp, 3 XP

*Though different now sounds my name, the spelling
still remains the same.
Once prior leap of might, now becomes bird of white.*

Andoran Faction Handout

Fellow Free Citizen,

Warm greetings on this cold Desnu morn. This city's chill and squalor does not agree with me, and each day I see the Council bow to slavers and oppressors, my heart sickens. We must do better, we can do better. It all begins with you, my friend.

We have become interested in a man named Yargos Gill. Although he's not much to look at, Yargos is an important voice of the common man in Absalom's underclass. He is well educated, but he prefers to live among the downtrodden in that wasteland called the Puddles District. He's also more virtuous than most give him credit for. The Eagle Knights of Andoran have identified Yargos as important to Absalom's future destiny as a free and independent state of the people. If you find Yargos, above all, make sure you keep him alive. Please do your best to aid him thereafter, and secretly pass along the message that the Eagle Knights will be there for him when he needs them. Purport yourself well and do nothing to besmirch our reputation as beacons of freedom. One day Yargos will be vitally important to the future of Absalom. We wish you to gain his trust so as best to aid him in his cause.

Many thanks for your assistance in this matter. As always, I am in your debt.

Sincerely,

Captain Colson Maldris

Cheliox Faction Handout

Her Majestrix's Most Loyal Servant,

Asmodeus's dark blessings upon you. Your service to his smoking altar does you great honor and advances the glory of Cheliox. Your devotion has not gone unnoticed, and I must say I am intrigued by you. I have a task of dire import—I have chosen to entrust it to you.

Her Majestrix's interest is piqued concerning the reports of strange undead roaming Absalom's notorious slum—the Puddles District. Early reports suggest that these strange mist-walkers are animated not by necromancy alone, but by the power of oaths given during their former lives. Our diabolic patrons decree these strange undead merit further study, in case this knowledge leads to a new source of power over mortal souls. Your mission is to obtain an intact skull of one of these undead assassins and secret it back to Cheliox. You must also uncover just what was the oath that these undead killers took.

If you succeed, a slew of fresh souls will be tied to Asmodeus's great purpose. As always, keep your mission in utmost confidence—tell no one. Your service to the Dark One is best done in whispers and shadows. Report back to me when it is done, and I shall reward you, perhaps with an invitation to my next exclusive party... or better yet, a private audience in the boudoir. I think I might enjoy that.

Achingly Yours,

Paracountess Zarta Dralneen

Osirion Faction Handout

Honored Subject of the Ruby Prince,

I trust this correspondence finds you well. As always, you have the gratitude of my ancestors and myself for your continued service to Sothis. Dark times are upon this city, and undead walk the streets in the misty hours of the night. Worse, a spectre from our past also rears its head.

Centuries ago, Osirion's food supply was plagued by a horrible poison called Gut Wither, a war-manufactured toxin brought over from Qadira to further weaken Osirion's delicate agricultural base. To protect the populace, the then ruling sultans waged a lengthy campaign to ensure that Gut Wither was stamped out and the secrets of its creation were destroyed. Our seers have advised that whoever these undead, mist-walking assassins within Absalom are, they somehow have obtained a chest containing a small supply of Gut Wither, perhaps left over from a forgotten age. I'm asking ask you to track down their supply and bring us a vial of this terrible concoction. The famine days cannot return to our gloried land.

In All Sincerity,

Amenopheus, The Sapphire Sage

Qadira Faction Handout

Servant of the Satrap,

Trade is such a fickle thing. It is like the tenacious relations of a man and woman: they touch, caress, and hope to form a lasting bond borne out of a single night drunk on passion. Absalom is the best lover Katheer has known in a long while. Trade with the city keeps the flow of gold into our Satrap's coffers strong and steady. Sadly, a recent development jeopardizes this most profitable relationship.

Our agents suspect that the appearance of strange undead skulking through the mists of the Puddle District in Absalom bear relation to an incident called the "Silent Tide," a failed Taldan invasion plan. While the Silent Tide is Taldor's embarrassing debacle, the secret truth is that our satrapy also made a tidy profit off of the entire episode by supplying weapons to an outfit called Black Echelon, the Taldan saboteurs hidden inside the city. At the time, this seemed a wise and profitable venture, paving the way for trade with our often-enemies to the North.

It would be best if our part in this invasion stays buried. Given Qadira's renewed economic interests in Absalom, it would be embarrassing, to say the least, to be revealed as a historic enemy of the city. With your help, this embarrassment will remain Taldor's alone. Cover up the evidence of our involvement. If these specters still carry weapons from our lands, be sure to destroy as many as you can. Do not draw attention to yourself by recklessly destroying them all. If you can make them all disappear, quietly, that will serve our needs as well. As always, you will be compensated; the Satrap showers the loyal with gold.

Kind Regards,

Pasha Muhlia Al-Jakri

Taldor Faction Handout

Agent of the Empire,

Your rarified services are once again required. I shall not bore you with obfuscation or frivolity. We have acted against Absalom on myriad occasions and failed with each passing stroke. Apparently this new terror of undead in that ever so deplorable Puddles District is a remnant of one of our more infamous disappointments.

The undead's weaponry, distinctive curved sickles, match the sickles once used by Black Echelon. Black Echelon was the rather ostentatious name of our hidden agents and saboteurs ordered to attack Absalom from within its walls as part of the "Silent Tide," an embarrassing and ill-conceived invasion plan we hatched several centuries ago. In advance of the failed attack, we hid a secret cache of magic wands somewhere within the heart of Absalom for Black Echelon's use when the time was right. As the Silent Tide turned out to be an utter boondoggle, the wand cache was never claimed. We believe Absalom's authorities never uncovered the cache and the valuable wands remain hidden, their location now lost to time.

With this return of Black Echelon from beyond the pale, we are calling upon you to keep an eye out for any clues as to the whereabouts of the wand cache. Relay your findings back to us so that we can send a second team to recover the wands. It is believed that a map to the wand cache was hidden on the last page of a codebook that contained the secret signals to direct the Silent Tide invasion. If you can find the book, steal or copy the last page and bring it to me.

Do so and you shall be suitably rewarded.

My Sincere Gratitude,

Baron Jacquo Dalsine

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SCENARIO 01: SILENT TIDE

Scenario Chronicle #

TIER	1-2	MAX GOLD	453
	4-5		1,267

This Chronicle Certifies That

_____ A.K.A. _____

Player Name Character Name Pathfinder Society # Faction

_____ Has Completed This Scenario.

Items Found During This Scenario

TIER

1-2

A lost treatise entitled “The Inward-Facing Circle” written by Coganaris the Wracker, a famed Chelish devil-binder. (When making Knowledge: [the planes] checks, this treatise grants a +2 circumstance bonus on checks concerning devils. Using the treatise in this way takes 1 minute.) (Cost: 100 gp)

Potion of blur (Cost: 300 gp)

Scroll of arcane lock (Cost: 175 gp)

Scroll of cure moderate wounds (Cost: 200 gp)

Scroll of delay poison (Cost: 200 gp)

TIER

4-5

Screaming bolt (Cost: 267 gp)

Scroll of cure serious wounds (Cost: 525 gp)

EXPERIENCE

Starting XP

+1 XP

Final XP Total

Prestige Award

Starting PA

	GM's Initial
--	--------------

PA Gained (GM ONLY)

Final PA Total

GOLD

Start GP

+	GM's Initial
---	--------------

GP Gained (GM ONLY)

+	
---	--

Items Sold

=	
---	--

Sub Total

-	
---	--

Items Bought

=	
---	--

Sub Total

-	
---	--

Gold Spent

=	
---	--

Sub Total

Items Sold / Conditions Gained

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

TOTAL VALUE OF ITEMS SOLD
Add 1/2 this value to the “Items Sold” Box

Items Bought / Conditions Cleared

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

TOTAL COST OF ITEMS BOUGHT

For GM Only

EVENT

EVENT CODE

DATE

Game Master's Signature

GM Pathfinder Society #