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ADVENTURE PATH



Kingmaker

PLAYER'S GUIDE



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Player's Guide

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Kingmaker

Player's Guide

Brevoy is a proud land, known throughout Golarion for producing able warriors, regal nobles, and clever rogues. Yet Brevoy's two regions, Issia and Rostland, have long held one another in contempt and now stand on the verge of civil war. Both Issia and Rostland were independent nations until Choral the Conqueror's barbarian armies and red dragon servitors united the regions into a single kingdom two centuries ago. Until recently, the iron rule of House Rogarvia maintained a fragile peace between the two regions. But a decade ago, House Rogarvia mysteriously disappeared, and the conniving leaders of Issia's House Surtova supplanted them as Brevoy's rulers. Now a labyrinthine political landscape plagues the nation, full of secret alliances, provincial loyalties, and nefarious plots; civil war seems inevitable. In Rostland to the south, the swordlords see in many of Issia's recent political moves the swift approach of such a war. They rightly fear such an event, for Rostland is smaller than Issia, it has fewer armies, and its rolling hills and grasslands offer very little in the way of natural defenses. Worse, unlike Issia, whose northern border stretches along the Lake of Mists and Veils, which offers some defense, Rostland's southern border lies along a stretch of wilderness infested with bandits and monsters. If Brevoy falls into civil war, it won't be long at all before the violent, opportunistic vultures to the south move to take advantage of Rostland's problems.

This southern region of wilderness is called the Stolen Lands. While these lands are technically a part of the River Kingdoms, several of which have advanced claims in the past, Rostland has long viewed them as "stolen" from it by bandits and monsters. Many attempts have been made to settle the Stolen Lands, but to date, none have succeeded, making these 33,000 square miles of unclaimed wilderness the largest swath of unclaimed land in the entire River Kingdoms. As tensions mount in Brevoy, some of Rostland's swordlords hope to change that fact; they have issued charters to several groups of adventurers, sending them south into the Stolen Lands. These initial charters are simple enough: re-open the old trade routes along the rivers and scatter or defeat the bandits who have made them too dangerous to use. Beyond that, it seems apparent that Rostland wants to encourage new nations to grow in this region—and believes that by supporting these nascent kingdoms as allies, it'll gain loyal support in any coming conflict with Issia. It's a bold and brilliant political move—for if Rostland turned its own resources to the task, not only would such a move weaken its defenses against the north, but the blatant power grab would certainly force Issia's hand. By sending

free agents south, the swordlords of Rostland hope to create new allies without sacrificing their own position of power in Brevoy.

Yet as with most complex and brilliant plans, there are plenty of opportunities for disaster.

THE KINGMAKER PCs

Your group of characters begins the Kingmaker Adventure Path as one of four groups sent south into the Stolen Lands to defeat bandits and, hopefully, to establish one of four new nations in the River Kingdoms. It certainly won't be an easy task. Before any such settlement can even begin, the bandits and monsters must be dealt with—and once that initial task is done, the danger will only increase. As you struggle to foster a fledgling kingdom, build up its cities, and expand its farmlands, your group is destined to face rival warlords, ferocious beasts, strange cults, invading barbarian hordes, and even the mysterious fey denizens of the near-mythical First World. Can you tame the Stolen Lands and forge a lasting settlement amid such opposition? Who will survive to rule your kingdom? Who among you possesses the makings of a king?

The *Kingmaker Player's Guide* is intended to provide context for creating characters from the nation of Brevoy or surrounding regions who wish to play a role in the Stolen Lands' transformation. In this campaign, your characters will explore vast wildernesses and settle them, build cities and nations, and even fight wars against opposing kingdoms. Many of these unusual campaign elements are supported by additional rules that appear in other volumes of the Kingmaker Adventure Path—your GM can provide you with the information you need to explore, build, conquer, and war as the need arises in each adventure. As a special preview, some of these elements are presented at the end of this guide so you have all of the blank forms and hex paper you need to track your adventures and achievements in the Stolen Lands.

The following pages outline qualities of typical members of all seven core races and 11 core classes; they should allow you to create any combination thereof within the framework of the Kingmaker Adventure Path. Characters of all alignments, religions, and nations of origin have a place in Brevoy and the River Kingdoms, and the following suggestions should serve to spark a concept or background for your would-be nation builder. You'll also find several new traits specific to the Kingmaker Adventure Path to better customize your character and link her to the campaign's setting and plot.

Stolen Land Explorers

Your group is but one of four groups chartered by the swordlords to explore and settle the Stolen Land. Here's what you know about the four regions in the Stolen Lands and who Brevoiy sent to explore them. If you wish to learn more, your characters will need to ask around once the campaign begins.

The Greenbelt: Dominated by the woodland known as the Narlmarches and the rolling hills of the Kamelands, this region is the one your group has been chartered to explore. Bandits are particularly rife in this area, and the rumors that they've organized under the banner of a bandit warlord who calls himself the Stag Lord are particularly troubling. You are to explore as much of the northern half of the Greenbelt as you can and, if possible, to find out more about this "Stag Lord" and remove the bandit threat from the region. Other rumored problems in the region include a tribe of mites, a tribe of kobolds, mischievous fey, and numerous dangerous monsters and wildlife.

Glenebon Uplands: The swordlords sent a relatively experienced band of adventurers into the westernmost reach of the Stolen Lands—an area that is supposedly under the rule of the bandit kingdom of Pitax (although that River Kingdom has done very little to prove its claims over this area).

The Slough: The East Sellen River runs through the swamps known as Hooktongue Slough. Rumor holds that the swordlords sent actual Brevic government agents into this swampy area.

Nomen Heights: The easternmost reaches of the Stolen Lands contain a low mountain range and border the long-ruined realm of Iobaria. The swordlords sent a band of mercenaries into this region, rumors hold.

DWARVES

Though typically rare in northeastern Avistan, dwarves exist in small numbers in almost every community in Brevoiy. Many serve as town blacksmiths, masons, militia quartermasters, or pawnbrokers. The small mining village of Brunderton in eastern Rostland has an overwhelming dwarven citizenry—most dwarves in the region can claim at least one relative or acquaintance that calls the hamlet home—and gem and ore traders from Brunderton travel throughout the area peddling their wares. Rumors of untapped or unclaimed mines hidden throughout the Stolen Lands are enough to get most dwarves interested in exploring the wilderness.

ELVES

Full-blooded elves are rare in Brevoiy, generally preferring to live in Kyonin further to the south. A fair number of rebellious elves, however, emigrate from their homeland up the Sellen River to Brevoiy. Often, Forlorn elves pass through Brevoiy on their way south to Kyonin to live among their people, and some find the region so amenable that they never complete their journey—although lately, others have chosen to stay after the direct route down the river through the Stolen Lands was closed because of hostility from bandits and indigenous tribes of boggards, lizardfolk, and even trolls. The Brevic city of Restov boasts one of the largest concentrations of elves in the region. Long ago, the elves maintained a stronger presence in this region, and rumors of surviving elven ruins scattered throughout the most remote reaches of the Stolen Lands have long intrigued elven scholars and historians.

GNOMES

The boundaries between Golarion and the First World are not constant; in some places, like in the Sellen River basin, these barriers are unusually thin. The barriers thin yet further, rumors hold, in the Stolen Lands—and certainly fey are a powerful force in the region. Many believe that the influence of the First World over the Stolen Lands is the primary reason none have managed to tame the wilderness. Regions like these have long drawn gnomes to their proximity, and tales of gnome expeditions to explore the Stolen Lands are quite common—as are tales of expeditions that become lost and are never heard from again. Optimistic gnomes cling to these vanishings as proof that the Stolen Lands hide pathways into the First World. Gnomes have a strong presence in the River Kingdoms and have established communities there, such as Thom and Artume. Enclaves of less civilized gnomes exist in Echo Wood near the Numerian border, Embeth Forest, and Brevoiy's Gronzi Forest, though these shamanistic sects tend to keep

RACES

Amid the constant threat of civil war, the inhabitants of Brevoiy have more pressing concerns than their neighbors' race, and few judge a person by race alone. Brevans value custom and loyalty regardless of race; thus, anyone who adheres to local traditions enjoys a high degree of tolerance and acceptance. As such, the region boasts a diverse population comprised of nearly every race and ethnicity on Golarion.

Note that you don't have to be from Brevoiy to play in the Kingmaker Adventure Path, but since the campaign begins with your characters chartered by the swordlords of Restov and your initial approach into the Stolen Lands is from Brevoiy, you should still take into account how members of your race and class function in this northern kingdom.

mostly to themselves. Full of interesting sights and new experiences, the region presents a perfect spectacle for gnomes who enjoy the variety of people and places that can be found there.

HALF-ELVES

Often the victims of unfounded stigmatization in communities of primarily human or elven populations, half-elves typically find Brevoyn a welcoming land. The Chelish and Taldan upper classes have long exiled their embarrassing—if common—illegitimate half-elf progeny to the unruly River Kingdoms, and as a result, many of the region's half-elves claim some noble heritage (even if such claims aren't formally recognized). Other half-elven settlers in the region are the result of trysts between locals and elves from nearby Kyonin. Regardless of their origins, half-elves find their adaptable nature well suited to Brevic life, especially those settlements in which adherence to local custom is of paramount concern. Many half-elves rise to positions of power thanks to their ability to roll with political changes and bypass unexpected social impediments.

HALF-ORCS

Throughout the civilized world, half-orcs suffer ostracism and prejudice, yet many find Brevoyn not merely tolerant of their kind, but in fact refreshingly accepting. Brevoyns don't view half-orcs with the same disdain that the half-breeds receive in other parts of the world, and any half-orc who adheres to the strict, provincial customs of the land achieves the same level of acceptance that a similarly compliant full-blooded human would. Half-orcs blessed with less overtly bestial features might attempt to pass for human, keeping the unseemly conditions of their birth a closely guarded secret and leaving their past behind as they start again with a clean slate in Brevoyn or the wild River Kingdoms. Some embrace their heritage, however, and are rewarded; warlords among feuding city-states often recruit half-orcs to serve as elite soldiers, officers, and law enforcement, valuing their blend of strength and cunning.

HALFLINGS

Brevan halflings tend toward transient lifestyles that shuffle them through Brevoyn and the neighboring River Kingdoms every few years. The Fifth River Freedom denounces slavery as an abomination, and inhabitants uphold this tenet of the land as earnestly as they do any other. As a result, the River Kingdoms have become a haven for escaped or freed slaves—especially Chelish halflings—attempting to start a new life without the fear of bondage. A strong halfling liberation movement has taken root in the region, and freedom fighters from

across Avistan often congregate in the northern River Kingdoms and southern Brevoyn, consolidating their power and plotting emancipation raids throughout the Inner Sea. Non-crusading halflings often work as street performers, pickpockets, or legitimate shop or tavern owners; their natural penchant for stealth and showmanship makes them valuable assets to both the ruling elite and underground criminal organizations. The opportunity to help shape a kingdom from the ground up, to build a civilization where halflings can be a significant part of the leadership, could well be a draw to any ambitious halfling.

HUMANS

Humans constitute the most populous race in and around Brevoyn, as they do throughout Golarion. Ethnic Taldans make up well over half the region's human population; many trace their lineage back to the explorers and soldiers who first tamed the wild countryside ages ago. Descendants of Choral's conquering army possess strong Kellid bloodlines, as do the barbaric hordes of nearby Numeria. Spring and autumn bring fleets of Varisian flatboats to the Sellen's waterways as the nomadic people make their seasonal migration between the banks of Lake Encarthan and the Lake of Mists and Veils. Because of the region's penchant for attracting outsiders from around the world, Chelish, Keleshite, Tian, and Ulfen visitors commonly pass through or make new homes in the River Kingdoms' many outcast sanctuaries.

CLASSES

People from all walks of life call Brevoyn home, and the region's population consists of members of every class. While some classes are more prevalent than others, characters of all sorts can find a niche within the eclectic society. As the expedition to reclaim the Stolen Lands prepares to embark, PCs with any set of skills and abilities have the potential to play an important role in the region.

BARBARIANS

Most of Brevoyn's barbarians hail from the nearby nation of Numeria, where primitive Kellid tribes bow to the will and power of the mysterious Technic League. Numerians often hold strong superstitions about both magic and technology, and many barbarians in the region share this wariness, even those from the wild lands of Iobaria to the east. Many Brevic communities adhere to strict customs and cultural mores and don't permit variation from these traditions. As such, barbarians are rarely fully accepted in more parochial settlements. They

Leadership Roles

Once your party begins building a nation in Kingmaker, each PC can take on the role of a leader in that nation. As a leader, you'll be able to apply one of your character's ability score modifiers to the kingdom's Economy, Loyalty, or Stability, increasing the kingdom's statistics and helping its chances for success. Most leadership roles allow you to choose one of two ability scores to apply, so if you're particularly interested in having your character play a specific role among the kingdom's leadership, consider focusing on an appropriate ability score. The 11 leadership roles and their associated ability scores are listed below.

Ruler: Charisma

Councilor: Wisdom or Charisma

General: Strength or Charisma

Grand Diplomat: Intelligence or Charisma

High Priest: Wisdom or Charisma

Magister: Intelligence or Charisma

Marshal: Dexterity or Wisdom

Royal Assassin: Strength or Dexterity

Spymaster: Dexterity or Intelligence

Treasurer: Intelligence or Wisdom

Warden: Strength or Constitution

often find employment as bouncers, mercenaries, and toughs for the region's shadier factions, though in rare instances they may hold prominent positions among city watches or standing armies. Their generally wild nature makes the class well suited for exploration and guerilla warfare in the less-tamed River Kingdoms to Brevo's south. The primary barbarian tribe within the Stolen Lands themselves is known as the Tiger Lords—it's a violent tribe, though, and unsuitable for a PC barbarian to hail from.

Recommendations: Wilderness exploration plays a major role in Kingmaker, so skills like Acrobatics, Climb, Handle Animal, Perception, Survival, and Swim will be used quite often.

BARDS

In a nation balanced on the edge of civil war, diplomats, spies, and political strategists are a vital part of Brevic society. A person skilled in the art of flattery, embellishment, and subtlety has near limitless opportunities, and bards frequently serve as rulers' trusted advisors, envoys, and moles. King Noleski Surtova employs an army of bards who fight his battles not with sharpened blades but with golden words and poisoned lies among the taverns, barracks, and throne rooms of House Surtova's enemies and allies alike. This emphasis on verbal combat doesn't mean that bards in the region lack competence in physical combat, however; many

members of the class receive training in the exclusive dueling schools of the Aldori swordlords in Rostland. Whether bards earn their way by weaving through the upper echelons of power or singing for their dinner in shady dockside taverns, they rarely lack stories to tell or secrets to keep in Brevo.

Recommendations: Diplomatic interactions between tribes, nations, and other groups, as well as the ability to lead armies and nations effectively, play a significant role in Kingmaker. Skills like Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive should be helpful quite often. All Knowledge skills will be useful at different points during the Adventure Path, but those having to do with the wilderness, fey and the First World, and the intricacies of running kingdoms will be most useful (typically geography, local, nature, nobility, and planes).

CLERICS

The faiths represented in Brevo are as varied as the eclectic population that calls the region home. Each faith places an emphasis on the clergy teaching its followers diligently and leading by example. The nation's war-torn past—as far back as Choral's conquest of the land—has provided Gorum with a strong following, especially among the Iobarian descendants of House Rogarvia. The lawless nature of the northern region of Issia supports freedom-loving churches such as those of Calistria, Cayden Cailean, and Desna, while the region's more nefarious factions often venerate Norgorber for his influence over subterfuge and thievery. Travelers on the treacherous waters of the Sellen River frequently encounter priests or shrines dedicated to Hanspur, the god of rivers and river travel, while the wild landscape of southern Rostland draws clerics of both Erastil and Gozreh who wish to help civilization thrive in the threatening environment. In fact, worship of Erastil was once quite common among the Taldans who attempted to settle the Stolen lands, and ruins and lost temples dedicated to Erastil are said to lie hidden in the wilderness there.

Recommendations: Erastil and Gorum are the two deities with the strongest presence in the Kingmaker Adventure Path, but all of the deities listed above make excellent choices for clerics to worship.

DRUIDS

Many Brevan communities on the border of the untamed Stolen Lands employ druids in roles traditionally held by clerics. Especially in small, rural villages on the edge of civilization, citizens consider a druid's mastery over nature incredibly valuable. Unlike the fertile farmland of northern Rostland, the waterlogged wilderness of the Stolen Lands and the barren hills of Issia provide little in the way of arable fields, creating a high demand for

anyone who can keep the encroaching wasteland under control around what few crops do exist. Many druids in the region venerate Hanspur or Gozreh, focusing more on the latter's affiliation with water than on other aspects of nature, though adherents to the more general Green Faith are not uncommon. Brevan druids conventionally possess a natural affinity with plants, animals, water, or weather, though those who travel with an animal companion tend to bond with creatures at home both on land and in the region's rivers.

Recommendations: The following animals are logical choices for druids operating in the Stolen Lands: badger (wolverine), bear, bird, boar, cat (big or small), blood caiman (crocodile), dog, horse, pony, snake (viper), and wolf. From the Bestiary, the following additional choices are logical: dire bat, dire rat, giant frog, mastodon (elephant), and narlmarch mugger (monitor lizard). Finally, two new animals are introduced in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #31—the elk and the thylacine (also known in this world as the Tasmanian tiger). If you're interested in taking either of these as animal companions, use the following statistics.

ELK/MEGALOCEROS COMPANIONS

Starting Statistics: Size Medium; Speed 50 ft.; AC +1 natural armor; Attack gore (1d6); Ability Scores Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 5; Special Qualities lowlight vision.

7th-Level Advancement: Size Large; AC +2 natural armor; Attack gore (1d8) or 2 hooves (1d6); Ability Scores Str +8, Dex -2, Con +4; Special Qualities powerful charge.

THYLACINE COMPANIONS

Starting Statistics: Size Small; Speed 30 ft.; Attack bite (1d4); Ability Scores Str 12, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 7; Special Qualities low-light vision, powerful jaws (a thylacine's muscular jaws threaten a critical hit on a natural roll of 19 or 20).

4th-Level Advancement: Size Medium; AC +2 natural armor; Attack bite (1d6); Ability Scores Str +4, Dex -2, Con +4.

FIGHTERS

The esteemed and exclusive schools of the Aldori swordlords train many of Brevoy's numerous fighters, especially in the southern region of Rostland. These proud duelists long resisted the authority of House Rogarvia, and they have earned a globe-spanning reputation for their martial prowess. As such, ambitious swordsmen from distant lands make their way to Restov with the hopes of joining the Aldori's illustrious ranks. Similarly eager warriors often work as mercenaries, bodyguards, or muscle for those wishing to earn or maintain influence in a land where wealth and power are only secure if well defended. Alternatively, expeditions to tame the wilderness and establish new outposts

of civilization benefit greatly from skilled military tacticians, particularly with the threat of war ever looming on the horizon. That said, the harsh landscape of the Stolen Lands gives no quarter to heavily armored or mounted warriors; those few who exist hold fearsome reputations for their prowess and effectiveness on the battlefield.

Recommendations: All manner of weapons and armor exist in the Stolen Lands, but specific legends speak of certain types of powerful magic weapons being hidden in the region, particularly axes, bows, and swords.



MONKS

The sometimes lawless and mercurial land of Brevoyn does not lend itself to the disciplined, meditative lives of most monks, and few call the region home. Occasional ascetic vagabonds make their way through the region, bound for far-flung monasteries or shrines. These wanderers sometimes pause for weeks or months at a time to rest their weary feet, find brief employment to fund the next leg of their journey, or isolate themselves in hidden forest hermitages. In almost every case, though, the transients move on to other, more welcoming parts of Golarion.



The rare monk who resides in the region permanently might dedicate her life to maintaining order in the more anarchic cities of Issia, perhaps even going undercover among a thieves' or assassins' guild.

Recommendations: While there are no significant monk orders or monasteries in the Stolen Lands (yet!), a monk's ability to be self-sufficient should be quite helpful in the campaign. See the Barbarian and Bard recommendations for skill selection choices.

PALADINS

Holy warriors are relatively uncommon in the generally lawless and wild reaches of Brevoyn and the River Kingdoms, though they are not completely absent in the region. Most common in central Breven settlements, paladins of Abadar continually work to maintain peace and trade between Issia and Rostland despite the growing threat of civil war. The verdant landscape of the south attracts Erastil's faithful, who often dedicate their lives to aiding smaller communities in need of protection or guidance, acting as sheriffs, mayors, or even religious leaders. As Brevoyn prepares its expeditions into the Stolen Lands to establish a stable settlement there, paladins of both faiths flock to Restov to be part of the undertaking to push back the wilderness and make a civilized foothold in the otherwise uninhabited region. Alternatively, more than a few Iomedean crusaders hear an unexpected calling as they traverse the Sellen River on their way to Mendev and the Worldwound and end up staying in Brevoyn to combat evil there instead of on the battlefields to the north.

Recommendations: Erastil is the best choice for a divine patron for a paladin, for his presence and influence is strong in the Stolen Lands. See the Bard recommendations for suggested social skill choices. Given the focus on wilderness exploration (and the possibility late in the game for jousting and similar competitions), focusing on mounted combat is not a bad choice for a paladin. There are still some dungeons involved, but most of the dungeon locations in Kingmaker are relatively small—you won't have to worry too much about leaving your mount behind for an entire adventure!

RANGERS

In the feral Stolen Lands and surrounding wilderness, travel depends on daring trailblazers unafraid to lead armies, dignitaries, and merchants from one kingdom to the next, either on the treacherous waterways of the Sellen River or on harsh overland routes. Dense woods and fetid swamps necessitate less regimented armies, and rangers tend to function as efficient guerilla soldiers and scouts. As such, many communities in southern Brevoyn

and the River Kingdoms employ rangers as the backbone of both their offensive and defensive military strategies, retaining them as protectors against barbarian raids, fey ambushes, and unscrupulous bandits. The region also attracts countless bounty hunters, who seldom lack clients, local or foreign, eager to recruit their services.

Recommendations: See the Barbarian recommendations for good choices for wilderness-themed skills. The ability to track well is particularly valuable in numerous Kingmaker encounters. See the Druid recommendations for logical animal companion choices.

A ranger's best choices for favored enemies in Kingmaker include the following: animal, dragon, fey, humanoid (boggard, human, giant, or reptilian), magical beast, monstrous humanoid, plant, undead, and vermin. Good favored terrain choices include forest, mountain, plains, swamp, and water.

ROGUES

Rogues are prominent in northern Brevo, where House Surtova has long controlled powerful thieves' guilds, organized crime syndicates, and spy networks out of Port Ice. Since the disappearance of House Rogarvia in 4699 AR, they have dispatched discreet agents throughout both Issia and Rostland to consolidate their power in the absence of the traditional ruling family, and the family feel that their scion Noleski Surtova's rule legitimizes its shameless methods. Even in the more stable region of Rostland, rogues are plentiful, often migrating north from the River Kingdoms, where pirate bands and roadside brigands give credence to the idiom "as thick as thieves." In many cases, rogues find themselves in the River Kingdoms after ending up on the wrong side of the law in their homelands, and the region's inhabitants frequently take new names and invent elaborate back stories upon arriving in the Sellen valley, a tradition that carries into Brevo as well.

Recommendations: Kingmaker includes traps, although they're not as overwhelmingly prevalent as are hazards, ambushes, and social situations where rogues can excel. A rogue talented at stealth and scouting, particularly in wilderness areas, should do well. See the Barbarian and Bard recommendations for good skill selection choices.

SORCERERS

Sorcerers, with their untrained mastery of arcane mysteries, have long found the wilds of northeastern Avistan alluring. Often viewed as uncontrolled compared to wizards, many sorcerers emigrate to Brevo and the River Kingdoms to obtain some semblance of acceptance or anonymity. The realm of the First World touches the Material Plane in strange ways in the Stolen Lands along the southern

Brevic border, resulting in many native sorcerers drawing their powers from fey bloodlines. Brevo's history with red dragons has led to the prominence of draconic bloodline sorcerers. Members of the ambitious Brevic nobility often belong to destined bloodlines and find that fate frequently intervenes on their behalf as they rise in power and influence. While these three bloodlines appear most often in Brevo and the River Kingdoms, all bloodlines exist in the region.

Recommendations: In Kingmaker, the following bloodlines fit best thematically (although all bloodlines should be equally useful in combat situations): destined, draconic, elemental, fey. See the Wizard recommendations for familiar choices if you play an arcane bloodline sorcerer.

WIZARDS

Scholars of the arcane might find themselves in Brevo for countless reasons. Illusionists and enchanters, for example, often travel to the region to study the mysterious First World, the fey realm that touches Golarion in enigmatic and unexplained ways in the untamed wilderness on the nation's southern border. The city of Skywatch in eastern Brevo also attracts throngs of wizards who hope to unlock its arcane secrets and break through the impenetrable seal that has isolated the settlement from the outside world for the last decade. Wizards skilled in the art of evocation generally find employment as battlefield artillery in the armies of the region's various feuding kingdoms. Other arcanists make their way to Brevo and the River Kingdoms out of necessity when their experiments and studies get them into trouble in their homelands (most often those mages who tamper with the very forces of life and death).

Recommendations: See the Bard recommendations for good Knowledge skill choices. All of the arcane schools should be equally useful throughout Kingmaker.

While any sort of bonded object works well in Kingmaker, wizards who opt instead to take on a familiar might wish to choose creatures that make sense for the region in which the Adventure Path takes place. Logical choices for familiars based on the region's climate include all of the basic familiars from the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* except for monkeys. Good choices of improved familiars (again, based on Kingmaker's themes) include celestial or fiendish animals, dire rats, mephits, and pseudodragons. Legendary, shy creatures known as carbuncles are also available as improved familiars as well—these creatures are detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #31, so ask your GM for details if you're interested in taking one of these somewhat comical creatures as a familiar.

KINGMAKER CAMPAIGN TRAITS

The people of Brevoy are a diverse people, and those from many walks of life have answered the call to reclaim the Stolen Lands. The traits presented in this guide and in the Pathfinder Character Traits Web Enhancement—recently updated to Pathfinder RPG Rules and available at paizo.com—are designed to help you customize your character, allowing you to further distinguish him from your standard class, as well as to provide a means to help flesh out his history. Presented here are a number of Campaign Traits that are particularly suitable for characters playing in the Kingmaker Adventure Path.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

Campaign traits are tailored to a specific Adventure Path and give your character a built-in reason to begin the first adventure in a new campaign. Some campaign traits also grant teamwork benefits if you choose to begin a campaign with a character who has a preexisting relationship with another PC.

Campaign Traits assume a lot more about your character's backstory, but they are meant to help serve as inspiration for a player working to create a detailed and interesting history for her character. You have a certain amount of leeway in adjusting a campaign trait's expected backstory once you've selected which trait is right for you; just be sure to get your GM's approval before you run with a modified history.

All of the following traits revolve around characters making their homes in and around the country of Brevoy, a country deeply involved in the events that touch off the Kingmaker Adventure Path. You can take a look at these traits to get a general, spoiler-free idea of the types of foes and challenges your character might encounter over the course of the Adventure Path. Knowing that there are going to be elements of exploration, banditry, deception, fey magic, politics, and the like should help you build a character that fits more organically into the campaign you're about to join. These traits all lead your character to become interested in an exploratory effort meant to chart the Stolen Lands, an unclaimed frontier between Brevoy and the River Kingdoms ruled only by deadly beasts, lurking monsters, capricious fey, brutal bandits, and creatures of legend.

Bastard (limited to human characters): One of your parents was a member of one of the great families of Brevoy, perhaps even of the line of Rogarvia itself. Yet you have no substantive proof of your nobility, and you've learned that claiming nobility without evidence makes you as good as a liar. While you might own a piece of jewelry, a scrap of once-rich fabric, or an aged confession of love, none of this directly supports your claim. Thus,

you've lived your life in the shadow of nobility, knowing that you deserve the comforts and esteem of the elite, even though the contempt of fate brings you nothing but their scorn. Whether a recent attempt to prove your heritage has brought down the wrath of a noble family's henchmen or you merely seek to prove the worth of the blood in your veins, you've joined an expedition into the Stolen Lands, hoping to make a name all your own. You take a –1 penalty on all Charisma-based skill checks made when dealing with members of Brevic nobility but gain a +1 trait bonus on Will saves as a result of your stubbornness and individuality. (The penalty aspect of this trait is removed if you ever manage to establish yourself as a true noble.)

Brigand: You hail from the River Kingdoms or the more lawless reaches of Brevoy. Life has been hard for you. Perhaps your parents and siblings were crooks and con artists, or maybe your rough, lonely life lead you to fall in with thieves and worse. You know how to ambush travelers, bully traders, avoid the law, and camp where no one might find you. Recently, you've run into some trouble, either with the law or with other bandits, and you're looking to get away to somewhere no one would ever think to look for you. An expedition into the rugged wilderness seems like a perfect way to lie low until the trouble blows over. You begin the campaign with an extra 100 gp in ill-gotten gains. You also gain a +1 trait bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks when dealing with brigands, thieves, bandits, and their ilk.

Issian: You were raised northern Brevoy, a land of misty shores and harsh hill lands, of snowy vistas and violet-hued mountains. You are descended from an able and intelligent people, and you have grand ambitions, a mind alert for opportunity, and the tenacity to fight for your goals no matter the challenge. You care for little more than achieving your aspirations and opportunities to win wealthy and grandeur, for which few costs prove too great. You see yourself as a citizen of Brevoy through and through. The call for champions willing to help take back your country's rightful holdings in the Stolen Lands has inflamed your dreams of profit and possibilities, so you have joined an expedition to quest south. Your agile mind grants you a +1 trait bonus on all Will saves made to resist mind-affecting effects.

Noble Born: You claim a tangential but legitimate connection to one of Brevoy's noble families. If you aren't human, you were likely adopted by one of Brevoy's nobles or were instead a favored servant or even a childhood friend of a noble scion. Whatever the cause, you've had a comfortable life, but one far from the dignity and decadence your distant cousins know. Although you are associated with an esteemed name,



your immediate family is hardly well to do, and you've found your name to be more of a burden to you than a boon in many social situations. You've recently decided to test yourself, to see if you can face the world without the aegis of a name you have little real claim or care for. An expedition into the storied Stolen Lands seems like just the test to see if you really are worth the title "noble." Choose one of the following noble families and associated benefits.

Garess: Your family's long association with the dwarves of the Golushkin Mountains has left its mark. You ignore the movement penalty for the first 5 feet of rocky difficult terrain you move through per round. This applies only to terrain made difficult by rocks or ruins. In addition, you gain a +2 trait bonus on Appraise checks to assess the value of natural stones or metals. Your family motto is "Strong as the Mountains."

Lebeda: Your family's history of trading along the shores of Lake Reykal pervades your blood. As a deft merchant of the region, you gain a bonus language: Dwarven, Elven, Hallit, Gnome, Giant, Halfling, Skald, or Sylvan. Your family motto is "Success through Grace."

Lodovka: Your family has made a living off the coasts of the Lake of Mists and Veils since before Brevoyn existed. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Swim checks, and Swim is always treated as a class skill for you. Your family motto is "The Waters, Our Fields."

Medvyed: Your family has long a deep respect for the wilderness and is superstitious about the creatures that dwell therein. You gain a +2 trait bonus on all Diplomacy checks made to deal with fey creatures and a +1 trait bonus on Will saves made against their spells and supernatural abilities. Your family motto is "Endurance Overcomes All."

Orlovsky: Your family has a reputation for avoiding conflicts. You gain a +1 trait bonus on your CMD. In addition, choose Acrobatics, Diplomacy, or Stealth—you gain a +1 trait bonus on this skill. Your family motto is "High Above."

Surtova: Your family is well known for their political agility and scheming natures. You deal +2 damage when attacking a flat-footed opponent while wielding a light or one-handed weapon. Your family motto is "Ours is the Right."

Pioneer: You have long lived along the southern border of Brevoyn, in the shadow of wilderness known

as the Stolen Lands. Life has been hard, but through hunting, trapping, trading, and coaxing crops from the freezing earth, you've learned how to survive on the rugged frontier. With the wilderness ever at your door, you've also learned much about its denizens and the wild creatures that lurk in that unwholesome land. Your family might even claim holdings in the Stolen Lands, with elders telling stories of being driven from or robbed of a lost ancestral homestead, fertile farmlands, bountiful orchards, or a hidden mining claim. Whether because of your personal expertise and familiarity with the borderlands or in order to reclaim your family's land, you've joined the expedition into the Stolen Lands. You begin play with a horse. Also, choose one of the following skills: Climb, Handle Animal, Knowledge (nature), Perception, Ride, Survival, or Swim—you gain a +1 trait bonus on this skill.

Rostlander: You were raised in the south of Brevo, a land of dense forests and rolling plains, of crystalline rivers and endless sapphire skies. You come from hearty stock and were raised with simple sensibilities of hard work winning well-deserved gains, the importance of charity and compassion, and the value of personal and familial honor. Yours is the country of the Aldori

swordlords and the heroes who refused to bend before the armies of a violent conqueror. You care little for matters of politics and nobles or of deception and schemes. As you are thoroughly Brevic, the call for champions willing to expand your land's influence into the Stolen Lands has inflamed your sense of patriotism and honor, and so you have joined an expedition to quest southward. Your hardy nature grants you a +1 trait bonus on all Fortitude saves.

Sword Scion: You have lived all your life in and around the city of Restov, growing up on tales of Baron Sirian Aldori and the exploits of your home city's heroic and legendary swordlords. Perhaps one of your family members was an Aldori swordlord, you have a contact among their members, or you have dreamed since childhood of joining. Regardless, you idolize the heroes, styles, and philosophies of the Aldori and have sought to mimic their vaunted art. Before you can petition to join their ranks, however, you feel that you must test your mettle. Joining an expedition into the Stolen Lands seems like a perfect way to improve your skills and begin a legend comparable to that of Baron Aldori. You begin play with a longsword or Aldori dueling sword and gain a +1 trait bonus on all attacks and combat maneuvers made with such weapons.

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PLAYER RESOURCES

The Kingmaker Adventure Path includes several new rules and subsystems for players interested in taking up the scepter and crown. The resources on the following pages will make tracking the progress of exploration, the growth of kingdoms, and the shape and size of cities you found easier. As the Adventure Path progresses and new possibilities open up, your GM will aid you in making proper use of these resources. Until these points begin in your particular campaign, you can consider these resources curious previews of things to come!

Blank Hex Map: Use copies of these maps to track your progress in exploring the four zones of the Stolen Lands. Each sheet of blank hexes is equal in size to one of the four Stolen Land regions; as you explore, draw in the terrain features, rivers, locations, and other discoveries as you see fit. The box at the bottom of each hex can be used to track which hexes you've thoroughly explored (simply walking through a hex does not count as exploring it—your GM has guidelines on what you need to do to fully explore a hex), which hexes you've claimed and added to your kingdom, and which hexes have been developed as farmland. Put an "E" in the box once you explore a hex, a "K" once you add that hex to your kingdom, and an "F" if you develop that kingdom hex as farmland.

Kingdom Sheet: This will be your kingdom's "character sheet" once you're given the opportunity to claim land and found a nation. Rules for building and maintaining a kingdom appear in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #32.

Buildings: These represent the various buildings you can construct and add to your kingdom's cities. Rules for building and maintaining a city appear in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #32.

City Grid: This grid gives you a matrix in which to place the buildings you construct, as well as a handy place to track your cities' statistics and any unusual magic items available for sale in the city. Rules for building and maintaining a city appear in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #32.



KINGDOM SHEET

KINGDOM NAME _____ CAMPAIGN _____
ALIGNMENT _____ SIZE _____ CONTROL DC _____ POPULATION _____

BONUSES

PENALTIES

	TOTAL	BUILDINGS	EDICTS	EVENTS	LEADERSHIP	RESOURCES	ALIGNMENT	EDICTS	UNREST	VACANCIES	OTHER
ECONOMY											
LOYALTY											
STABILITY											

EDICTS

PROMOTION LEVEL _____
+ [] STABILITY + [] BP CONSUMPTION
TAXATION LEVEL _____
+ [] ECONOMY - [] LOYALTY
FESTIVALS PER YEAR _____
+ [] LOYALTY + [] BP CONSUMPTION

UNREST

[] PENALTY ON ALL CHECKS

CONSUMPTION

[] BP

SIZE + CITIES + EDICTS - FARMS + OTHER

TREASURY

[] BP

ONGOING EVENTS

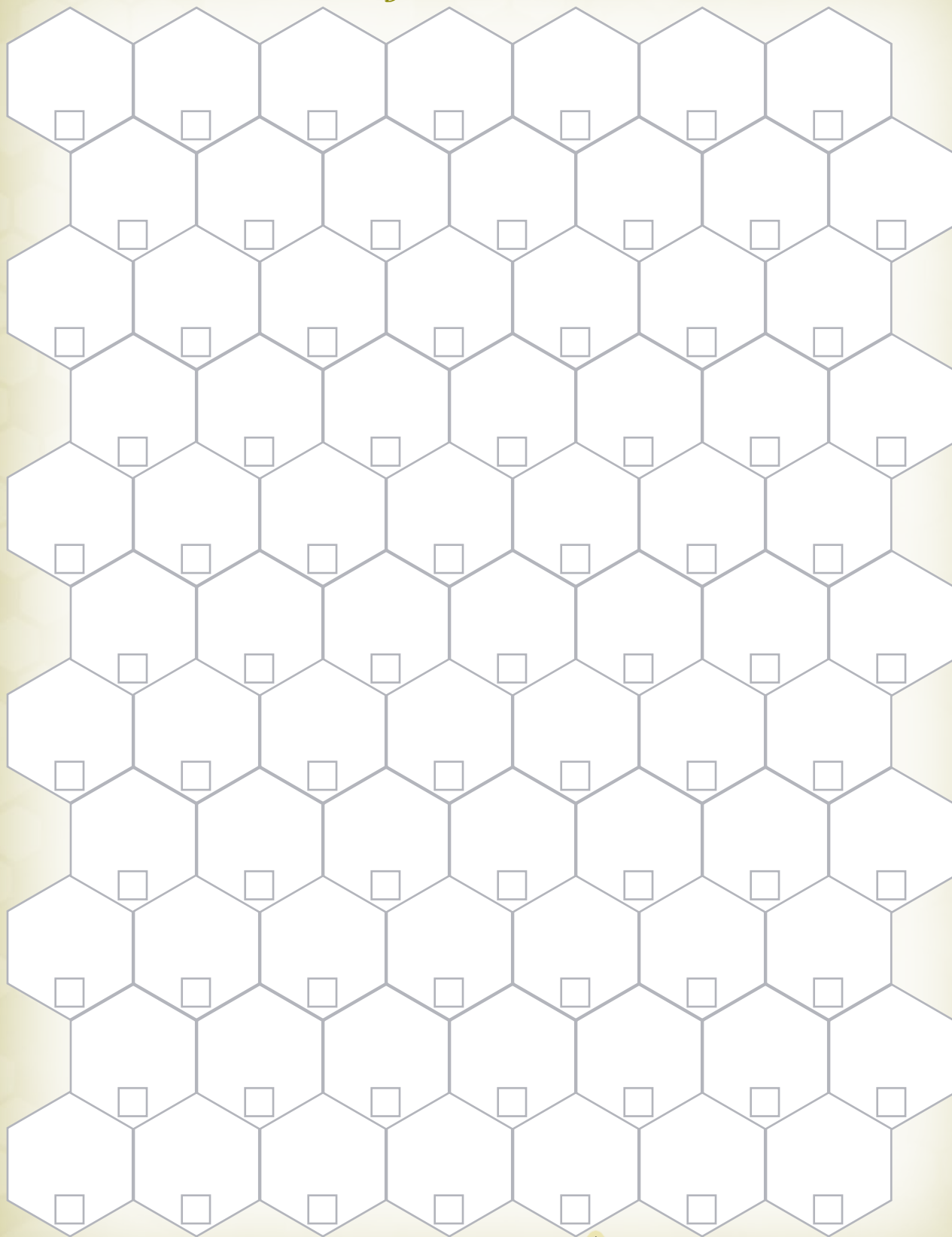
[]

LEADERSHIP

RULER	LEADERSHIP ROLE	BONUS	ATTRIBUTE
RULER		+	ECONOMY, LOYALTY, STABILITY
COUNCILOR		+	ECONOMY, LOYALTY, STABILITY
GENERAL		+	LOYALTY
GRAND DIPLOMAT		+	STABILITY
HIGH PRIEST		+	STABILITY
MAGISTER		+	STABILITY
MARSHAL		+	ECONOMY
ROYAL ASSASSIN		+	ECONOMY
SPYMASTER		+	LOYALTY, -1 UNREST/UPKEEP
TREASURER		+	ECONOMY
WARDEN		+	LOYALTY

Kingmaker

REGION





Alchemist



Barracks



Black Market



Brewery



Brothel



Caster's Tower



Dump



Exotic Craftsman



Granary



Graveyard



Herbalist



House



Inn



Jail



Library



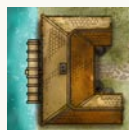
Luxury Store



Magic Shop



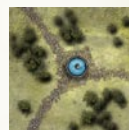
Mansion



Mill



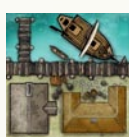
Monument



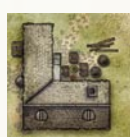
Park



Academy



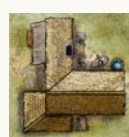
Pier



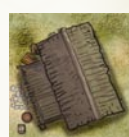
Shop



Shrine



Smith



Stable



Garrison



Guildhall



Market



Tannery



Noble Villa



Temple



Tavern



Tradesman



Theater



Town Hall



Tenement



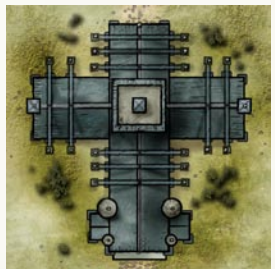
Watchtower



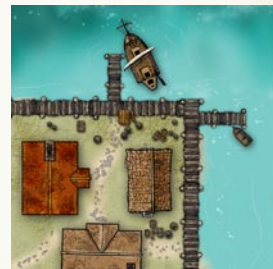
Arena



Castle



Cathedral



Waterfront

☐ Land ☐ Water

☐ Land ☐ Water

☐ Land ☐ Water

☐ Land ☐ Water

City Name _____ Base Value _____ Defense _____ Population _____

ITEMS

MINOR	MINOR	MEDIUM	MAJOR
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
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Into the Wild

South of Rostland, the hills rise and forests bloom into a land that has long remained wild, despite numerous attempts by colonists from both north and south to claim and civilize it. Caldor made the most ambitious attempt to settle this realm, but even that great nation failed to tame the wilderness that lies in a green swath between Brevoy and the River Kingdoms proper. This region is known as the Stolen Lands, as the wilds are viewed as territory unfairly claimed (and lost) by the other. It has lain fallow for decades since the previous attempt at colonization, and some whisper that the time is ripe for another attempt.

Yet before the Stolen Lands can be claimed, they must be known. Old ruins, monuments to previous failures, dot the landscape, home now to all manner of savage humanoid tribe and ravenous glowering monstrosity. Bandits and barbarians are the closest thing to civilization an explorer can expect to encounter in these deadly but beautiful wilds.

—from Taldan historian Gustav Devarr's "Kingdoms of the Lost"

The Stolen Lands encompass an area that covers approximately 35,000 square miles—a territory about the size of the state of Maine. The map of the Stolen Lands is presented on the next two pages in a much-reduced size—this is to give you a good look at how the four main regions of the Stolen Lands connect. Each volume of the Kingmaker Adventure Path focuses on a specific region in particular, with full-page maps of those regions appearing in the appropriate volumes. These four regions are briefly summarized below.

The Greenbelt: With the tangled woodlands of the Narlmarches to the west and the rugged hills of the Kamelands to the east, the Greenbelt is a haven for bandits. The lack of dangerous inhabitants other than indigenous tribes of kobolds and mites makes this the safest of the four regions for “freelance banditry,” although recent rumors hold that a particularly powerful bandit known as the Stag Lord has risen to unite and lead the region’s brigands. To the south, tribes of trolls and more dangerous creatures provide a quite effective buffer between Brevoiy and Mivon. The Greenbelt is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volumes #31–32.

The Nomen Heights: With a southern skyline dominated by the ragged, stony mountains known as the Tors of Levenies, the Nomen Heights are named after the aggressive tribes of Nomen Centaurs who view the eastern steppes of the region as their own. Ancient ruins dot the Tors themselves, hinting that the region may have once been the most civilized of the Stolen Lands. The Nomen Heights are detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #33.

The Slough: East of the Glenebon Uplands, the rugged hills and rolling grasslands soon give way to a swath of reeking swampland known as Hooktongue Slough. Inhabited by lizardfolk, boggards, and stranger beings, this region has long been a battleground between the Tiger Lord barbarians and the more monstrous tribes of the swamp. The slough is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #34.

The Glenebon Uplands: The westernmost quadrant of the Stolen Lands is a contested zone between the barbarian tribes known as the Tiger Lords to the north and the bandits of Pitax to the south. Further complicating this scene is the not-insignificant presence of several powerful fey and dangerous monsters in the Branthlend Mountains and the forest of Thousand Voices. The Glenebon Uplands are detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volumes #35–36.

EXPLORING THE STOLEN LANDS

Presented on the following pages are rules for exploring, claiming, and keeping control of a large tract of wilderness. Although specialized for use in the Kingmaker Adventure Path, you can use these rules and guidelines for any exploration-themed campaign.

Exploring the Stolen Lands

Traveling (Time to cross 1 hex)

Party Speed	Plains	All Other Terrains
15 feet	11 hours	16 hours
20 feet	8 hours	12 hours
30 feet	5 hours	8 hours
40 feet	4 hours	6 hours
50 feet	3 hours	5 hours

Exploring (Time to fully explore 1 hex)

Party Speed	Plains	Forest or Hill	Mountain or Swamp
15 feet	3 days	4 days	5 days
20 feet	2 days	3 days	4 days
30 feet	1 day	2 days	3 days
40 feet	1 day	1 day	2 days
50 feet	1 day	1 day	1 day

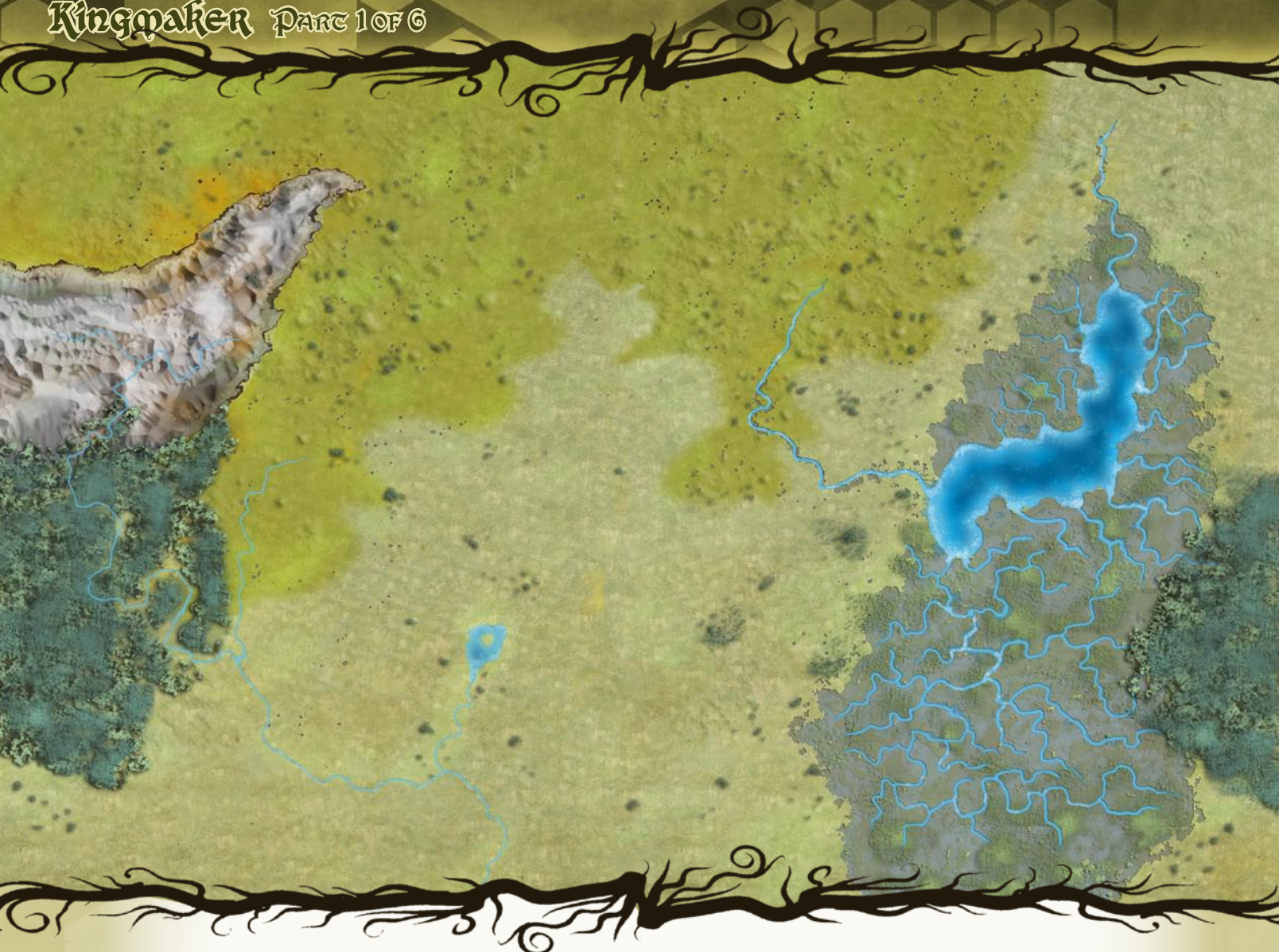
The expanse of the Stolen Lands has not, in Brevoiy’s recent memory, been accurately mapped, and part of the task set before the PCs is to rectify this gap. As they explore the region, they and their companions are expected to keep track of what they find in order to keep Brevoiy informed of strong and weak points of defense and to determine possible sites for roads, towns, and other fortifications. While the actual process of claiming resources, setting up patrols, and establishing a border for a new kingdom is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #32, the preliminary stages of that process begin in this volume, with exploration. These rules and guidelines should continue to aid you as the PCs’ exploration of the Stolen Lands expands out of the Greenbelt and into the other three regions.

MOVEMENT IN THE STOLEN LANDS

Each hex on the map of the Stolen Lands is 12 miles across (between opposite corners) and covers just under 150 square miles of area. These hexes are provided not only as a way to help define the land (and eventually aid in defining the territory of the kingdom the PCs are destined to rule), but also as an aid in tracking travel through the Stolen Lands.

In Chapter 7 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, Tables 7–6 and 7–8 on page 172 list how long it takes for a person to travel through various terrains. In this Adventure Path, though, characters will also be taking time to fully explore hexes on the map—doing so takes much longer than simply walking through a hex. To determine how long it takes the PCs to travel through a hex or to fully explore it, determine the group’s speed (which is set by the slowest member of the group) and consult the tables above.

For traveling, the amount of time it takes to cross one hex is listed. For exploring, the amount of time listed is to fully



investigate the hex. Until the PCs spend money to create trails and roads, all of the Stolen Lands are considered to be trackless. In some hexes, more than one terrain is present in a hex. In such cases, calculate that hex's effect on travel as if it were a hex of the dominant terrain type.

Forests: The forests of the Stolen Lands are densely vegetated, but generally crisscrossed with game trails and numerous clearings. The trees here typically consist of oaks, beech, rushleaf, and smaller scrub.

Hills: The rolling hills of the Stolen Lands are often pocked by small caves, twisting valleys, and small woodlands that crown hilltops or nestle in clefts.

Mountains: Although mountains in the Stolen Lands are relatively low in elevation (rarely rising more than 1,000 feet), they are often quite rugged and sheer, forcing travelers to follow old riverbeds, gorges, and twisting trails.

Plains: The grasslands and moors of the Stolen Lands vary from relatively open plains to swaths of tall grass that grows up to 3 feet high in places. Small copses of two to six trees are not uncommon.

Swamps: Swamps are a confounding mix of soggy ground, partially dry hummocks, tangled undergrowth, and deep pools of murky water. Travel in a straight line is impossible, requiring constant course adjustments.

Water: A river varies from 50 to 500 feet in width. Infrequent bridges and fords that allow a river to be crossed are indicated on the map where they appear, but in most cases, travel across a river requires swimming or boating. If the PCs wish to try swimming, all members of the group must make DC 15 Swim checks. If all members (and all mounts) make the check, then that particular river crossing doesn't impact travel time through the hex. Otherwise, add 1 hour to the amount of time spent traveling for each failed Swim check. Lakes are calmer than rivers and may be navigated with a DC 10 Swim check, but their larger size makes swimming across them dangerous—as a general rule, if the PCs lack boats or actual swim speeds, it's best to simply treat lakes as barriers to travel and force the travelers to circumnavigate the edges. See page 55 for a list of rivers in the Greenbelt region.



TRACKING EXPLORATION

The easiest method to track the PCs' progress as PCs travel and explore the Stolen Lands is to do so on hex paper. A sheet of blank hex paper is provided in the *Kingmaker Player's Guide*, available as a free PDF at paizo.com. As the PCs explore hexes, they should notate their progress by placing a small "X" in the hex. Tracking which hexes are fully explored is important for determining exploration rewards and establishing a nation's territory (which is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #32).

REWARDS FOR EXPLORATION

With each hex of terrain fully explored, the party earns 100 experience points.

When the PCs defeat the Stag Lord and receive their first commission from Brevoy to establish a colony in the Greenbelt, they can look to transforming explored lands into claimed territory—rules for establishing territory and keeping it are presented in the next volume of *Pathfinder Adventure Path*.

Encounter Sites

Many set encounter locations await discovery during the Kingmaker Adventure Path—each of which will be detailed in the individual adventures presented over this and the next five volumes (see page 14 for this month's). These fixed encounter locations are categorized into one of three categories: landmark, standard, and hidden.

Landmark Site: The site is a large structure or sizable city that is automatically discovered as soon as the PCs enter the hex containing the site. A landmark site can be avoided or explored according to the PCs' whims.

Standard Site: The site is not particularly obvious, and unless the PCs are traveling specifically to that site, they do not encounter the site until they explore the hex, in which case they encounter the site automatically.

Hidden Site: This is identical to a standard site, save that if the PCs don't already know about the site's location, they must make a specific skill check (the specific skill and DC required varies with the type of site) to locate it during that hex's exploration.



Of Cities and Kings

The Stolen Lands have long resisted all attempts to claim them. Taldor itself has tried, and to this day, once-proud ruins of ambitious but doomed Taldan colonies dot the wilds of these distant reaches. Others have tried as well. Bandits, adventurers, and all manner of distasteful riffraff have attempted to claim domains here, often in the name of established River Kingdoms like Pitax or Mivon, but sometimes without any external support at all. Brevoy has long dabbled with southward expansion, yet the Stolen Lands harbor many ferocious and tenacious denizens and have no shortage of monsters or mysteries to foil such attempts at colonization.

It seems obvious, therefore, that these lands will remain wild for some time to come—only a group blessed equally with tenacity, foolishness, and luck might succeed where so many before have failed to transform these regions into a new kingdom.

—from Taldan historian Gustav Devarr's *Kingdoms of the Lost*

CREATING A KINGDOM

A major part of the Kingmaker Adventure Path is the PCs' creation of a kingdom and the cities within its borders. This article presents rules for creating kingdoms and cities. Like characters, kingdoms use sheets to track their statistics. See page 59 for a blank kingdom sheet. Use the following notes to fill in a kingdom's initial values.

Alignment: A kingdom's alignment affects its statistics, so choose your kingdom's alignment carefully. Lawful kingdoms gain a +2 bonus on Economy checks. Chaotic kingdoms gain a +2 bonus on Loyalty checks. Good kingdoms gain a +2 bonus on Loyalty checks. Evil kingdoms gain a +2 bonus on Economy checks. Neutral kingdoms gain a +2 bonus on Stability checks (a truly neutral kingdom gains this bonus twice).

Size: Count the number of hexes your kingdom comprises and record that number here. This number affects a kingdom's Consumption and its Control DC.

Control DC: A kingdom's Control DC is 20 + its size; this value is the DC you'll be rolling against most often with your kingdom's Stability, Economy, and Loyalty checks.

Population: Actual population numbers do not factor into your kingdom's statistics, but it can be fun to track the number anyway. A kingdom's population is equal to its size \times 250 + the total population of each of its cities.

Stability, Economy, and Loyalty: These three values are analogous to saving throws. You make Stability checks during a kingdom's Upkeep phase to determine whether it remains secure. You make Economy checks during a kingdom's Income phase to determine how much its treasury increases. You make Loyalty checks to keep the public peace. A kingdom's initial scores in all three of these categories is 0 + the kingdom's alignment modifiers. A natural 1 is always a failure for these checks, and a natural 20 is always a success.

Unrest: A kingdom's Unrest value indicates how rebellious its people are. A kingdom's Unrest score is applied as a penalty on all Stability, Economy, and Loyalty checks. If a kingdom's Unrest is above 10, it begins to lose control of hexes it has claimed. If a kingdom's Unrest score ever reaches 20, it falls into anarchy. While in anarchy, a kingdom can take no action and treats all Stability, Economy, and Loyalty check results as 0. Restoring order once a kingdom falls into anarchy typically requires a number of quests and lengthy adventures by the kingdom's would-be leaders—if your PCs' kingdom falls into anarchy, you can either assume the Kingmaker Adventure Path is over (as you might if all of the PCs were slain in an encounter), or you can simply let the PCs "restart" a new kingdom elsewhere in the Stolen Lands. Unrest can never go below 0—adjustments that would normally reduce Unrest lower than 0 are wasted.

Golarion's Newest Kingdom

One thing that this campaign doesn't assume or provide is a name for the kingdom the PCs are building—its name is up to them. Therefore, in this volume of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* and the four that follow it, the kingdom is at all times referred to as the "Stolen Lands," regardless of how many or how few hexes the PCs add to their kingdom.

Note that for this Adventure Path, it's assumed that the PCs' kingdom is a monarchy, and thus its rulers are kings and queens. While one could certainly further customize and adapt these rules to allow for different types of government, such rules are beyond the scope of this Adventure Path.

Consumption: A kingdom's prosperity is measured by the Build Points (abbreviated BP) in its treasury, and its Consumption indicates how many BP it costs to keep the kingdom functioning. If a kingdom is unable to pay its Consumption, its Unrest increases by 2. A kingdom's Consumption is equal to its size plus the number of city districts it contains plus adjustments for Edicts minus 2 per farmland.

Treasury: As your kingdom earns money, favors, resources, and power, its Build Point total increases. In the Kingmaker Adventure Path, you begin with 50 BP in your kingdom's treasury (this amount is bestowed upon you by the swordlords of Restov).

Special Resources: If your kingdom includes any special resources (see below), record them here.

Leadership: Write in the names of the PCs or NPCs filling each of the 11 leadership roles here, along with their appropriate modifiers.

EDICTS

Edicts (promotions, taxes, and festivals) increase your kingdom's Stability, Economy, and Loyalty scores. Promotions can include recruitments, advertisements, and even propaganda campaigns. Taxes are payments gathered from a kingdom's citizens to help pay for Consumption. Festivals, which can also include parades and other public events, can increase the kingdom's happiness and loyalty.

SPECIAL RESOURCES

Some hexes do more than just add size to a kingdom—they also add resources and impact a kingdom's Stability, Economy, Loyalty, and other elements.

Bridge: A bridge hex negates the cost increase of building a road that crosses a river.

Building: If you establish a city in a hex at a building location, you can incorporate the building into the city as a free building—the encounter indicates what type of

Kingdom Edicts

Promotion Type	Stability Bonus	Consumption Increase
None	-1	—
Token	+1	1 BP
Standard	+2	2 BP
Aggressive	+3	4 BP
Expansionist	+4	8 BP
Taxation Level	Economy Bonus	Loyalty Penalty
None	+0	+1
Light	+1	-1
Normal	+2	-2
Heavy	+3	-4
Overwhelming	+4	-8
Festivals per Year	Loyalty Bonus	Consumption Increase
None	-1	—
1	+1	1 BP
6	+2	2 BP
12	+3	4 BP
24	+4	8 BP

building it counts as. See page 58 for a list of building types.

Cave: Caves can be used as defensive fallback points, storage, or even guard posts or prisons. A cave hex increases a kingdom's Stability by 1.

Landmarks: Landmarks are sites of great pride, mystery, and wonder. They serve well to bolster a kingdom's morale. A landmark hex increases a kingdom's Loyalty by 1.

Road: A hex with a road in it allows for much easier travel. For every four road hexes your kingdom controls, the kingdom's Economy increases by 1. For every eight road hexes your kingdom controls, its Stability increases by 1.

Ruins: A ruin can be incorporated into a city as a building—doing so halves the cost of the building, as the ruin only needs to be repaired rather than having to be built from the ground up. The encounter indicates what type of building a repaired ruin counts as. See page 58 for a list of building types.

Towns: A town consists of an established settlement—claiming a town hex is an excellent way to add a fully functional city to a kingdom. In order to claim a town hex peacefully, the annexing kingdom must make a Stability check (DC = Command DC). Failure indicates that radicals and upstarts in the town increase your kingdom's Unrest score by 2d4.

Resources: Resources include particularly valuable sources of lumber, metal, gems, food, or the like. A resource hex increases a kingdom's Economy by 1.

LEADERSHIP ROLES

A healthy kingdom has leaders filling a number of different roles. Each leader grants the kingdom different benefits; leaving a role unfilled can penalize the kingdom.

In order for a Leadership role to grant its bonus, the character in that particular role must spend at least 1 week per month engaged in various leadership duties (during which time the PCs must be located within a hex that is part of their kingdom). For this campaign, it's best to have the party pick the same week to dedicate to their administrative duties so that all of the PCs are all available for "adventuring duty" at the same time. A single character can only occupy one leadership role at a time.

RULER

The ruler is the primary leader of the kingdom. Unlike the other leadership roles, a ruler uses one of three distinct titles, depending on the current size of the kingdom. For a kingdom of size 1–20, its ruler is known as a baron or baroness. For a kingdom of size 21–80, its ruler is known as a duke or duchess. A kingdom of size 81 or higher is ruled by a king or queen.

Benefit A baron or baroness chooses one of a nation's statistics (Economy, Loyalty, or Stability) and modifies that score by a value equal to the character's Charisma modifier. A duke or duchess chooses two of these values to modify. A king or queen modifies all three values.

Vacancy Penalty A kingdom without a ruler cannot claim new hexes, create farmlands, build roads, or purchase city districts. Increase Unrest by 4 during each Upkeep phase in which the kingdom has no ruler.

Special Two characters can fill this role if they become married, in which case the two rulers can jointly command the kingdom. Both rulers apply their Charisma modifiers to the kingdom's Stability, Economy, and Loyalty checks as appropriate for their rank, and as long as one of the two rulers is present for 1 week per month, they avoid the vacancy penalty.

COUNCILOR

The councilor ensures that the will of the citizenry is represented.

Benefit Increase Loyalty by a value equal to the Councilor's Wisdom or Charisma modifier.

Vacancy Penalty Decrease Loyalty by 2; the kingdom cannot gain benefits from festivals. Increase Unrest by 1 during each Upkeep phase in which the kingdom has no Councilor.

GENERAL

The General commands the kingdom's armies and is a public hero.

Benefit Increase Stability by a value equal to the General's Strength or Charisma modifier.

Vacancy Penalty Decrease Stability by 4.

GRAND DIPLOMAT

The Grand Diplomat oversees international relations.

Benefit Increase Stability by a value equal to the Grand Diplomat's Intelligence or Charisma modifier.

Vacancy Penalty Decrease Stability by 2; the kingdom cannot issue Promotion Edicts.

HIGH PRIEST

The high priest guides the kingdom's religious needs and growth.

Benefit Increase Stability by a value equal to the High Priest's Wisdom or Charisma modifier.

Vacancy Penalty Decrease Stability and Loyalty by 2. Increase Unrest by 1 during each Upkeep phase in which the kingdom has no High Priest.

MAGISTER

The Magister guides a kingdom's higher learning and magic.

Benefit Increase Economy by a value equal to the Magister's Intelligence or Charisma modifier.

Vacancy Penalty Decrease Economy by 4.

MARSHAL

The Marshal helps organize patrols and enforces justice in rural and wilderness regions.

Benefit Increase Economy by a value equal to the Marshal's Dexterity or Wisdom modifier.

Vacancy Penalty Decrease Economy by 4.

ROYAL ASSASSIN

The Royal Assassin can serve as a public executioner, a headsman, or a shadowy assassin.

Benefit Increase Loyalty by a value equal to the Royal Assassin's Strength or Dexterity modifier. Fear inspired by the Royal Assassin reduces Unrest by 1 during each Upkeep phase.

Vacancy Penalty A kingdom without a Royal Assassin suffers no vacancy penalty.

SPYMASTER

The Spymaster observes the kingdom's underworld and criminal elements and spies on other kingdoms.

Benefit Increase Loyalty, Economy, or Stability (Spymaster's choice) by a value equal to the Spymaster's Dexterity or Intelligence modifier. The Spymaster can change which value he modifies during the kingdom's Improvement phase (but only once per phase).

Vacancy Penalty Reduce Economy by 4 because of out-of-control crime. Increase Unrest by 1 during each Upkeep phase in which the kingdom has no Spymaster.

TREASURER

The Treasurer organizes tax collection, and manages the treasury.

Benefit Increase Economy by a value equal to the Treasurer's Intelligence or Wisdom modifier.

Vacancy Penalty Reduce Economy by 4; the kingdom cannot collect taxes.

WARDEN

The Warden leads the kingdom's defense and city guards.

Benefit Increase Loyalty by a value equal to the Warden's Strength or Constitution modifier.

Vacancy Penalty Reduce Loyalty by 4 and Stability by 2.

BUILDING CITIES

The greatest asset of any kingdom are its cities, for it is here that the bulk of a kingdom's citizens live, its armies train, its culture develops, and its future is forged. The rules presented here are designed to support the rules for kingdom building presented in the first portion of this article and to give players a visual representation of a city (the city grid) they helped to build up from scratch.

READING THE GRID

The city grid consists of 36 city blocks, each arranged into nine larger squares. Each block is separated by alleys, while each square is separated by streets. The nine squares themselves are in turn bordered by four sides—each side represents a border to the entire city district. A district border can represent a city wall, a river, a lake or ocean shore, a cliff, or merely the transition from one city district into another. For larger cities, you can prepare multiple districts sharing common borders.

As the PCs build structures and locations, they can place cut-out representations of their buildings into these city blocks, eventually creating a visual representation of their completed city.

PREPARING THE SITE

Once you select a location for your city (which must be in a hex you have explored and cleared), you must pay to have the site cleared and prepared to support the city's roads and buildings. The cost and time required to clear space in various terrains is detailed on the table on page 59.

Once you finish preparing the site, decide which of the district's borders are water (in the form of riverbanks, lakeshores, or seashores) or land. Record these choices at each border on your city grid. In addition, adding a city district to a kingdom increases its Consumption by 1.

THE CITY GRID IN PLAY

You can use your city grid to aid in resolving encounters or adjusting kingdom or city statistics.

Destroyed Blocks: If an event destroys one or more blocks, the devastation causes +1 Unrest per destroyed block. The cost to build the replacement structure is halved if the replacement is the same type of structure as the one that preceded the destruction.

City Grid Scale: Although combat encounters in a city should still be played out normally, you might need to determine how long it takes for someone to travel from

one location to another in the city in the case of multiple encounters. In this case, treat each city block as if it were a 750-foot square—this means that an entire city district is about 1 square mile in size.

BASE VALUE

When using these rules to build a settlement, the city's base value (see *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, pages 460–461) starts at 200 gp. It increases as you construct certain buildings, like shops and marketplaces.

BUILDING A CITY

Once you've prepared your city district, you can start to build. The placement of buildings in your district is left to you, but two-block and four-block structures cannot be split up (although they can span streets). When you decide to place a building, you can use the cut-out icon for the appropriate type of structure and affix the building where you wish in your city grid. It takes 1 month to construct a building, no matter what size the building is—its benefits apply immediately.

Population: A city's population is equal to the number of completed blocks within its districts \times 250. A city grid that has all 36 blocks filled with buildings has a population of 9,000.

Defensive Modifier: A city's Defensive Modifier can be increased by building certain structures (such as city walls) and has an impact on mass combat (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #35). Keep track of your city's Defensive Modifier, but until the city is attacked by an invading army (something scheduled to occur later in the *Kingmaker Adventure Path*), this value is not used.

Base Value: The base value associated with a city built in this manner is tied not to its size but rather to the number of Economy-based buildings it has. Each such building, whether it's a shop, tavern, or brothel, increases a city's base value. Any magic item equal to or lower than this base value in cost is available for purchase 75% of the time—this check may be made again every month (as new stock comes and goes). Any nonmagical item from the equipment chapter in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* is always available if its cost is lower than the city's base value. Cities with multiple districts add the individual base values of each district together to determine the entire city's base value, with an upper limit of 16,000 gp per city.

At the GM's whim, using construction magic (such as a *lyre of building* or spells like *fabricate* or *wall of stone*) can reduce the cost of a building's BP by 2 (minimum of 0 BP). This is a one-time reduction, regardless of the amount of magic used.

Magic Item Availability: A certain number of more powerful and valuable magic items are available for

purchase in any city, although these items tend to be of a somewhat random nature as new items are found or created and enter the economy. As with base value, a community's size does not influence the number of magic items above base value that are available for purchase. Instead, these items become available as certain buildings (like academies or magic shops) are added to a city. Whenever such a building is added to a city, place an "X" in one of the boxes next to the appropriate item category to indicate that the city has gained a "slot" in that category. During every Upkeep phase, randomly roll a magic item of the appropriate category for each empty slot.

After it is generated, a magic item remains on the market until it is purchased. Alternatively, once per Income phase, a kingdom can make Economy checks to try to sell items; once the item is sold, its slot remains empty until the next Upkeep phase (see page 61).

BUILDING TYPES

Adding buildings to a city is one of the most efficient ways to enhance your kingdom's statistics, as each block of buildings added to a city in your kingdom grants a specific bonus. Page 62 presents icons for 31 one-block buildings, eight two-block buildings, and four four-block buildings. Descriptions of each of these buildings, as well as the bonuses it provides once it's added to a city, are listed below. The building's BP cost and any prerequisite buildings that must be built first are listed in parentheses after its name. The building's benefit to the city and kingdom once it is constructed is listed last in italics. If a building affects Unrest, it does so only once, when it is first constructed.

A fair amount of additional residential structures are common amid most one- and two-block structures.

Academy (52 BP): An institution of higher learning that can focus on any area of knowledge or education, including magic. *Halves cost of Caster's Tower, Library, and Magic Shop in same city; 3 minor items, 2 medium items; Economy +2, Loyalty +2.*

Alchemist (18 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): The laboratory and home of a creator of potions, poisons, and alchemical items. *City base value +1,000 gp; 1 minor item; Economy +1.*

Arena (40 BP): A large public structure for competitions, demonstrations, team sports, or bloodsports. *Halves cost of Garrison or Theater in same city; halves Consumption increase penalty for festival edicts; Stability +4; limit one per city.*

Barracks (12 BP): A building to house city guards, militia, and military forces. *Defense Modifier +2; Unrest -1.*

Black Market (50 BP; must be adjacent to 2 houses): A number of shops with secret and usually illegal or dangerous wares. *City base value +2,000; 2 minor items, 1 medium item, 1 major item; Economy +2, Stability +1; Unrest +1.*

Brewery (6 BP): A building for beermaking, winemaking, or similar use. *Loyalty +1, Stability +1.*

Brothel (4 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): A place to pay for companionship of any sort. *Economy +1, Loyalty +2; Unrest +1.*

Caster's Tower (30 BP): The home and laboratory for a spellcaster. *3 minor items, 2 medium items; Economy +1, Loyalty +1.*

Castle (54 BP): The home of the city's leader or the heart of its defenses. *Halves cost of Noble Villa or Town Hall in same city; Economy +2, Loyalty +2, Stability +2; Defense Modifier +8; Unrest -4; limit one per city.*

Cathedral (58 BP): The focal point of the city's religion and spiritual leadership. *Halves cost of Temple or Academy in same city; halves Consumption increase penalty for promotion edicts; 3 minor items, 2 medium items; Loyalty +4; Unrest -4; limit one per city.*

City Wall (8 BP): City walls do not occupy a city block—rather, purchasing a city wall fortifies one of a district's four outer borders. A city wall cannot be built on a water border. *Defense Modifier +4; Unrest -2.*

Dump (4 BP): A centralized place to dispose of refuse. *Loyalty +1, Stability +1.*

Exotic Craftsman (10 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): The workshop and home of an exotic craftsman, such as a creator of magic items, a tinker, a fireworks maker, or a glassblower. *1 minor item; Loyalty +1, Stability +1.*

Preparing a City District Site

Terrain	Cost to Prepare	Time to Prepare
Forest	4 BP	2 months
Grassland	1 BP	Immediate*
Hills	2 BP	1 month
Mountains	12 BP	4 months
Swamp	8 BP	3 months

*Construction of buildings can be started the same month for grassland cities.

Garrison (28 BP): A large building to house armies, train guards, and recruit militia. *Halves cost of City Wall, Granary, and Jail in same city; Loyalty +2, Stability +2; Unrest -2.*

Granary (12 BP): A place to store grain and food. *Loyalty +1, Stability +1.*

Graveyard (4 BP): A plot of land to honor and bury the dead. *Economy +1, Loyalty +1.*

Guildhall (34 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): A large building that serves as headquarters for a guild or similar organization. *City base value +1,000 gp; halves cost of Pier, Stable, and Tradesman in same city; Economy +2, Loyalty +2.*

Herbalist (10 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): The workshop and home of a gardener, healer, poisoner, or creator of potions. *1 minor item; Loyalty +1, Stability +1.*

PATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME™

KINGDOM SHEET

KINGDOM NAME	CAMPAIGN
ALIGNMENT	SIZE
CONTROL DC	POPULATION

	TOTAL	BUILDINGS	EDICTS	EVENTS	LEADERSHIP	RESOURCES	ALIGNMENT	EDICTS	UNREST	VACANCIES	OTHER
ECONOMY											
LOYALTY											
STABILITY											

EDICTS

PROMOTION LEVEL _____
 + _____ STABILITY + _____ BP CONSUMPTION

TAXATION LEVEL _____
 + _____ ECONOMY - _____ LOYALTY

FESTIVALS PER YEAR _____
 + _____ LOYALTY + _____ BP CONSUMPTION

UNREST _____ PENALTY ON ALL CHECKS

CONSUMPTION _____ BP

SIZE _____ CITIES _____ EDICTS _____ FARMS _____ OTHER _____
 _____ + _____ + _____ - _____ + _____

TREASURY _____ BP

ONGOING EVENTS _____

LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP ROLE	BONUS	ATTRIBUTE
RULER _____	+	ECONOMY, LOYALTY, STABILITY
RULER _____	+	ECONOMY, LOYALTY, STABILITY
COUNCILOR _____	+	LOYALTY
GENERAL _____	+	STABILITY
GRAND DIPLOMAT _____	+	STABILITY
HIGH PRIEST _____	+	STABILITY
MAGISTER _____	+	ECONOMY
MARSHAL _____	+	ECONOMY
ROYAL ASSASSIN _____	+	LOYALTY, -1 UNREST/UPKEEP
SPYMASTER _____	+	
TREASURER _____	+	ECONOMY
WARDEN _____	+	LOYALTY

House (3 BP): A number of mid-sized houses for citizens. Houses serve as prerequisites for many other buildings. The first house you build during any Improvement Phase does not count against the total number of buildings you can build during the phase. *Unrest -1.*

Inn (10 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): A place for visitors to spend the night. *City base value +500 gp; Economy +1, Loyalty +1.*

Jail (14 BP): A fortified structure for housing criminals. *Loyalty +2, Stability +2; Unrest -2.*

Library (6 BP): A large building containing books, often presided over by a sage or other scholar. *Economy +1, Loyalty +1.*

Luxury Store (28 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): A shop that specializes in expensive wares and luxuries. *City base value +2,000 gp; 2 minor items; Economy +1.*

Magic Shop (68 BP; must be adjacent to 2 houses): A shop that specializes in magic items and spells. *City base value +2,000 gp; 4 minor items, 2 medium items, 1 major item; Economy +1.*

Mansion (10 BP): A single huge manor housing a rich family and its servants. *Stability +1.*

Market (48 BP; must be adjacent to 2 houses): An open area for mercantile pursuits, traveling merchants, and bargain

hunters. *City base value +2,000 gp; halves cost of Black Market, Inn, and Shop in same city; 2 minor items; Economy +2, Stability +2.*

Mill (6 BP; must be next to a water border): A building used to cut lumber or grind grain. *Economy +1, Stability +1.*

Monument (6 BP): A monument can be a statue of a city founder, a bell tower, a large tomb, or a public display of art. *Loyalty +3; Unrest -1.*

Noble Villa (24 BP): A sprawling manor with luxurious grounds that houses a noble. *Halves cost of Exotic Craftsman, Luxury Store, and Mansion in same city; Economy +1, Loyalty +1, Stability +1.*

Park (4 BP): A plot of land set aside for its natural beauty. *Loyalty +1; Unrest -1.*

Piers (16 BP; must be adjacent to a water border): Warehouses and workshops for docking ships and handling cargo and passengers. *City base value +1,000 gp; +1 Economy, +1 Stability.*

Shop (8 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): A general store. *City base value +500 gp; Economy +1.*

Shrine (8 BP): A small shrine or similar holy site. *1 minor item; Loyalty +1; Unrest -1.*

Smith (6 BP): An armor smith, blacksmith, or weapon smith. *Economy +1, Stability +1.*

Stable (10 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): A structure for housing or selling horses and other mounts. *City base value +500 gp; Economy +1, Loyalty +1.*

Tannery (6 BP; cannot be adjacent to a house): A structure that prepares hides and leather. *Economy +1, Stability +1.*

Tavern (12 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): An eatery or drinking establishment. *City base value +500 gp; Economy +1, Loyalty +1.*

Temple (32 BP): A large place of worship dedicated to a deity. *Halves cost of Graveyard, Monument, and Shrine in same city; 2 minor items; Loyalty +2, Stability +2; Unrest -2.*

Tenement (1 BP): A staggering number of low-rent, cheap housing units. Tenements count as houses for the purpose of fulfilling building requirements, but building too many tenements can increase a kingdom's Unrest quickly. You can build a house over an existing tenement for 2 BP. *Unrest +2.*

Theater (24 BP): A venue for providing entertainment such as plays, operas, concerts, and the like. *Halves cost of Brothel, Park, and Tavern in same city; Economy +2, Stability +2.*

Town Hall (22 BP): A public venue for town meetings and repository for town records. *Halves cost of Barracks, Dump, and Watchtower in same city; Economy +1, Loyalty +1, Stability +1.*

Tradesman (10 BP; must be adjacent to 1 house): A shopfront for a tradesman, such as a baker, butcher, candle maker, cooper, or rope maker. *City base value +500 gp; +1 Economy, +1 Stability.*



Watchtower (6 BP): A tall structure that serves as a guard post and landmark. +1 *Stability*; +2 *Defense Modifier*; *Unrest* -1.

Waterfront (90 BP; must be adjacent to a water border): A port for arrival and departure when traveling by water, facilities for building ships, and a center of commerce. City base value +4,000 gp; 3 minor items, 2 medium items, 1 major item; halves cost of *Guildhall* and *Market* in same city, halves *Loyalty* penalty for tax edicts; *Economy* +4; limit one per city.

GAINING EXPERIENCE

As their kingdom grows, the PCs gain experience points. Use the following guidelines to determine when and how much XP should be awarded. These XP awards should only be awarded the first time each event occurs.

Founding a kingdom: 2,400 XP

Establishing a capital city: 1,200 XP

Reaching a kingdom size of 5: 1,600 XP

Reaching a kingdom size of 10: 2,400 XP

Reaching a kingdom size of 25: 3,200 XP

Reaching a kingdom size of 50: 4,800 XP

Reaching a kingdom size of 75: 6,400 XP

Reaching a kingdom size of 100: 12,800 XP

Reaching a kingdom size of 150: 25,600 XP

Reaching a kingdom size of 200: 76,800 XP

Filling a square with four blocks of buildings: 1,600 XP

Filling three city squares with buildings: 4,800 XP

Filling an entire city grid with buildings: 12,800 XP

RULING A KINGDOM

Like a player character's stat block, a kingdom's stat block continues to evolve and grow as the kingdom expands, gathers more resources, purchases upgrades, and suffers defeats and setbacks. As the kingdom grows, the PCs will need to deal with a host of situations, all of which can further influence the kingdom's stat block.

A kingdom's growth occurs during four phases, which represent a month in total. When the PCs establish a kingdom, you should pick a day of each month to resolve that kingdom's growth and fortunes—it's best to set this as the last day of each month, so that any accomplishments the PCs have made during that month can impact that month's growth.

One thing to decide early on is who makes kingdom rolls. The obvious choice is for the Ruler to roll the dice, as this adds a feeling of command to that player's role. You can also assign each roll to a specific leader—for example, the Treasurer might make *Economy* checks and the Warden may wish to make all checks having to do with events under her command. Ultimately, since a kingdom is shared by all the players, it doesn't matter who makes the kingdom's *Economy*, *Loyalty*, and *Stability* checks, but assigning them can be fun nonetheless.

UPKEEP PHASE

During a kingdom's Upkeep phase, take the following actions. If your kingdom currently controls 0 hexes, skip this phase and proceed to the Improvement phase.

Step 1—Determine Kingdom Stability: Make a *Stability* check against your Command DC to determine your kingdom's level of security for the month. If you make the check, reduce your kingdom's *Unrest* by 1 (if your *Unrest* is at 0, gain 1 BP as a result of surplus goods and services). If you fail this check by 5 or more, increase *Unrest* by 2.

Step 2—Pay Consumption: Deduct your kingdom's Consumption from the kingdom's Treasury BP. If you aren't able to pay for the month's Consumption, your kingdom's BP drops into the negative. Every time you end an Upkeep phase with negative BP in your Treasury, your kingdom's *Unrest* increases by 2.

Step 3—Fill Vacant Magic Item Slots: If there are any vacant magic item slots in any cities, randomly roll new items to fill these slots.

Step 4—Unrest: If the kingdom's *Unrest* is 11 or higher, it loses one hex chosen by the kingdom's leaders. Any improvements in that hex (farmlands and roads) are lost and must be rebuilt after the hex is reclaimed. Any settlements in that hex become towns that must be annexed if they are to be reclaimed into the kingdom (see page 56). Finally, if the kingdom employs a Royal Assassin, reduce your total *Unrest* by 1 at the end of this phase.

IMPROVEMENT PHASE

During a kingdom's Improvement phase, take the following actions. The number of improvements you can make during a single phase is limited by your kingdom's size; see the Improvements per Month table for these limits.

Step 1—Select Leadership: Assign leaders to any vacant leadership roles. Leaders must be PCs or closely allied NPCs. You can change leaders as often as you want with no impact on your nation's statistics (apart from changing what bonuses apply, as the ability scores of leaders differ); reallocating roles allows you to give every player a chance to play the role of ruler if you wish.

Step 2—Claim Hexes: Each hex on the maps of the Stolen Lands measures 12 miles across, and the PCs' kingdom must be built hex by hex. To claim a hex, you must explore it and clear it of monsters or dangerous hazards; the hex must also be adjacent to a hex that is already part of the kingdom (with the exception of the first hex, which can be anywhere). At this point, you can claim the hex as part of the kingdom by spending 1 BP. Increase your kingdom's size (and thus its Consumption) by 1 for each hex you claim. You can abandon a hex to reduce your kingdom's Size. Doing so increases *Unrest* by 1 (or by 4, if the abandoned hex contained a city).

Step 3—Establish and Improve Cities: Prepare land for city districts and then purchase new buildings for your kingdom's cities. The building's adjustments to your nation apply immediately. You can also destroy buildings at this time in order to clear a space to build something new; if you destroy a building, don't forget to remove its benefits from your kingdom's statistics!

Step 4—Build Roads: Roads have an immediate initial cost but over the long term can pay for the investment handsomely. It costs 1 BP to build a road though a hex. This cost increases to 2 BP in forests and to 4 BP in swamps and mountains. If the road crosses a river, a bridge must be built—this doubles the road's cost.

Step 5: Establish Farmlands: You can develop any grassland or hill hex that contains roads into farmlands to help sustain your kingdom's Consumption. It costs 2 BP to designate a grassland hex as farmland and 4 BP to designate a hill hex as farmland. You cannot build a city on a farmland hex. Every farmland hex in your kingdom reduces your Consumption by 2 BP.

Step 6: Edicts: Pick or adjust your edict levels (see page 55) as you wish.

INCOME PHASE

During a kingdom's Income phase, take the following actions.

Step 1—Deposits: You can add funds to a kingdom's treasury by donating coins, gems, jewelry, weapons, armor, magic items, and other valuables you find while adventuring. For every full 4,000 gp in value of the deposit, increase your kingdom's BP by 1. Items that individually cost more than 4,000 gp must be sold as detailed under Step 3 below.

Step 2—Withdrawals: You can also withdraw funds from the kingdom's treasury, but doing so runs the risk of annoying the citizens. Each time you withdraw funds, the kingdom's Unrest increases by 1. In addition, you must make a Loyalty check (DC = Command DC + number of BP being withdrawn); a failure causes your kingdom to gain Unrest equal to the total BP withdrawn. Each BP withdrawn in this manner converts into 2,000 gp.

Step 3—Sell Valuable Items: You can attempt to sell items that cost more than 4,000 gp through your city's markets to bolster your kingdom's Treasury; these can be items you recover during an adventure or they can be magic items currently held by any of your cities. To sell these items, make an Economy check (DC 20 for minor items, DC 35 for moderate items, and DC 50 for major items). A failed check indicates the item doesn't sell. Success indicates that the item sells and you can increase your kingdom's treasury by 2 BP (for minor items), 8 BP (for moderate items), or 15 BP (for major items). You can make one Economy check per city district during each Income phase.

Step 4—Generate Income: Make an Economy check against your Command DC at the end of your Income phase. If you're successful, divide your result by 5 (dropping any fractions) and increase your Treasury's BP by that amount.

EVENT PHASE

During a kingdom's Event phase, roll once on the Kingdom Events table to determine if an event occurs. Adventure-specific kingdom events occur during this phase. Once you've determined what kind of event occurs (if any), simply follow the rules for each event to determine how the event impacts the PCs' kingdom or cities.

Chance of an Event: There's a 25% chance that a random event occurs during an Event phase. This chance increases to 75% if no event occurred in the previous Event phase.

KINGDOM EVENTS

Listed below are numerous events that can occur during an Event phase. Some events are listed as "continuous" events—their effects continue through every Event phase until the events are resolved by making the appropriate check during an Event phase.

Harmful events can be lessened or negated with a successful Economy, Loyalty, or Stability check, as indicated by the event. The DC of these checks is equal to the kingdom Command DC (20 + kingdom size).

Assassination Attempt: One of your leaders (determined randomly) is the target of an assassination attempt. If the target is a PC, you should play out the attempt, using an assassin of a CR equal to the targeted PC's level + 1. If the target is an NPC, you can simply make a Stability check to negate the attempt. If the leader is assassinated, the nation gains 1d6 Unrest points and immediately suffers the penalties for not having a leader in that role until the role is filled during a subsequent Improvement phase.

Bandit Activity (continuous): Bandits are preying upon those who travel through your kingdom. Make a Stability check. If you succeed, your kingdom's defenses stop the banditry before it causes problems. If you fail, the bandits reduce your kingdom's Treasury total by 1d6 BP (each time you roll a 6, reroll that die and add the result to the total).

Disaster: A fire, storm, earthquake, flood, sabotage, or other disaster strikes! Roll 1d6—on a result of 1–5, the disaster is localized and affects only 1d4 city blocks in one city. On a 6, the disaster is widespread and affects 1d6 city blocks in each of your kingdom's cities. Make a Stability check for each affected city block—every failure results in that city block's destruction (this Stability check represents your kingdom's ability to prepare for or react to the disaster as much as it represents the structure's ability to withstand damage).

Improvements per Month

Kingdom Size	New Cities	New Buildings	Hex Claims	Roads	Farmlands
1–10	1	1	1	1	1
11–25	1	2	2	2	1
26–50	1	5	3	3	2
51–100	2	10	4	4	2
101–200	3	20	8	6	3
201+	4	No limit	12	8	4

Economic Boom: Trade is booming in your kingdom! Increase your Treasury by 1d6 BP (each time you roll a 6, reroll that die and add the result to the total).

Feud: Nobles in your cities are bickering. Unless you can smooth over ruffled feathers with a Loyalty check, the feud increases Unrest by 1d6.

Food Shortage: Spoilage, treachery, or simple bad luck have resulted in a food shortage this month. If you fail a Stability check, your Consumption is doubled during the next Upkeep phase.

Food Surplus: Farmers produce an unexpected windfall! Your Consumption is halved during the next Upkeep phase.

Good Weather: Good weather raises spirits and productivity. You gain a +4 bonus on Loyalty checks until your next Event phase.

Monster Attack (continuous): A monster (or group of monsters) attacks the kingdom—pick a hex the PCs have claimed to determine which hex the monster is active in. You can determine the type of monster by rolling on a wandering monster table until you get a result of CR 7 or higher. If the PCs don't set out to defeat the monster or monsters, a Stability check removes the threat. If the monster is not defeated, Unrest increases by 4. If your kingdom's Unrest is 5 or higher, the hex the monster dwells in becomes unclaimed at this time (this is in addition to losing control of hexes during Upkeep due to high Unrest).

Natural Blessing: A natural event, such as a bloom of rare and beautiful wildflowers or good omens in the stars, raises your kingdom's morale. You gain a +4 bonus on Stability checks until your next Event phase.

Outstanding Success: One of your kingdom's citizens creates an artistic masterpiece, constructs a particularly impressive building, or otherwise brings fame to your kingdom. You gain 1d6 BP and a +4 bonus on Economy checks until your next Event phase. Reduce Unrest by 2.

Plague (continuous): A deadly contagion strikes your kingdom! Choose a hex containing a city in your kingdom—this is where the plague strikes. If you control no cities, treat this as if no event had been rolled. Otherwise, make a Stability check to curtail the plague's spread. If you fail, increase Unrest by 1d6 and reduce your treasury by 1d6 BP. A plague-stricken city cannot build new structures.

Kingdom Events

d%	Event
1–3	Assassination Attempt
4–12	Bandit Activity
13–19	Disaster
20–24	Economic Boom
25–29	Feud
30–32	Food Shortage
33–39	Food Surplus
40–44	Good Weather
45–49	Monster Attack
50–54	Natural Blessing
55–61	Outstanding Success
62–64	Plague
65–67	Political Calm
68–77	Public Scandal
78–85	Sensational Crime
86–92	New Vassals
93–100	Visiting Celebrity

Political Calm: A sudden absence of political machinations coincides with an increase in public approval. Reduce Unrest by 6.

Public Scandal: One of your leaders is implicated in a crime or an embarrassing situation, such as an affair with another leader's spouse. If you fail a Loyalty check, increase Unrest by 2 and suffer a –4 penalty on all Loyalty checks until your next Event phase.

Sensational Crime (continuous): A serial killer, arsonist, flamboyant thief, or daring bandit plagues your kingdom. Make a Stability check to catch the criminal; otherwise increase Unrest by 2.

New Vassals: A small group of indigenous creatures joins your kingdom and submits to your rule. Reduce Unrest by 2 and gain 1d6 BP (each time you roll a 6, reroll that die and add the result to the total).

Visiting Celebrity: A celebrity from elsewhere on Golarion visits your kingdom, causing a sudden influx of visitors and spending. Increase the Treasury by 2d6 BP (each time you roll a 6, reroll that die and add its results to the total).



Brevoy

Be it known that, as it has been seven months to the day since the disappearance of King Urzen Rogarvia and his heirs and kin, and furthermore that no true bearer of the blood and rights of Choral the Conqueror has been found in all the land, for the good of the Nation of Brevoy and its people it is so declared that Lord Noleski Surtova, right wise Regent of the Dragonscale Throne, by virtue of descent from the line of Nikos Surtova and Myrna Rogarvia, daughter of Choral the Conqueror, shall henceforth be honored as King of All Brevoy, in the Name of Choral, Lord of Issia and Prince of Rostland, Suzerain of New Stetven, Overlord of Restov, and Defender of the Lake of Mists and Veils. His heirs shall follow him in the rights to these titles, unto the ages.

So witnessed and sealed on this 21st Day of Ruthora, in the Year 4699, Absalom Reckoning.

—Public declaration of King Noleski's ascent to the Dragonscale Throne

In the far northern reaches toward the Crown of the World, the land and its people become harsh and unforgiving. Winters are long and deadly here, forcing common folk to scratch out a sustainable existence from near-frozen soil during an all-too-short spring and summer. All the while, the lords of the land plot in their keeps and strongholds, jealously eyeing their neighbors' domains. For centuries, the firm and forceful hand of Choral the Conqueror's lineage has held these nobles in check, but in 4699 AR, the royal house of Brevoy vanished, leaving the kingdom in turmoil. House Surtova took the contested crown, yet not all of Brevoy agreed that the new king had the right to rule. In the decade that followed, noble ambitions burned hotter even than the hearth fires working to drive away the chill of winter, and now all of Brevoy lies on the edge of civil war.

HISTORY

The history of Brevoy is actually the history of two lands, Issia and Rostland, united into one by force.

Issia, the northern half of the nation, has been sparsely settled for centuries. Numerous small villages cluster on the southern shore of the Lake of Mists and Veils and in the foothills of the mountains to the east. With the land too rocky and cold elsewhere for proper farming, the people of Issia survived on a combination of fishing and raiding—the most successful tribes even venturing across the great lake to sack settlements along its western or northern shores.

Rostland, south of Lake Reykal and the Gronzi Forest, is quite different than Issia—a vast stretch of rolling hills and grasslands fed by the East Sellen River and its tributaries. Taldan colonists settled this area centuries ago under the leadership of Baron Sirian First, who became Sirian Aldori, first of the Aldori swordlords.

CHORAL THE CONQUEROR

In 4499 AR, the Iobarian warlord Choral Rogarvia, known as “the Conqueror,” crossed the Lake of Mists and Veils with a considerable force under his command. Lord Nikos Surtova of Issia met with the Conqueror on the shores of the lake under a flag of truce, and there the two men worked out an agreement whereby Issia would surrender its land and people to the Conqueror but the Surtovas would retain their power and wealth, serving the new ruler as stewards and duly sworn vassal lords.

The Aldori swordlords of Rostland, with their history of resisting bandit raiders, were not so willing to bend their knees to a foreign conqueror. They immediately rallied for war and secured their strongholds south of Lake Reykal. Yet the fractious swordlords were no match for the discipline and tactics of Choral's forces. By the time the survivors of the war against the Conqueror were able to unite in a last

assault, they believed they had cornered part of Choral's force in a narrow mountain valley. When the swordlords entered, the Conqueror unleashed his greatest weapon—a pair of red dragons. The devastation inflicted by these monsters upon the swordlords was the final blow, and with this fiery defeat Rostland pledged itself to Choral the Conqueror as a way to save its traditions from eradication.

THE VANISHING

The Conqueror sat only briefly on the Dragonscale Throne of the new nation he forged, soon leaving his family to rule in his name. For two centuries, the Rogarvias held the Ruby Fortress and ruled from New Stetven, pacifying minor uprisings and rebellions, and working to weld two disparate lands into one. Under Rogarvian rule, the nation came to be known as Brevoy and grew into a significant northern power. Yet even the greatest of dynasties do not last forever.

In the middle of winter in early 4699 AR, every member of House Rogarvia vanished without a trace. Rumors flew of palace coups and sinister plots, but it quickly became clear that what had occurred was something altogether stranger than a mere rebellion. There was no evidence of foul play or struggle within the royal palace, nor in any of the noble villas owned by the Rogarvias throughout the land—the nobles were simply gone, leaving empty manors scattered across Brevoy. A brief period of chaos and panic followed, but by the end of the year, the Surtovas had made their move. Citing their age-old ties with the Conqueror's line, they were quick to seize power in New Stetven and extend their reach across Brevoy. With all of Issia seemingly backing the move, Rostland (whose standing army and defenses had increasingly shifted north during Rogarvian rule) had little choice but to bend its knee again. Today, King Noleski Surtova holds the Ruby Fortress and the Dragonscale Throne, yet it remains to be seen how long he can maintain this rule over a kingdom growing increasingly fractious.

GEOGRAPHY

Brevoy is divided into two lands historically, culturally, and geographically. The vast Lake of Mists and Veils forms the northern border of Brevoy, bound in ice during the winter months, the domain of fishing vessels, merchant ships, and the pirates who prey upon them the rest of the year. The Awzera and East Sellen Rivers, along with the dark depths of the Gronzi Forest, divide the nation into north and south. The Golushkin Mountains south of Port Ice mark the western border, while the Icerime Peaks to the east form a barrier with the old lands of Iobaria beyond.

The northern half of Brevoy, Issia, is a broken expanse of rugged, rocky hills stretching between the bordering mountain ranges of the Icerime Peaks and the Golushkin Mountains, with the lone peak of Mount Veshka rising in its midst. Small, windswept scrub and spiky grasses are

Brevoy at a Glance

Brevoy's government is a hereditary monarchy ruled by a king, although many (particularly those dwelling in the southern region known as Rostland) privately contest the current king's right to rule.

Terrain: Mountainous and rocky plains to the north, rolling hills and grasslands to the south, with a large region of forest in the east. Brevoy's highest point is Mount Veshka in the north-central area of the nation. Its lowlands are centered on Lake Reykal in the south-central region.

Capital: New Stetven (population 32,850)

Notable Settlements: Grayhaven (population 5,880), Port Ice (population 13,260), Restov (population 18,670), Skywatch (population 6,590)

Ruler: King Noleski Surtova

Languages: Common, Hallit, Skald, Varisian, Draconic

Religions: Abadar, Erastil (rare), Gorum, Lamashtu (outlawed), Pharasma

Imports: Spices, cloth, exotic curiosities

Exports: Grains, fish and shellfish, timber, iron, copper, fur, salt, liquor

all that grow in the rocky soil, save for in small, painstakingly tended plots and in some of the more fertile areas long the lakeshore (which must deal instead with storm surges, floods, and other hazards of equal concern). The mountains offer plentiful stone for quarrying and building, and occasional veins of metals and precious stones for mining, although the locals are generally poor at mining.

Compared to the land north of Lake Reykal, Rostland is a gentle and fertile place of grassy plains and rolling hills. Watered by the lake and rivers, Rostland's soil is better suited for farming, and the mountains and forest help to blunt the worst of the storms that roll down off of the Lake of Mists and Veils. Still, Rostland is known for its chill winters and its long, slow, and muddy spring season. Rostland is relatively poor in minerals, so most construction is of wood, supplemented by local fieldstone. A few great structures, like the Ruby Fortress or the Bulwark of Gorum in New Stetven, are built with

imported stone, but otherwise even the great manor houses are built mainly of wood.

CULTURE

"The dragon has two heads," goes the Brevic saying. Some see it as a reference to the dual nature of the nation's culture—Issian and Rostlandic—others to the division between the ambitious nobility and the often grasping priesthood, or between the noble houses and the self-proclaimed swordlords, all with the common people caught in the middle.

THE LORDS OF THE LAND

Apart from the king and royal family, the highest ranking nobles in Brevoy are its lords—the heads of the noble houses. The lords of Brevoy are male; eldest sons inherit their father's estate and titles. Younger sons often receive some provision, but it need not be much under the law. Women exert influence through their husbands or sons, and may even rule as regents for sons who have not yet reached the age of majority (15 winters). Lords tend to have many children as a result, at least to secure a male "heir and a spare." This leads to various cadet branches and lines of houses, as well as alliances by marriage, such that in the past 200 years the seven major noble houses have become both more closely related and more widespread. There is an ever-greater demand for land and titles, and more young, disaffected nobility looking to make a mark in the world.

GOLD, RED, AND BLACK

Although Brevans make it a point to honor all gods, three hold particular prominence among these hardy folk. Although worship of Erastil is not uncommon in far-flung rural areas, and cults of Lamashtu have a tenacious ability to endure all manner of cleansing crusade, the following three religions have the greatest influence over life in Brevoy.

Abadar: The Master of the First Vault is the unifying religious power in Brevoy, favored of the



merchant and tradesman class, as well as those nobles more interested in prosperity through trade and the rule of law than the iron fist of battle. Temples of Abadar are places of judgment and trade, and the bearers of his golden key are often invested as neutral judges or arbiters.

Gorum: Our Lord in Iron speaks to the needs and interests of the nobility of Brevoy: strength through force of arms and prowess in battle. The household priests of the great keeps and strongholds of the land are iron-clad followers of Gorum, wearing their red tabards and swinging iron censers heavy with pungent incense.

Pharasma: Our Lady of Gentle Repose is the divinity of the common people of Brevoy, more concerned with cultivation, birthing, and harvesting than wealth, and less involved in the outcome of battles than in the repercussions of the corpse-strewn fields they leave behind. Inhabitants of scattered villages are far more acquainted with the local bone-thrower, midwife, and black-clad mortician-monk than they are with the splendid clerics of Abadar or Gorum.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

The vast majority of the Brevic people are simple peasants, primarily farmers and craftspeople who owe their fealty (and their taxes) to one lord or another. A Brevic peasant's life is largely the same throughout Brevoy—up with the sun in the short spring and summer months to tend the fields in Rostland or fish and mine in Issia, with household chores filling the rest of the day. In the long, dark winter months there is no shortage of mending, brewing, carving, and cleaning. Men may visit the local tavern or taphouse in the evening, and such places host dances or revels perhaps two or three times a season. The wise man attends to his own house and avoids the attention of noble and priest alike, praying to all their gods simply for decent weather, good crops, a healthy family, and the peace with which to enjoy them.

POLITICS

Seven great noble houses dominate the political landscape of Brevoy, most dating back to before the arrival of the Conqueror, when they existed as powerful tribes of raiders and barbarians. Choral apportioned lands and titles to those lords willing to pledge fealty to him, reordering the houses into their modern forms. The past two centuries, coupled with various marriages of alliance, have shifted and expanded the influence of the noble houses, extending well south of the rivers and Lake Reykal.

House Garess: The valleys and lowlands of the Golushkin Mountains are the domain of House Garess, founded on both the defensibility of the mountain terrain and the mineral wealth the house has brought out of the peaks for generations. House Garess once had a profitable alliance with a clan of dwarves living in the Golushkin Mountains,

Brevic Wisdom

The people of Brevoy are known for their somewhat pessimistic (they would say “realistic”) view of life, summed up in the many expressions on the lips of every farmer, trader, traveler, and tavern regular. Common Brevic sayings include:

“When the wolf shows you his teeth, he’s not smiling.”

“Riders at night carry no glad tidings.”

“Winter always follows spring.”

“As the stars see me” (a common oath asserting the truth) and “The stars see all.”

“The dragon has two heads” (referring to both the crest of the Conqueror and the duplicity of the nobility).

“The temple is close, but the night is cold. The tavern is far, but I have a cloak.”

“Fire is everyone’s ally, but no one’s friend.”

“Pharasma makes cradles for us all.”

“No man dies wishing he had worked more.”

serving as brokers of a sort for the ores, metals, and worked goods the Golushkin dwarves produced. **Lord Howlan Garess** (LN male human aristocrat 5/expert 2) even took **Toval Golka** (N male dwarf aristocrat 2/expert 4), the son of the clan-chief of the dwarf hold, as his ward (some say more as a hostage than a guest in Grayhaven Castle). This proved fortunate for young Toval, as Grayhaven lost all contact with the dwarf hold of Golushkin during the same winter as the Vanishing. With his own son Bren lost inside the mountains, Lord Howlan, a widower with no other children, has named Toval his adoptive heir. This has earned the dwarf, now a skilled young warrior in his own right, few friends in Grayhaven.

House Garess’s crest is a snow-capped mountain peak in gray against a dark blue field like the sky, with a silvery crescent moon in the upper right corner and a black hammer across the base of the peak, head toward the left. Its motto is “Strong as the Mountains.”

House Lebeda: The Lebedas of Lake Reykal are known as the most “Rostlandic” of Brevoy’s noble houses, having inherited a good deal of Taldan blood and tradition, including a fondness for sword fighting and an appreciation of the finer things. Their family seat of Silverhall is one of the grandest castles in Brevoy, its spires rising above the shores of Lake Reykal. The Lebedas earn and maintain their fortune as merchants and brokers between the northern and southern reaches of Brevoy, and control much of the shipping across the lake. **Dame Sarrona Lebeda** (N female human aristocrat 11) has ruled the house as regent since the death of her husband, but their son **Lander** (LN male human aristocrat 2/warrior 1) is approaching his majority, when he will become lord

of the house. His older sister **Elanna** (NG female human aristocrat 4) spends a great deal of time representing their house in New Stetven, and rumors claim the Lebedas are looking to arrange a marriage between her and Noleski Surtova. Naturally, Natala Surtova hates the young and charming Elanna Lebeda with a passion.

House Lebeda's crest is a white swan, serenely sailing across a blue expanse, with the sun on the horizon behind it. Whether the sun is said to be rising or setting depends on the house's fortunes, but the Lebedas' sun appears ascendant at the moment. Its motto is "Success through Grace."

House Lodovka: Whereas House Surtova slowly changed their waterborne ways to focus on their lands and political affairs in Brevo, House Lodovka has remained strongly interested in maritime affairs. They have steadily grown their fleet of ships in the Lake of Mists and Veils and their influence along their lakeshore lands and the trade routes crossing the waters. House Lodovka claims comparatively little land in the northernmost areas of Brevo, and much of the land they hold is unsuitable for farming, but the house has many vessels hauling catches of fish and freshwater crabs from the Lake. **Lord Kozek Lodovka** (CG male human aristocrat 2/expert 3/warrior 2) is at heart a cunning old pirate with a love of the water, looking to do right by his house, his family, and his people.

House Lodovka's crest is a green-shelled crab climbing from the blue waters toward the gray band of shore surmounted by a gray tower-keep in the center, against a backdrop of black. Their house motto is "The Waters, Our Fields."

House Medvyed: The easternmost house, Medvyed claims lands nestled against the Icerime Peaks and the Gronzi Forest, and rules them from the fortress of Stoneclimb in the lower peaks. They are a hardy folk, raisers of mountain goats and sheep, hunters in the Gronzi Forest, and cultivators of what good land can be found on the edges of their harsh territory. The Medvyeds and their people hearken back to the "Old Ways" of worshiping nature in its myriad forms. Isolated forest and mountain shrines to Old Deadeye (and, it is rumored, Lamashtu) are more common than temples of Abadar or Gorum. **Lord Gurev Medvyed** (NG male human aristocrat 1/warrior 5) loves to

hunt, ride, and feast with his men, and dotes on his wife and children.

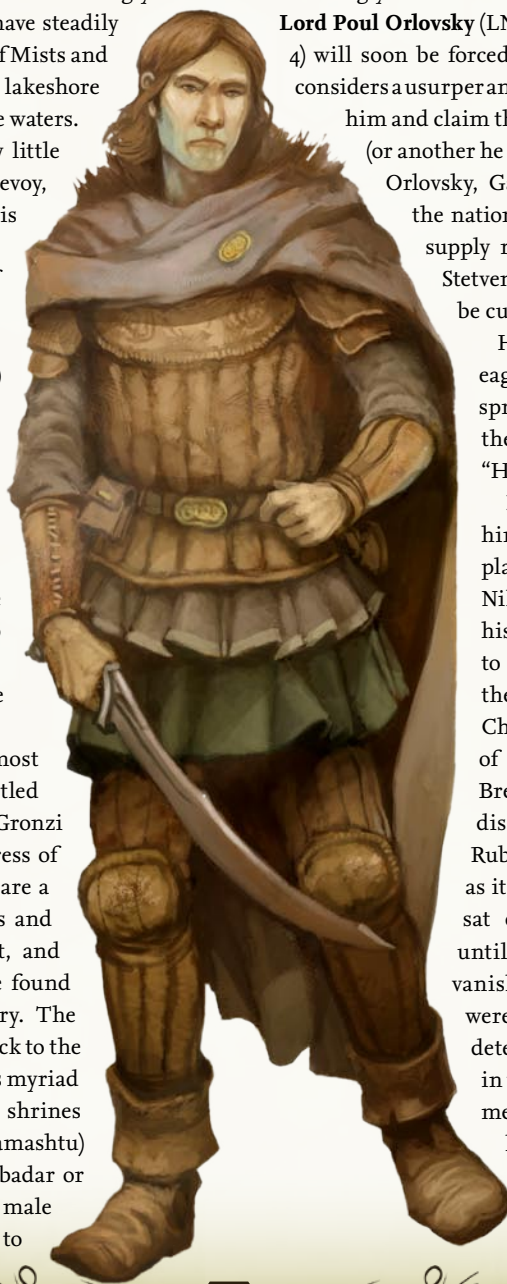
House Medvyed's crest is a black bear, rampant against a red field, with a spread of black antlers above the bear's head. Its motto is "Endurance Overcomes All."

House Orlovsky: From Eagle's Watch on the slopes of Mt. Veshka, House Orlovsky seeks to remain above the conflicts in Brevo, both figuratively and literally. Unfortunately, the house's role as a staunch ally of the Rogarvias has placed it in an awkward position under the current regime. Thus far, House Orlovsky has refused to acknowledge Noleski Surtova as anything other than Lord Regent in the absence of King Urzen or a true Rogarvian heir, but it is becoming increasingly clear which way the political winds are shifting.

Lord Poul Orlovsky (LN male human aristocrat 4/warrior 4) will soon be forced to either declare for the man he considers a usurper and opportunist, or seek to overthrow him and claim the Dragonscale Throne for himself (or another he finds worthy). An alliance between Orlovsky, Garess, and Medvyed could divide the nation, and cut the Surtovas' travel and supply routes between Port Ice and New Stetven, but any such arrangement must be cultivated discreetly.

House Orlovsky's crest is a black eagle against a gold field, wings spread, feathers almost touching at the point of the base. Its motto is "High Above."

House Rogarvia: Looking to secure himself and his progeny as high a place in the new order as he could, Nikos Surtova offered the hand of his daughter, Myrna, in marriage to Choral, binding the house of the Conqueror with his own. Since Choral's final victory in the Valley of Fire, House Rogarvia has ruled Brevo, until the recent mysterious disappearance. The house built the Ruby Fortress in the city of New Stetven as its stronghold, and Urzen Rogarvia sat on the Dragonscale Throne up until 4699, when the entire family vanished overnight. The Rogarvias were well known as ruthless rulers, determined to hold Brevo together in the Conqueror's name by whatever means necessary. Still, while their loss was not overly mourned, the stability they represented has been. Loyalists have continued to call for investigation into the



Vanishing and make much of the fact that their rule lasted precisely 200 years, but it has become increasingly clear that House Rogarvia will not return soon, if ever.

House Rogarvia's crest is a two-headed red dragon, one head breathing flames, the other bearing an unsheathed sword, representing Choral's legendary conquest, against a quartered field in white and gold. Its motto is "With Sword and Flame."

House Surtova: The most influential house in Brevoy, House Surtova, is also the oldest, established in Issia centuries before Choral's arrival. The Surtovas were infamous pirates and raiders in those early days, and with the Conquerer's coming were able to parley captured wealth into lands and titles. What started out as a defensible fortress became Port Ice, a settlement that has been the seat of Surtova power for generations. Nikos Surtova's alliance with Choral secured House Surtova's place at the right hand of the ruling house, and allowed them to move quickly into place after the Vanishing. The Surtovas established a "regency" in the absence of King Urzen, which has quickly become the de facto succession to the crown. **King Noleski Surtova** (N male human aristocrat 5/warrior 3) sits upon the Dragonscale Throne, while his sister **Natala Surtova** (LE female human aristocrat 6) reigns as unofficial "queen," as her brother is as yet unmarried. Rumors say Natala enjoys her role (and her influence over her brother) far too much to embrace the idea of a proper sister-in-law. Still, there is considerable pressure for Noleski to choose a bride and produce heirs for his new dynasty.

The Surtova crest is a gray ship against a field of blue below and black above, the upper shield spangled with silver stars. Its motto is "Ours Is the Right."

THE ALDORI SWORDLORDS

Bandits from the River Kingdoms and Issia nearly spelled the end of the Taldan colony of Rostland in its early years. Sirian First's reputation as a duelist drew the attention of a bandit chieftain, who offered the baron a wager: half his fortune against the bandit leader's head, if he could best him in a duel. Baron First accepted, and lost. He paid his due and disappeared, too ashamed to show his face any longer, most assumed. Yet Sirian returned years later as Baron Aldori and, in a highly-publicized "rematch," defeated his foe in seconds and reestablished his rule in Rostland. Baron Aldori then issued his own wager: 100,000 gold pieces to anyone able to best him in a duel of blades. Thousands flocked to Rostland to answer this challenge, and the "Sword Baron" defeated them all. He founded the Aldori school of sword fighting, and established the influence of the Aldori swordlords over Rostland for centuries.

With the change in regime, many swordlords fled Brevoy to other realms, such as the River Kingdom of Mivon. A few became sell-swords, prostituting the arts of

the Aldori School for the coin needed to buy them food and shelter. The rest primarily settled in or near the free city of Restov.

LOCATIONS IN BREVOY

Brevoy is a place where you can travel for days between small villages, to say nothing of the long journey between larger strongholds of civilization. These places tend to huddle in the shadows of the mountains, and along the shores of the rivers and lakes, leaving the lands between dotted with small settlements making their way as best they can.

THE GOLUSHKIN MOUNTAINS

The Golushkin Mountains are home to Issia's greatest concentration of natural resources, as the peaks sit upon deep veins of iron, nickel, copper, silver, and tin, along with some other useful or precious ores. Humans like the Surtovas showed little interest in mining these riches, particularly since the Golka clan of dwarves were already doing so. House Garess established trade with the mountain dwarves, building a reputation on metalworks and a stronghold in the defensible mountain lands.

THE GRONZI FOREST

The dark expanse of the Gronzi Forest is simply "the Forest" to the people of Brevoy. It extends from the highlands of the Icerime Peaks to the shores of Lake Reykal, forming part of the old border between Issia and Rostland. Although technically the forest belongs to the Brevic crown, hunting and even woodcutting is largely unregulated around its outskirts, particularly in the western reaches. The stretch of forest nearest New Stetven was largely cleared generations ago for the wood to rebuild and maintain the city, and Brevic woodcutters must delve deeper each year to meet their needs.

Although there are many tales of the hazards of the deep forest, the most recent stories are of human origin. A mysterious bandit chief known as **Duma the Sly** (CG male human ranger 5) has led raids on merchants, travelers, and tax-collectors near the bounds of the forest. He and his band are known for their ability to strike without warning and vanish just as quickly into the greenery. Duma is no friend of King Noleski Surtova, but the common folk love him for his generosity, and therefore aid him in evading royal sanction. Tales claim Duma is everything from the son of a wronged Aldori nobleman, a fey-blooded trickster, or the lost Rogarvian heir.

THE ICERIME PEAKS

The Icerime Peaks wall off most of Brevoy from the former lands of Iobaria to the west. Their heights are perpetually covered in ice, even in the summer months, when cold rivers tumble and cascade down their sides, forming



towering waterfalls and clear mountain lakes. The late spring thaws open what passes there are through the mountains, although few make use of them.

Skywatch is by no means the only ancient site in the Icerime Peaks. Tales tell of half-buried entrances to mountain dungeons, some of them outposts of old Iobaria, others even older. Some of the ruins are said to be haunted by the chill shades of soldiers or miners who perished there, still guarding whatever treasures they found in life.

THE LAKE OF MISTS AND VEILS

The people of Brevoy know the vast Lake of Mists and Veils simply as “the Lake,” and it defines the northern border of the land as well as dominates Brevoy’s seasons and weather. In the winter, the fiercest storms howl down from the foggy waters, driven between the mountain peaks to pour freezing rain, sharp hail, and heavy snow drifts upon Issia, slowed only slightly by the forest and the hills around Rostland, before exhausting their fury on the southern hills and plains. The lake gets its name from its tendency to warm enough in the peak months of summer so that when the first chill of winter sets in, the water “steams” with heavy layers of mist at night, slowly burning off each morning.

NEW STETVEN

Choral the Conqueror established the Brevic capital of New Stetven after his successful campaign, building over the ruins of the original Taldan settlement of Stetven. It remains the center of political and economic power in the land, in spite of the recent upheavals. Of particular importance is New Stetven’s place as a trading city, carrying goods to and from Brevoy along the East Sellen River and the major trade roads that meet here along the shores of Lake Reykal.

New Stetven earned the nickname “The City of Wooden Palaces” for the abundant use of timber to build everything from walls and houses to mansions and forts. Even some of the city streets are “paved” with planks laid in the near-constant mud from the snow and slush. Raised wooden sidewalks are common in the wealthier parts of the city, allowing people to walk up out of the mud as much as possible. The only great stone structures of the city are the Ruby Fortress, the seat of power to the crown of Brevoy, and the Bulwark of Gorum, Brevoy’s greatest temple to the Lord of Iron. Fire, like that which destroyed Old Stetven, remains a constant threat, and the city relies heavily on the services of volunteers aided by local spellcasters to put out the handful of fires that occur each winter.

PORT ICE

House Surtova's ancestral lands extend from Port Ice, a settlement that has shifted increasingly inland, like its masters. Although connected to the lakeshore villages by a reasonably well-maintained road, Port Ice is locked behind its walls for much of the cold winter months, visited only by sled and the occasional foolhardy traveler. The rest of the year, the city is open to stockpile all the supplies needed for the next season. The White Manor is the Surtova ancestral seat, currently in the care of King Noleski's uncle, **Domani Surtova** (N male human aristocrat 4/warrior 1).

RESTOV

Nowhere is the Rostlandic spirit more alive than in the Free City of Restov. The city owes its allegiance to the Brevic crown, and **Lord Mayor Ioseph Sellemius** (NG male human aristocrat 3/expert 2) must bend his knee before the Dragonscale Throne like any lord, but otherwise Restov belongs to no house, making it a haven for the lost glories of the Aldori swordlords and those who look back to the old days before the coming of the Conqueror. Restov is a city of both refinement and rough-and-tumble manners, as only a colony can be in fondly recalling and imitating its motherland. The gentry of Restov consider themselves sophisticates, although a Taldan visitor would consider their ways quaint, and touched with no small amount of northern barbarism. The city is a bustling trade center along the border. Restov's relative wealth supports no small number of idle and titled lordlings and merchants' sons. They frequent the various Aldori and Taldan dueling schools, as well as the alehouses, and fight each other in street corner challenges at dawn and dusk. The schools, salons, and taprooms of Restov are also hotbeds of rebellious talk against the reign of King Noleski Surtova, with young firebrands in search of a leader to rally them to the cause.

THE ROSTLAND PLAINS

The region of grassy plains and rolling hills to the east of the Sellen and south of the Gronzi Forest are the heart of Old Rostland, dotted with farming towns and villages with a mixture of Issian and Taldan heritage and manners, but with more of an emphasis on the Rostlandic descendants of the original Taldan colonists. Although close to the capital of New Stetven, the Rostland Plains harbor some simmering dissent against the crown, the man who presently wears it, and the very idea of Brevoy as a unified nation.

SKYWATCH

High in the northern Icerime Peaks is a city built around an ancient observatory discovered by the Surtovas centuries ago in the early days of Issia. In spite of its apparent age, the observatory is perfectly preserved,

The Rumor Mill

Brevic tongues wag in alehouses, temples, market squares, and "hospitality parlors" just as much as folk anywhere, and there is a great deal for the people of Brevoy to gossip and speculate about. The following are just a few of the things one might hear muttered in a conspiratorial tone over a mug or shop counter.

Blood of Dragons: There were three dragons involved in the conquest of Brevoy, not two. The two reds at the Valley of Fire were both females. But their male mate was close at hand—wearing the human guise of Choral the Conqueror. House Rogarvia carried the blood of dragons in their veins, and in the end it consumed them all.

The Conqueror's Debt: Choral the Conqueror made a pact with otherworldly forces to obtain not only his vast army, but also the aid of his red dragon allies. The disappearance of House Rogarvia is the result of Choral's debt finally coming due.

The Next Earthfall: Skywatch was built as a lookout and warning post against disasters such as the Earthfall, and the reason the Rogarvias have vanished is the observatory has detected another such imminent threat. The people of Skywatch huddle in shelter waiting for the sky to fall.

Return of the Conqueror: Choral placed the care of Brevoy in the hands of his descendants and then departed into the depths of the Gronzi Forest, promising one day to return. The Vanishing is a sign the Conqueror's return is imminent, and he wants his kin either out of the way of his armies, or just out of the way of his return to the throne.

maintained by a powerful, lingering magic. The same night House Rogarvia vanished, Skywatch sealed its gates, and the walled city has allowed no one to enter or leave since, not even couriers or supply caravans. Messages and envoys sent to Skywatch have been ignored and none are known to have left. Even divination magic cannot penetrate its walls to discover what is going on within, or even if anyone there is still alive.

THE VALLEY OF FIRE

In the southernmost Icerime Peaks lies the mountain valley where Aldori rebels fought their last battle against the forces of Choral the Conqueror. They were lured into the valley with the hope of cornering Choral, but instead found themselves in a trap when the Conqueror's red dragon allies bathed the valley in fire, wiping out the men of Rostland. To this day, the Valley of Fire is an infamous place where life refuses to return to the blackened and melted earth, said to be haunted by the tortured shades of the men who died here, seen in the night as fiery shadows with a burning hatred for the living.



Iobaria Gazetteer

Anyone who assumes Iobaria is only a barbaric wasteland of frozen forests, broken mountains, and random ruins is a fool. The Ice Steppes, the Taemorin, the Syrzemyan Highlands, and the Hills of Nomen—all are home to mysteries, monsters, myths, and magics long forgotten among the warmer climes. The human realm of Iobaria was perhaps the least of the powers ever to stalk the glaciers' edges, its name the only lingering claim to the land and powers that yet remain there. Look past the freezing mists and trackless wilderness, and you'll find a land whose legends refuse to pass into the haze of history and forgetfulness. This is a place where myth and history blur into a single ageless tradition, weaving a legacy that the diverse native peoples hold as sacred as any religion, and that strangers to these realms ignore at their own peril.

—Gadava Bhulada, *Under the Undying Eye*

Iobaria, to many across Avistan and Garund, exists only as a name for the northern Windswept Wastes and the uninhabited (or at least uncontrolled) lands between their own nations and the eastern powers of Casmaron. In truth, Iobaria is a vast region, unclaimed by any single power for millennia. The rough region has been home to many different factions over the centuries, and even the powerful kingdom of Old Iobaria only conquered roughly two-thirds of this wilderness at its height (though it claimed to outsiders to be master of everything from the glaciers to the Castrovin Sea).

Roughly eight out of 10 of Iobaria's current inhabitants live outside the cities in settlements smaller than most Avistani hamlets (primarily in the forests, around Okor's Basin, or in isolated caves near Mavradia, Lenusya, or Orost). For the human population, this tendency toward isolation may result from a fear of returning plagues, a spirit of independence and self-reliance, a need for anonymity, or a desire to not swear fealty to unworthy city-bound nobles. Others races, such as centaurs, cyclopes, and more savage humanoids, dwell in nomadic tribes with a wide range of campsites and rarely congregate in numbers larger than the average village. In any case, Iobaria on a map seems far more civilized and organized than it is in reality, and those mapped locations may be the most civilized spots therein.

What follows is a brief look into the vast realm of Iobaria. Those who wish to delve into the history of this land in greater detail can find a supplemental timeline of the region available on paizo.com.

REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

Iobaria's relentlessly cold lands stretch from its northwest corner, between the glacial Icewall and the Lake of Mists and Veils, down to its southeastern corner, bordering the Castrovin Sea. The northern boundaries contain the Ice Steppes, whose rocky conditions fool many into dismissing them as a lifeless barrens leading to the glaciers and the Crown of the World. The most populous area for humans has always been Okor's Basin, the sloping depression between the Lake of Mists and Veils, the Icerime Peaks, and the Syrzemyan Highlands considered by many to be the breadbasket of the north, with its varieties of hardy plant and animal crops. In fact, topographically, Iobaria resembles a crude pyramid, with its peak around Kirya and the lands sloping away from that peak in all directions, save where the Icerime Peaks meet the land.

The Syrzemyan Highlands encompass the majority of central Iobaria and are rife with caverns, hills, and mountains filled with riches and dangers aplenty (be they natural, supernatural, or monstrous in nature). This area contains the fewest human settlements of any size, though the chance of meeting lone prospectors, bounty hunters, or trappers of all races is still moderate. Many of Iobaria's

powerful waterways start from these uplands, with two exceptions: the Myrfrus River (or "Deeprun") in the east and the Okorrus River ("Okor's Flow") in the northwest. Settlers and villages are few and far between, and local populations give their own unique names to the hills and territories of the highlands.

The Caemorin surprises many who come to Iobaria expecting naught but icy rocks and glaciers. These fertile lands are in some places even more productive than Okor's Basin, though the plants and animals are still unfamiliar and unsettling foods to many whose roots stretch westward.

In general, Iobaria's climate is near-arctic and quite hostile, but it supports a surprisingly robust ecosystem that keeps people strong, if isolated and hard. This still isn't enough to make it more than a limited target for those after wealth and resources. Few who don't already love Iobaria's stark harshness ever stick around to see its beauty bloom in summer, and fewer still brave its threats to explore its ancient mysteries and ruins.

HISTORY OF IOBARIA

Little is known, even among the most learned scholars, about the first major powers to claim the northern steppes of Casmaron. Before the Age of Darkness and the formation of the Pit of Gormuz, cyclopes dominated northern and central Casmaron for more than an age. The ancient histories of Iblydos, one of the oldest known human nations of Casmaron, call the cyclopes' empire Koloran, though whether this was the creatures' name for their own land or simply the appellation of their human enemies remains uncertain.

The first human realm to lay claim to what all now consider Iobaria rose from humble beginnings in 752 AR. Twenty Ulfen survivors (out of an initial force of 60) staggered out of the Crown of the World and hunkered down in a small longhouse just as winter closed in. That mere longhouse eventually grew into Okormirr, the first of nine Ulfen cities or settlements of Njalgard, each city a stronghold for one of nine koffars. Njalgard is almost totally forgotten and has since been subsumed by the realm it spawned—Iobaria. The nation was named after Iobar the Potent, the heir to Orlov's throne who cajoled or tricked each koffar into a trial by combat, besting them all to take control of all Njalgard's city-states and unite the lands as one state. After the Choking Plague fractured the populace and induced local rebellions, the three powers within the remaining cities of Kridorn, Orlov, and Mavradia held on to power for a few centuries, but never restored the full glory of Old Iobaria.

Plagues, for one reason or another, seem to crop up more regularly in Iobaria than in other lands. Since the second millennium of the Age of Enthronement, plagues have struck with limited to widespread effects

no less than 55 times. Despite these eruptions of illness and the mystery of their source, most Iobarians stay due to their love of their land or innate sense that surviving its challenges makes them stronger and more worthy to inherit such a noble land.

Nearly 500 years after the Choking Death fractured the original nation, three warlords, their followers, and their dragon allies restored the rule of New Iobaria. With the inner highlands now easily reached by dragonriders, the three armies quickly conquered the realm anew by 3309 AR. Treachery among the human rulers led to strife and eventually left only one clan in control of Iobaria after 3870 AR (many allies and enemies fled west to what is now Brevoy). The second realm of Iobaria lasted another 8 centuries, until its power dwindled due to infighting and the Drakeplague of 4519 AR. Now, only the covetous factions controlling Kridorn, Mirnbay, and Orlov believe Iobaria still exists in any meaningful way, and their claims to power are only as strong as the mercenary armies they hire.

Iobaria in the present has pockets of civilization all tightly tied to trade, money, and what little control or influence some warlords or former nobles can cobble together through gold or might. Overall, Iobaria has become the wilderness the outside world has long believed it to be, though its people keep their balance and stay alive by knowing what the harsh land and its varied races can do to and for them. Those who respect each other's claims hold détente among themselves and survive; those that ignore the balances of power or reach beyond their grasp find themselves as lifeless as the frozen stone pinnacles of Hvorsuli.

PEOPLE OF IOBARIA

In Iobaria, unlike the lands of the Inner Sea, no single ethnic group or race controls the majority of power. In the eyes of Avistani or Garundi natives, "Iobarian" seems to mean "any human from the northeast who is not obviously Keleshite or Casmari." To natives of this land, the few folk who claim to be "true Iobarians" are those humans and

others who yet believe in the leaders that claim the realm still exists. Many simply live here without the benefit of any social denomination or ethnic group beyond their associated family, clan, tribe, or faith. Of the primary sentient races found in Iobaria, the most populous are centaurs, followed by humans, dwarves, and a smattering of other races both civilized and savage. Of the typical monstrous races, ogres, random hill and frost giants, trolls (including at least one enclave of rare rock trolls), and all the various goblinoids are the most common.

While most countries or travelers encounter only one tribe or type of centaur, Iobaria's steppes, hills, and forests are home to members of three recognized groups, similar to human ethnicities: the Azorva, the Rashalka, and the Tsolniva (though others exist east across Casmari). The Azorva are mountain and highland centaurs, stockier and stronger than the norm, and of darker skin and coat hues in general; they dominate the mountains and highlands of Iobaria. The Rashalka are familiar centaurs in look and stature and are the most numerous of

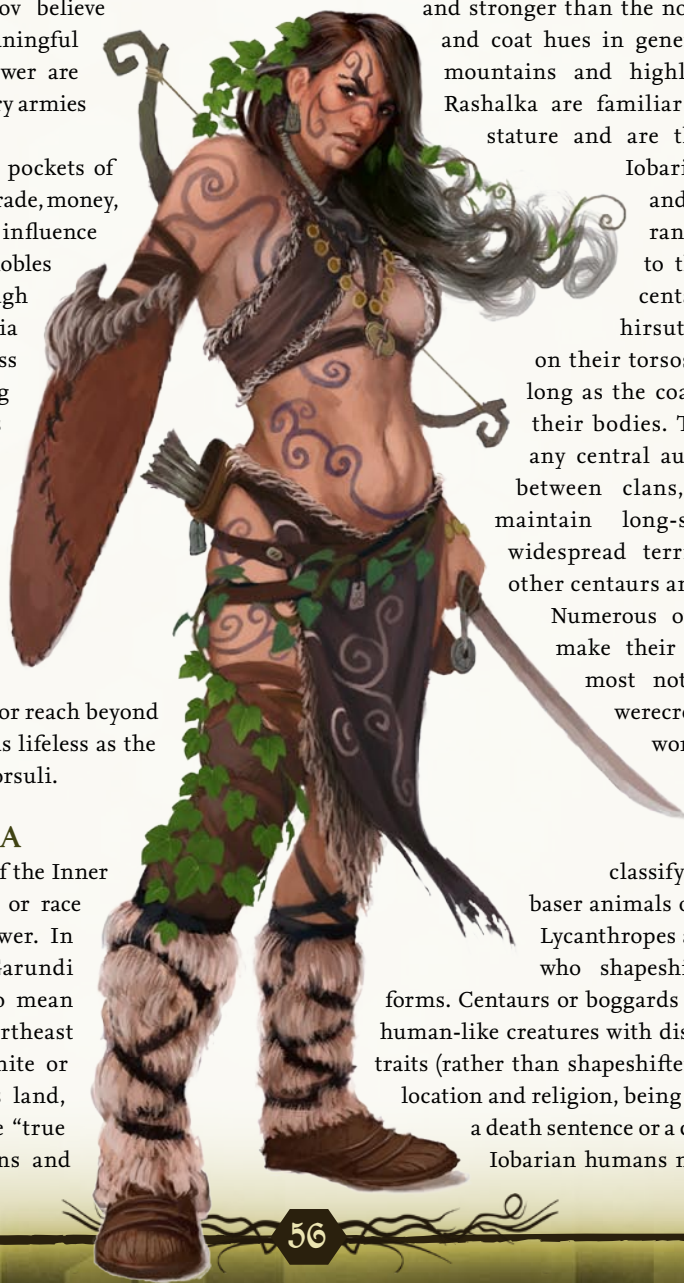
Iobarian centaurs in the west and all across the south, ranging from Okor's Basin to the Caemorin. Tsolniva centaurs are the most

hirsute of centaurs—the hair on their torsos is nearly as thick and long as the coats covering the rest of their bodies. The centaur tribes lack any central authority or government between clans, though elder clans maintain long-standing claims on widespread territories (recognized by other centaurs and most races).

Numerous other bestial races also make their homes across Iobaria, most notably several tribes of werereatures. Two regional words found nowhere else on Golarion, "kodlak" and "kodlok," are used by native humans to

classify beings who become baser animals or assume animal traits. Lycanthropes are kodlak—humanoids who shapeshift to assume animal

forms. Centaurs or boggards or harpies are kodlok—human-like creatures with discrete and stable animal traits (rather than shapeshifters). Depending on one's location and religion, being kodlak or kodlok can be a death sentence or a quick way to power. Only Iobarian humans make these distinctions;



kodlak and kodlok races see humanity as just another enemy or rival against whom they fight for the resources of the cold lands.

IOBARIA AT A GLANCE

Iobaria is a collection of sites, geographic features, and mysteries. Many of these locations have both traditional local names (cited first in the following list) and names by which they are known to the land's human population and traders from beyond (noted in quotation marks).

Antoll: The most comfortable city in all of Iobaria, Antoll stays insulated from the worst of the cold by the open and heated waters of the Nyvyrd. Waters piped beneath the city (installed at New Iobaria's height, when it was the capital from 3312 to 3679 AR) keep many homes and businesses warm year-round. This is one of very few cities not founded upon or near the ruins of a cyclops city, and its primary draws today are its pearl and fishing trades and its libraries of magical, religious, herbal, and medicinal lore, founded long before the Pathfinder Society ever breached its walls. A battalion of troops sent from Veka "help keep the peace" (but actually monitor the citizenry to prevent revolts against the koffar Rjul, whose control of trade and military forces around the Nyvyrd make him a de facto despot). There is a growing faction in Antoll opposed to Rjul's excesses, but his spies keep its numbers under control by frequently arresting members and executing them on trumped-up charges.

Ardshrod River: "The Icy Way." This icy river traces the chill northern tundras of Iobaria, separating the semi-settled lands of the south from the more savage north. Few dare travel the river except in the summer months, as it is often choked with iceflows.

Artrosa: "The Three Who Watch." These three massive stone mesas are visible from many Iobarian cliffs despite the distance. Crudely carved into the cliffs are three nude female humanoid figures of uncanny scale, their bodies at least a half-mile long. While their race is unclear, the figures show a long-haired maiden, a pregnant matron, and a hunchbacked crone, each holding up a hand and warning the viewers away (though from what is unclear).

The Caemorin: Both natural resources and dangers hide among the small copses of conifers scattered throughout these scrub grasslands, making travel into the tall seas of grasses worthwhile to those seeking fortune. A variety of animals wander the undulating slopes of the Caemorin; the centaur tribes and other hunters regularly trap them for their tradeable pelts.

Castrovin Sea: The central sea of Casmaron influences the climate of southern Iobaria with its open waters, changing the tundra to semi-arable lands. The waters of the Castrovin are notoriously harsh and unforgiving to

Iobarian Cities & Settlements

Most Iobarian settlements reflect the predominant originating culture that built them, and therefore those founded in earlier periods include structures built in the old Ulfen style. This means most towns and cities have a single longhall or lodge at their hearts, from which the city or clan ruler oversees his duties. Where the cities are built among or adjacent to old cyclopes ruins, there are some minor modifications to the ancient stone, but these areas are often left abandoned due to the difficulty of moving or shaping 5-foot cubes of granite and other hardstones (or due to the habitation of said ruins by dragons or other fell predators over the centuries). Most cities and towns bear partial stone foundations on a more human scale and rely on plentiful wood supplies for most other building materials.

Only Mirnbay, Orlov, and Orost ever made extensive changes to their stone ruins, moving some to create massive defensive walls around their settlements and increase the grandeur of the homes of the powerful. Still, even the largest of the current cities pales in significance compared to the remaining stone arches and towers of cyclopean scale. In fact, as much defense is committed to protecting a city from its adjacent ruins as against enemies from without, as most ruins house the desperate, the monstrous, and the illicit, who are unwelcome in more settled regions. While very few ruins still remain the homes of the dragon allies of Iobaria's noble houses, there are some dragons living in the ruins of Kask-Kirrulthar, Zradnirras, and Kirya (as well as persistent rumors of a mated pair hidden in Orlov, conspiring with Orlov's self-proclaimed "prince" Tzakiv Korya to build his power base anew).

all but the most skilled pilots or craft, limiting much sea traffic to fishing boats huddling in coastal waters rather than providing a means to invade bordering states.

Caverns of Pirthous: A gnarled tangle of tunnels and moderate caves, the Caverns of Pirthous are one of the best-kept secrets on the Syrzemyan Highlands. While many know these are the winter homes of the Azorva and their refuge in times of war, no non-centaur has ever discovered an entrance to the caverns beneath the highland hills without immediately meeting its death. If other centaur clans have similar subterranean or subarctic hideaways, they are even better at keeping those secrets, for these remain unnamed as well as unmarked on any map.

Coreth Wood: This wood is a notorious haunt for ogres and hobgoblins who live in cavern complexes beneath their roots. For humans, Coreth Wood is the sole source of the fine frostfir wood from which artisans



carve beautiful works of art valued in many affluent Brevic homes.

Daruthrost: "The Loss Bridge." This cyclopean bridge arcs over the Deeprun Crevasse and might have once spanned it entirely. However, its central span and sides fell away long ago, leaving a quarter-mile gap at the bridge's apex. High winds (enhanced by magic) render the gap treacherous at best for flying, and few try after seeing the skeletal remains smashed against the craggy, broken edges of Daruthrost's span.

Dirrinir: "The Deathly Mountain." Many myths and legends surround this tall peak of naked, barren rock, its many craggy steps (carved long before even the cyclopes came to power) leading up its slopes to 20 or more cavern maws. Some claim this mountain spawned the first cyclops, giant, or member of some other race (the specifics depend on whom one asks). Most know that many treasures (and many more deaths) lie within its labyrinthine caverns. The most powerful and famous artifacts ever to come from its halls include the Diadem of Thyrv, the Crown of Mirim, the Perobov Maul, and Kridor's Shininglaive.

Duroth Wood: This gnarled and hardscrabble old forest is home to a few gnome settlements, as well as to other civilized races seeking safety and shelter. The wood itself may contain treants or other creatures that torment and torture those beings they deem unwelcome here. As within Fangard, a group of wercreatures defends this forest's borders and interior without explaining themselves or what they guard.

Evaren: This has been the primary trade town between humans and non-humans at the threshold of the Syrzemyan Highlands for long centuries. Evaren is much reduced in population after the last two plagues, though people tired of the isolated life within the forests or out on the tundra often come here to avoid having to pay allegiance to any but the Council of Three who rule the town by means of money, might, and magic. The kind but aged Councilor Pavla Trynar is generally regarded as the most powerful magic-user in all of Iobaria, though her score of apprentices help to keep the peace more than she does directly.

Fangard: The largest single forest in Iobaria, Fangard is home to many factions and forces, only some of whom

are known to the humans of Iobaria. Without using the ancient roads, no human has ever crossed through Fangard alive (though some were allowed to exit from whence they came). Rumors tell of such hidden wonders as an elven court, the homes of Erastil and other gods sacred to trees and nature, and a surviving remnant of the Koloran Empire watching to see how they can best use their ancient powers in a world of mortals-turned-gods. The only truth widely held is the presence of werebeast hunters and rangers (primarily werebears and werepanthers) who patrol the forest borders against intruders and despoilers.

Finadar Forest: What separates this forest from other Iobarian woods is its unique scarlet-needled pines, known as bruorsivi (“bloodpines”) to the local human populace. Bloodpine sap is deep red and is both very flammable and slow burning once dried; the wood itself is a deep burgundy color that brightens after carving and polishing. (The wood’s primary use is as fuel, its slow burning hardwood being an efficient source of heat for many.) Many folk make wind-resistant torches from seedcones soaked in bruorsivi sap atop a twig. While other tree species exist here, the Ulfen explorer Finadar gave his name to the forest by bringing back knowledge of the bruorsivi.

Fralros: “The Charred Watchtower.” This watchtower of the Koloran Empire has seen use in both old and new Iobaria, the massively scaled stone structure having been partially adapted for human use with smaller steps carved up its 100-foot height and smaller ramps and floors built within its massive chambers. Once called Orostros (“Watching Star”), it has been known as Fralros ever since the Great Horde trapped many within and choked them to death by burning fires all around its base for months. Streaks of char still mar the length of the tower, and uneasy ghosts and other threats have occupied the partially ruined tower for a thousand years. If travelers need to pass Fralros, they always do so swiftly and in daylight.

Franax: This pleasant, human-built port once excelled at ship repair and building thanks to its protected bays and its three islands, onto which the port expanded. Now, its buildings lurch in half-repair since the town lost 80% of them to fire in a misguided attempt to eradicate a plague of boils and bone-aches in 4651 AR. Today, the shipbuilding and repair happens in Orlov, and the few who remain in Franax live amid a frenzied struggle for control between Niath Koyra, a fisherman of some repute and coin, and the druids of the Glacircle, who wish to convert all to the worship of an elemental power embedded within the tundra and the Icewall.

Grenalthrost: “The Great Bridge of Grenalf.” This massive stone bridge spans an immense crevasse within the mountains and makes it possible for folks to enter the plateau known as Grenalf. However, even after centuries

of use, the Great Bridge still takes its toll in lives the mechanical traps that defend it spring to life and grind unlucky travelers to paste between its massive stones or fall away on hinges for a time, dropping folk to their deaths.

Hask-Ultharan: “Cairn of Many Torments.” Like Fralros to its south, Hask-Ultharan appears to have once been a massive watchtower for the Koloran Empire. This is a modern guess, as the cairn’s peak rises above Fangard’s trees, and few natives tempt fate enough to approach its dark, rune-covered stones. By accident or design, there have always been giants of some form here, and the longer they remain, the more savage they become toward any they deem to be approaching too close. According to the most recent reports, a mixed group of hill giants and their even more brutish kin has made camp there and begun loud rites with massive bonfires on nights of the new moon. (For more details, see Iobaria’s entry in the *Pathfinder Chronicles Campaign Setting*.)

Hills of Nomen: Named by a fearful Taldan wanderer, the Hills of Nomen contain the primary territories of a large number of centaur tribes, as well as other non-human races. The stretch of Koloran road from Lenusya past Katrivish has long been considered the most dangerous to any who fail to respect other races and their sovereignties. Bones from more than a few armies and their arrogant human commanders litter these hills after vain attempts to “stem the inhuman tides.”

Hoofwood: This coniferous forest is home solely to centaurs and native animals—no other sentients walk or clamber among its trees. As such, it is peaceful save when the northern tribes make war against the local centaur tribes, thundering out of the Ice Steppes to upset the centaur camps in Hoofwood. Throughout the forest lie many pit and spring traps (effective against centaurs, hoarpanthers, and others), which make it dangerous to invade the forest.

Hroran: Once a vibrant logging camp that used the fast waters of the Noyrus to send timber down to the growing Kridorn, Hroran is now a ghost town, its buildings and roads all overgrown by the forest and its animals, which were quick to reclaim it. Few know what happened to Hroran’s people, save that all disappeared without leaving a single body behind during the snow-heavy winter of 4388 AR.

Hvorsuli: “The Snow Spires.” This majestic ruined city (created by unknown powers at a giant scale) of thin spindle-towers and massive gates and walls is a tantalizing mystery for treasure and mystery hunters. Only its foremost gatehouse lies outside the glacier that entombs it, though this allows access inside the frozen city (as do a few broken domes exposed atop the glacier, which allow one to drop into Hvorsuli). A few accounts mention a great power that glows on rare nights deep within the city, held within by the ice and the glacier god Rheth (worshiped by some depraved druid circles).

Ice Steppes: The harsh tundra that dominates northern Iobaria thunders with the hooves of centaurs, the crack of glaciers, the roars of ice wolves and hoarpanthers, and the skittering of hundreds of creatures unseen in other lands. While dangerous and dire, the Ice Steppes have more life (and death) than most expect of an ice-frosted desert.

Kask-Kirrulthar: A slightly more expanded site than the other two 100-foot-tall watchtowers (Fralros and Hask-Ultharan), Kask-Kirrulthar has an active population of wraith-like beings among its shadowed ruins. While the sun or moon shines, these wispy figures (which faintly resemble anything from children to dragons) remain tied to the stones of this town/watchtower. If any living beings approach within 2 miles when there is no light in the sky beyond starlight, however, these wraiths swarm toward them and flay the warmth and life from their victims' bodies before the light drives them back to their stony prison.

Katrivish: This small town has few inhabitants beyond its mad druids, who all carve out one of their own eyes to honor their cyclops god, Prathos ("the Howling Eye"), and gain gifts of wisdom and knowledge for their sacrifices. Whether mad or not, they have unseen powers that help them find and trap any who dare enter the woods around Katrivish.

Kirrosuli: "The Hauntspires." A perfect triple circle of 90 spindle-towers 20 feet in diameter and 60 to 90 feet tall, the Hauntspires' purpose is a mystery since there are no apparent openings into these slim white-stone towers, each of which is topped by a massive crystal cone or pyramid. On nights of the full moon, mournful songs seem to come from the towers, though no figures are ever seen there.

Kirya: This city high above the Syrzemyan Highlands lies nestled among a ring of peaks breachable only by wing or by the Koloran road across Grenalthrost onto the Grenalf Plateau. The Ulfen explorer Grenalf followed the road up into the mountains and survived the bridge's traps to discover a cyclops ruin dominated by temple structures at the edge of a crystal-clear mountain lake (named Orost-Kar, the Lake of Stars). He named the settlement Kirya after his wife, and as the faithful rededicated the temples to their own gods, the area became the focal point for pilgrimages from all across Iobaria. Kirya grew to be one of the larger Iobarian cities, its newer structures built from the wood of Orostgard to the east. However, 7 centuries of logging the Orostgard unleashed something long hidden in the mountains around the plateau, resulting in the deaths of all humans in Kirya by 1574 AR. In the past three millennia, many powers have taken control of the plateau for a time. Cyclopes and hill giants built grisly sites like the Temples of Blood and Bone out of their human victims. Hobgoblins reclaimed the plague-cleared city for a time. Since 3212 AR and the rise of New Iobaria, Kirya has been

under human control, though it currently stands neutral and unaffiliated with any of those claiming control from Kridorn, Mirnbay, or Orlov. Its leader is the great druid Fedor Vasyk, whose circle embraces 36 local nature gods as children of Erastil.

Kridorn: "Kridor's Cliff." The second great power of Iobaria, Kridorn rises on a sloping cliff at the edge of the Castrovin, its proud towers and lighthouse shining bright for any sailors on the sea. The second most populous city in the region, Kridorn is a city spoiling for a fight with any who point out its shortcomings. Koffar Buran Evyas is the fourth Evyas to hold power here. In his greed, he sees himself as the future overlord of Iobaria, as do his manipulative advisers, all of whom easily outwit Buran. The koffar's constant focus on drumming up his own (and the city's) reputation leaves many municipal decisions and services to others, and thus the large city has unreliable services unless one meets the price demanded. Still, this remains the safest city in southern Iobaria, even with its troubles.

Kridorthrost: "Great Bridge of Kridor." One of the great bridges left from the ages of cyclops dominance, Kridorthrost, which spans the Noyrus, has a small cyclops ruin on its western end, while the human populace has built many wooden and stone structures up along the bridge's length and on its eastern end. This town, controlled by Kridorn and its so-called "noble houses," does not officially limit trade or travel to Mirnbay, but those allied with that rival city suffer more than the usual number of accidents and problems while passing through.

Lenusya: Empty of human inhabitants for more than 100 years since a plague took half its children, Lenusya has become a temporary haven and safehold for many brigands from time to time.

Mavradia: A silent and barren ruin of both cyclops and human construction, Mavradia was once a gem of Iobarian civilization, but the Drakeplague left much of it engulfed in wild magics—great powers of flame, ice, and acid—and over one-third of the city crumbled in less than a day because of battles among dragons seeking a rumored cure within the city's walls. Later attacks by giants and their allies out of the depths of Fangard again made the city a longtime battleground for control. A second plague spelled the end of Mavradia when an unknown disease turned many inhabitants into mindless gelatinous creatures that preyed on all others. Both dragons (undead or otherwise) and the oozing deaths of Mavradia keep this once-great city a dangerous place to visit.

Maw of Karth: This massive fanged maw vaults high over the two small mountains that frame it, creating a carved cyclops' head as the gate. Karth's tongue forms the stairs to it, and his fangs and teeth the siderails leading to an ancient stone roadway. The danger of this gateway is

simple—many brutish monsters and creatures see this as a holy site and worship Karth as a god, making it a choice ambush site for goblins, kobolds, and the like.

Mirnbay: Stone and wood palisades shelter this city, and a peaceful lagoon provides a safe and easy port. Mirnbay is the most vibrant and prosperous of the cities of Iobaria and its most populous. Its most recent influx of Galtan nobles upset the social and mercantile order for a time, though matters now seem resolved (the Galtans presently control more than a third of the trade guilds). The nobles of Mirnbay hold power carefully through alliances and strategies that seem arcane even to those used to labyrinthine politics. House Rhukov (the surviving splinter of royal House Arjal) holds the most power and controls the city through its wizards and their arcane colleges. House Xsagi, a longtime ally growing restless, holds power over the military. Their combined might keeps in check the other 17 noble houses and the five Galtan “newcomer” houses. Still, deals and treaties flow fast and furious as Koffar Ivad Rhukov plans to wrest power from Kridorn and Orlov and rule Iobaria himself, and he promises rewards undreamed to his fellow nobles... though few know if his word can be trusted.

Mishkar: A fully human-built town of wood and stone (not scavenged from cyclops ruins but plowed up from the surrounding hills), Mishkar rests on a hill surrounded by long-built defenses. Unallied with any of the other power factions, Mishkar’s people (a mix of Varisians and Taldans with a random assortment from elsewhere) value their independence and make this city-state relatively self-sustained. Its former purpose as a guard-garrison against threats from the Grenalf Plateau is long in the past. Today, Mishkar is made up of good folk building a strong agricultural and trade base that can help them purchase mercenaries or train soldiers to resist the inevitable armies to come. Alliances with some local centaur tribes have long been discussed, but none have occurred other than those forged of necessity, when resisting goblin hordes out of the upper highlands.

Myrfrus River: “The Deeprun.” The Myrfrus protects the eastern frontier from invasion. It’s unsafe for travel or trade, and not just because of the large carnivorous creatures that swim its waters and lair in riverside caves. The river cascades down innumerable waterfalls and rapids during its course, 50 of which lie between Daruthrost and the Castrovin Sea alone.

Myrnorosc: The sole recognized non-human community in Iobaria, Myrnorosc is a relatively recent town that has risen up around a series of artesian springs. The halflings and dwarves who established the town in 4661 AR allowed a few human families to settle here, but the original population has a secret way to determine rulers—this community holds kodlak and kodlok races in high regard, and in fact reveres them. To be a lycanthrope is a sign of

specialness here (and even the problematic werewolf is welcome if in control of its changes). The komar (“mayor”) of Myrnorosc is the dwarf Harsk Vladaxe, a werebear and head of a dwarven clan with more than a few lycanthropic members. Even their religious members revere Erastil and those subordinate gods with a mix of animal power to them. This is not actively discussed, nor is it hidden; any travelers are treated as kindly as they act themselves. Those who take offense at or hunt lycanthropes should not expect to leave Myrnorosc easily—or alive.

Nirrus River: “The Cliff-flow.” The headwaters of the Nirrus give it its name—springs and a series of small lakes feed into the riverbed from the Icerime Peaks and their foothills, often flowing or falling off cliffs into the five main tributaries that become the Nirrus. More human settlements cluster near this waterway for its fishing (or to pan for precious metals) than elsewhere in Okor’s Basin until one goes north of Storith Wood.

Norinor: Despite its borders on the Hills of Nomen and the upper highlands, the Norinor is actually a relatively sheltered and peaceful forest with more human settlements and “hideholds” within its borders than any other Iobarian forest of note. However, the people living there are hundreds of individuals seeking their own paths and goals, not a singular community. Thus, they do not come together easily to defend each other, save to share information on or warn each other of outsiders in the Norinor (like marauders from Kridorn press-ganging folk into their ranks to increase Koffar Buran Evyas’s power base). In fact, while knowledge of the forest, its resources, and its dangers is common, folks herein often know only their immediate neighbors within a couple of miles and few others, unless their trades involve travel beyond a 5-mile radius.

Noyrus River: “The Runningflow.” The Noyrus provides much fish as well as one of the few avenues into the heart of the Norinor and to its tiny settlements. In fact, the only way most who live in the Norinor reach the outside world is by taking a barge down to Kridorn (or a smaller village before it) to trade their goods for those unavailable among the trees (like steel axes or anvils).

The Nyvyrd: “The Warmth Water.” This massive freshwater lake improbably hugs the Icewall glaciers and remains a steaming warmth unexpected in the north. Its waters teem with fish and sea life of both amazing and monstrous proportions and variety. The only safe waters onto which boats venture lie very close to shore, as sailors fear being capsized by the flippers or jaws of the enormous predators out on the open waters. Nearer to shore are massive beds of shellfish (a major staple) and pearl beds yielding peals of colors and varieties unseen anywhere else (including ice pearls, striped pearls, and some shells nearly as hard as tempered steel). Hundreds

of small settlements and cabins (and sometimes Taldan-inspired villas or mansions) lie abandoned (or inhabited by brigands or worse) all around the warm shores here, either due to plagues or forced evictions by nobles seeking to control access to the Nyvyrd.

Okor's Basin: This depression slopes from the Syrzemyan Highlands and western Coreth Wood all the way to the Lake of Mists and Veils. Somewhat sheltered from the worst arctic winds, Okor's Basin holds a good stretch of farmland, its inclined fields producing dwarf strains of barley, wheat, rye, and other grains. Domesticated and wild cattle herds roam all across this area, thanks to the scattered settlements of westerners over the centuries.

Okormirr: "The Rest of Okor." All but abandoned save for a small population of druids and their families, Okormirr is nonetheless the most obvious example of an Ulfen settlement, with its log lodges, dragon poles at its wooden

palisades, and the like. This city has seen resettlement many times, and its present residents increasingly grow weary of Prince Tzakiv Korya's empty promises of Orlov's return to greatness. The Druid-King Aalgin expects all who live in Okormirr to swear fealty to his circle and their giant god, Perbov ("the Father of the North"), whose sweat forms the Lake of Mists and Veils.

Okorrus River: "Okor's Flow." While the Okorrus is a relatively small river now, there is some evidence that it was once much deeper and stronger in its flow. Aside from its steep banks and some dry lake beds along its path, the primary bridge across it seems built to span a river of greater height, depth, and width. The Okorrostr, or "Bridge of Okor," is one of the first cyclops structures most folks encounter as they travel into Iobaria from the west.

Orlendas: This town has risen from the ashes more than a dozen times, whether destroyed by fire, plague, human war, or centaur marauders. Its importance to Franax and Orlov as the logging source for shipbuilding has waned, but lumber remains one of the town's primary goods, along with small game pelts. Its other recent claim to fame is its komar, Kasrel Unilich, an exiled Galtan noble and ranger whose abilities and coin have made Orlendas far more defensible and prosperous than ever.

Orlov: The oldest "city" of Iobaria and long the capital of that first realm, Orlov is a crumbling ruin in all quarters, whether built by cyclopes or by humans, millennia later. Occupied by fewer than half its former inhabitants, the port city simply ignores or walls off places too ruined to fix or inhabit (and its stonemiths are a far cry from their forebears that carved up the cyclopean stones for their own use). Prince Tzakiv Korya is among the last of his line, descended from one of the factions that restored Iobaria in 3304 AR. He assumes this makes him the legitimate heir to power, though he lacks the money, allies, and will to forge the country anew. For now, he bides his time, luring monied allies from Cheliox or the River Kingdoms to his cause to bolster his plans for reconquering the whole of the region.

Oroskirr: "The Ever-Watching Eye." Also called the Opal Island, Oroskirr is an enduring mystery. Its opalescent dome glows every night and crackles with energy, drawing lightning to it during storms. None have ever broached its shell to tell of the mysteries beneath it, though many assume it is the source of the warming waters of the Nyvyrd in which it rests.

Orosknir: "The Eye Mount" This lone mountain peak stabs higher than its neighbors by a good height, though its name comes from the massive eye carved into its eastern face. This eye never gets covered by the snowpack, and it flashes with energies every few decades, though to what effect none can prove. Many guess this magic may have something to do with the frequent plagues.



Orost: “Star.” The only safe stop on the roads between Orlov and Mirnbay, Orost has become a site of growing importance and strife among the factions fighting to control Iobaria. In the center of town is a massive building of wood and stone that houses the central ruling komar; inside it becomes obvious humans constructed the building over and around an ancient two-ringed stone circle of massive proportions. The town’s name comes from the star mosaics in the floor of this former temple, though its growth and defenses have given it a crude star shape as well. Numerous envoys and proxies of the powerful from Orlov, Mirnbay, Kridorn, and Veka frequent this trade town, and the local law enforcers merely try to protect the citizens from the battles and intrigues among those scrabbling for power among the host of visitors seeking trade goods.

Pharrus River: “The Swiftflow.” The Pharrus yields much wealth in fishing, gems, and metals. There are more edible varieties of fish in this river than any other within Iobaria. It also boasts many sites and shallows wherein folk pan for nuggets of precious metals or random gems (very few brave the dangers of the mountains to mine directly for these resources, preferring to stick to the riverbeds and their many hardscrabble camps).

Sjohvornor: Sjohvor is a great white wyrm who claims the northeastern Ice Steppes and the northern Deeprun Crevasse as his domain. An uncounted number of shattered dragon skeletons litter the cliffs and steppes around his glacial mountain lair, warnings to any foolhardy enough to approach. He is the eldest and strongest dragon to survive the Drakeplague of 4519 AR.

Storith Wood: When the ruins that became Orlov were first discovered, Storith Wood encompassed all of Okor’s Basin, but over the centuries human logging has greatly reduced its size. Korred, satyrs, and fanatical circles of druids now defend its trees from loggers (though they do allow removal of deadfall by local humans, delivering it to the forest edges in exchange for other goods, like cattle or knowledge).

Syrzemyan Highlands: The vast central portion of Iobaria is a land of rough hills, jagged cliffs, and high mountains. Few humans live in this harsh region; the few rugged highlanders who do huddle in well-defended “huntholds” among the far more numerous centaur tribes and rampaging ogre and cyclops bands.

Thraxnorni: “The Bone Caverns.” Unwitting travelers fall prey to the Thraxnorni when they pitch camp at the crossroads at Fangard’s edge. A nearby stone cairn, long hidden beneath thick deadfall and underbrush, marks the entrance to the Bone Caverns. The cairn lies but a short distance from the roads, and the undead and other menaces that exit the caverns at night feast heartily on the unwary. The Bone Caverns get their name from the tales of many tunnels beneath the forests and roads, all lined from floor to ceiling with bones. Whether the tales are

true or not is unknown, as few who get dragged beneath the cairn (or other hidden sinkholes) return to report.

Veka: The easternmost hold for Iobaria in the Ice Steppes, Veka has stood as a garrisoned fort town since its founding. This is the power base for Koffar Rjul, a shrewd and ruthless man whose family’s control of Veka’s smithies (where all metal weapons and materials in the area are forged) led to his control of the local military, making him the most powerful man around the Nyvyrd. He hopes to increase his control over Antoll and ally with Prince Tzakiv Korya of Orlov—or if the latter fails, isolate the Nyvyrd from the prince and preserve his own power.

Vladmirr: Only its relative isolation and proximity to the Icerime Peaks have kept Vladmirr from becoming a major city and a player in Iobarian politics. The Pharrus River’s delta, which surrounds it on all sides, provides many arable patches for crops, and the river also yields large amounts of precious metals panned in many places along its length. Still, the lack of a protected port and the high waves of the Castrovin Sea make Vladmirr only a temporary stop for loading or unloading goods in good weather before most make sail for Kridorn to the north. Consequently, the town’s population hasn’t managed to grow much over the years, and in the end Vladmirr has ended up as more of a support operation for Kridorn (providing grains, cattle, and gold) than the hub of power it has long hoped to become.

Volod: One of the newer settlements in Iobaria, Volod came into being in 4400 AR to replace the lost logging camps of Hroran. This town has been tied to the logging and wood trades for much of its history, and these professions still dominate Volod’s mercantile aspects. Despite its traditional past, Volod has become a strange place of late, with druids talking of new gods walking the highlands and the Norinor, demanding worship.

Vurnirn: “The Centaur’s Cliff.” The sole cyclops ruin in Hoofwood and the largest single centaur settlement in Iobaria, Vurnirn plays host to many conclaves of clan leaders every summer. It is the shared seat of power for the Rashalka clans Kraask, Tsurvom, and Voaldyn, with the city split among them into three zones of control. These three clans (and Clan Phelor, which dwells in the southern forest) all share the Hoofwood as territory and maintain a provisional alliance against the more ruthless Tsolniva centaurs to their north. Vurnirn also marks the northernmost reach of Rashalka centaurs in Iobaria.

Zradnirras: Once a powerful city for cyclopes and then later for Iobarians, Zradnirras is now a deadly shambles of stone, magic, and danger. At least one family clutch of dragons lives in the toppled tower ruins, watching the city and the crevasse to the east for prey. Still, tales of the Zradnirri Arcolleges and their fabled magics draw many to its dangers (and its dragon-worshipping goblin and kobold legions).

The River Kingdoms





BY JEFF QUICK

THE RIVER KINGDOMS

In the far-distant past, when forests covered much of Avistan and elves were the dominant race, the land now known as the River Kingdoms was verdant and lively. Streams ran quick and clear, and the land was green and firm. This territory adjoining Kyonin and Lake Encarthan was a place for high nobles and their courts to enjoy hunting and sport. The elves called it Telvurin, translated today in Taldane as “The Shifting Lands.” The departure of the elves gave the human race new territory to explore, putting them in conflict with lizardfolk, frog-men, and suspicious fey. With its dozens of tributary rivers dividing the region into countless small territories, it became a natural place for outcasts, rebels, and petty tyrants to stake claims and declare themselves rulers of whatever land they could grab and hold.



Millennia later, the pleasantness of the land remains. Unfortunately, so does the chaos. Very little stays static in the River Kingdoms. The rivers slowly shift boundaries over centuries, and kingdoms can trade hands yearly. Banditry is a national pastime, and security is a distant hope for commoners, reserved for people in other lands.

The River Kingdoms are a collection of often-fractional neighbors united only by their common geography and their near-anarchic independence. When the local lord may change from year to year, the nearest “king” is actually a bandit with delusions of grandeur, and the only thing protecting a rancher’s livestock is how well he can use a sword, the strong learn to depend on themselves and distrust those who break their word or exploit others. Though the leaders of the River Kingdoms are varied and ever-changing, the people—as stubborn and contrary as they may be—mark the character of the River Kingdoms: survivalist adaptability and stubborn endurance.

The first section of this book covers the geography of the River Kingdoms, how this region survives as a political entity despite not having a unified leader, the many types of governments that exist here, relations with other countries, and what life is like in this land. Any discussion of the River Kingdoms, of course, must address its bandit problem, its strange local deities, and the Six River Freedoms held common throughout the kingdoms.

The remainder of the book is a gazetteer of 22 of the most significant territories within the River Kingdoms. Eight of these are the largest and most stable: Daggermark, Galton, Lambreth, Mivon, Pitax, Sevenarches, Tymon, and Uringen; though little more than city-states with ambiguous borders, these eight major kingdoms conduct trade and engage in diplomacy with nearby countries where smaller or newer kingdoms may be laughed off by merchants and foreign leaders. The other territories are smaller, more isolated kingdoms which may yet survive long enough to establish a permanent foothold in the manner of Daggermark and the other major players, or else places that lie fallow after wars, plagues, or unknown events. The Stolen Lands is the setting for the Kingmaker Adventure Path; whether or not you plan to run a campaign using that Adventure Path, this area is ripe for exploration and can easily be the site of a custom home-brewed campaign of conquest for ambitious PCs.

RIVER KINGDOMS GEOGRAPHY

The lay of the land is the direct result of the Sellen River and its many tributaries. The rich, damp soil supports ancient trees and traps water, creating dozens of isolated boggy areas with their own ecologies and pockets of native creatures.

The Sellen River

This wide, lazy river system drains across the gentle slopes of the River Kingdoms into Kallas Lake, and eventually empties into the Inner Sea. The Sellen is the main transport system

of this region, as it or its tributaries touch most kingdoms in the nation. Thanks to the Third River Freedom (see page 7), these waterways are clear of any official obstruction to trade or travel. However, bandits and pirates ply all parts of the river, so travel and commerce are never certain. Merchants mainly move food around the kingdoms, but steady traffic in arms and armor makes traders both good targets for bandits and well prepared for them. Travelers also use the Sellen daily, and the western and main branches are highways for crusaders headed to Mendev. Of course, crusaders often feel obliged to halt wrongdoing along the way as well, or to stop and collect some much-appreciated “donations” to the cause.

In most places, the river is less than a mile wide and around 12 feet deep, best suited to barge travel. Bridges seldom last outside of the stable kingdoms, so ferryboats are common along the waterway.

Outsiders find it confusing that on many maps the tributaries are also called “the Sellen River.” The turnover of sovereignty leads to frequent renaming, making most names too temporary to be useful. When it’s relevant, the river is referred to by its three main branches: West Sellen, Main Sellen, and East Sellen, with specific sections of the river named according to the nearest kingdom through which it flows. When conversing with a native about one of these confusingly named rivers, understanding the particulars of directions and locations requires a DC 15 Knowledge (local) skill check.

Forests

Over a dozen discrete forested areas cover much of the River Kingdoms. During the time of the elves, woods blanketed much more of the land in one or two vast forests that rivaled the size of the modern Verduran, but logging, blight, and fire culled many of the trees over the ages. The larger forests are still home to secretive fey, and all of them are havens for bandits and other undesirables.

Swamps

The many waterways are known to flood and shift over time, and what was once a fertile plain can become a shallow lake in a particularly rainy season, eventually transforming into a bog. Conversely, the source of a swamp’s water may drift farther upstream, causing the swamp to dry out and revert to a forest or even a plain. Most plants of the River Kingdoms can adapt to wet or dry situations, though some thrive better in one or the other and are replaced by competitors when the environment changes too far from their optimal setup.

The waters carry silt and nutrients to all parts of the River Kingdoms, and crops grow well here, leading some enterprising settlers to plant on dry areas or small, clear-cut sites, moving their plots as the terrain accommodates these alterations. This constant change means that



maps drawn a decade ago may contain significant errors regarding wilderness areas, and those from a century before may be all but unrecognizable except for the names of settlements.

THE PRIZED PROFESSIONS

In most countries, food producers are at the bottom of the pecking order. Large nations need tons of food to feed their populace. Not so in the River Kingdoms, where smaller, scattered populations require less food, and a willingness to take charge of crops or livestock is practically an act of defiance. Able farmers and herders earn respect for daring to do their jobs. Indeed, food suppliers are local heroes, and wise lords court their involvement, especially since the Third River Freedom makes standard feudalism impossible. Mistreated farmers or herders can leave and receive a hero's welcome a day's walk away if they're willing to contribute their skills to that community. This makes farming and ranching among the noblest professions among Riverfolk, the work of the courageous few who feed their families and safeguard communities against raiders and the hazards of nature.

Soldiers are the other laurelled professionals in the River Kingdoms. A lord may have only a few dozen loyal soldiers, with the rest of his military made up of mercenaries. Anyone can carry a spear, but a soldier trained with weapons, steeled to battle, and devoted to a king is worth more than his or her salary. Few kingdoms bother to differentiate between military and city watch—soldiers handle both roles. An experienced, loyal soldier is respected by local Riverfolk as a guardian. This appreciation has a bolstering effect on soldiers who guard a kingdom. Some remain tied to the people of the land, and accept new lords as they come and go as long as the common people are treated well; others prefer to find a more compatible liege in another kingdom when the local ruler changes.

THE THREAT OF INVASION

Many a roving eye has looked at the fine pastures and fields of the River Kingdoms with intent to claim them. The pickings look easy, but the doing has proven difficult. Rulers in the River Kingdoms are fractious neighbors, but common enemies bind them like *sovereign glue*.

Razmiran, Numeria, and Galt are the foreign governments most frequently making claims to land here, but none have made a long-standing claim to more than a section of the River Kingdoms. Generally, chaos within the kingdoms—disorganization, madness, or simple stubbornness—prevents these other countries from mounting a unified offense, but the land proves tricky to hold. The people are recalcitrant, and the rivers favor entrenched defenders. Furthermore, the River Kingdoms represent one of the geographically larger political entities in Avistan,

comparable in size to Varisia or Cheliax, and larger than Andoran or Qadira. Taking the land might be relatively standard warfare, but occupying it is another matter. Few nations have the army to hold such acreage. Thus, the River Kingdoms remain unconquered by external forces. Only small-scale, internal strife leaves its mark.

The Outlaw Council

Consisting of leaders from the most significant kingdoms, the Outlaw Council provides the only political stability the land has ever known. Rulers from all kingdoms are invited to attend this yearly council in Daggermark, but only lords from Daggermark, Gralton, Lambreth, Mivon, Pitax, the Protectorate of the Black Marquis, Sevenarches, Tymon, and Uringen are truly respected. Other kingdoms are considered too transient to merit full consideration in the proceedings, though in the spirit of unity they are allowed to attend and speak occasionally. Unlike in other meetings, mere representatives are not allowed to speak—a lord must attend personally to have a voice.

Topics of yearly discourse include negotiating treaties, defense against mutual threats, food distribution, recognition of sovereignty, and solving smaller, interpersonal matters before they become armed conflicts. The meeting hall where the Outlaw Council gathers is considered neutral territory—no king rules any other there, even Livondar, Lord of Daggermark. However, Daggermark's famed assassins are on silent duty as servants throughout the meeting, making the Outlaw Council meeting the worst time of the year to attempt a Daggermark coup.

FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

Nearly every type of government imaginable has been attempted within the River Kingdoms, and will likely be attempted again. Below is a list of the most common government types that appear in the River Kingdoms. Government types can be mixed, such as an ethnocratic oligarchy. Types include:

Anarchy: The complete absence of organized government. This state exists intermittently throughout the River Kingdoms, but sustaining it as a form of actual policy is exceptionally difficult.

Aristocracy: Rule by a hereditary class of people. Usually subsumed under a monarchy.

Autocracy: Government in which one person has sole, unrestricted rule. Also known as despotism. The majority of River Kingdoms are ruled by autocrats.

Bureaucracy: Rule through a system of departments or bureaus, arranged in a hierarchy of authority. Department heads and staff are usually appointed rather than elected or openly decided.

Confederacy: Rule under a union of states, organizations, or individuals.

Democracy: Majority rule by the people. Rulers are elected from among the populace.



Dictatorship: Although a form of autocracy, a dictator has no plans or aspirations for hereditary rule.

Ethnocracy: Government in which rulership is limited to those of a particular ethnicity or race.

Feudality: A loosely defined form of government consisting of binding agreements between lords and vassals. The River Freedoms make traditional concepts of feudalism difficult to sustain, but versions of this agreement frequently crop up in unstable regions.

Gerontocracy: Rule determined by the eldest—usually a group of elders, rather than the single oldest person.

Gynarchy: Explicit rule by females. See “matriarchy.”

Kritocracy/Kritarchy: Rule by judges. The former is rule by a judge’s personal opinion, whereas the latter is rule by comparison to an external standard, such as “natural rights.”

Magocracy: Rule by secular magical authority, usually a single wizard or sorcerer.

Matriarchy: Rule by a mother figure, within a familial social system.

Meritocracy: Government by those who demonstrate talent or ability in a certain position.

Militocracy: System of rule where the military holds full authority (another River Kingdoms favorite).

Monarchy: Government where supreme authority is held by one hereditary ruler, typically referred to as a king or queen. Many River Kingdom autocrats declare themselves monarchs.

Ochlocracy: Rule by a mob with no formal authority.

Oligarchy: Rule by an elite few.

Patriarchy: Rule by a single father figure, within a familial social system.

Pedocracy: Government by the learned or scholarly.

Plutocracy: Rulership by the rich. Although the wealthy always have power over government, plutocracy is explicit, literal rule by the wealthiest.

Republic: A form of government where the people ruled can indirectly affect the government through representatives.

Syndicracy: Rule by a business group.

Theocracy: Though technically meaning direct rule by a deity, theocracy is often defined as rule by clergy who act on a deity’s dictates. Also known as a hierocracy or emirate.

Within the River Kingdoms, “kingdom” is considered acceptable shorthand when referring to an autonomous state, and “lord” is the generic term of address for a ruler, regardless of a ruler’s form of government or sex.

RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORS

The nations surrounding the River Kingdoms absorb and mirror some of their chaos. Many are in or close to civil upheaval, too disorganized to threaten the River Kingdoms’ major powers. No sovereign neighbor has both the ability and inclination to challenge River Kingdom hegemony. Some try anyway.

Brevoy

King Surtova is embroiled in a pending civil war and wary of turmoil in the River Kingdoms spilling over into his lands. To provide a buffer between his country and Pitax, he encourages ambitious folk to settle in the broad strip of land bordering Brevoy and the River Kingdoms, called the Stolen Lands (see page 50). Surtova hopes that by founding small colonies there, the “kings” of these realms will deal with aggressive Lord Irovetti of Pitax, or at least slow down any invasion force before it gets to Brevoy.

Galt

About once a generation, a Galtan leader decides to enforce some ancient treaty or deed entitling him to a swath of River Kingdoms territory. Since Galt doesn’t border any of the well-established realms, the offensive usually overruns an independent lord’s stake. Galt is in such a calamitous state that these forays never permanently enlarge Galtan holdings. But even in less tempestuous times, Galtans haven’t held the land for long, always losing their grip to some bandit king or charismatic rebel.

Just to make sure this remains the case, the lords of Gralton (who are mainly exiles from Galt) quietly supply mercenaries and aid to defenders in the River Kingdoms, without directly appearing to be involved; they do not wish to be hounded by their enemies and errors from the homeland any more than they already are. The only Galtans who have occupied a kingdom for any length of time are those in Gralton, and then only as their own fiefdom, not actually as an arm of Galt. The Oakstewards of Sevenarches claim this is the legacy of the elven chaos-land that the River Kingdoms were in millennia past.

Kyonin

Though the works of the elves are beautiful and awe-inspiring, the haughty behavior of the elves clashes with the inflated egos ruling the motley River Kingdoms, and fails to endear them to the lords of the Outlaw Council. Queen Edasseril and her court are keen to reclaim Sevenarches, but the ruling druid circle, the Oakstewards, do not allow elves inside their borders, and will meet with no emissary from the elven kingdom.





Kyonin has attempted to maneuver around this obstinate behavior by buying allies in Gralton and smaller kingdoms along the eastern border of Sevenarches. These alliances have gained little traction yet, as the elves find the turnover in leadership too quick to build “proper” relations.

Other kingdoms would love to deal with the elves, but Edasseril’s court officially disdains the lords of the Outlaw Council. Any kingdom other than Sevenarches attempting to treat with Kyonin on its own terms has its ambassadors politely and firmly halted at Greengold.

Numeria

Kellid nomad tribes constantly menace the northern edge of the River Kingdoms, from the Echo Wood all the way over to Pitax. These same tribes also make fine mercenaries when a northern lord wants to bolster his army. Automaton sometimes cross the borders on silent, murderous errands for their Technic League masters. Meanwhile, Numerian steel trickles into various River Kingdoms, and flows down the Sellen for profit.

Individual reactions to the River Kingdoms’ northern neighbors vary. The bloodthirsty Black Marquis of Deadbridge demands vicious revenge for every slight done to him, and a running feud between his men and local Kellid tribes seems to invigorate rather than deplete both sides. Irovetti of Pitax, on the other hand, barely seems to notice depredations onto his lands, although his bards have some scathing rhyme-chants in Hallit impugning the manhood of the raiders. The barbarians who hear them are reportedly so infuriated that they make easy targets for Irovetti’s archers.

Meanwhile, some folk consider Hajoth Hakados one of the River Kingdoms, despite being claimed by Numeria.

Razmiran

In living memory, Razmiran was one of the River Kingdoms (and by some reckoning, still is). The various rulers of Lambreth, Tymon, and Sevenarches hold predictably dim views of the theocracy next door. Lord Arnefax in Lambreth is particularly quick and brutal in repelling Razmir’s clergy, though worshipping the Living God is not forbidden—that would violate the First River Freedom. Some lords find the carrot more expedient than the stick, offering bounties for Razmiri religious symbols and literature, and letting their own people do the discouraging. The people need little incentive; they are as distrustful of Razmiri missionaries as they are of any outsider.

The bullying style of Razmiri proselytizers finds little purchase among the independent Riverfolk, who are well versed in repelling violent assault. Gentler priests bearing kind deeds and honeyed words, however, find an audience—selflessness and courage can sway hearts. Tales of the Living God find a toehold in some border settlements, no matter how the local lords rail.

Ustalav

The counts of Ustalav are too insular to have significant dealings with the River Kingdoms. Conte Ristomaur Tiriatic, count of the Varno territory, travels too often to plot against or with his immediate neighbor, Lord Arnefax of Lambreth, or any of the smaller kingdoms that rise and fall across the river. Arnefax finds little to dislike with this arrangement.

Political strife and civil war are traits both sides share, but this highlights their differences, rather than commonalities. Ustlavic commoners feel superior in that, even though they war, their rulers are nobles, and not trumped-up bandits. Meanwhile, the Riverfolk believe their freedom and self-determination make them superior to the trapped serfs. Fortunately, the mutual disdain doesn’t overly hinder trade. Fish, ore, and all manner of crafted goods (especially weapons) cross the borders in both directions, depending on whose food supplies are less secure this month.

Both Ustalav and various River Kingdoms lords claim fishing rights on the river they share, and skirmishes break out occasionally. Some lords, hard up for resources, send raiding parties into Ustlavic lands, while another group of counts has considered backing a tiny puppet regime just to provide stability along the border, seeking a likely candidate even now.

LIFE IN THE RIVER KINGDOMS

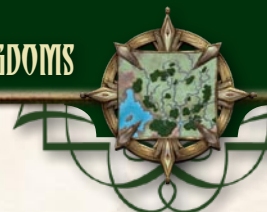
Passing crusaders headed to Mendev complain of the chaos in the River Kingdoms, but this is hyperbole. Far removed from the horror of the Worldwound, the River Kingdoms are as predictable as a cauldron—you never know what will come bubbling up, but you can be sure the whole thing is hot. This heat makes the River Kingdoms a singular place to live.

The River Kingdoms are split into more than two dozen sovereign realms, ruled by despots of varying temperament. Tyrants who raise a keep in the River Kingdoms often hail from surrounding lands, but are almost always castoffs, criminals, or wayward offspring of more important folk. Most rule by force, though some are gentler than others.

Life in the River Kingdoms is harsh. Bandits can attack at any time, local governments shift like riverbanks, invading armies pillage the land, and unexpected monstrous and magical threats occur with alarming frequency. Every family has lost someone to sudden violence. The perilous uncertainty keeps everyone tense, suspicious, and often angry.

Trust is paramount. Anyone unrecognizable is not just a potential threat, but also a potential vanguard for an army of threats. “Trust costs more than money” is a common Riverfolk aphorism.

For all this danger, though, the land is still beautiful and bountiful. Even the marshes and forests are fertile. Raiders, not the land or weather, make farming hard. Wheat, corn, oats, and rice are quick and plentiful crops grown throughout the kingdoms. Livestock grow fat on the rich grasses fed by the hydra-headed tributaries of the Sellen River.



Riverfolk love politics, and talk about it in the same manner as farmers talk weather: maybe they can't do anything about it, but they discuss it endlessly. Any given Riverfolk has an opinion about which form of government is best, how the local leader is doing, and how all the neighboring kingdoms' leaders are doing.

Living in the River Kingdoms requires protection. Farms and livestock pens are small and well defended, as though each were a small fortress. Moats and earthworks surround the better-established ones, and most farms also have a defendable cellar into which farmers and their families can retreat. Even hamlets and thorps have their own stockade walls, and most commoners wear weapons openly, "to keep everyone honest."

Trades that require complex support, such as alchemy, are rare and short-lived. Functional, relatively mobile livelihoods thrive here, including tanning, herding, brewing, and other forms of craftsmanship.

Bandits

Far more bandits roam the Kingdoms than one would think the population could absorb. Criminals and castoffs from nearby nations, as well as natives, frequently take a turn at banditry here. The law is flexible, and the Sixth River Freedom subtly encourages it.

Despite the fierce reputation of River Kingdoms bandits, many young men and women only try banditry as a side job, or as a found opportunity when they happen upon treasure left in weak hands. For a few, it's the only way to retrieve what was stolen from them first. Other bandits are mercenary soldiers turned out of their previous jobs. They would rather fight than steal, but they'd rather live than starve.

Commoners are a hardscrabble lot, so for profit, bandits target wealthy outsiders. Most cities contain lookouts for bandit crews, gathering information on likely visiting targets, or offering guide services to lure visitors into traps. The locals are always wise to these tricks, and for a handful of coppers, a local can usually identify the lookouts... assuming he isn't one of them himself.

For a charismatic few, banditry is a path to legitimacy. Bandit gangs past a certain size gain their own gravity; highway robbery becomes usurpation at a surprisingly low threshold in the River Kingdoms. More than once, a bandit leader has ended up taking over a keep that he only meant to plunder at the outset.

Yet the River Kingdoms are far from lawless; it's just that the laws they adhere to appear lawless in practice. The Six River Freedoms receive a lot of lip service, but the primary law of the River Kingdoms is that power rules. The members of the Outlaw Council would be quick to inform would-be philosophers that all nations follow this rule; the River Kingdoms just aren't shy about admitting it.

The Six River Freedoms

Frequently invoked—and occasionally trampled—the River Freedoms are the ideological backbone for common Riverfolk. Outsiders who expect to lead Riverfolk must quickly make themselves aware of the subtleties of the River Freedoms, as those who repeatedly flout a beloved freedom find themselves deposed by a mob. Indeed, the River Freedoms find their most curious interpretations in the folkways of common Riverfolk. A quick-witted wag who quotes a freedom to justify her actions can sway hearts to accept the most egregious behavior, and a misinterpretation of words can get an honest paladin driven out with malice.

Philosophers and scholars who study the political landscapes of the River Kingdoms rank the River Freedoms in order from least to most grave—after all, no one seriously believes in unfettered freedom to speak at all times. However, slavery is





as serious an offense here as in Andoran, and nothing is so sacred to Riverfolk as the freedom to keep what one holds.

Say What You Will, I Live Free: The freedom to speak is not the same as freedom from consequences of speech. Outsiders, drunkards, and fools are the only ones who vocally invoke this freedom. All others respect it, and live with it accordingly.

Still, criticism of government is more common here than in other lands. Cruel despots occasionally get an earful from their subjects, and the wise ones do not harshly punish such vocal rabble. In the River Kingdoms, subjects are earned by withstanding criticism rather than suppressing it. Pride sometimes intervenes, but a long-lasting lord is one who lets tongues wag.

This freedom is especially tantalizing for bards and anyone using charm magic. No one attempts to limit a spellcaster's speech, and a *silence* spell is a suspicious abrogation of rights.

Oathbreakers Die: The flip side of free speech in the River Kingdoms is the gravity of oath-breaking. Petty liars are common, but in a land where tomorrow can bring a gang of mercenaries, the people in charge must know whom they can trust. Common oaths include "I swear by the Sellen," "May Hanspur take my sons," and "My freedom is my bond."

Riverfolk who undertake oaths of this nature keep them, or die trying. This attitude trickles down to business transactions, but can ironically make things more difficult—it's hard to get a Riverfolk trader to fully commit to anything. Standard contracts contain a "Gyronna clause" which voids a contract in case of unforeseen calamity. This would seem a perfect dodge for scoundrels, but associating with Gyronna is the worst omen a Riverfolk trader can invoke. No one deals with a trader who admits affliction by Gyronna, lest the association rub off.

Walk Any Road, Float Any River: This freedom implies no safety while traveling, especially from the local lord. It merely prevents lords from blocking land and water travel, or charging tolls for passing (except for non-Riverfolk). Of course, any ruler who doesn't want people on his roads can bar them without erecting a single block—threats, bribes, political pressure, or hiring "bandits" are just as effective.

However, in practice, it means no lord can take his or her people for granted. Most Riverfolk do not leave their homes for anything but essential travel, no matter who is in charge (and poor Riverfolk usually have nowhere else to go), but they might still move to a new kingdom if their lord is abusive. This escape is rarely necessary. A lord who wants a functioning kingdom knows not to treat subjects too harshly, or the best ones will disappear, leaving a half-empty kingdom behind.

Courts Are for Kings: Buried midway down the list is one that undergirds them all: law within the River Kingdoms is malleable, and the rulers of a kingdom do as they wish. In

their lands, one must obey. Whether a visitor is a commoner or a neighboring king, all are subject to a lord's law within his own territory, and anyone who disobeys must be prepared for punishment or a declaration of war.

As a result, rulers seldom visit each other directly. Intermediaries do the talking, even when lords are scant miles away. When face-to-face negotiations occur, the monarchs often take great pains to protect their own sovereignty, even going so far as to set up camp tents on shared borders, talking across a rope line hung with pennants from both kingdoms. The major exception is the yearly Outlaw Council, where the meeting hall is considered politically neutral.

Slavery is an Abomination: Nothing is so secure in the River Kingdoms as freedom for escaped slaves. Unlike Andorens, Riverfolk won't leave their homes to free slaves, but a runaway in the River Kingdoms is a slave no more.

Some estimates say that one-third of the Riverfolk alive today are escaped slaves or descendants of slaves. Riverfolk welcome thousands of escaped slaves to all kingdoms each year, to fill ranks in armies and agriculture. Escaped slaves are usually the fiercest proponents of the River Freedoms, as these conventions are the first taste of freedom in their new lives.

Because of this freedom, Hellknights of the Order of the Chain and other slave-takers cannot operate openly here, and any Andoren Eagle Knight can dispel most Riverfolk's natural distrust of strangers by showing her insignia—and get a free drink and a barn to sleep in.

Depending on the local custom, this abolition can extend to indentured servitude. Spellcasters are warned to be circumspect when summoning monsters in the River Kingdoms, lest their magic be misinterpreted.

You Have What You Hold: In contrast to many other civilizations on Golarion, this freedom draws a moral distinction between robbery and mere stealing. Taking something by force is considered acceptable, even begrudgingly praiseworthy. Burglary, on the other hand, is punishable under common law. The difference is in allowing a victim the ability to resist, the opportunity to face his or her robber, and to plan for repossession if so desired. This allows for a rough honesty, letting Riverfolk know and face their enemies.

RELIGION

In addition to having temples and shrines to Calistria, Cayden Cailean, Erastil, Norgorber, Desna, and even Lamashtu, the River Kingdoms are home to many strange cults, some of which actually have a source of magic behind them. The elves say the magic of the land responds to belief, and many local tales tell of mysterious creatures of the woods who can grant boons in exchange for a sworn oath or devotion, with a few even having true clerics (though strangely limited by distance to their patron). The best known are Gyronna and Hanspur, who are actual (if minor) divinities and whose priests retain their magic throughout Golarion.





GYRONNA

The Angry Hag

Goddess of hatred, extortion, and spite

Alignment: CE

Domains: Chaos, Destruction, Evil, Madness

Favored Weapon: dagger



Gyronna's origin is uncertain, and few entities care to treat with her for any length of time to find out the truth. Some believe she may have once been a creature of the First World, cast out for some infraction against a fey queen. Others say she was born a green hag and became a favored priestess of Lamashtu, gaining divinity from some ancient pact. Still others suggest she was a rival or rebellious child of Baba Yaga, banished to a far land until her penance was paid. The goddess and her worshipers don't speak of her past and like to single out those who ask too many questions.

The goddess only allows females into her priesthood, and attracts the castaways and undesirables of society—those suspected of witchcraft, adulterous wives, old prostitutes, and so on. The Riverfolk fear her clergy for their ability to poison the minds of others with hate, turning friends against each other and making enemies out of allies (though they are not above knifing someone in an alley if it suits their purposes). They have been known to swap infants for demon-tainted creatures from their own horrid wombs (though it is unknown if these corrupted offspring are the norm for them, the result of evil magic, or require actual demonic couplings). They seem to only exist to prey on others, demanding coins from passersby, harassing solitary travelers with verbal and magical curses, and making visitors feel unwelcome; most Riverfolk pay the hags a few coppers to be left alone and move on. Gyronna has no book of scripture—at least, none has been found on any priestess's corpse.

Her priestesses favor loose black smocks, typically ragged at the bottom (called a "shabble" by Riverfolk). Some priestesses claim to have the "evil eye," and an unusual number of them have a bulging, bloodshot eye which appears to be the point of origin of their cast spells.

Gyronna's followers do not build temples, only small shrines throughout the land where offerings are left for her. The average shrine is just a pile of rocks topped with a fist-sized, spherical stone inscribed with an iris and vein-like tracings. Some actually have a large cat's eye gem instead of a common stone, and folk whisper that the goddess can see anyone near the stone—and curse those who dare defile the shrine or steal the gemstone.

Clerics of Gyronna may prepare *eyebite* as a 6th-level spell.

HANSPUR

The Water Rat

God of rivers and river travel

Alignment: CN

Domains: Chaos, Death, Travel, Water

Favored Weapon: trident



Some legends say that Hanspur was once a mortal priest of Gozreh; murdered in his sleep by a traveling companion, he was raised by his god as an unstable guardian of the waterways. True or not, Hanspur is said to ply the Sellen River from its northernmost point to where it empties into the Inner Sea, using the guise of a common riverman and sometimes accompanied by a pet dire rat. Grizzled and damp, he is usually dour and speaks little, though he can be quite friendly to those who respect the river. His doctrine comprises the Six River Freedoms and includes only a few other simple statements about the changing nature of things, how life is a river, and death on the water is a good end to an honorable, simple life. He dislikes dams that completely block a river, though ones that merely divert it or create a reservoir with an exit flow are acceptable.

Hanspur's faithful sometimes build driftwood shrines on the shore, or even float them downriver on small rafts. When a worshiper builds a temporary raft, it is customary to set it loose afterward to follow the river so that someone farther south might find it in a time of need. His priests have no set uniform, but tend to wear waterproofed, short-legged pants, and waterproofed ponchos (which can double as tent cloth or small sails), and often go barefoot. Most are proficient fishermen, whether using nets or poles. They make sacrifices to their god by drowning animals, unwanted infants, or convicted criminals (though evil priests are said to murder in his name, especially to prevent disastrous floods). The Water Rat's priests are highly transient and rarely stay in one settlement for more than a few days, trading news, magic, and mail in exchange for goods and shelter. Some hire themselves as guides or steersmen.

The great shrine of Hanspur stands on the northern shore of the Kallas Lake bordering the River Kingdoms and Kyonin. Technically a dozen rafts lashed together, it is home to a tiny community of priests, with its membership (and component rafts) changing on a weekly basis.

Hanspur's priests are clerics, druids, or rangers. His druids may prepare *water walk* as a 3rd-level spell, and his rangers may prepare *water breathing* as a 2nd-level spell. Most druids and rangers have dire rat animal companions, though some prefer donkey rats, fish, frogs, otters, or even swimming snakes.





BY COLIN McCOMB

MIVON

When Choral the Conqueror began his bloody conquest in 4499, certain families of the Aldori swordlords fled south into the River Kingdoms and watched their homeland burn. They thought they were in the vanguard of their people. Instead, they were first in flight, as many of their compatriots remained behind to fight the invaders. Though 200 years have passed, the Aldori of Mivon still worry at the memory of their ignominious retreat, and rather than admit the cowardice of their ancestors, have turned the existence of Brevoiy itself into an insult to their honor. “Coward” and “Brevoiy bird” have become among the gravest insults one can bestow on the Mivoni Aldori, and those who lived here before the exodus have picked it up as well.



MIVON

Small City nonstandard (meritocracy); **AL** CN

Base Value 4,000 gp

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 10,870

Type humanoid (human 86%, dwarf 6%, elf 6%, gnome 2%)

AUTHORITY FIGURES

Raston Selline, mayor (CE male human fighter 10); **Gaspar Tellick**, adjutant swordlord (CE male human fighter 9); **Lady Andara Gisvet**, speaker for the Houses in Exile (N female human fighter 7).

The land of Mivon is, like all the River Kingdoms, heavily crisscrossed with rivers. Much of the low-lying land is marshy, and the locals have built high and arching stone bridges for their flocks of sheep and herds of cows, who feed on the high hills and in the highlands of the southeast. To the southwest, the kingdom's borders give way to the Embeth Forest, and in the northeast lives a tribe of exiled elves. The northwest of Mivon shares an uneasy border with Pitax, and though hostilities have largely ended between the two kingdoms, the history between them suggests that the longstanding enmity is never far from the surface.

The Aldori exiles have brought their love of dueling to Mivon, and here they have formalized its status: the basis of Mivon's current society is the List of Suitors, a monthly publication that lists the results of the previous month's duels. Fortunes rise and fall on the basis of a duel, governmental positions are won or lost, and scores are settled with a quick thrust or lunge.

Additionally, the central square of Mivon hosts the Sevier, a weekly gathering for swordsmen and swordswomen who wish to prove themselves in public. They simply appear, present themselves to the judges, and proclaim whom they wish to duel. Duels are usually not held without formal insults, and thus it is customary that a participant in the Sevier studies the list of names, calculates an insult, and delivers it within earshot of at least two witnesses. Many of the Mivoni Aldori have no wish to create everlasting enemies, however, and so must craft an insult that will create a great enough grievance for a response, but not so great that it requires a duel to the death.

Attendance among the Aldori is not mandatory; indeed, those who have settled reputations and positions tend to absent themselves from the affair unless they have been specifically challenged to appear.

The rules of Mivoni dueling are:

- The challenged picks the weapon and armor.
- The two parties must agree on the victory conditions of the duel; if they cannot, the duel is canceled and both suffer dishonor. Potential conditions include first blood, until one party is disabled, until one party concedes, or until death or otherwise mortal wounding.

- The two parties must agree on the stakes: money, position, a spot on the List, or some other defined object.
- Anyone between the ages of 16 and 60 may duel. Minors may not enter the List, no matter how great their skill, and those who achieve seniority may rest upon (or suffer) their reputations thereafter.
- Both men and women may participate.
- Only Aldori are eligible to win governmental positions.
- At the Sevier, one may fight only three duels per week, and no duel may last more than 15 minutes.
- All duels must be witnessed by at least one friend of each participant; otherwise, any fatalities resulting from a duel are considered homicide.
- A duel's outcome is irrevocable, and shall not be cause for vendetta.

Most Aldori of Brevoyn regard Mivoni Aldori as part of a subfaction of the swordpact, and many seek duels with the Mivoni to prove the superiority of their own branch of the tradition. The Mivoni conduct regular duels and face constant incursions from bandits and other fame-seekers drawn from across the River Kingdoms, and so their style has necessarily adjusted itself to become a broader, more encompassing net, a defensive style from which strikes and counters spit like lightning. Swordlords from Brevoyn come to Mivon to test their skill and the strength of the Mivoni, and those who return to Brevoyn—many of them grievously wounded—report that the Mivoni swordpact flourishes.

Non-Aldori winners who achieve some measure of fame in the List may be offered additional Aldori training, provided they have shown interest in the style. Rostlander Aldori may or may not recognize the trainees of Mivoni Aldori as members of the swordpact, depending on whether they wish to insult the bearer of the title.

As with most of the River Kingdoms, the early history of Mivon is fragmented, much of it lost to time and the constant eradication of its previous residents. The bandits who cycle through the region ensure that the legends of the land are full of bloodshed, petty and major. The Aldori exiles have shaped the character of this portion of the River Kingdoms, subjugating the more recent inhabitants, who in their turn put down the original settlers to occupy the area. Of the major River Kingdoms, Mivon is one of the most stable—not that this says much. The kingdom has a few more settlements than others, with palisades and guards, and some of the Aldori have been working intermittently on construction of stone keeps along the rivers leading to and from Pitax. Historians and their assistants have likewise come to Mivon to study the ancient dwellers of the land, some of whom are still said to lurk in the marshes and fens of the kingdom.

Government

When the Aldori arrived, they decided that they'd both create a more unified government for the area and bring with them



Rostland's government-in-exile. Unfortunately, the major families of Rostland remained behind to do battle with Choral the Conqueror and his dragons; the nine major Houses that fled had no clear line of succession from the court among them, and neither did the 20 or so minor Houses, and so the exiles began their struggle for supremacy almost immediately, even as they put down the bandits who had lived in Mivon before them.

The leadership of Mivon is commonly held to be a meritocracy. The Aldori swordlord Raston Selline is the titular mayor of the city, guiding Mivon through the treacherous waters of River Kingdoms politics. He claims that the city will pass to the hands of whoever can defeat him in a fair contest; first, though, a challenger must pass through a gauntlet of the lesser lords of Mivon, fighting his way up the List of Suitors.

Selline seems genteel enough, and is even a bit of a gossip. It's said that nothing passes in the salons and streets of the city without his knowledge, and he frequently lets drop juicy tidbits regarding rivals and up-and-coming duelists—never quite enough to provoke an insult (for his reputation is such that he can be bolder in his statements without danger), but certainly enough to cause some shame or embarrassment. He is proud of his network of informants, and whether it is as pervasive as he claims or this is mental trickery, none can—or will—say.

As Selline grows older, one of his compatriots, a younger swordlord of devastating skill named Gaspar Tellick, has voluntarily declared himself Selline's inferior—and thus anyone wishing to take the city's government must first pass through Tellick. This allows Selline to teach Tellick how to manipulate the hidden strings of the city and its intrigues, and how to deal with troublesome interlopers. The city whispers that Tellick will strike out at Selline sometime soon, but for now, they keep their friendship public and ostensibly tension-free.

Other powers exist in the city: the High Council, who officially advise Selline and unofficially control his network of informants; the League of Merchants, who ostensibly provide protection against river pirates in this and neighboring kingdoms, but who are said to be little more than organized thugs controlling the pirates; and the Houses in Exile, whose Aldori members proffer legislation and speak for the nobility in the politics of the city.

The Houses, according to popular opinion, agree on little. Mivon has no army; rather, each Aldori House fields its own militia, flies its own colors, and swears fealty to a master, rather than to Mivon as a whole. The Houses compete with each other for the right to provide security in the city, patrol the land around the city, and other such necessary military duties. Selline plays a complicated game in rotating these duties among the Houses, balancing the desires of the swordlords against the city's needs, and

sometimes he fails—on more than one occasion, militias being shipped to the frontier have spilled their successors' blood in the streets.

Notable Sites

Other than a dozen walled villages, only two places attract the attention of visitors to Mivon.

Mivon: The largest city in the kingdom, Mivon is the seat of government for the area. It's a walled city built at the confluence of two major rivers: one reaching to Restov and the other to New Stetven. The stone walls of Mivon have seen a number of sieges, and their foundations constantly sink into the marsh that surrounds the city. Still, the walls offer some protection, and they bristle with crossbowmen, as do the wharves and jetties lining the river that flows through the city. The great Council Hall (formerly the palace) sits in the central plaza of the town, and is itself surrounded by stronger walls. The square outside is the market square, filled with as much bustle as a kingdom the size of a barony can assemble. The structures inside the city are largely wooden, mostly one- and two-story buildings, though a few have expanded. The walls also contain granaries and livestock pens, to which the populace can drive any herds they might own in case of a raid. The greatest part of the Mivoni population lives here.

The ramshackle huts of the lower quarter, where most visitors stay if they're just passing through, line squalid, muddy streets. Half the houses here are places of ill repute: brothels, gambling dens, drug parlors, and worse. No fewer than three different gangs—the Fast Fallen, the River's Edge Cutters, and the Half-Deads (said to be servants of a vampire)—vie for control over the quarter, and their nightly battles always leave a few corpses in the street. Even the Aldori militia doesn't come down here in groups of less than four.

The nine great Aldori Houses and their holdings, along with a patchwork of smaller walled villages and communal farms surrounding those, create a wide ring around the city. Each of the larger families has constructed its own keep of stone or wood on the hills, to which their tenants can flee during raids, and from which the Houses can conduct raids of their own. Permanent communities here are walled and gated, with guards, mercenaries, and soldiers protecting them from the depredations of the bandits and opportunists that ply the rivers.

The Feasting Hall of Cayden Cailean: In southeastern Mivon, there is a bald hill—no trees or grass grow on its surface, and a ring of standing stones decorates its crown. Every few years, though not on any fixed schedule, the standing stones spontaneously expand and change to become the walls and roof of a grand and mysterious feasting hall, rumored to be that of Cayden Cailean himself. Anyone who comes to the hill on that evening can disappear inside



for a night or a decade of feasting and festivity. Music, laughter, and sounds of revelry spill from every lighted window, and the morning after, when the stones resume their normal appearance, the hilltop stinks of spilled ale and wine. The last time, though, villagers who approached the hilltop afterward found blood—a lot of blood—among the stones.

Resources

The city of Mivon fills a small, low-lying valley, and sits at the confluence of two branches of the Sellen River, neighboring a large fen. The kingdom's greatest exports are eels and fish—fishermen and drab eel catchers haunt the byways and sodden trails of the marsh, and drag their catch to market. The swampy land is home to quicksand and sudden pools, and someone not native to the area might see a slow and gruesome death in the sands.

Occasional bogs provide excellent sources of peat in more far-flung corners of the kingdom, and the Aldori exploit these as much as possible. Additionally, enterprising would-be lumber barons have started logging in the north of Mivon. Their only concern is the band of elves who've taken that forest; each side appears bent on total destruction of the other.

The chief exports of Mivon are bands of mercenaries trained in the Aldori swordpact. Every year, the Houses in Exile assemble select members of their militias and send them off to fight for the highest bidder, with the money coming into House coffers. It's not unknown for Mivoni mercenaries to be fighting on opposite sides of the same war; indeed, if one side hires a House, in many cases the other side immediately seeks a delegation from a different House. For the Houses, this has a dual benefit: it sends the hottest heads away, and it earns the Houses a significant sum.

Adventurers

For the most part, Mivon encourages foreign visitors. With adventurers come foreign trade and caravans, and this city, more than most, requires significant economic activity in order to maintain the lifestyles of the Aldori overlords. Further, more foreigners means more duels, and as any duels raise one's social standing, these foreigners become an easy rung for Mivon's social ladder.

Still, the kingdom has enough of a dark underbelly that it'd be easy for an outsider to come in and spoil someone's fun. Whether Selline or his cronies are connected to that underbelly is a matter better left unsaid, unstated, and skirting implication—but digging too deep into the criminal world in Mivon is a sure route to “a duel in the fishponds.” It is best for foreigners to keep themselves on the legitimate side of things, and not to try to link any of the Aldori Houses to the corruption that seeps up from the river's edge.

Adventure Hooks

Mivon's current problems stem not only from its location, but its history.

From the Old Country: Brevoys' criminals have long considered Mivon a place to start over—or, more often, to flee the long arm of the law and continue their predation someplace significantly less policed. Of late, it seems that Brevoys' jails have grown empty, for there's a far greater influx of these criminals than usual. They're taking hill steadings and violating the laws of the river, as if they were daring someone to come and dislodge them. They're still primarily in the north, but they've recently allied under a female chief called Rainbow's Daughter, so named for her habit of withdrawing to lure her enemies to a place where she can strike them down.

The Mysterious Plume: Orange smoke rises intermittently from the center of the Embeth Forest, and serves as a beacon for adventurers. Some few of them have returned to tell of an ancient ruin hidden within the forest's depths, but to a man these haggard wrecks shudder and refuse to say any more on the subject. Most who venture out never see the light of day again.

The Red Revolutionaries: Galtan bounty hunters are branching out throughout Mivon, operating with near-total disregard for the laws laid by Selline. The bounty hunters never approach major towns, but they take citizens with impunity and brutality. Rumors along the rivers say that they are in fact the predecessors of a more powerful force preparing to move on the Aldori and take control of Mivon for themselves. The Houses in Exile are said to be drafting a resolution to empower outsiders to eliminate the problem: in effect, putting bounties on the heads of the bounty hunters.

Saber-Rattling: The kingdom of Pitax is making noise again on the borders. The small towns that lie between Mivon and Pitax report an ever-increasing frequency of raiders and skirmishers near their homes, as well as foreign loggers heading toward the Embeth Forest. Most of these “loggers” are heavily armed and armored, as if there's something besides wood they're going after.

Simple Thuggery: The people of Mivon face constant danger from roving gangs of bandits, thugs, and thieves. Because of the difficulties in transporting goods safely to and from the settlements, some of the more enterprising residents have begun working on ways to create safe trading passages. So far, their best solution has been hiring more and better guards for each trip, but this is a temporary solution that leads only to escalation. Word is that they're leaning toward paying protection money to the League of Merchants, but they haven't got enough cash on hand nor the inclination to invite the League into their cities in force. They'd rather hire mercenaries or adventurers to solve the problem for them.



BY MIKE FERGUSON

PITAX

Long a haven for thieves and smugglers, Pitax is a hub for trade in the River Kingdoms. It aspires to be a center of culture and higher learning as well, but cannot escape its more unsavory origins. Threats and plots from other lands—as well as from within the borders of Pitax itself—have the potential to tear the small kingdom apart. Greedy adventurers eye the rich land on its northern frontier and picture themselves as rulers of their own kingdoms, collecting taxes that this kingdom so desperately needs for itself. Only the actions of Pitax's shrewd leader, Lord Irovetti, have managed to stave off this downward spiral to ruin—at least, for the moment.



PITAX

Small City autocracy (single ruler); AL CN

Base Value 4,000 gp

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 8,790

Type humanoid (human 90%, halfling 4%, elf 3%, other 3%)

AUTHORITY FIGURES

Castruccio Irovetti, lord of the city (CN male human bard 9); **Irsei Caelysse**, captain of the guard (NG male elf ranger 7), **Kharne Vereel**, guildmaster of the thieves' guild (NE male gnome rogue 9), **Joravin Pyathe**, shipmaster of the yard (N male dwarf expert 3/fighter 3), **Atalia Gitaren**, headmistress of the Academy of Grand Arts (NG female half-elf bard 4/ranger 2), **Xapiri Yasmína**, owner of the Serpent's Breath Trade House (LE female human expert 3/sorcerer 3).

Pitax's origins lie with brigands from their neighbor to the north, Brevoy, who sought sanctuary amid the forests of the River Kingdoms. The most famed of these brigands, a rogue with sorcerous powers born with the name Cesare Cattanei but better known as the Silver Fox, took to hiding his band of vicious thieves in a riverside hamlet known as Pitax. As they visited there year after year, the ill-gotten gold of the Silver Fox slowly transformed Pitax into something considerably larger than a simple, sleepy fishing village. Eventually, when the Silver Fox and his followers grew tired of their larcenous ways—and when the prices on their heads in Brevoy became too great—they settled in Pitax permanently, building walls around the village and hiring sellswords to help defend against their enemies. With this, Pitax became a permanent fixture of the River Kingdoms, able to survive and thrive for nearly 4 centuries while others around it withered and decayed.

Most of Pitax's history has been embroiled with strife. The small kingdom constantly battles with its neighbor Mivon for control of the fertile territory along the border that they share. Numerian brigands regularly attack the northern reaches of Pitax, and are given covert support by the Numerian crown. Brevoy, though it has never struck at Pitax with its formidable might, always threatens to do so, forcing Pitax to keep a vigilant eye to the east. Small factions within Pitax always squabble with one another for control of the kingdom. The two largest of these factions are the Cattanei and the Liacenza families. The Liacenzas, renowned for their fruit orchards near the town of Sarain, ruled Pitax for the better part of the last century. Though the family's rule bordered on the thuggish—their dealings with potential rivals tended to be brutal and clumsy—few people within the borders of the small kingdom complained, for they kept the orchards and the vineyards flourishing and gold coins flowing into their coffers from Brevoy and Numeria. Most importantly, they brokered the Grand Tournament of Sarain, which kept the prized vineyards near the village protected from the constant border wars with Mivon. Under their guidance, Pitax remained small but secure for decades.

This changed in 4702 with the arrival of a Numerian bard named Castruccio Irovetti. With a silver tongue and a sack filled with gold coins, Irovetti bought most of the trading houses in Pitax, and managed to talk his way into profitable partnerships with the rival merchants of the Liacenza family. On one fateful evening, Irovetti invited the leaders of the Liacenza name—the brothers Lothaire and Berengar, warriors renowned for their skills with the rapier—to a card game at one of his warehouses. Somehow, no one present could later recollect the events of that card game, or any part of that strange evening. However, when the sun rose the next morning, Irovetti owned a signed document legally handing over all the possessions of the Liacenza family to him, including the crown of Pitax.

Born from the blood and sweat of criminals, Pitax was initially conceived as nothing more than a den of thieves, where bandits could hide from authorities. Though this criminal haven has grown into something far greater, with much influence among the other River Kingdoms and many legitimate businesses driving its economy, its heart remains unchanged. The real goings-on in Pitax take place at night under cover of darkness, where the thieves and bandits who control both the city and the kingdom—a group including the kingdom's leader—conduct most of their business.

Hoping to give Pitax the illusion of respectability, Irovetti formed the Academy of Grand Arts shortly after taking over, hoping to turn the small city into a bastion of fine arts and high culture. Unfortunately, this plan proved to be disastrous. Irovetti insists on carefully controlling whatever the various artists, musicians, actors, and other performers of the academy create or do. As a result, the talented sorts that Irovetti hoped to attract to the academy never come, instead leaving only those with limited talents and great delusions of grandeur to enter its gates.

Government

A small, slight man who walks with a pronounced limp, Lord Irovetti is not physically intimidating or particularly handsome. He is, however, a charming fellow with a gifted memory, one who knows even the smallest of details about those with whom he speaks. Additionally, his most prized asset is hidden in plain sight—his cane, a silver curiosity that Irovetti “liberated” from his estranged father. In reality, the cane is a Numerian artifact, one that acts in a manner similar to a *rod of rulership*. However, Irovetti's cane only has a limited number of uses, something he knows well, so he makes use of its power only when necessary.

Irovetti has a gift for studying other people and learning their wants and fears. During his years as lord of Pitax, he has managed to stay out of the way of his enemies—of which there are many—by successfully pitting them against one another. Observers have noted that Irovetti's methods seem to be the work of a shrewd genius at times, and a raving madman at



The Academy of Grand Arts

While not as popular as some of the great bardic schools of the Inner Sea, Pitax's Academy of Grand Arts still manages to attract some students seeking greater specialization.

Focused Performance

Bards who have successfully mastered the strict curriculum of Pitax's Academy of Grand Arts to graduate are more adept in their assigned field of performance, at the expense of versatility in other areas. Such bards have the focused performance alternate class ability, which replaces versatile performance.

Focused Performance (Ex): At 2nd level, a bard must choose one type of Perform skill. The bard gains Extra Performance as a bonus feat, usable only with the chosen category of the Perform skill. At 8th level, and every 6 levels thereafter, the bard gains Extra Performance as an additional bonus feat. The additional uses of bardic performance gained from these feats cannot be used with any category of the Performance skill other than the one chosen at 2nd level.

others. Whatever the endgame of the Numerian bard might be, the only thing known for sure by anyone—save Irovetti himself—is that it is complex, ambitious, and likely to take years, if not decades, to reach.

Notable Sites

Three settlements in Pitax stand out as focal points for conflict in this kingdom.

Mormouth: The small hamlet of Mormouth, located in the northwest corner of Pitax, is a reluctant part of both the River Kingdoms and Pitax. Tradition ties Mormouth to Pitax, but common sense and a desire for gold and other finer things in life edge it ever closer to Numeria, its stronger neighbor. Mormouth was founded not long after the establishment of Pitax as an actual kingdom. Beginning as a humble fishing outpost, the hamlet remained a sleepy, unassuming place for many years. When Pitax underwent a great period of civil unrest a mere hundred years ago, and split into the rival kingdoms of Pitax and Corvenn, Mormouth found itself in Corvenn, which allied with Numeria. When Corvenn merged back into Pitax a few decades later, all of the Numeria-based prestige and affluence gained by the people of Mormouth vanished, transforming the bustling town back into a simple fishing village. Some welcomed this change, but many others did not. Now the residents of Mormouth are strongly divided on the issue of where their true loyalties lie, enough so that violent unrest has been known to spill out onto its streets over the matter.

Pitax: Pitax is a strange and disparate city, with distinctive sections. The original city sprang outward from the keep built long ago by the Silver Fox. However, the western half of Pitax partly burned to the ground during its rebellious war

with Corvenn nearly a century ago, and only under Irovetti's direction has this ruined section of the city been rebuilt. Sailors and newcomers to Pitax keep to the eastern parts of the city, known as Troutmouth. The merchants and rogues who have long controlled Pitax stay in the central heart of the city, known as the Shattered Ward. The newcomer artists and musicians keep to the west, in the New Ruins, where the Academy of Grand Arts resides.

Until Irovetti's arrival in Pitax, the various merchant Trade Houses of the city—and the families that controlled those houses—ruled over the city. Though they only retain a fraction of the power they once possessed, the Trade Houses still control the city's docks and warehouses, and also maintain strong financial ties with influential people in Numeria, Brevoy, and the other River Kingdoms. Most travelers staying in Pitax for more than a day or so invariably wind up allying themselves with one of the houses, as trying to accomplish anything in the city without the support of a house typically proves to be a complete waste of time.

The Thieves' Guild of Pitax effectively controls the city. No shipments of goods may move in or out of the city without the guild's blessing. Even the most honest of merchants know that they must pay bribes to the guild on a regular basis in order to avoid the unnecessary plunder of their caravans. Rumors abound that the guild's headquarters lie far beneath the city, and are guarded by a large labyrinth filled with minotaurs who also serve as the guild's enforcers. Those seeking to commit any illicit activity in Pitax would be well served to apply for membership in the guild, or at least seek its blessing, lest they face its formidable wrath.

Sarain: This town lies close to the border between Pitax and Mivon, meaning that Sarain has changed hands from one kingdom to the other over a half-dozen times in the past 200 years. The reason for this is simple—whoever controls the village controls the wondrous vineyards that grow nearby. Many a border war has been fought between the two small kingdoms over these vineyards, as Sarain vintages are renowned throughout Avistan. Unfortunately, an unintended consequence of this constant fighting has been the vineyards' occasional destruction.

Resources

Pitax has long been known for its prized orchards and vineyards. In particular, the lush area near Sarain has supplied all the lands of the Inner Sea with fine wines for over a century. Many of the forests of Pitax have been transformed into grand orchards producing apples, oranges, plums, and pears. Though much of this fruit can only be sold to the other River Kingdoms or nearby lands before spoiling, the various ciders and ales that come forth from the Pitaxian merchant houses are almost as popular as the wines, and Pitaxian dried fruit is a staple aboard most merchant ships set to sail across long expanses of oceans. Additionally, a few cunning alchemists have used the various fruits to create a wide variety



of exotic paints, something quite appreciated by the many artists making their home in Pitax.

The recent influx of artists and musicians into Pitax has also cultivated a slow but steady growth in the number of artisans producing fine musical instruments. Though many of the performers utilizing these instruments have little talent, the instruments themselves have proven to be of phenomenal quality. In particular, a Pitaxian craftsman named Nicolo Gramati has created many masterwork stringed instruments which are coveted by bards and musicians at the finest courts across Golarion.

The needs of Pitax are quite simple—metal and stone. Apart from a few sparse limestone quarries, Pitax possesses neither. These limitations keep the number of blacksmiths working in Pitax to just a handful. Swords and other tools wrought from metal are often in short supply, which is why Irovetti seeks constantly to acquire them with generous trade agreements from the other River Kingdoms and from Numeria. Irovetti constantly monitors the black-market sales of weapons in Pitax with great interest—he actually doesn't mind that they are brought into his small kingdom, provided that they aren't turned against him.

Much of the reason that other River Kingdoms pay attention to Pitax these days is because of its market for strange drugs. Many of the artists and musicians who travel to Pitax to become great performers often resort to taking mind-altering substances, hoping to foster their creative abilities, and this creates a demand for pesh from Katapesh, odd elven plants harvested in Kyonin, and exotic leaves and animal parts from the Mwangi Expanse.

Adventurers

Pitax is a veritable haven for bards and rogues. Though the streets of its quiet hamlets seem quite benign to travelers, there lurks within a covert world of intrigue. In Pitax, adventurers may find themselves able to buy, trade, or sell exotic items that simply cannot be found in the other River Kingdoms—provided, of course, that the seller is part of the thieves' guild. Although it officially does not exist, Pitax's thieves' guild has flourished under the reign of Irovetti. Crimes committed in Pitax without proper guild sanctioning bring harsh retribution against those responsible, both from the officials of the law and the guild. Criminal sentences for non-guild rogues tend to be much more severe than those meted out to guild members—a handsome result of the gold flowing from the guild to Irovetti and his cronies.

Pitax's focus upon the only to fall victim, arts tends to draw bards to the small nation like moths to a flame. With the various theaters and festivals spread out among all the towns of Pitax, jobs are plentiful for those who can entertain. In particular, the taverns of Pitax enjoy holding singing competitions, sometimes for those who have the best voice, other times for those who can compose the most beautiful

song, or the bawdiest one. In all such cases, the prizes for these competitions can be handsome indeed for a novice performer—a sack of gold, a handful of gemstones, or even a small magical item about which little is known. Bribery among the judges of these contests runs rampant, and winners are often confronted in the back alleys of Pitax by sore losers armed with swords.

Fighters, rangers, and druids may find work among the farmers of the various vineyards and orchards in Pitax. These places are constant targets of bandits from Brevo, as well as roaming monsters. Most farmers just want hired warriors to protect their lands, but a few hire mercenaries to actively seek out and destroy potential enemies before their farmlands can be threatened, and a druid's green thumb is usually welcome.

Many wizards and sorcerers can make a handsome living by using their alchemical skills to partake in the illicit trade of narcotics—and many other good-hearted magic users seek to stop their less scrupulous brethren.

Adventure Hooks

Intrigue, double-crossings, and backstabbing are all part of daily existence in Pitax. Most events here revolve around the thieves' guild, the Trade Houses, or the Red Crescent Theater.

The Dark Theater: Those involving themselves with the Red Crescent Theater quickly learn of the underground drug trade that pervades the theater and the Academy of Grand Arts. Anyone seeking to stop the drug trade in Pitax—or at least slow it down—need only start in the basements of the theater, where some academy students also dabble in alchemy and the dark arts of magic. Longtime residents of Pitax also speak of dark portals lying beneath the theater, which was built on the ruins of a forgotten temple. According to legend, these portals lead to hellish domains if opened correctly, but also to great realms of treasure and power.

Serving the Trade Houses: Various merchants and craftsmen scattered all over the kingdoms deal with the various Trade Houses of Pitax. The Trade Houses often require guards to accompany their caravans to protect them from the assorted brigands lurking in the wilds of the River Kingdoms. They often need the services of explorers as well—to find treasures in the 12 abandoned towers near Pitax, or to find possible mines of ore in the hills east of Mormouth.

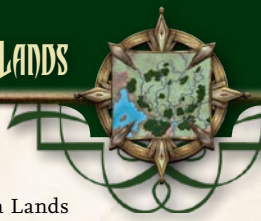
Steal and Re-Steal: The Thieves' Guild of Pitax always has openings for enterprising adventurers, and gladly waives typical initiation fees and rituals in exchange for performing simple tasks. The guild often looks for newcomers to Pitax willing to “liberate” certain items from the warehouses and ships of the city; likewise, the original owners of those objects often seek to have their property liberated in kind from the guild. Daring adventurers can earn handsome rewards from the richer merchants of Pitax by stealing from the guild, although doing so may be tantamount to signing one's own death warrant if caught.



BY F. WESLEY SCHNEIDER

THE STOLEN LANDS

Across the northern frontier of the River Kingdoms runs a hinterland not even the most brazen bandit lords dare to claim. Sharing borders with strange barbarians and the scions of a proud kingdom, this wilderness invites few intruders, out of fear of provoking the ire of empires. For untold decades this land has lain fallow, left to the devices of nature and deadly beasts, while strange things lurk amid its swamps, forests, and peaks, and the remnants of an ancient, near-forgotten history sleeps amid ruins and weeds. These are the Stolen Lands, a lordless realm having defied untold conquerors, yet ripe with potential for any bold enough to prove themselves its masters.



The regions called the Stolen Lands takes its name from Brevo, which claims this realm as rightfully its own. The fertile plains of the Brevic demesne of Rostland spill into the region, coloring the fractious nation's claim on the wilderness. This makes the border between the River Kingdoms and the northern realm hotly contested, with the descendants of Choral the Conquer—the unifier of modern Brevo—and ancient Rostlandic nobles claiming right to lands as far south as Hooktongue Slough and the Kamelands, and some brash families asserting their reach extends as far south as the bandit city of Pitax. Beyond the plains, to the east stretch the craggy forests of the Narlmarches and rugged hill country that gradually rises in the wall-like mountains called the Tors of Levenies. To the west, the many rivers and bogs of the Hooktongue Slough transform the region's lowlands into a vast swamp, eventually giving way to the Spinefields, weedy plains threaded over with bony crags, with the forest of Thousand Voices and the steeps around Mount Branthlend beyond. Diverse in both vistas and dangers, the Stolen Lands hide a variety of dangers, from tales of hauntings and eerie lights in the west to claims of ruins from forgotten empires scattered across the east, with the dens of bandit gangs, strange recluses, and deadly beasts scattered throughout. Those who travel the land, whether as traders or conquerors, find it a rugged, unforgiving region, one that has defied ages of settlers as if it consciously preferred to remain a realm of brutality and beasts. Yet endlessly, new generations enter the land with ambitions and steel, ever hoping to carve out a piece of the Stolen Lands for themselves.

Notable Sites

Largely uninhabited by civilized folk, the Stolen Lands hold ample opportunities for profit and adventure. Noted here are several of the regions and noteworthy sites within the northeastern River Kingdoms, along with numerous rumors and legends that tempt glory seekers and treasure hunters to these secluded reaches.

Candlemere: Leaves from the Narlmarches collect year round within the clear depths of the Candlemere. In spring and summer, the lake reflects the colors trapped below in vibrant greens and rainbow bursts of flowering hues. By autumn, fiery reds, oranges, and yellows blaze through the water. In winter, the oft-frozen surface hides depthless blacks that make the lake appear as unfathomable as the night sky. Legends say that drinking from the Candlemere can, depending on the season, grant long life, cut a life short, intoxicate, or invigorate. In the middle of the lake lies a hilly island covered in mysterious willows, surrounding the ruins of an ancient, crumbling tower. Eerie witchlights glow above the tower on summer nights, and will-o'-wisps congregate here throughout the fall, perhaps holding eerie councils or plotting whatever motivates their inscrutable deeds.

Dunsward: This easternmost frontier of the Stolen Lands borders the steppes of Casmaron and the ancient ruins of Iobaria. Tribes of barbaric centaurs regularly traverse these low, grassy plains, seeing no distinction between this region and their pastoral homeland. Proud and suspicious of humanoids, these tribes avoid what they consider human lands, holding to an ages-old unspoken truce, and are both easily and violently provoked should their plains feel humanoid boots. Although the Brevic city of Restov lies nearby, the lands south of the river have traditionally been held as existing beyond Brevo's borders and are trod at great risk.

Glenebon: The black hills of Glenebon march from the Stolen Lands into Numeria. Moody gray grasses and tangled scrub meander over rocky hills, regularly blasted by fierce winds in the spring and autumn and by summer brush fires. Few trees stand above the craggy hills and little shelter exists in the dusky land, with the hilltops mounted by barren stone and the valleys filled with scrub and scree. While rain comes too often to transform the hill country into true badlands, the rugged plants that thrive in the area mean that little more than beetles, rodents, snakes, and mangy wolves prowl these hills. Several small prides of manticores find the region to their liking, however, and range from the Branthlend Mountains across the hills and into Numeria, fighting each other for dominance and impaling any creature larger than a hare that falls under their shadow.

Hooktongue Slough: Beyond the Narlmarches sink the lowlands of the Stolen Lands, a great murky swamp of rotting trees and moldy mosses. Threaded through with hundreds of slow-moving rivulets and algae-clogged brooks, the Hooktongue Slough sprawls in a massive slime pit, home to all manner of stinging insects, sickly rodents, and croaking predators. Among the northern reaches, large snakes and strange water-striding creatures hunt in close proximity to Lake Hooktongue. To the south, several tribes of boggards inhabit high mound-islands, defending their lands against all interlopers while avoiding the ill-reputed northern lake. Trolls also make occasional forays into the southern swamps, but in wariness of the frogfolk and their strange magics rarely attempt to expand their territory. With such obvious dangers and countless more unknown, few humans would even consider entering the slough were it not for the azure lily, known to grow only amid the bogs just south of Lake Hooktongue. Reputed to be able to cause paralysis in any creature that breathes its grainy blue pollen, the elusive lily has long been hunted for by bandits and assassins of all walks. While most believe the plant to be nothing more than a myth, occasionally a few pinches of a dangerous blue power appear in Pitax or Daggermark, spurring renewed interest in and searches for the plant. Such hunts, however, usually culminate in nothing more than more deaths and disappearances in the depths of the Hooktongue Slough.



Kingmaker

The Stolen Lands serve as the setting for the Kingmaker Adventure Path. The sixth Pathfinder Adventure Path—found in *Pathfinder* volumes #31 to #36—Kingmaker leads PCs from their place as agents in the service of Brevoy to rulers of a fledgling country. With new rules allowing players to explore every step of the region and a subsystem for building and running a country included along with all the adventures, characters, encounters, and monsters that color a complete campaign, Kingmaker delves into the Stolen Lands in expansive detail. Check out *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #31: “Stolen Land” and the *Kingmaker Map Folio* for additional insights, maps, encounters, and details on this fateful frontier.

The Kamelands: Rolling hills of brown and yellow grass sprawl across the eastern Stolen Lands, the patchy, sand-colored waves and dusky tarns broken by countless rocky mounds called kames. With grasses ranging in height from mere inches to lashing blades over 4 feet tall, and uneven rises rife with hidden rocks, the hill country poses a daunting barrier to travel and settlement, accounting for much of the region’s continued wildness. Amid the hills and grass loom the mysterious kames. While most of these mounds of ancient stone and debris stand quiet and purposeless, in many corners of the region they display strange patterns, with mounds suggestive of waymarkers, ancient barrows, or even long-crumbled walls or foundations. Aside from a few small herds of wild horses and goats, few large animals inhabit the Kamelands, with wolves, foxes, hares, and multitudes of rodents and snakes being the primary occupants. Frequently, wyverns from the western tors wing over the region, seeking easy prey from above, while bears, boars, owlbeats, and other savage creatures from the eastern forests regularly range into the hills. While the horses of the region are reputed for their vigor and surefootedness, those from the southern River Kingdoms who attempt to capture such mounts often run afoul of the trolls of the southern Narlmarches, making such attempts too dangerous to regularly risk.

Lake Hooktongue: Deep and snaking, the murky gray-green waters of Lake Hooktongue slither through the northern bogs that make up Hooktongue Slough. Some might say that the lake and the slough are one and the same, Lake Hooktongue merely forming the deepest reaches with the surrounding swamps and their ever-changing runnels, mounds of damp earth, and boggy plants connecting to form a single massive, shallow body. Hidden almost completely by the pike-like hemlock and moody willow trees that flourish in the swampy surroundings, only the lake’s westernmost shore emerges from the bog, presenting a pebbled beach patrolled by legions of geese and egrets.

Few visitors come to the lake, though, as the moody, secluded place shares a deadly reputation with its famous ancient resident, the Hooktongue orm. Said to live deep in the cold, murky water where it might sleep for years amid the mud and dead leaves, Old Hooktongue snakes its way throughout the lake and even into the deeper waterways of the slough, feeding upon whatever it pleases. Said to resemble a black water snake of prehistoric proportions with jaws strong enough to snatch up a bear and a ridge of razor-sharp fins, the lake orm rules as the undisputed master of all the Hooktongue waterways. While many dismiss the beast as legend, sightings occur too often and furriers and trappers disappear near the lake too regularly for the tale to quietly fade away. Hunters venturing near the lake always leave a part of their kills on the shore as an offering and appeasement to Old Hooktongue.

Lake Silverstep: The cleanest and clearest source of water in the Stolen Lands, Lake Silverstep draws from countless pristine streams and rivulets cascading down the steep tors to the east. Dozens of small waterfalls and foamy cascades make the lake’s eastern shores places of eldritch beauty, where ancient willows spread mossy canopies over islands of flowering reeds and lilies. Several small bands of fairies and faerie dragons dwell along the most secluded shores. Welcoming to those who don’t threaten their misty paradise, the fey tell of a wise old silver dragon who once laired amid the falls and from whom the lake takes its name. More than one eager wanderer, incited by fairy tales of gems and dragon silver, has discovered the caverns hidden behind several of the lake’s falls, just at its waterline, and below. Those who return speak of connections with caverns that run deep beneath the Tors of Levenies, of monstrous ossuaries, and of strange eyes that glow in the depths. Most, however, are never seen again.

Mount Branthlend: From amid a cloak of low, forested mountains and high hills rises Mount Branthlend, the Peak of Broken Promises. Distinctive not for its incredible height—though it does stand as the largest in the surrounding Branthlend range—but for its barren summit, the mountain rises like a bald pate upon a monk’s head. Reaching a height of more than 5,000 feet, the mountain’s knob-like pinnacle of stark white stone stands completely bare, except for some particularly tenacious scrub and a few standing snags and windfalls along the forested rim some 450 feet below. Kellid tales claim that Noarra, the first love of the barbarian lord Tagran, wailed curses from this peak after the warlord took another woman as his queen, and that amid a storm of stone and fire the peak was scoured and she was transformed into the blade-scaled dragon that legendarily rampaged across eastern Numeria. This fantastic myth draws desperate souls from across Numeria and the River Kingdoms to Mount Branthlend’s peak even today, where rumors claim that frightening and



ancient powers of darkness and fire pay oaths of vengeance special heed.

The Narlmarches: Splitting the Stolen Lands in half, the Narlmarches—or Narlmarch Woods, as they are sometimes known—sprawl across the region's lowlands, hiding deep ravines, craggy hills, and languid streams beneath its boughs of oak, beech, and rushleaf. Within range proud herds of elk, rivercats (a mossy-furred breed of bobcat), black bears, boars, brush thylacines, and numerous breeds of especially large rodents. More unusual creatures also inhabit the forest, including giant owls, will-o'-wisps, various aggressive plant creatures, and a healthy owlbear population. Several small troll gangs also occupy the forest's southern reaches near the Candlemere, their seclusion affording them a simple life as hunters and scavengers, though, like most of their kind, they take eager sport in ambushing weaker humanoids. The ruins of numerous forgotten bandit hideaways also molder within the Narlmarches, leading to countless tales of lost riches and trap-laden tombs of fantastic treasures.

Rushlight: A small lake only a dozen or so miles north of barbarian-ruled Pitax, Lake Rushlight has a dichotomous reputation for both good and terrible luck. The lake takes its name from the strange and seemingly natural lights that regularly flicker across its surface, eerie flames of green and blue that flash into life, cut wavering paths over the water, and then vanish. By day, the pale lights prove difficult to see, though occasionally a flash of color blooms with special brilliance and streaks across the water like a falling star. Witnessing such "daylights" is said to bring good luck. At night, though, the lights become far easier to see, illuminating the water with a spectral glow. It is said that those who look upon these colors risk being hypnotized and coaxed by the weird spirits of the lake to enter the water and drown amid the flames. A small island also floats near the center of the unusually deep lake, covered in stands of hemlock, dense shrubs, and tall reeds. A strange breed of slight egrets lives here, which possess beautiful rainbow plumage. These rushlight egrets are rarely captured, though, as they are disquietingly still and silent, rarely blink, and are said to scream like women when slain.

Thousand Voices: Among the densest wildernesses of the River Kingdoms, the forest of Thousand Voices holds untold varieties of life and an almost equal number of mysteries. Also called the Forest of Breath, it is a strange place, and nearly all who come within sight of the misty old-growth realm of tall beech, white oak, hemlock, and veined orger trees speak of strange lights and whispers that rise and fall through the foliage. While moaning wind and sparkling dew amid the hanging, hag-hair lichen account for a measure of the strange accounts, tales of unexplained disappearances, ghostly beckoners, and winding paths that open and vanish with a glance grant the forest its sinister

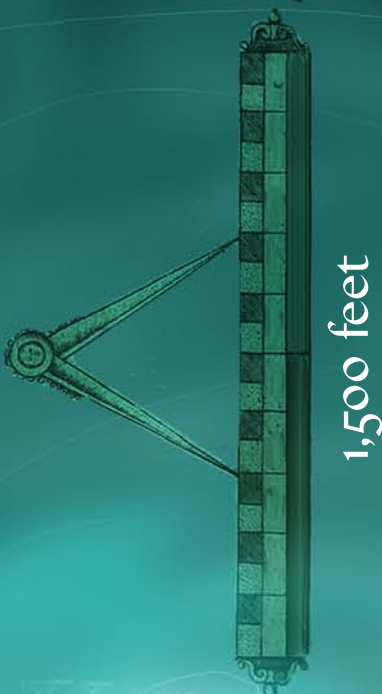
reputation. Numerous fey beings and fairy-kin are known to linger among the gnarled forest trunks, and while many prove content to merely harass those who intrude upon their woodlands, others prove far less forgiving, especially of those trespassers bearing flame and steel. Bandit rumors also speak of much stranger things hidden by the forest, like massive but slow dragonsnails, the ancient Trees That Weep, Ghogas the Tick Mother, and the ivy-exploded Castle of Knives. For all its tales of danger and treasure, though, all rumors of the woodland carry with them the same warning: avoid the Forest of Breath, where men are unwelcome.

Tors of Levenies: Looming over the eastern Stolen Lands, the Tors of Levenies jut up violently from the rolling grass of the Kamelands. As if thrust skyward by some ancient upheaval, the mountains stand wall-like against the western reaches, all cliffs and streaked escarpments, some over 300 feet high. From the east, the mountains ascend more slowly, climbing gently to the rocky ridges that give the summits a distinctive appearance, reminiscent of walls and ruins of impossible size, scoured by weather and countless ages. Gnarled willows and brownish swards climb many of the eastern slopes, ascending nearly to the stony summits. Such growth hides numerous pits, shallow valleys, ravines, and tarns, making climbing the seemingly even slopes a surprisingly treacherous affair. Craggs and openings into caverns below also dot the mountains, revealing vast cave systems hidden below. Those explorers who return from such depths bring tales of lairing wyverns, great blind snakes, and poisonous stones. Perhaps most unnerving, though, are reports of massive sculptures and ancient, flaking cave art brooding in the dark, the works of forgotten and impossibly-sized artists of the past.

The Tuskwater: Cliffs and steep hills hide this brown, rocky lake from almost every direction, though following any river through the Kamelands or Narlmarches inevitably leads to its waters. Sounders of boars frequently visit its shores and favor the thick briars and berry tangles between its western shore and the forest, these beasts granting the great arching body its name. Swelling with the spring thaw, the Tuskwater floods seasonally, spilling into swampy ravines all along its length but mainly to the west. This creates muddy gullies and pits of standing water where fierce swarms of mosquitoes, stirges, fat snakes, and assassin vines prey upon whatever falls into the quicksand-like muck. At more significant depths, the Tuskwater proves bountiful, with pike, longnose gar, bluegill, and—more dangerously—fanged eels. While fanged eels are well known for their slippery skins and vicious, painful bites, elder eels in the lake are known to grow up to 8 feet long and can ably reverse the stakes on any fisherman who tries to make a meal of them. Nevertheless, Tuskwater fanged eels are a delicacy on the tables of New Stetven in Brevoiy to the north, making the reward well worth the danger.

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The Tarnished Jewel
of the River Kingdoms



The Devil's Tusks

Moondock

Troutmouth

The Shattered Ward

The New Ruins