

SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER SOCIETY



YEAR OF
CORRUPTION'S
REACH

Scenario #2-07

Levels 5-8

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

By Charlie Brooks



AUTHOR

Charlie Brooks

DEVELOPMENT LEADS

James Case and Jenny Jarzabski

ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Linda Zayas-Palmer

DESIGN LEAD

Mark Seifter

EDITING LEAD

Leo Glass

EDITOR

Patrick Hurley

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

Nicolas Espinoza

CARTOGRAPHERS

Jason Engle

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Tony Barnett

ORGANIZED PLAY MANAGING DEVELOPER

Linda Zayas-Palmer

ORGANIZED PLAY MANAGER

Tonya Woldridge

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

James Jacobs

DIRECTOR OF GAME DEVELOPMENT

Adam Daigle

PUBLISHER

Erik Mona

HOW TO PLAY



PLAY TIME: 4-5 HOURS



LEVELS: 5-8



PLAYERS: 3-6



Paizo Inc.
7120 185th Ave NE, Ste 120
Redmond, WA 98052-0577

paizo.com

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GM RESOURCES

Campaign Home Page: pathfindersociety.club

Books: *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* and *Pathfinder Bestiary*

Maps: *Pathfinder Flip Tiles: Dungeon Starter Set* and *Pathfinder Flip Mat: Noble Estate*

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

SCENARIO TAGS

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



GRAND ARCHIVE

SUMMARY

After summoning the PCs to the Grand Lodge, Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin appoints them as investigators into matters at the Blakros Museum. He instructs the PCs to speak with Dhrami Blakros at her townhouse, tour the museum itself with Nigel Aldain, and then report back with their findings regarding the curator's competence.

Unknown to the PCs, Dhrami has heard wind of the investigation and contacted the Onyx Alliance to buy time. The first of these delays comes in the form of a dwarven pickpocket who attempts to steal the PCs' letter of appointment. At the townhouse, burglars have tied Dhrami up while they loot the building. These robbers actually serve at the behest of the Onyx Alliance and seek to delay the PCs before escaping.

The PCs investigate the townhouse under Dhrami's guidance and the museum with Nigel's accompaniment. While searching the area, the PCs have the opportunity to influence both individuals. During the course of the investigation, they enter a vault that contains a set of enchanted statues, which are actually magically preserved nightmares. These monsters spring to life in the presence of the PCs.

Depending on how much the PCs influenced Nigel and Dhrami, the curator might explain the Blakros family's checkered history and admit to his secret sabotage. Finally, the PCs report their findings to Ambrus, either defending Nigel or recommending his removal.

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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

After enduring many thefts, disappearances, and disasters over the years, the historic Blakros Museum has become something of an embarrassment to the prominent family who founded it. As the common denominator in all of these tribulations, Curator Nigel Aldain now serves as the focal point for the stakeholders' ire. Whispers of Nigel's inability to manage the museum grew when members of the Pathfinder Society recommended that he face an investigation for incompetence.

In truth, Nigel has poorly managed the museum not due to incompetence but because his motivations run counter to the interests of most of the Blakros family. Nigel serves as the devoted spouse of Dhrami Blakros, who aids her husband in deliberately squandering her family's resources as part of a subtle revenge scheme. Dhrami knows the sinister secret that allowed her family to rise to prominence, and she wishes all involved to suffer for centuries of misdeeds.

For more than 500 years, the Blakros family accumulated a vast fortune thanks to a contract known as the Penumbral Accords. This agreement allowed the family access to the Shadow Plane, allowing the Blakroses to access trade routes inaccessible to other merchants in Golarion. However, this unfettered access came with a heavy price. As part of the Penumbral Accords, the Blakros family provided shipments of slaves to the Onyx Alliance, an organization led by the mysterious shadow creatures known as kayals. Furthermore, once every decade, the family surrendered the eldest Blakros daughter as a sacrifice to their shadowy benefactors.

In recent years, the Penumbral Accords came to an end, and the Onyx Alliance fell under new leadership—that of Sarnia Blakros, one of the Blakros daughters given to them as a sacrifice. In Dhrami's eyes, the recent reversal in fortunes does not nearly absolve her family of centuries of sin. Working with Sarnia and the Onyx Alliance, Dhrami and Nigel strive to hit their family where it hurts the most, deliberately losing them gold and prestige.

Agents from the Pathfinder Society could end this sabotage by recommending the curator's dismissal.

WHERE ON GOLARION?

The Blakros Deception takes place in Absalom, the City at the Center of the World. Beginning at the Grand Lodge in the Foreign Quarter, the PCs proceed to the townhouse of Dhrami Blakros in Westgate before finally reaching the Blakros Museum in the Wise Quarter. For more information about Absalom, see Chapter 2 of the *Lost Omens World Guide*.

ISLE OF KORTOS



Hopeful to delay the investigation and potentially turn her investigators into allies, Dhrami has reached out to the Onyx Alliance for help. If they succeed in turning this investigation in their favor, Nigel can retain his post and continue his deception.

GETTING STARTED

The adventure begins in the Grand Lodge of Absalom, where Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin has summoned the PCs to meet with him. Once the PCs arrive in Ambrus's office, the venture-captain brusquely gestures toward some seats before beginning his briefing. Read or paraphrase the following.

Venture-Captain Ambrus Valsin stands behind an oak desk and addresses the agents with a dour look on his face. "The Pathfinder Society has allies in many parts of Golarion," he begins, "and we do our best to honor our alliances. Today we

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need reliable agents who can do our allies justice. The Blakros family has helped us immensely over the years. Without their aid, we likely would have lost many Taldoran relics during the Grand Campaign. Recently, they've had issues with one of their major holdings, the Blakros Museum here in Absalom."

He opens a drawer and shuffles through some papers inside. "Between thefts, disappearances, and worse, the museum has suffered numerous setbacks these past few years. Now its stakeholders want a neutral party to investigate the curator, Nigel Aldain, for incompetence. Of course, nothing is ever easy. Nigel and his wife Dhrami Blakros are longtime friends of the Society as well. With two valuable allies at odds with each other, we need to ensure we make the right judgment."

Ambrus produces a letter bearing a red wax seal from the desk drawer. "The Blakros family has provided us with an official missive, giving me the right to appoint you as investigators in this matter. First, stop at Dhrami's townhouse in Westgate, where you can interview her and review her records. Compare what you find there with a search of the Blakros Museum. Tour the museum with Nigel, check his records, and make sure everything that should be in the museum's vault is still present. Then return to me with your recommendation."

Ambrus clears his throat before handing over the letter. "Dhrami and Nigel don't know you're coming, and they'll be understandably tense about finding themselves under investigation. If you put them at ease and show your objectivity, you might learn more details from them as their trust grows. In the end, be objective, be fair, and be honest. Understood?"

Ambrus patiently answers any questions the PCs have about the mission and provides the information below if prompted. If any of the PCs either played *Pathfinder Society Scenario #2-05: Balancing the Scales* or comment further on their experiences with the Blakros Museum's history of misfortune, Valsin thanks them for helping address some of the museum's many mishaps and asks them to do their best to keep an open mind during the investigation.

What sort of things have happened at the museum? "Disasters, plain and simple. Pieces have gone missing, employees have lost their lives, and certain relics have proven more troublesome than they're worth. Every incident has an explanation, but the sheer number of problems over the years have raised suspicions."

What do you think of the Blakros family? "The Blakroses have centuries of wealth and power behind them. Any family with that level of influence has a few skeletons in their closet. But they have the right to protect their assets, especially something as important as the museum."

What can you tell us about Dhrami? "She's a very competent woman. She's excellent at creating replicas of

some of the museum's most dangerous artifacts, and she helps Nigel keep the records in order. As a daughter of the Blakros family, she has a stake in the museum, but she's also loyal to Nigel, so I can only imagine that this situation leaves her in a difficult spot."

What is your opinion of Nigel? "He used to belong to the Society, and I think he's a good man. But... well, everybody has their limits. Running the Blakros museum is different from working in the field. I can't deny that he seems less organized than he used to be. Working as a curator can overwhelm many people."

SOCIETY OR GENEALOGY LORE (RECALL KNOWLEDGE)

The PCs likely know that the Blakroses are a prominent family whose lineage dates back centuries. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Society check or a DC 18 Genealogy Lore check to Recall Knowledge remembers additional information about the family. For Levels 7–8, a PC must succeed at a DC 23 Society check or a DC 21 Genealogy Lore check to Recall this Knowledge. Remember that this skill check should be rolled secretly.

Critical Success In addition to the information in the success entry, the PC recalls that the eldest daughter from each Blakros generation over the past several centuries either died young or disappeared mysteriously.

Success The matrilineal Blakros family earned most of their fortune during the Grand Campaign, a 524-year-long conflict between Qadira and Taldor. Blakros merchants somehow managed to smuggle many goods and relics past Taldor's closed borders when nobody else could.

Failure The PC knows no additional information.

Critical Failure The Blakros family once earned the blessing of the angelic Empyrean Lord Keltheald, granting them an uncanny ability to locate ancient wonders and magical relics imbued with celestial power.

SOCIETY OR ABSALOM LORE (RECALL KNOWLEDGE)

Almost every Pathfinder knows that the Blakros Museum, located in Absalom's Wise Quarter, displays notable relics from across Golarion. In addition to this general information, a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Society check or a DC 18 Absalom Lore check to Recall Knowledge remembers additional details about the museum. For Levels 7–8, a PC must succeed at a DC 23 Society or a DC 21 Absalom Lore check to Recall Knowledge. Remember that this skill check should be rolled secretly.

Critical Success In addition to the information in the success entry, the PC recalls that the museum once served as the stronghold of the astrologer Ralzeros the Overwatched,

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scholar of forbidden knowledge. Ralzeros disappeared following a magical duel with his rival Beldrin, but nobody ever confirmed his death. The Blakros family bought the building several centuries after Ralzeros's demise.

Success As a former Pathfinder, Curator Nigel Aldain has arranged open access to the Blakros Museum's sizeable collection for the Society.

Failure The PC knows no additional information.

Critical Failure The museum recently acquired a powerful but dangerous artifact known as the *deck of many things*, and the Blakros family has offered a reward to those willing to draw a card from the deck.

HERO POINTS

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

A. TRAVERSING THE CITY

From the Grand Lodge in the Foreign Quarter, the PCs must first travel to Dhrami's townhouse in Westgate and then to the Blakros Museum in the Wise Quarter. However, the Onyx Alliance knows of the PCs and their mission. As soon as the Pathfinders leave the Grand Lodge, agents tied to the Onyx Alliance target them with the goal of slowing the investigation.

A1. PICKPOCKET WITH A PLAN

Citizens and travelers from across Golarion crowd the streets of Absalom. The air dances with smells ranging from freshly caught fish to spices imported from half a world away. These crowded streets allow a pickpocket hired by the Onyx Alliance to stalk the PCs and identify the individual bearing the group's letter of appointment.

When the PCs approach the halfway point between the Grand Lodge and Dhrami's townhouse, the thief **Kaldra** (CN female dwarf) tries to maneuver close to them, steal the letter from the PC carrying it, and then disappear into the crowd. A lifelong pickpocket, Kaldra might disappear without a trace, taking the PCs' official missive with them.

Fortunately, as skilled adventurers themselves, the PCs might foil the canny thief's plan. As Kaldra approaches, allow each PC to attempt a DC 20 Perception check (DC 23 for Levels 7–8) or a DC 18 Underworld Lore check (DC 21 for Levels 7–8) to notice the dwarf trailing them. Subtle observation reveals that she sticks close to crowds for cover, avoids putting her hands in her pockets, and has her fingers extended and at the ready—all signs of a potential pickpocket.

KALDRA'S APPROACH

Any PC who notices Kaldra's approach can attempt one

action to prevent her from stealing the letter. Allow the players to choose from the list of actions below.

- The PC carrying the letter can attempt a DC 22 Acrobatics check (DC 25 for Levels 7–8) to Tumble Through areas blocked by the crowd in a way that prevents Kaldra from following.
- A PC can attempt a DC 20 Deception check (DC 23 for Levels 7–8) to Create a Diversion, causing Kaldra to lose sight of them in the confusion.
- A PC can attempt a DC 20 Intimidation check (DC 23 for Levels 7–8) to Demoralize Kaldra, frightening her away.
- The PC carrying the letter can attempt a DC 20 Stealth check (DC 23 for Levels 7–8) to Conceal an Object, hiding the letter so Kaldra can't find it.

If a PC attempts something else that could work, have that PC make a relevant skill check against a DC of 22 (DC 25 for Levels 7–8). Note that the limit of a single action before Kaldra strikes precludes the use of most spells and consumable items.

Each PC who succeeds at a check earns an Evasion Point. Critical successes earn two Evasion Points, while critical failures remove one Evasion Point. Calculate the total number of Evasion Points among PCs who spotted Kaldra and attempted a check. If the PCs record a number of Evasion Points equal to half the total number of players, they successfully evade the thief. Otherwise, Kaldra gets close enough to steal the letter.

KALDRA'S FLIGHT

If the PCs fail to shake Kaldra, the dwarf bumps into the PC carrying the Blakros missive, swiftly pickpockets it, and then attempts to flee. At this point, all PCs can make one final effort to stop the dwarf from escaping. Allow each PC to choose once from the list of actions below, even if they failed their initial check to notice Kaldra's approach:

- A PC can attempt a DC 22 Athletics check (DC 25 for Levels 7–8) to Grapple Kaldra.
- A PC can attempt a DC 22 Stealth check (DC 25 for Levels 7–8) to Sneak after Kaldra, trailing her. They soon see the dwarf slip into an alleyway and drop the letter into a pile of trash. The PCs can then recover the missive from this site.
- A PC can attempt a DC 20 Thievery check (DC 23 for Levels 7–8) to Steal the letter back without Kaldra noticing.

PCs can attempt other actions not on this list, including the use of spells or attacks. For Levels 5–6, Kaldra has an AC of 22 and her saving throws are Fort +12, Ref +15, Will +9. For Levels 7–8, she has an AC of 25 and her saving throws are Fort +15, Ref +18, Will +12.

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If grabbed, injured by an attack, or immobilized, Kaldra surrenders immediately and gives up the letter. If questioned, she admits that somebody hired her to take the missive from them. She describes the person as a middle-aged human male with a salt and pepper beard who paid her half of her reward in advance. She has an appointment to meet this same person at a disreputable bar known as the Soggy Piper this evening for the other half of the reward.

Despite this incident occurring in a public place, PCs likely receive few repercussions from the city watch since Kaldra initiated the conflict by attempting to steal from them. However, any PC who uses excessive force, such as attacking the dwarf after she has already surrendered, receives 1 point of Infamy.

The PCs can continue their investigation even if Kaldra escapes with the missive, but the delay does hinder their progress, as detailed in this scenario's encounters.

Reward: If captured, Kaldra surrenders her purse of ill-gotten gains, including the payment her benefactor had already provided. This treasure includes 50 gp and a collection of semiprecious gemstones worth 25 gp.

B. DHRAMI'S TOWNHOUSE

Dhrami's townhouse sits at the end of a trail set off from a main thoroughfare of Westgate. Plum saplings line the path, which leads to an estate with a walled courtyard. The stone walls surrounding the courtyard stand 10 feet high, while the wooden doors leading within hang open. While this last detail is not suspicious in and of itself, more signs await within that something has gone wrong.

B1. SUSPICIOUS BURGLARS SEVERE

This courtyard contains a lengthy stable, several immaculately trimmed hedges, and a clear pond stocked with large koi of various colors. Two granite gargoyles stare menacingly at the front gate. The double doors at the center of the building, like the entrance to the courtyard, stand ajar.

Activity around the townhouse appears suspiciously sparse and the owners have locked the servant's entrance with an average lock (requiring four successful DC 25 Thievery checks to Pick the Lock). The staff all have the day off, given abruptly as a "gift" by Dhrami to avoid interference with her plan. The open main entrance stands out as unusual, and the foes within the sitting room left the doors deliberately ajar to make themselves appear as careless burglars. Use the map on page 7 for this area.

When the PCs enter the sitting room, either by passing through the main doors or sneaking through the servants' entrance, read or paraphrase the following.

Well-upholstered sofas and finely crafted rugs show off the luxury that this room normally possesses. However, much of the rest of the area appears in a state of upheaval. Pieces of furniture are overturned, papers lie scattered haphazardly across the floor, and the spilled dirt of a potted fern covers the eastern wall. An unconscious woman slumps on one of the sofas, her hands and feet bound and a bright purple bruise on her left temple.

The woman is none other than **Dhrami Blakros** (N female human aristocrat). Her contacts within the Pathfinder Society gave her insight as to the PCs' expected arrival time, and she prepared appropriately with her allies. Her wounds are real, designed to sell the idea that she is the victim of a robbery in progress.

Creatures: Four "burglars" lie in waiting within this room, ready to ambush the PCs as soon as they enter. In truth, these attackers belong to the Onyx Alliance. The agents provided Dhrami with plausible deniability by roughing her up and rummaging through her home as though they seek valuables.

The Onyx Alliance agents each use an *invisibility* spell to facilitate an ambush when they hear the PCs approach the courtyard. If the PCs linger before entering the room, the agents hide behind overturned furniture as their *invisibility* wears off. PCs who successfully use Stealth to Avoid Notice during their approach or who Sneak through the servants' entrance can catch the agents by surprise, in which case the agents use Perception instead of Stealth for initiative. In combat, the agents flank against a single foe whenever possible. If reduced to fewer than 25 Hit Points, an Onyx Alliance agent uses their Shadow Retreat ability to escape.

Dhrami harbors hope that the PCs could become her allies if they learn the truth behind the Blakros family's secret to success. For this reason, she has issued orders to the Onyx Alliance to avoid killing any of the Pathfinder investigators. Each agent fights to incapacitate, not kill, and wields nonlethal weapons. After the Onyx Alliance agents have all acted in combat, allow each PC to attempt a DC 22 Perception check (DC 25 for Levels 7–8) to Sense Motive. A PC who succeeds at this check takes note of the agents' reluctance to use lethal force in battle.

LEVELS 5–6

ONYX ALLIANCE AGENTS (4)

Page 15, art on page 23

CREATURE 4

LEVELS 7–8

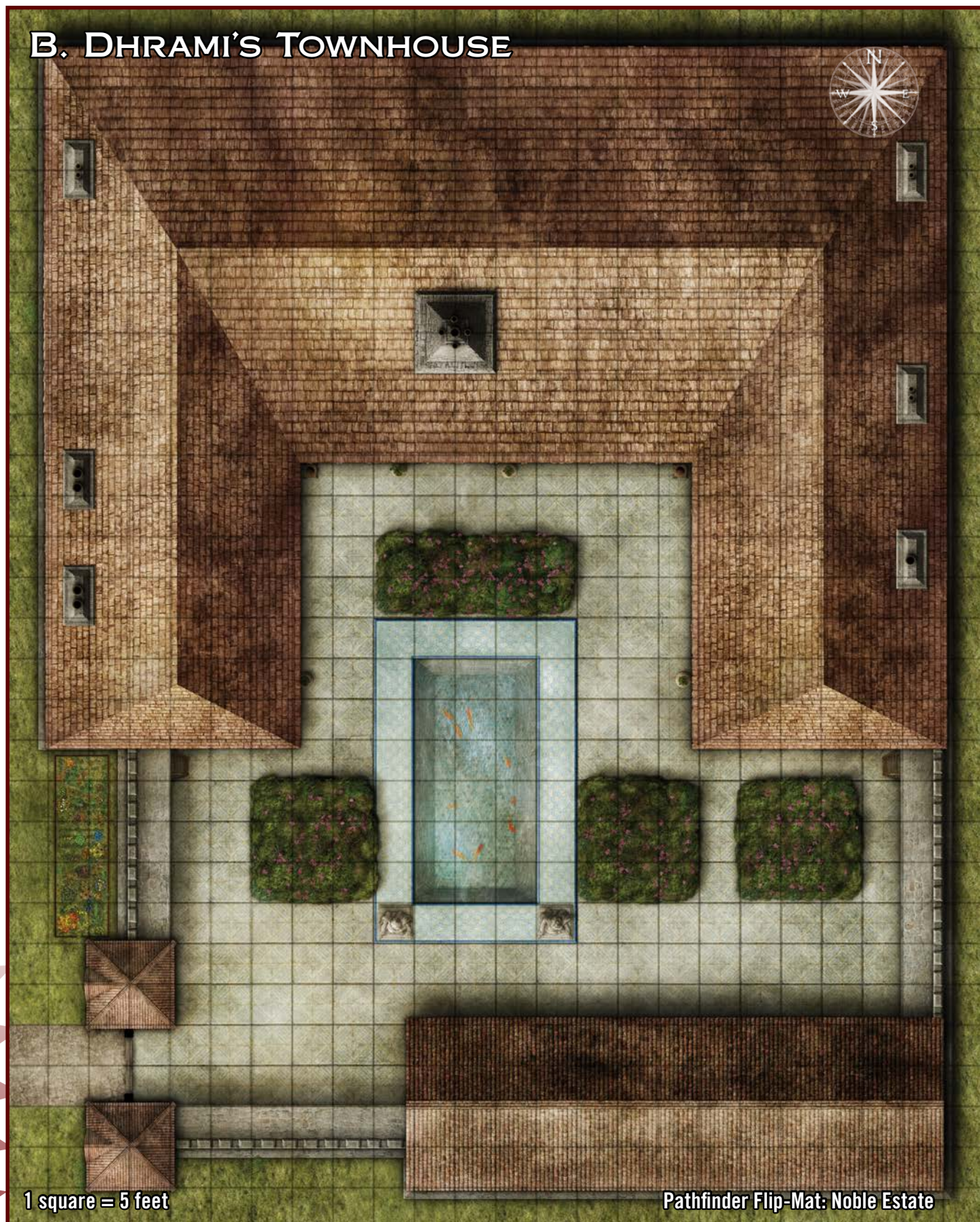
ONYX ALLIANCE AGENTS (4)

Page 19, art on page 23

CREATURE 6

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B. DHRAMI'S TOWNHOUSE



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Development: If the PCs fall in battle, they wake up to find Dhrami tending to her wounds. Dhrami claims to have awoken and squirmed free of her bonds shortly after the “burglars” fled. The PCs can proceed with their investigation normally, but the delay means that Nigel has more time to conceal evidence of his sabotage. **Area C** details the results of this delay.

Should the PCs capture one or more agents and interrogate them, the captives initially stick to their cover story as burglars. Magical coercion can loosen their tongues further and get them to admit their connection with the Onyx Alliance. Should this happen, each PC can attempt a DC 25 Occultism check or a DC 23 Onyx Alliance Lore or Shadow Plane Lore check to Recall Knowledge. A PC who successfully Recalls Knowledge recognizes the Onyx Alliance as an organization of creatures from the Shadow Plane—one believed to have a connection to Golarion’s slave trade. Even when magically coerced, the Onyx Alliance agents resist revealing their arrangement with Dhrami unless forced to via a *dominate* spell or other powerful means—magic which the PCs likely do not yet possess.

Dhrami urges the PCs to turn any captured agents over to the city watch to let them deal with the matter, buying her more time in the process. Should any of the agents perish, she urges the PCs to leave the bodies for eventual identification by the watch. In truth, she already set aside funds to pay for *raise dead* spells for those agents.

Reward: In addition to the equipment listed in their stat block, one Onyx Alliance agent has a leather pouch containing a *crafters’ eyepiece* and an *emerald grasshopper*. Another wears a gold necklace with a jade wolf’s fang (worth 30 gp). For Levels 7–8, one of these agents also possesses a *shifting* runestone.

B2. INVESTIGATING THE TOWNHOUSE

Whether the PCs overcome their attackers or fall in battle, they now have the opportunity to begin their investigation in full. This includes interviewing Dhrami and investigating her townhouse.

This scenario uses the Influence system (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 151). During the investigation, PCs receive several opportunities to gain Influence Points with both Dhrami and Nigel. During each of these social rounds, any PC can attempt to either Discover something about the NPC or Influence them in some way. These actions are detailed in the *Gamemastery Guide* and reproduced below for the GM’s convenience.

DISCOVER

CONCENTRATION SECRET

You watch or study an NPC to learn more about that NPC’s preferences. Attempt a Perception check or an appropriate skill check determined by the GM. The DC is found in the NPC’s influence stat block.



ONYX ALLIANCE AGENT

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Critical Success Choose two of the options detailed in Success below; you can choose the same option twice to learn two pieces of information from the same category.

Success Choose one of the following: You learn which skill that can Influence the NPC has the lowest DC (skipping any skills that you already know), one of the NPC's personal biases, one of the NPC's resistances, or one of the NPC's weaknesses.

Failure You learn no information.

Critical Failure Choose a piece of information to learn about, as success, but the information is incorrect.

INFLUENCE

CONCENTRATION LINGUISTIC

You attempt to make a favorable impression on an NPC to convince the NPC to support your cause. Attempt a skill check to impress that NPC. The DC and skills which can apply can be found in the NPC's stat block.

Critical Success You gain 2 Influence Points with the chosen NPC.

Success You gain 1 Influence Point with the chosen NPC.

Failure You gain no Influence Points with the chosen NPC.

Critical Failure You lose 1 Influence Point with the chosen NPC.

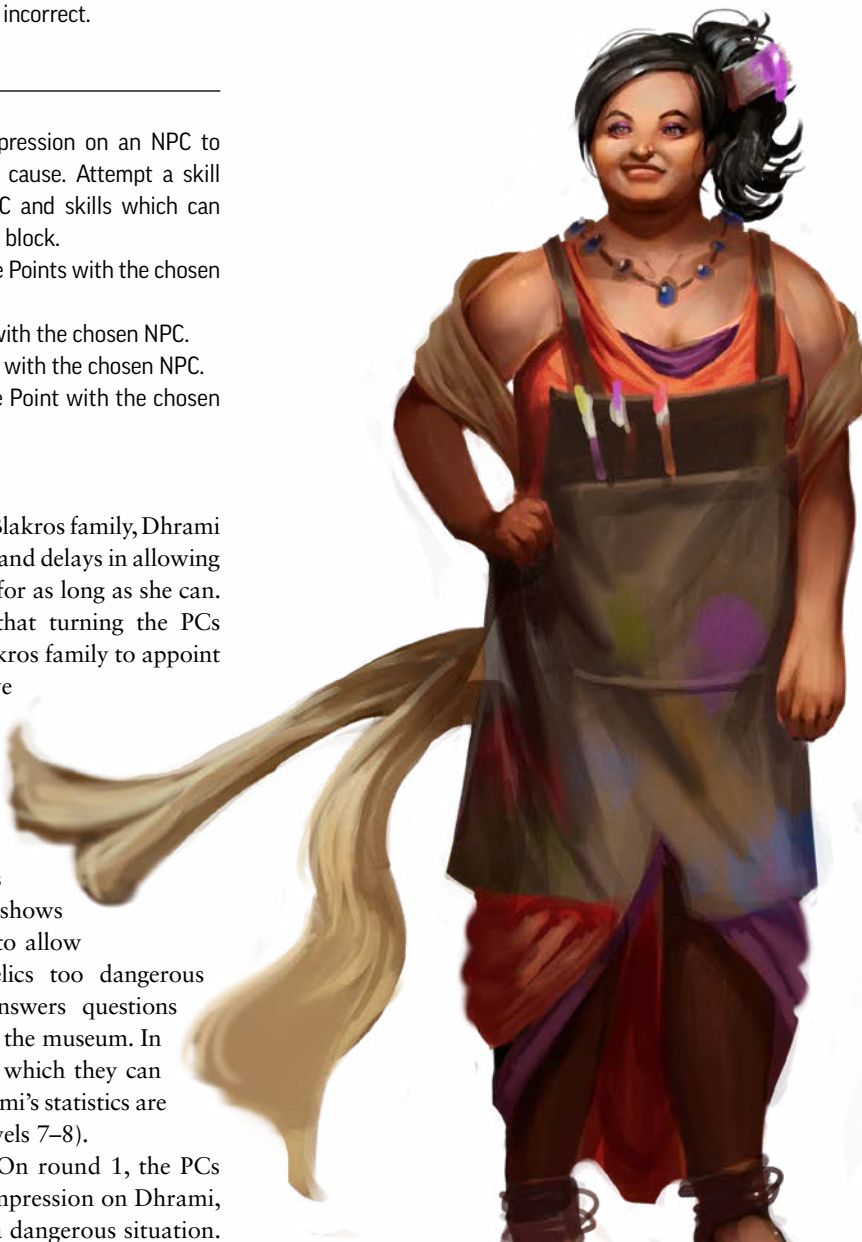
INFLUENCING DHRAMI

If Kaldra stole the missive from the Blakros family, Dhrami appears skeptical of the PCs' claims and delays in allowing them to investigate her townhouse for as long as she can. Ultimately, however, she realizes that turning the PCs away completely could lead the Blakros family to appoint more aggressive, less objective investigators in the future. As such, after stalling as much as possible, she allows the PCs to search her home and records.

During the investigation, Dhrami submits financial records pertaining to the Blakros Museum, shows the PCs some replicas she crafted to allow for the exhibition of magical relics too dangerous to display to the public, and answers questions pertaining to the recent disasters at the museum. In total, the PCs have four rounds in which they can Discover or Influence Dhrami. Dhrami's statistics are located on page 16 (page 20 for Levels 7–8).

Round 1—Initial Introduction: On round 1, the PCs have a chance to make their first impression on Dhrami, likely as an apparent savior from a dangerous situation. If the PCs didn't kill any Onyx Alliance members, they gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Influence Dhrami during this round.

Round 2—Financial Records: Dhrami brings the PCs to her study and allows them to review financial records tied to the museum. To a PC who examines these documents and succeeds at a DC 22 Society check or a DC 15 Accounting Lore check, it is clear that Dhrami has accounted for all expenses. She pointedly insists that any institution with the number of potentially dangerous relics and items that the Blakros Museum receives would have a similarly large budget line for accidents and unexpected expenses.



DHRAMI BLAKROS

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

Round 3—Evaluation of Replicas: Dhrami shows the PCs some of the replicas she created to allow the display of potentially dangerous items. This includes a partially completed sculpture, *The Foals of Szuriel*. Dhrami indicates that the original lies in the museum's vault until Nigel can fully identify the enchantments laid upon it.

Round 4—Interview with Dhrami: Dhrami takes the time to answer any additional questions the PCs have

before leading them to the museum. If the PCs showed Dhrami kindness following the attack (such as by healing her wounds), each PC gains a +1 circumstance bonus to any attempt to Influence her during this round.

Rewards: As thanks for protecting her from the “burglars,” Dhrami retrieves two *lesser healing potions* and a *wand of heal* from her bedchambers, offering them to the PCs. For Levels 7–8, she instead offers two *moderate healing potions* and a *wand of heal*.

C. THE BLAKROS MUSEUM

When the PCs conclude their business at the townhouse, Dhrami offers to guide them to the Blakros Museum and introduce them to Nigel. The PCs can choose to decline Dhrami's offer, but doing so means that they can't gain the circumstance bonus granted to their initial attempt to Influence the curator that they earned by gaining Dhrami's favor.

Aside from the crowded streets, crowing town criers, and occasional panhandlers, the journey from the townhouse to the museum lacks the diversions that preceded the PCs' investigation.

C1. TOUR OF THE MUSEUM

An imposing, multistory building with an exterior that seems crafted almost entirely from one massive chunk of volcanic rock stands at the end of a stone path flanked by large flower gardens. An ambitious decorator seems to have attempted to make the exterior brighter with the addition of colored banners and the beginnings of a mural near the front doors.

Nigel has worked himself into a frenzy since learning of the investigation, and now hovers near the museum's entrance as he awaits the PCs' arrival. He greets the PCs shortly after they pass through the main entrance, remaining curt and tight lipped unless Dhrami provides a glowing recommendation of the group.

After the PCs meet Nigel and present him with their missive (provided they still have it), read or paraphrase the following.

“Hmm.” Nigel smooths out his tunic and straightens his spectacles as he considers the information provided. “I really don't have the time for all of this, but I suppose the matter is out of my hands. I will of course cooperate, and I believe we can handle this matter in a straightforward manner. Allow me to show you a few of our exhibits, some details about the design of this museum, and my financial records. After that, I will guide you to the vault downstairs and we can hopefully conclude matters quickly, yes?”



NIGEL ALDAIN

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

INFLUENCING NIGEL

If Dhrami made the initial introductions, she excuses herself after handing the PCs off to Nigel so she can clean up matters back at the townhouse. Nigel brusquely begins the tour of the museum, regarding the PCs as hostile forces out to remove him based on rumors and speculation until they show otherwise.

Despite the stress he finds himself under, Nigel can't help but show pride as he presents the museum to his investigators. The Blakros Museum features a vast, open floor plan with several balconies on three different levels to allow for the display of a wide variety of different exhibits. Anybody who enters immediately notices that the museum's interior seems significantly larger than the dimensions on the outside suggest. Nigel beams if one of the PCs points this out and promises to reveal his secret in good time.

In terms of competence, Nigel serves quite capably as curator of the museum. However, he has intentionally run up significant expenses as a way of draining the Blakros family's funds. In preparing for the PCs' arrival, Nigel has added several annotations and edits to his existing records to help explain away some of his overspending. At certain points during the investigation, the PCs have an opportunity to spot some of these discrepancies and point them out to Nigel. The first PC in a round to point out these issues gains a +1 circumstance bonus to Discover something about Nigel if they attempt to fluster the curator into making a mistake or a +1 circumstance bonus to Influence Nigel if they accept his explanation for the records adjustment.

The longer Nigel has had to prepare for the PCs' arrival, the harder it is to spot his discrepancies. If the PCs lost their missive to Kaldra or lost their battle against the Onyx Alliance agents, increase the DCs to Notice something unusual in the museum by 1 (or by 2 if the PCs failed in both encounters).

The PCs have six rounds to acquire Influence Points with Nigel: the initial introduction and the five museum locations presented below. Note that they do not have to attempt Discover or Influence checks at every stop. If they reach 12 Influence Points at any point during the investigation, inform them that Nigel visibly relaxes and seems open to providing information unsolicited. At this point unless the PCs actively antagonize him, they no longer run the risk of losing Influence Points with him. Nigel's statistics are located on page 17 (page 21 for Levels 7–8).

Round 1—Initial Introduction: Nigel appears stiff and nervous when he meets the PCs, although he softens slightly if Dhrami shows that she has a positive opinion of them.

Round 2—The Deck of Many Things: Seeking to get a sensitive matter out of the way immediately, Nigel brings the PCs to a recent display that caused a significant bit of trouble: a replica of a powerful artifact known as the *deck of many things*. The *deck* can grant wishes and change reality, but it has an equal chance of causing disaster for those who draw from it. This display is actually a replica of the *deck*, created by Dhrami based on reports and studies of the original. With a sigh, Nigel mentions that the real *deck* is currently offsite for extended study. The member of the museum who identified it had the misfortune of drawing the Dullard card, severely reducing his intelligence, followed by the Ruin card, which caused him to lose all his wealth and property. “The poor fellow had devoted his life to the pursuit of knowledge,” laments Nigel. “We’re doing our best to reverse the effects and will ensure that the *deck of many things* remains secure in our vault upon its return.”

Allow each PC to attempt a DC 20 Perception check (DC 23 for Levels 7–8) to Notice that Nigel speaks of his efforts to aid the unfortunate museum employee in the present tense, while a letter contained in Dhrami's records from her family indicated that the stakeholders considered the matter closed after several failed attempts to restore the employee's intelligence. If somebody points this out to Nigel, the curator bristles and says, “True, the Blakroses have some concerns about the cost. But it would be callous to ignore a person's suffering because of money alone, wouldn't it?”

Round 3—The Foals of Szuriel: Nigel brings the PCs to an empty space reserved for the eventual display of the *Foals of Szuriel*, a recently acquired piece that lies in the vault beneath the museum. He speculates that the intricately carved statue of two fiendish steeds was originally crafted as an offering to Szuriel, the Horseman of War. Nigel shows obvious appreciation for the artisanry while abhorring its purpose. He indicates that he has not made as much progress as he hoped in identifying the original piece but commissioned a replica from Dhrami under the assumption that any magic item with such a dark origin poses an obvious danger.

Round 4—The Golden Gripli: As Nigel leads the PCs toward his administrative office, he pauses here and there to point out interesting facts about other displays in the museum. This includes a large frog-shaped idol labeled as the Golden Gripli of the Mwangi Expanse. Nigel speculates that the idol could represent a famous fiend keeper and explains that the peaceful froglike creatures known as griplis hold such individuals in a place of honor for their ability to keep evil entities at bay.

Allow each PC to attempt a DC 18 Perception or Society check (DC 21 for Levels 7–8) to Notice that

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

Nigel's explanation of the piece runs counter to the written history on the exhibit, which suggests that it shows a possible connection between ancient gripplis and the demon lord Gogunta. If a PC points this out to Nigel, he explains that the text of the exhibit came from the idol's discoverer, Gerhard Pendergrast. Although Nigel disagrees with Gerhard's assessment of the idol's history, the explorer has friends within the Blakros family who support his personal account despite its dubious historical accuracy. "Without speaking too much ill of Gerhard, let's just say that he represents one of many unfortunate associations that the Blakros family has picked up over the years," comments Nigel before moving on.

Round 5—The Shadow Obelisk: When he escorts the PCs to his office, Nigel pauses in front of a large drawing board filled with different floor plans and potential layouts of the museum. He speaks with pride about an artifact known as the *shadow obelisk*, which allows him to alter the dimensions of the museum's interior. If pressed about where the *shadow obelisk* came from, Nigel admits that he doesn't know its exact origins but assures the PCs that he has thoroughly examined it and used it for years without incident.

Round 6—Financial Records: Nigel allows the PCs to examine his ledger, which provides a record of all the museum's finances. This gives them a chance to compare Nigel's records with Dhrami's and identify discrepancies. Nigel stands by quietly while the PCs look through this information, occupying himself by studying his drawing board unless the PCs ask him questions directly.

Although none of the information seems out of place, PCs who study the ledger can see that the level of hazard pay provided to employees injured during the museum's many incidents far exceeds the expected standard. In some cases, employees who escaped with relatively minor injuries or trauma received as much as a full year of paid leave. Nigel insists that such expenses were a matter of simple compassion for those who put their lives on the line in pursuit of greater knowledge.

As they peruse these records, allow each PC to attempt a DC 20 Society check (DC 23 for Levels 7–8) to Decipher Writing or a DC 22 Perception check (DC 25 for Levels 7–8) to Notice that Nigel added his additional explanation for these expenses recently, not when they initially occurred. If asked about this matter, Nigel becomes defensive and claims that his many duties as curator prevented him from citing a full account at the time of the incidents.

Hero Points: If the PCs accrue 10 or more Influence Points with Nigel, consider granting a Hero Point to a PC who did a particularly good job at earning the curator's trust.

C2. THE FOALS OF SZURIEL MODERATE

As the final portion of the investigation, Nigel escorts the PCs down a spiral staircase accessible only from his office. The descent leads to a deep basement which holds a vault where the curator keeps relics that either have yet to be properly identified or which Nigel has decided to remove from display. The vault's doorway remains sealed with a superior lock (requiring six successful DC 40 Thievery checks to Pick the Lock), but Nigel carries the key.

A thick wooden door opens to a sizeable vault filled with chests, bookshelves, wooden crates, and several unusual pieces. Four square pillars spaced throughout the chamber rise to a vaulted ceiling. On the ground, several items look too large to have fit through the room's single doorway. These large displays include an ogre trapped in a block of ice, statues of fearsome-looking horses, and a giant-sized bronze shield, among other various relics and curios.

For the sake of security, Nigel uses the *shadow obelisk* to resize the doorway to the vault when a particularly large piece arrives. He restores the doorway to its current size and shape after, making it all but impossible for thieves to steal the museum's larger and more valuable displays. The ceiling begins at a height of 15 feet on the sides of the vault and rises to 25 feet high between the room's four stone pillars. Use the map on page 13 for this area.

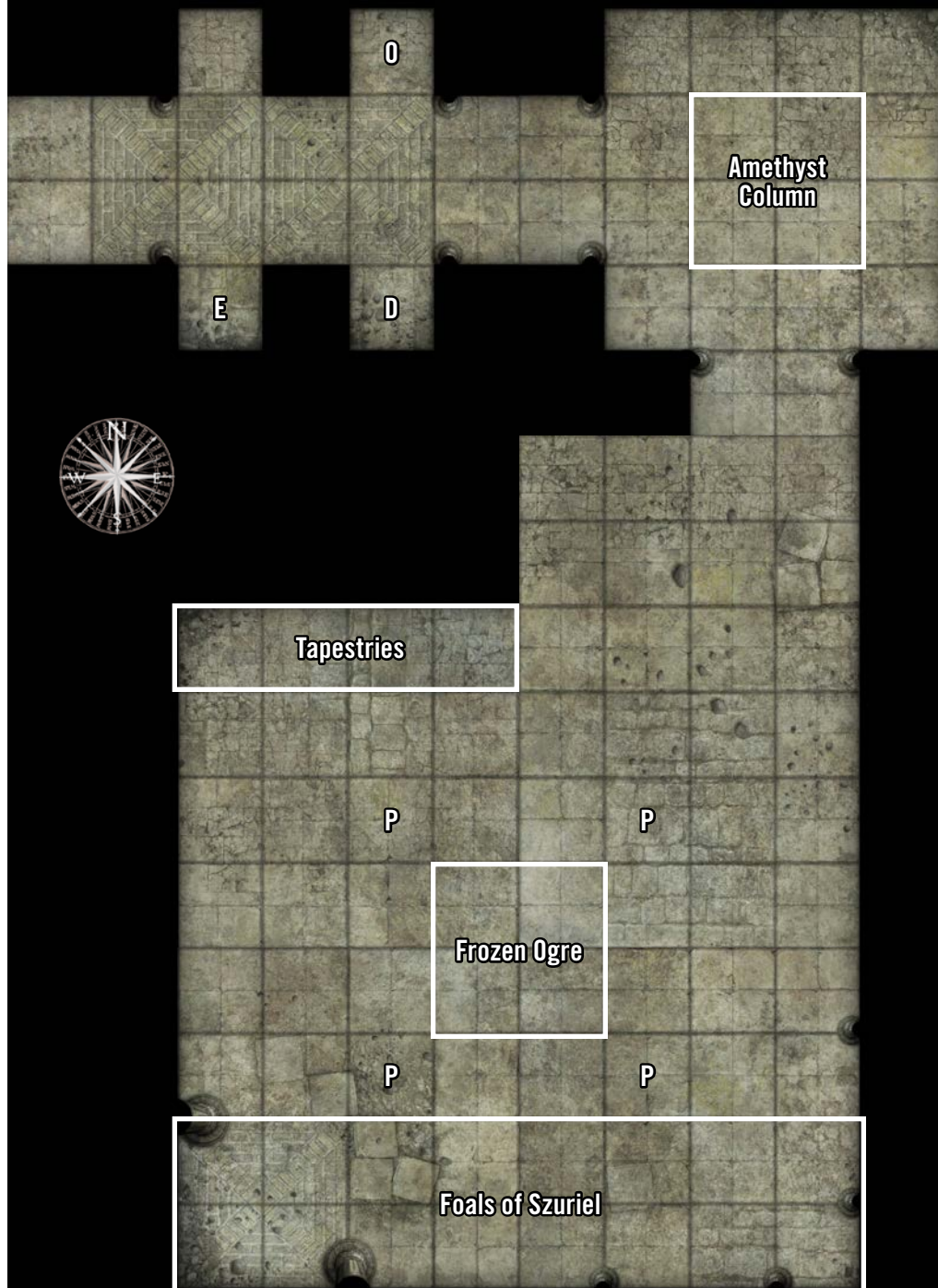
Once all PCs enter the room, Nigel closes the vault door and launches into a quick summary of the prominent pieces in the vault.

"Each of the pieces here will hopefully find a home on display in the museum above," the curator explains. He gestures toward the items around the chamber in turn. "We discussed Foals of Szuriel during our tour. The Frozen Ogre of Kalsgard would be simply a curiosity were it not for the fact that this creature's corpse remains preserved in an unmelting block of ice. The Tapestries of the Forgotten Pharaoh may hold the secret to a lost Osirian dynasty if we can fully decipher the hieroglyphics. The Amethyst Column of Tannaris has a heretofore unknown connection to one of the ancient Runelords of Envy, and the Eloquent Page of Ytarn is a volume penned by his favorite poet. It seems unlikely that the Danava Shield was truly wielded by those most ancient titans, but we suspect that it might have some connection to a cult of giants who worshiped the creatures. And the Castrovellian Orb possibly originated on the green planet itself."

Nigel pauses and allows himself a rueful smile. "I apologize for giving a history lesson at every turn. Investigate as you wish; you will find detailed records of each of these pieces and other minor curios here, all consistent with reports I sent to the Blakros family."

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C2. THE FOALS OF SZURIEL



D = Danava Shield
E = Eloquent Page of Ytarn
O = Castrovelian Orb
P = Pillar
1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Flip-Tiles: Dungeon Starter Set

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As Nigel finishes speaking, he retreats toward the vault entrance and waits for the PCs to proceed with their investigation. Unfortunately, as often occurs at the Blakros Museum, disaster strikes when Nigel least expects it.

Creatures: Crafted thousands of years ago, the *Foals of Szuriel* remained in isolation before a collector brought them to Absalom. Since explorers first unearthed the sculpture, it has subtly interacted with the life forces of the people around it. Isolation in the vault kept the steeds in stasis, but the presence of multiple creatures at once causes them to activate. One round after the PCs begin exploring the vault, the statues' stone exterior shatters, revealing a pair of magically preserved nightmares intent on destroying all living creatures around them.

The nightmares relish destruction, and each makes a point of trampling one exhibit per round if they can (two exhibits per round, in Levels 7–8). The nightmares can move through squares occupied by an exhibit as though it were difficult terrain. The first time a nightmare moves through a square containing an exhibit, their flaming hooves damage the piece. If the exhibit gets struck by the hooves again, it is destroyed. The nightmares remain mobile in combat, each focusing their attacks on different targets so they can maximize the effects of their smoke.

At the end of the first round, Nigel casts *fly* on one of the PCs and activates his *boots of speed*. At the end of each subsequent round, he Strides toward one exhibit (with a speed of 35 feet) and protects or repairs that piece. If he protects an undamaged piece, that item does not take damage the next time a nightmare runs into it. If he repairs the piece, he undoes the damage previously caused. He can't repair an object that has been struck twice and destroyed. If a PC is a master in Crafting and has the Quick Repair skill feat, they can also repair an artifact by succeeding at a DC 24 Crafting check to Repair.

LEVELS 5–6

WEAK NIGHTMARES (2)

CREATURE 5

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LEVELS 7–8

NIGHTMARES (3)

CREATURE 6

Page 22

Development: If the PCs stop the *Foals of Szuriel* before they destroy 4 or more relics within the vault, increase their total number of Influence Points with Nigel by 1.

Reward: Even if Nigel doesn't like the PCs, he feels obligated to reward them for protecting the museum. As thanks for their efforts in defeating the nightmares, he

offers the PCs a *bag of holding type I* (or a *bag of holding type II* for Levels 7–8) with 40 gp inside.

CONCLUSION

When the PCs complete their investigation, combine the total number of Influence Points they earned with Dhrami and Nigel. If they obtained a total of 16 or more Influence Points, Nigel invites them to his office. There, he reveals the information provided in the adventure background, highlighting the sordid history of the Penumbra Accords and his and his wife's sabotage of the museum. He emphasizes that removing him as curator means fewer repercussions for a family who spent generations sacrificing their own kin for wealth. He asks the PCs to allow him to continue to aid the Onyx Alliance and not report him.

If the PCs failed to earn the trust of Dhrami and Nigel, the curator thanks them for their help in the vault before asking them to leave. He emphasizes that the investigators have uncovered no meaningful evidence.

Whatever they learn, the PCs must return to Ambrus and make their final report. What information they reveal and whether they declare Nigel competent is up to them.

REPORTING NOTES

If the PCs agree to aid the Onyx Alliance, check box A. If they turn Nigel over to the Blakros family, check box B. If they declare Nigel competent in their final report, check box C. If they declare Nigel incompetent in their final report, check box D. Note that it is possible to check more than one box when reporting this scenario.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

The PCs fulfill their primary objective if they successfully complete their investigation, regardless of what recommendation they make to Ambrus in the end. Doing so earns each PC 2 Reputation with their chosen faction.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

The PCs fulfill their secondary objectives if they either prevent the destruction of four or more artifacts in the vault or uncover the connection between Nigel and the Onyx Alliance. Doing so earns each PC 2 Reputation with their chosen faction.

FACTION NOTES

Grand Archive: If the PCs prevent the destruction of four or more artifacts in the vault and treat the Blakros Museum's contents with respect, the Grand Archive is pleased with the PCs' efforts. Each PC earns 2 additional Reputation with the Grand Archive faction, in addition to any other Reputation earned as a result of completing this scenario.

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

APPENDIX 1: LEVEL 5-6 ENCOUNTERS

The statistics presented in this appendix include full stat blocks for creatures and hazards appearing in this scenario. These encounters are written for four 5th-level PCs. If your group has a different composition or size, refer to GM Basics section of the *Guide to Organized Play: Pathfinder Society* for instructions on how to use the scaling sidebars to adjust the encounters for your group.

Some scaling sidebars reference the elite or weak adjustments. Rules for these adjustments appear on page 6 of the *Pathfinder Bestiary*. If a creature is marked “(0)”, don’t include it in the encounter unless otherwise specified (likely from the scaling sidebars).

ENCOUNTER B1 (LEVELS 5-6)

ONYX ALLIANCE AGENTS (4)

CREATURE 4

LN MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +14

Languages Common, Shadowtongue

Skills Acrobatics +12, Athletics +12, Deception +12, Occultism +10, Stealth +15, Thievery +10

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

Items leather armor, lesser smokestick (2), sap, whip

AC 21; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +14, **Will** +14

HP 60

Canny Reversal ➤ **Trigger** An opponent within the Onyx Alliance agent's reach critically fails on a melee Strike targeted at the agent; **Effect** The Onyx Alliance agent makes a melee Strike or Trip attempt against the opponent and then Steps.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ whip (disarm, finesse, nonlethal, reach, trip) +14,

Damage 1d4+10 slashing

Melee ♦ sap (agile, nonlethal) +14, **Damage** 1d4+10 bludgeoning

Occult Spontaneous Spells DC 21; **2nd** *hideous laughter*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *silence*; **1st** *command*, *fear*, *sanctuary*, *true strike*; **Cantrips (2nd)** *daze*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *message*, *shield*

Shadow Retreat ♦♦♦ (conjunction, occult, shadow, teleportation) **Frequency** once per year; **Effect** Activating a special ritual taught through the Onyx Alliance, the agent teleports to a safe house located in the Shadow Plane. Simultaneous with the teleportation, a 5-foot emanation of darkness appears where the agent once stood. The darkness lasts for one minute.

Sneak Attack The Onyx Alliance agents deal an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B1

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

10-11 Challenge Points: Increase the Onyx Alliance agents' Hit Points by 10.

12-13 Challenge Points: Add one additional Onyx Alliance agent.

14-15 Challenge Points: Increase the Onyx Alliance agents' Hit Points by 10 and add one additional Onyx Alliance agent.

16-18 Challenge Points: Increase the Onyx Alliance agents' Hit Points by 10 and add two additional Onyx Alliance agents.

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

ENCOUNTER B2 (LEVELS 5–6)

DHRAMI BLAKROS

N MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Blakros scion

Perception +12

Will +15

Discovery DC 17 Genealogy Lore, DC 20 Society, DC 22 Crafting, DC 24 Perception

Influence Skills DC 17 Academia Lore, DC 17 Art Lore, DC 20 Crafting (showing an appreciation for Dhrami's ability to create replicas), DC 20 Diplomacy, DC 20 Society, DC 24 Deception, DC 26 Intimidation

Influence 6: Dhrami fondly discusses her husband's work at the Blakros Museum. The insight she provides grants a +2 circumstance bonus to each PC's first attempt to Discover when interacting with Nigel.

Influence 8: Dhrami becomes more forthcoming with information about her role in management of the museum. In the process, she inadvertently highlights an incident that Nigel had hoped to keep quiet. The first time each PC attempts to Notice a discrepancy in Nigel's accounts (see encounter C1), allow them to roll twice and keep the best result.

Influence 10: The PCs win Dhrami over almost completely, and she speaks highly of them when she introduces them to her husband. Each PC gains a +2 circumstance bonus when they first attempt to Influence Nigel.

Resistances Dhrami does not take well to those who openly speculate that Nigel is corrupt or incompetent. If a PC insults Nigel in this manner, increase the DC needed to Influence Dhrami by 2.

Weaknesses Dhrami appreciates art and quality artisanry. PCs who demonstrate a knack or appreciation for complex crafts and machinery gain a +2 circumstance bonus to their next attempt to Influence her.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B2

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

10–11 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 1.

12–13 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 2 and increase all DCs by 1.

14–15 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 3 and increase all DCs by 1.

16–18 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 4 and increase all DCs by 2.

Background Dhrami grew up a Blakros scion and stands out as something of a black sheep in her family because of her willingness to marry an elf. The fact that Nigel will outlive several generations of Blakros daughters rankles prominent members of the lineage-obsessed family. Shortly after she discovered her family's terrible secret, she made contact with her relative Sarnia and the Onyx Alliance. Outraged by the injustice that afforded her a life of luxury, she swore to make amends by exacting revenge upon her family.

Appearance A woman of half-Vudrani descent, Dhrami has dark brown hair and eyes. She carries herself with dignity and grows eager when discussing academic topics.

Personality Dignified, independent, loyal

Penalty If the PCs accuse Dhrami of creating her replicas for criminal purposes, her opinion of them sours, and her future replies to their questions are curt. While she continues to cooperate with the investigation, the PCs can't gain Influence Points during their final round at the townhouse.

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

ENCOUNTER C1 (LEVELS 5–6)

NIGEL ALDAIN

N MEDIUM ELF HUMANOID

Museum curator

Perception +14

Will +14

Discovery DC 19 Academia Lore, DC 19 Pathfinder Society Lore, DC 21 Society, DC 23 Arcana,

Influence Skills DC 19 Architecture Lore (showing respect for Nigel's renovations of the museum), DC 19 Intimidation (reminding Nigel of the potential repercussions of them giving him a negative report), DC 21 Arcana, DC 21 Diplomacy, DC 23 Occultism, DC 23 Religion

Influence 7: Nigel opens up slightly and says more than he originally intended to. The extra information he provides gives the PCs a +1 circumstance bonus to checks to Notice something he has attempted to cover up.

Influence 9: Nigel becomes comfortable enough to discuss some of his personal habits and views. Allow each PC to attempt one free Discovery attempt to learn more about the curator.

Influence 11: Nigel discusses some of his theories about the pieces in the vault, including the possibility that the *Foals of Szuriel* could interact with surrounding life forces. Grant each PC a +1 circumstance bonus to Initiative rolls during Encounter C2.

Resistances Nigel's two greatest passions in life are his wife and the museum. If a PC shows open disrespect for Dhrami or flaunts an ignorance of history, increase the DC to Influence Nigel by 2.

Weaknesses Ever since learning about the impending investigation, Nigel has grown increasingly tense. PCs who put his fears to rest by either assuring him of their neutrality or openly stating that they don't believe him to be incompetent gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Influence him.

Background After several years as an agent with the Pathfinder Society, Nigel retired to become curator of the Blakros Museum when the opportunity presented itself. His initial interest in the museum focused on the Collection Esoterica, an assortment of psychic magic items gifted to the Blakros family. Through his work at the museum, he met and fell in love with Dhrami. When Dhrami revealed the dark secrets of her family, he readily agreed to aid her in ruining the Blakroses.

Appearance Although handsome, Nigel often appears disheveled, caring little for social graces. He wears a pair of silver-rimmed spectacles and becomes noticeably more gregarious when discussing academia.

Personality Bookish, professional, tense

Penalty Nigel fears that the investigators may treat him unfairly. PCs who accuse him of incompetence cause him to withdraw into himself. In this case, the PCs can't gain Influence Points with Nigel in the final round of the tour.

SCALING ENCOUNTER C1

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

10–11 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 1.

12–13 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 2 and increase all DCs by 1.

14–15 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 3 and increase all DCs by 1.

16–18 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 4 and increase all DCs by 2.

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

ENCOUNTER C2 (LEVELS 5–6)

WEAK NIGHTMARES (2)

CREATURE 5

NE LARGE BEAST FIEND

Perception +12; darkvision

Languages Abyssal, Daemonic, Infernal

Skills Acrobatics +11, Athletics +14, Intimidation +12, Survival +10

Str +6, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** +1, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +2

Smoke (aura) 15 feet. The nightmare continually exhales black smoke that creates concealment in an aura around them. Nightmares and their riders can see through this smoke. A creature that begins its turn in the area becomes sickened 2 (DC 21 Fortitude negates) and is then temporarily immune to sickness from the smoke for 1 minute. The nightmare, their rider, any creature currently holding its breath (or that does not need to breathe), and any creature immune to poison are immune to the aura's sickened effect but not the concealment.

AC 22; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

HP 80; **Resistances** fire 10

Speed 40 feet, fly 90 feet

Melee ♦ jaws (evil, magical) +14, **Damage** 2d10+4 piercing plus 1d6 evil

Ranged ♦ hoof (agile, evil, fire, magical) +14, **Damage** 1d8+4 bludgeoning plus 1d6 and 1d8 fire

Divine Innate Spells DC 22; **7th plane shift** (self and rider only)

Flaming Gallop ♦♦ (fire) The nightmare Strides or Flies up to triple their Speed. Their hooves burst with intense flame, dealing 3d6 fire damage (DC 22 basic Reflex save) once to each creature other than the nightmare's rider that the nightmare moves adjacent to during their gallop.

SCALING ENCOUNTER C2

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

10–11 Challenge Points: Replace one weak nightmare with a nightmare.

12–13 Challenge Points: Replace both weak nightmares with nightmares.

14–15 Challenge Points: Replace both weak nightmares with nightmares and add one weak nightmare to the encounter.

16–18 Challenge Points: Replace both weak nightmares with nightmares and add another nightmare to the encounter.

NIGHTMARES (0)

CREATURE 6

NE LARGE BEAST FIEND

Perception +14; darkvision

Languages Abyssal, Daemonic, Infernal

Skills Acrobatics +13, Athletics +16, Intimidation +14, Survival +12

Str +6, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** +1, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +2

Smoke (aura) 15 feet. The nightmare continually exhales black smoke that creates concealment in an aura around them. Nightmares and their riders can see through this smoke. A creature that begins its turn in the area becomes sickened 2 (DC 23 Fortitude negates) and is then temporarily immune to sickness from the smoke for 1 minute. The nightmare, their rider, any creature currently holding its breath (or that does not need to breathe), and any creature immune to poison are immune to the aura's sickened effect but not the concealment.

AC 24; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12

HP 100; **Resistances** fire 10

Speed 40 feet, fly 90 feet

Melee ♦ jaws (evil, magical) +16, **Damage** 2d10+6 piercing plus 1d6 evil

Ranged ♦ hoof (agile, evil, fire, magical) +16, **Damage** 1d8+6 bludgeoning plus 1d6 and 1d8 fire

Divine Innate Spells DC 24; **7th plane shift** (self and rider only)

Flaming Gallop ♦♦ (fire) The nightmare Strides or Flies up to triple their Speed. Their hooves burst with intense flame, dealing 3d6 fire damage (DC 24 basic Reflex save) once to each creature other than the nightmare's rider that the nightmare moves adjacent to during their gallop.

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

APPENDIX 2: LEVEL 7-8 ENCOUNTERS

The statistics presented in this appendix include full stat blocks for creatures and hazards appearing in this scenario. These encounters are written for four 7th-level PCs. If your group has a different composition or size, refer to GM Basics section of the *Guide to Organized Play: Pathfinder Society* for instructions on how to use the scaling sidebars to adjust the encounters for your group.

Some scaling sidebars reference the elite or weak adjustments. Rules for these adjustments appear on page 6 of the *Pathfinder Bestiary*. If a creature is marked “(0)”, don’t include it in the encounter unless otherwise specified (likely from the scaling sidebars).

ENCOUNTER B1 (LEVELS 7-8)

ONYX ALLIANCE AGENTS (4)

CREATURE 6

LN MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +17

Languages Common, Shadowtongue

Skills Acrobatics +17, Athletics +17, Deception +17, Occultism +13, Stealth +18, Thievery +13

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

Items blowgun (10 needles), leather armor, lethargy poison (3), +1 whip

AC 24; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +17, **Will** +17

HP 95

Canny Reversal ➤ **Trigger** An opponent within the Onyx Alliance agent's reach critically fails on a melee Strike targeted at the agent; **Effect** The Onyx Alliance agent makes a melee Strike or Trip attempt against the opponent and then Steps.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ whip (disarm, finesse, magical, nonlethal, reach, trip) +18, **Damage** 1d4+12 slashing

Ranged ♦ blowgun (agile, nonlethal, range increment 20 feet) +18, **Damage** 8 piercing plus lethargy poison

Occult Spontaneous Spells DC 24, attack +16; **3rd** *haste*, *hypnotic pattern*, *paralyze*, *slow*; **2nd** *hideous laughter*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *silence*; **1st** *command*, *fear*, *sanctuary*, *true strike*; **Cantrips (3rd)** *daze*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *message*, *shield*

Shadow Retreat ♦♦♦ (conjunction, occult, shadow, teleportation) **Frequency** once per year; **Effect** Activating a special ritual taught through the Onyx Alliance, the agent teleports to a safe house located in the Shadow Plane. Simultaneous with the teleportation, a 5-foot emanation of darkness appears where the agent once stood. The darkness lasts for one minute.

Sneak Attack The Onyx Alliance agents deals an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B1

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

10-11 Challenge Points: Increase the Onyx Alliance agents' Hit Points by 10.

12-13 Challenge Points: Add one additional Onyx Alliance agent.

14-15 Challenge Points: Increase the Onyx Alliance agents' Hit Points by 10 and add one additional Onyx Alliance agent.

16-18 Challenge Points: Increase the Onyx Alliance agents' Hit Points by 10 and add two additional Onyx Alliance agents.

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

ENCOUNTER B2 (LEVELS 7-8)

DHRAMI BLAKROS

N MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Blakros scion

Perception +15

Will +18

Discovery DC 20 Genealogy Lore, DC 23 Society, DC 25 Crafting, DC 27 Perception

Influence Skills DC 20 Academia Lore, DC 20 Art Lore, DC 23 Crafting (showing an appreciation for Dhrami's ability to create replicas), DC 23 Diplomacy, DC 23 Society, DC 27 Deception, DC 29 Intimidation

Influence 6: Dhrami fondly discusses her husband's work at the Blakros Museum. The insight she provides grants a +2 circumstance bonus to each PC's first attempt to Discover when interacting with Nigel.

Influence 8: Dhrami becomes more forthcoming with information about her role in management of the museum. In the process, she inadvertently highlights an incident that Nigel had hoped to keep quiet. The first time each PC attempts to Notice a discrepancy in Nigel's accounts (see encounter C1), allow them to roll twice and keep the best result.

Influence 10: The PCs win Dhrami over almost completely, and she speaks highly of them when she introduces them to her husband. Each PC gains a +2 circumstance bonus when they first attempt to Influence Nigel.

Resistances Dhrami does not take well to those who openly speculate that Nigel is corrupt or incompetent. If a PC insults Nigel in this manner, increase the DC needed to Influence Dhrami by 2.

Weaknesses Dhrami appreciates art and quality artisanry. PCs who demonstrate a knack or appreciation for complex crafts and machinery gain a +2 circumstance bonus to their next attempt to Influence her.

SCALING ENCOUNTER B2

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

19-22 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 1.

23-27 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 2 and increase all DCs by 1.

28-32 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 3 and increase all DCs by 1.

33+ Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 4 and increase all DCs by 2.

Background Dhrami grew up a Blakros scion and stands out as something of a black sheep in her family because of her willingness to marry an elf. The fact that Nigel will outlive several generations of Blakros daughters rankles prominent members of the lineage-obsessed family. Shortly after she discovered her family's terrible secret, she made contact with her relative Sarnia and the Onyx Alliance. Outraged by the injustice that afforded her a life of luxury, she swore to make amends by exacting revenge upon her family.

Appearance A woman of half-Vudrani descent, Dhrami has dark brown hair and eyes. She carries herself with dignity and grows eager when discussing academic topics.

Personality Dignified, independent, loyal

Penalty If the PCs accuse Dhrami of creating her replicas for criminal purposes, her opinion of them sours, and her future replies to their questions are curt. While she continues to cooperate with the investigation, the PCs can't gain Influence Points during their final round at the townhouse.

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

ENCOUNTER C1 (LEVELS 7-8)

NIGEL ALDAIN

N MEDIUM ELF HUMANOID

Museum curator

Perception +16

Will +16

Discovery DC 22 Academia Lore, DC 22 Pathfinder Society Lore, DC 24 Society, DC 26 Arcana

Influence Skills DC 22 Architecture Lore (showing respect for Nigel's renovations of the museum), DC 24 Arcana, DC 24 Diplomacy, DC 26 Occultism, DC 26 Religion

Influence 7: Nigel opens up slightly and says more than he originally intended to. The extra information he provides gives the PCs a +1 circumstance bonus to checks to Notice something he has attempted to cover up.

Influence 9: Nigel becomes comfortable enough to discuss some of his personal habits and views. Allow each PC to attempt one free Discovery attempt to learn more about the curator.

Influence 11: Nigel discusses some of his theories about the pieces in the vault, including the possibility that the *Foals of Szuriel* could interact with surrounding life forces. Grant each PC a +1 circumstance bonus to Initiative rolls during Encounter C2.

Resistances Nigel's two greatest passions in life are his wife and the museum. If a PC shows open disrespect for Dhrami or flaunts an ignorance of history, increase the DC to Influence Nigel by 2.

Weaknesses Ever since learning about the impending investigation, Nigel has grown increasingly tense. PCs who put his fears to rest by either assuring him of their neutrality or openly stating that they don't believe him to be incompetent gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Influence him.

Background After several years as an agent with the Pathfinder Society, Nigel retired to become curator of the Blakros Museum when the opportunity presented itself. His initial interest in the museum focused on the Collection Esoterica, an assortment of psychic magic items gifted to the Blakros family. Through his work at the museum, he met and fell in love with Dhrami. When Dhrami revealed the dark secrets of her family, he readily agreed to aid her in ruining the Blakroses.

Appearance Although handsome, Nigel often appears disheveled, caring little for social graces. He wears a pair of silver-rimmed spectacles and becomes noticeably more gregarious when discussing academia.

Personality Bookish, professional, tense

Penalty Nigel fears that his investigators may treat him unfairly. PCs who accuse him of incompetence cause him to withdraw into himself. In this case, the PCs can't gain Influence Points with Nigel in the final round of the tour.

SCALING ENCOUNTER C1

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

19-22 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 1.

23-27 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 2 and increase all DCs by 1.

28-32 Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 3 and increase all DCs by 1.

33+ Challenge Points: Increase the number of Influence Points needed for each result by 4 and increase all DCs by 2.

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

ENCOUNTER C2 (LEVELS 7-8)

NIGHTMARES (3)

CREATURE 6

NE LARGE BEAST FIEND

Perception +14; darkvision

Languages Abyssal, Daemonic, Infernal

Skills Acrobatics +13, Athletics +16, Intimidation +14, Survival +12

Str +6, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** +1, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +2

Smoke (aura) 15 feet. The nightmare continually exhales black smoke that creates concealment in an aura around them. Nightmares and their riders can see through this smoke. A creature that begins its turn in the area becomes sickened 2 (DC 23 Fortitude negates) and is then temporarily immune to sickness from the smoke for 1 minute. The nightmare, their rider, any creature currently holding its breath (or that does not need to breathe), and any creature immune to poison are immune to the aura's sickened effect but not the concealment.

AC 24; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12

HP 100; **Resistances** fire 10

Speed 40 feet, fly 90 feet

Melee ♦ jaws (evil, magical) +16, **Damage** 2d10+6 piercing plus 1d6 evil

Ranged ♦ hoof (agile, evil, fire, magical) +16, **Damage** 1d8+6 bludgeoning plus 1d6 and 1d8 fire

Divine Innate Spells DC 24; **7th** *plane shift* (self and rider only)

Flaming Gallop ♦♦ (fire) The nightmare Strides or Flies up to triple their Speed. Their hooves burst with intense flame, dealing 3d6 fire damage (DC 24 basic Reflex save) once to each creature other than the nightmare's rider that the nightmare moves adjacent to during their gallop.

SCALING ENCOUNTER C2

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

19-22 Challenge Points: Replace one nightmare with an elite nightmare.

23-27 Challenge Points: Replace two nightmares with elite nightmares.

28-32 Challenge Points: Replace all nightmares with elite nightmares.

33+ Challenge Points: Replace all nightmares with elite nightmares and add one elite nightmare to the encounter.

ELITE NIGHTMARES (0)

CREATURE 7

NE LARGE BEAST FIEND

Perception +16; darkvision

Languages Abyssal, Daemonic, Infernal

Skills Acrobatics +15, Athletics +18, Intimidation +16, Survival +14

Str +6, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** +1, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +2

Smoke (aura) 15 feet. The nightmare continually exhales black smoke that creates concealment in an aura around them. Nightmares and their riders can see through this smoke. A creature that begins its turn in the area becomes sickened 2 (DC 25 Fortitude negates) and is then temporarily immune to sickness from the smoke for 1 minute. The nightmare, their rider, any creature currently holding its breath (or that does not need to breathe), and any creature immune to poison are immune to the aura's sickened effect but not the concealment.

AC 26; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12

HP 120; **Resistances** fire 10

Speed 40 feet, fly 90 feet

Melee ♦ jaws (evil, magical) +18, **Damage** 2d10+8 piercing plus 1d6 evil

Ranged ♦ hoof (agile, evil, fire, magical) +18, **Damage** 1d8+8 bludgeoning plus 1d6 and 1d8 fire

Divine Innate Spells DC 26; **7th** *plane shift* (self and rider only)

Flaming Gallop ♦♦ (fire) The nightmare Strides or Flies up to triple their Speed. Their hooves burst with intense flame, dealing 3d6+2 fire damage (DC 26 basic Reflex save) once to each creature other than the nightmare's rider that the nightmare moves adjacent to during their gallop.

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

APPENDIX 3: GAME AIDS



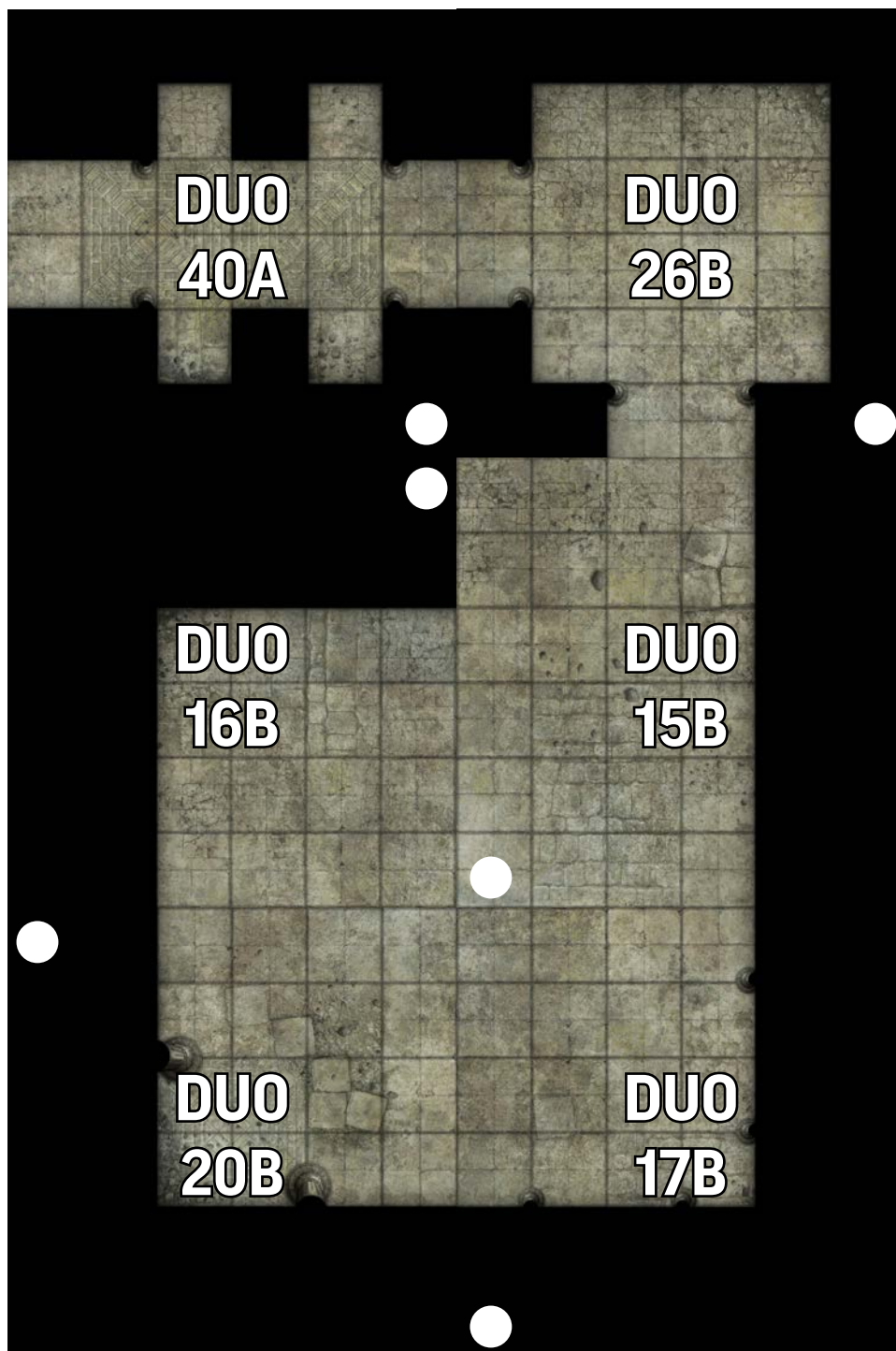
DHRAMI BLAKROS
ONYX ALLIANCE AGENT



NIGEL ALDAIN



THE BLAKROS DECEPTION



THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

ORGANIZED PLAY

TREASURE TABLE

LEVEL	TREASURE BUNDLE
5	10 gp
6	15 gp
7	22 gp
8	30 gp

TREASURE BUNDLES

- Pickpocket with a Plan, page 6: 2 Treasure Bundles for outwitting Kaldra
- Suspicious Burglars, page 8: 3 Treasure Bundles for defeating the Onyx Alliance agents
- Investigating the Townhouse, page 10: 2 Treasure Bundles for assisting Dhrami
- The Foals of Szuriel, page 14: 3 Treasure Bundles for protecting the museum

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION



Event Reporting Form

Date: _____ Event Code: _____

Location: _____

GM Org Play #:	-2	GM Name:	GM Faction:
Adventure #:		Adventure Name:	
Reporting Codes: (check when instructed, line through all if no conditions to report)		<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	
Bonus Faction Goal Achieved:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Scenario-based Infamy earned?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE BLAKROS DECEPTION

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Scenario #2-07: The Blakros Deception

		2	
Character Name		Organized Play #	Character #
Adventure Summary			
<p>You traveled to the infamous Blakros Museum in Absalom to investigate an accusation of incompetence leveled against Nigel Aldain, the museum's curator. After an encounter with a mysterious thief, you surprised a group of burglars at Dhrami Blakros' townhouse. Afterward, you had a conversation with Dhrami and reviewed her records regarding the museum and her family's resources. Upon finishing your review, you met Nigel inside the museum and continued your investigation. During the tour, a pair of magical statues transformed into nightmares and attacked you in the vault. At the conclusion of your investigation, you determined that (<input type="checkbox"/> Nigel was competent or <input type="checkbox"/> Nigel was incompetent) and (<input type="checkbox"/> discovered the terrible secret at the heart of the Blakros family's success). You (decided to <input type="checkbox"/> ally with Nigel or <input type="checkbox"/> expose Nigel's deceit to the Blakros family).</p>			
Boons		Rewards	
Congratulations on completing the adventure! You've earned Pathfinder Society (second edition) Achievement Points, a currency that be redeemed on our website at paizo.com for special character boons, such as access to rare or uncommon ancestries, feats, and more! To redeem your Achievement Points, go to paizo.com/organizedPlay/myAccount and click on the Boons tab. Note that you must have created a paizo.com account and registered a character before you can begin making Achievement Point transactions.		XP Gained	
		GP Gained	
Reputation Gained			
Items		Purchases	
<i>bag of holding type I</i> (item 4, 75 gp) <i>bag of holding type II</i> (item 7, 300 gp) <i>crafter's eyepiece</i> (item 3, 60 gp) <i>emerald grasshopper</i> (item 5, 30 gp) <i>lesser healing potions</i> (item 3, 12 gp; 2) <i>moderate healing potions</i> (item 6, 50 gp; 2) <i>shifting runestone</i> (item 4, 20 gp) <i>wand of heal</i> (item 3, 60 gp)		Items Sold / Conditions Gained _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ TOTAL VALUE OF ITEMS SOLD Add 1/2 this value to the GP Gained Box	
		Items Bought / Conditions Cleared _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ TOTAL COST OF ITEMS BOUGHT	
Notes		Downtime	
FOR GM ONLY			
EVENT		EVENT CODE	DATE
			GM Organized Play #