

PATHFINDER[®] ADVENTURE PATH[™]



WAR_{FOR THE} CROWN

PLAYER'S GUIDE



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REFERENCE

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at paizo.com/prd.

<i>Advanced Class Guide</i>	ACG	<i>Ultimate Combat</i>	UC
<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Ultimate Intrigue</i>	UI
<i>Advanced Race Guide</i>	ARG	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM
<i>Bestiaries 1–6</i>	B1–B6	<i>Ultimate Wilderness</i>	UW
<i>Occult Adventures</i>	OA		

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WAR FOR THE CROWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

Great nations proceed at the behest of a select few, and those select few are driven in turn by small things: whimsy, greed, fear, disease, love, or the right knife in the right back. The War for the Crown Adventure Path will take players up and down the length of Taldor and beyond, and while they run their blades through monsters and cast *fireball* against evil cultists, these champions of Taldor will play the deadliest game of the Taldan arena: politics. They'll tangle with magical monsters, match wits with senators, and play dirty pool against some of the most skilled spies in the Inner Sea, all to stop the nation of Taldor from collapsing into civil war. If they avert the end of its 6,000 years of history and culture, then maybe, just maybe, they can steer the staunchly traditionalist nation toward the future.

The Adventure Path's tone is one of action, espionage, and intrigue. The PCs are dashing rogues who sip exquisite drinks in formal clothes one night, only to crawl through the mud and cut down enemies the next.

The ultimate goal is to help Princess Eutropia claim her birthright and ascend to the Lion Throne, hopefully without the struggle destroying her good intentions and optimism. The characters themselves start out with little political power. They may be minor nobles, merchants, or even commoners, but their adventures, their associations, and the gratitude of an empress will help them rise to become some of the most important figures in Taldor.

The Adventure Path begins in Oppara—Taldor's glittering capital city—during the Grand Day of Exaltation, an annual celebration that culminates with the Grand Prince elevating an extraordinary commoner to the ranks of nobility. Oppara is a city of extremes; despite being among the wealthiest settlements in all of Avistan, it hosts the largest population of destitute and homeless residents. While they share a city, each population leads very different lives, separated by wealth and tradition more than stone walls.

COMING TOGETHER

In a city of over 100,000 souls, the PCs may be friends, family, schoolmates, or complete strangers. Regardless of the heroes' connection, the *War for the Crown* *Adventure Path* assumes each party member has some investment in Taldor and its future. They may be resource-strapped gentry trying to look out for their tenants, reformers who hope to make tomorrow better, or selfish schemers who want to climb the social ladder, but regardless of their motivation, they won't back down once the chaos starts. Many of the campaign traits (see page 8) offer ways to tie a character's past or future to Taldor's government. *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Taldor, The First Empire* discusses much of Taldor's culture, history, and geography, and provides some insight into the national mindset, making it an invaluable resource for players and Game Masters alike.

The Grand Day of Exaltation provides a motivation for characters to gather in Oppara even if they must travel from the far-flung corners of Taldor or beyond to do so. Minor nobles, ordinary citizens, and even peasants try to make the trip at least once in their lives to see the capital at its most convivial. Some citizens of Andoran, Chelax, Galt, Isgar, and Lastwall—countries Taldor still regards as wayward colonies—cross their nations' borders to enjoy the fireworks, parades, feasts, and sporting events that fill the week leading up to Exaltation. Entertainers from across the Inner Sea region journey to Taldor to capitalize upon the cheap food and generosity the festivities encourage.

Even residents of nations beyond Taldor's former colonies have reason to visit this cosmopolitan trading hub. Tourists and opportunists can find the same appeal in the spectacle of the Exaltation, but the week is business as usual for the year-round flow of trade. Oppara's ports see an endless succession of trading ships arriving from and departing toward Absalom, Rahadoum, Druma, Varisia, and even Taldor's former enemy Qadira—though Keleshites may find equal parts hostility and hospitality when they disembark.

This is a week when important treaties are signed and trade deals negotiated against a background of wine, music, and raucous color. And just as Oppara attracts politicians and strangers, it attracts schemers and criminals aiming to take advantage of both.

Adding to this year's excitement are rumors that the Taldan senate will finally vote on the matter of primogeniture: Taldor's ancient law that decrees only male heirs may inherit their families' titles, lands, and the authority that comes with both. Its repeal would be an enormous step forward for all of Taldor's women and people of other genders. Furthermore, it would give Taldor its first official heir since the accidental death of young Prince Carrius 20 years ago: the Princess Eutropia. Regardless of which side of the issue a given citizen supports, nearly every Taldan is passionate about the vote, and waiting for the results with bated breath.

Wherever your character hails from, two things bind you to your fellow adventurers: the aforementioned desire to save Taldor from itself, and a woman named Lady Martella Lotheed. Whatever brought you into the public eye—your own political ambitions, a sports victory, a protest—also earned you the attention of this young schemer looking for fresh talent for her own growing web of intrigue. In exchange for your service, she offers coin, new clothes, and invitations to one of the most prestigious social events of the year: the Exaltation Gala, held in the senate building. Anyone in Taldor needing a favor, an ear to bend, or a patron can find one during this annual event, as senators and nobles alike gather for hours of food, wine, and music, as well as for official senate business to be conducted before the Grand Prince arrives to formally exalt a citizen. No matter your feelings on the busywork the Lady Lotheed has in mind, these invitations represent rare access to high society and networking opportunities that can change the courses of lives.

CHARACTER TIPS

What sort of characters work best for *War for the Crown*? A champion for social reform? A scheming vizier looking to secure her own wealth and power? A dashing lothario looking to woo every pretty face in the empire? A military grunt with a sturdy sword? The answer: any of these ideas and more. While *War for the Crown* contains a fair amount of clandestine work and social interaction, it still has its fair share of monsters to slay and dungeons to delve. Whatever a character's motivation is for diving into Taldan politics, there should be opportunities aplenty.



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At its core, War for the Crown is a campaign for people who want to fix a broken system, not take it over for their own gain or tear it all down in bloody revolt. This difficult course means learning to blend in among those whose rule you seek to undermine, rather than upturning their world and starting from scratch. It means compromise and subterfuge and keeping up the appearance of loyalty to various despicable sorts even as you work behind the scenes to undermine them. But through all this, as your patron rises in power and prestige, so too do you, and your actions can help shape Eutropia's rule when—or if—she finally reaches the throne.

ALIGNMENT

The characters in War for the Crown fight on behalf of a neutral good candidate, and while their purpose is to get their hands dirty on her behalf, characters with good or neutral alignments will have an easier time navigating challenges and achieving goals. Lawful characters shouldn't feel beholden to tradition, as the laws of succession end up in uncharted territory as War for the Crown begins, while chaotic characters should take some solace that Eutropia's long-running goals include overturning corrupt and unfair systems for the betterment of all. More mercenary characters will find plenty of chances to earn wealth, fame, and prestige in Martella Lotheed's service; even characters of evil alignments can exploit these same opportunities if they keep their darker impulses concealed from their comrades and can be persuaded to work well with others.

ARCHETYPES AND CLASS OPTIONS

The challenges in War for the Crown rely as much on calm words and a winning smile as they do a sharp blade, and while combat will present itself, characters who can blend into the social scene or investigate strange events will find more opportunities to shine. Most character classes are suitable for War for the Crown, but those that revolve around rugged wilderness themes or with few options outside of combat may have less to do in many parts of the story. Character classes with diverse abilities—especially the bard, inquisitor, investigator, medium, rogue, swashbuckler, and vigilante—will find themselves well prepared for the variety of challenges they encounter. Martialy inclined players will find more utility playing brawlers, cavaliers, and paladins than most fighters or rangers. For spellcasters, those whose arts come from study and control—alchemists, arcanists, clerics, magi, and wizards—are more readily accepted in high society than those whose magic is a

WHAT WAR FOR THE CROWN IS NOT

War for the Crown is not an Adventure Path dedicated to helping a single player character become emperor of Taldor. While you can certainly play it this way, declaring a single PC the most important rarely turns out well, and can easily lead to player infighting (though this might be the exact sort of argumentative, backstabbing tone you want to set for a political game). It's also not an AP where you decide which political horse to back (not that we didn't consider it, but in the end it would require a lot more text in each adventure, and no one wants to pay for pages of content their campaign won't use). From a setting perspective, War for the Crown helps us move our timeline in Taldor forward from the default established in the original *Inner Sea World Guide* published 6 years ago; Stavian's an old man, after all, and has only so many Adventure Paths left.

Since its introduction, Taldor has often been the punch line of jokes: stagnant, spoiled, out of touch. These aren't inaccurate descriptions, but they don't make a setting sound like a fun adventure background, and that seems like a waste of an entire nation. Adventure is about change and drama, after all. Taldor's stagnancy makes it ripe for conflict, and a conflict that comes down to the question of "do we stay the course or do we move forward into a changing world"—Eutropia the reformer or Pythareus the traditionalist—strikes at the heart of what makes Taldor tragic and gives the PCs a hand in bringing the nation and her people some hope.

result of often-untraceable ancestry, happenstance, or unknowable forces; oracles, sorcerers, summoners, and witches are typically looked down upon in Taldan society. In much of Taldor, classes that thrive in the wild world—barbarians, bloodragers, hunters, rangers, and skalds—will find their skills less useful and their presence less welcome than their urban counterparts. Many Taldans distrust druids in particular, invoking as their reason the centuries of animosity towards the Wildwood Lodge of the Verduran Forest.

As much of War for the Crown focuses on the history, legacies, and zeitgeist of Taldor, along with conspiracies and strange forces, the various occult classes are especially appropriate for this Adventure Path.

Some potentially useful archetypes are listed below:

- Celebrity bard^{UM}
- Cleaner slayer^{ACG}
- Court bard^{APG}

- Court fool bard (*Pathfinder Player Companion: Heroes of the High Court*)
- Courtly hunter^{UI}
- Daring infiltrator swashbuckler^{ACG}
- Exemplar brawler^{ACG}
- Falconer ranger^{UC}
- Free hand fighter^{APG}
- Guerrilla rogue (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Intrigue*)
- Hidden priest cleric (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic*)
- High guardian fighter (*Heroes of the High Court*)
- Honor guard cavalier^{UC}
- Infiltrator inquisitor^{UM}
- Investigator rogue^{APG}
- Majordomo investigator^{UI}
- Mastermind investigator^{ACG}
- Mindchemist alchemist^{UM}
- Monk of the seven forms (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Combat*)
- Provocateur bard (*Inner Sea Intrigue*)
- Relic channeler medium^{OA}
- Sandman bard^{APG}
- Sensate fighter^{OA}
- Spy rogue^{APG}
- Storyteller medium^{OA}
- Swashbuckler rogue^{APG}
- Tinkerer alchemist (*Inner Sea Intrigue*)
- Virtuous bravo paladin (*Heroes of the High Court*)

BLOODLINES, MYSTERIES, AND PATRONS

While sorcerer or bloodrager characters aren't the best choices for Taldan adventures, they remain useful. The following suggestions fit the themes or provide abilities especially appropriate to this campaign: destined, draconic, imperious^{ARG}, maestro^{UM}, and starsoul^{APG}.

The oracle mysteries and shaman spirits with the strongest ties to the themes of the Adventure Path are ancestor^{UM}, life, lore, metal^{UM}, and time^{UM}.

Apt witch patrons for the War for the Crown include ancestors^{UM}, deception, time^{UM}, trickery, and wisdom.

Of course, these choices are only suggestions, and players should not feel limited to these options.

FAMILIAR AND ANIMAL COMPANIONS

Exotic pets are not uncommon among the nobles of Taldor, and the nation's diverse environments guarantee that a wide variety of animals can be found within its borders. Familiars in particular are a common sight

among the aristocracy. While wealthier families may pay royal sums for exotic beasts from across the sea, familiars native to Taldor include cat, flying fox^{B5}, flying squirrel^{B3}, fox^{B3}, greensting scorpion^{UM}, hawk, hedgehog^{UM}, house centipede^{UM}, lizard, monkey, otter^{B3}, owl, peafowl^{UM}, rabbit^{UM}, rat, raven, squirrel^{UM}, thrush^{UM}, toad, and weasel.

The following animals are found throughout Taldor and the Verduran Forest and make readily available animal companions: antelope^{B3}, baboon^{B2}, badger^{B2}, bear, bird, camel, big cat, small cat, crocodile, digmaul^{B5}, dog, horse, hyena^{B1}, monitor lizard^{B1}, pony, ram^{B2}, giant raven^{B6}, roc^{B1}, venomous snake, stag^{B4}, swan^{B4}, giant vulture^{B3}, and wolf. Of these, however, only the bird, small cat, dog, horse, pony, and swan are considered appropriate in aristocratic gatherings.

FAVORED ENEMIES AND ENVIRONMENTS

Players will encounter a variety of opponents throughout the course of the War for the Crown Adventure Path as they traipse through urban sprawl, ancient dungeons, fetid waterways, and sweltering plains. The best choice for favored terrain is urban, followed by plains and underground. Throughout the adventure, rival humanoids—especially humans—will be the PCs' most frequent opponents, backed up by animals, magical beasts, and evil outsiders.

ORIGINS

Given the nature of the campaign, characters are most likely Taldan natives from middle- or upper-class families, but Lady Lotheed may well have recruited a lower-class PC who came to her attention through extraordinary circumstances. Young or inexperienced aristocrats, apprentice merchants, rising celebrities, students, reformers, guild members, journalists, and aspiring spies all have reasons to invest themselves in Oppara's treacherous political stage. Eutropia has also gained the support of the Sovereign Court, a secret society that believes that those entrusted with the power of a title must be bound to use it wisely and respectfully, and so Pathfinder agents from all across Avistan and Garund may find themselves in Taldor to assist her.

LANGUAGES

Common is by definition the language of Taldor, as Taldor originated the Common tongue. Academics and sophisticates often opt to learn Azlanti, Celestial, or Elven as a status symbol. The nation's proximity to Qadira means many merchants, soldiers, and travelers speak Kelish. Taldor's historical march over much of Kellid



territory means many lower-class citizens, especially those living in and around the Verduran Forest, speak a bit of Hallit. By contrast, Taldor's many dwarves and halflings rarely use nonhuman languages outside of their own communities, making experience with Dwarven and Halfling rare outside of those groups.

Oppara in particular sees a large variety of languages. Skald is common among soldiers and servants thanks to the presence of the Ulfen Guard, while Taldor's trade relationships with Osirion and Jalmeray lead a sizable minority of merchants and accountants to study Osiriani and Vudrani.

RACES

Taldor's history of empire and trade is visible in its people. For centuries, Taldor conquered every land it could and traded with those it didn't; modern Taldans, noble and common alike, represent nearly every human ethnicity. The nation also hosts a wide variety of other humanoids. Dwarves native to Taldor make their homes in Maheto and the Sky Citadel Kravenkus. The Verduran Forest supports a large population of gnomes, centered in and around Wispil. Halfling villages and farmsteads dot the Taldan countryside, while their urban counterparts work as bakers,

cooks, entertainers, and servants. Part-humans, from half-elves to geniekin, also number among Taldor's citizens. Some rare races call Taldor home as well; reclusive families of fetchlings dwell in the shadows of great cities, while gillmen can be found all along the western coasts. Skinwalkers descended from the lycanthropes of the Verduran Forest live in the rural north. Even tengus and vishkanyas have crossed Golarion to come to Taldor. Non-human visitors are also a regular occurrence, especially dwarves from the Five Kings Mountains and elves from Kyonin.

Despite this cosmopolitan veneer, Taldor remains a stubbornly old-fashioned, humanocentric empire with little regard for non-humans. Stigma toward part-humans such as half-orcs, half-elves, and geniekin is especially virulent, with some humans openly labeling such folk "mongrels" or worse. Half-elves descended from noble Taldans generally have the resources to live in comfort, but at the cost of lifelong seclusion. Halflings, gnomes, and half-orcs are considered suitable only for roles as servants. Dwarves and elves experience exceptions to this discrimination, but only because of their perceived benefits to Taldan humans—elves for their beauty and sophistication, and dwarves for their part in Taldor's economic bounty.

The notable exception to this backwards attitude is the Taldan acceptance of aasimars. The people of Taldor believe the angel-blooded stem from their eons-long relationship with the god Aroden, and see them as physical manifestations of Taldor's own cultural and moral enlightenment.

RELIGION

Worship of Aroden is still a part of Taldan daily life to some degree, but while the church still exists, its coffers are nearly empty, leaving it with little political power. The practical gods of Taldor are Abadar, Cayden Cailean, Norgorber, and Shelyn—the so-called Taldan pantheon—with sizable cults of Calistria, Iomedae, and Kurgess as well. Many staunch Taldan traditionalists still consider worship of Sarenrae taboo, but now that the faith is no longer outlawed it enjoys a growing popularity among the poor. Worship of darker gods divides sharply along class boundaries; indulgent nobles often form cults to Urgathoa to worship her aspect as the goddess of gluttony and indulgence, whereas the poor turn to Norgorber, especially his aspect as the Gray Master. The Green Faith is dominant in the Verduran Forest, and, surprisingly, the empire has imported some diabolism from Cheliah.

SKILLS AND FEATS

At many points during War for the Crown, various social and knowledge skills will prove critical for winning allies and uncovering clues. While combat and physical challenges will still present themselves, players may risk feeling left out if their characters don't have at least one of the following skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, or Sense Motive. Skills that are less critical but still appear frequently include Knowledge (history), Knowledge (nobility), Performance, Profession, and Stealth. Many useful feats for social encounters and investigations can be found in *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Intrigue*.

Especially thematic feats include the Cosmopolitan, Flagbearer, Noble Scion, Secret Signs, Stoic, and Taldan Duelist feats from *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide*, as well as story feats that delve into a character's heritage. Non-humans may benefit from the Pass for Human^{APG} feat as they cross paths with Taldor's more conservative personages. Taldor is also a nation of duelists, and combat feats such as Amateur Swashbuckler^{ACG}, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Disarm, Lunge, Spring Attack, and Weapon Finesse are all thematically appropriate.

With ready access to a huge variety of services, the PCs will have little need for crafting feats.

TRAITS

In addition to the Campaign Traits listed below, several traits from *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Player's Guide* are particularly fitting for the themes of War for the Crown, or provide access to important skills. These include Adopted, Armor Expert, Bully, Classically Schooled, Ease of Faith, Eyes and Ears of the City, Fast-Talker, Fencer, Focused Mind, Magical Talent, Savannah Child, Suspicious, Well-Informed, and World Traveler. Beyond these, *Pathfinder Player Companion: Spymaster's Handbook* presents many new traits appropriate to this campaign, in particular Criminal Roots, Deep Cover, Hidden Faith, Official Ties, and Persuasive Insight.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

The War for the Crown Adventure Path guides players from being relative nobodies with an interest in Taldor's politics to major players on the nation's stage. The campaign begins in Oppara, glittering capital of the empire, with the assumption that each character has done something minor that nonetheless proved sufficient to earn the attention of some noble circles and led to their recruitment by Lady Martella Lotheed. Regardless of background, every character should have a vested interest in preserving Taldor as a nation, and be willing to work alongside others to accomplish that greater goal.

Each player character should select one of the following campaign traits as one of their two traits available at character creation:

Athletic Champion: Your physique and skill brought you into the public eye, and a winning smile helps you stay there. Taldor honors its extraordinary athletes, celebrating them as cultural heroes. Whether you were a gladiator, a runner, a wrestler, or any other competitor, your most recent victory caused someone important to sit up and take notice. You may never have a political career in front of you, but for now your name is helping to bring a little extra money in, and maybe that's good enough. Select two of the following skills: Climb, Diplomacy, Perception, and Swim. You gain a +1 trait bonus on checks with those skills, and they are always class skills for you. In addition, you are accustomed to maneuvering through crowds; you gain a +2 trait bonus on checks to navigate through a crowd or resist being moved against your will, including spells and bull rush, drag, and reposition combat maneuvers.

Child of Oppara: You belong to a noble family that matters in Taldor, though as the story begins you may or may not be on good terms with your relatives. Your upbringing among the city's well-to-do gives you an upper hand when it comes to knowledge of high society,

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and you start the game with a modest inheritance. With Princess Eutropia's efforts to provide for Taldor's common citizens and overturn years of tradition, new lines are being quietly drawn in the sand, and you have found yourself embroiled in these intrigues whether you intended to be or not.

With this trait, the assumption is that you belong to a minor noble family (and can make up your family name). In this case, your family keeps a small manor in Aroden's View or Senate's Hill. If you want to be a member of one of Oppara's major noble families, you must take the Noble Scion feat at 1st level.

You gain a +1 trait bonus on Appraise and Knowledge (nobility) checks, and one of these skills is always a class skill for you. The Noble Scion feat (see the sidebar) does not have a Charisma prerequisite for you. In addition, you start play with a noble's outfit, a signet ring, and a single additional nonmagical item worth no more than 200 gp.

Disgraced Noble: Your noble family used to matter, until your father took a stand against Maxillar Pythareus, the commander of Taldor's military. True or not, the accusations Pythareus leveled against your family in return destroyed your reputation and isolated you from the society you grew up in. Now the only thing that matters to you is clawing your way back up the social ladder, either for your own quality of life or to clear your family's name. You've had to practice deception as you began working your way back into Taldan social circles; you gain a +2 trait bonus on Bluff checks to conceal your identity and a +2 bonus on Linguistics checks to spot or produce forgeries, and one of these skills is always a class skill for you. Once each day, you can choose a single humanoid you believe to have been involved in the conspiracy to destroy your family; you gain a +1 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls against that NPC for a number of rounds equal to your character level. At 10th level, this bonus increases to +2.

Rising Star: All too often, great minds must suffer for their art, but you're one of the lucky ones. Your skills attracted the attention of a noble patron who pays for your food, housing, and tools. As your patron introduces you to other cultural elites, you're slowly learning to navigate the treacherous waters of high society, but you still remember the lean times when each meal was a hard-won treasure. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Sense Motive and Survival checks, as well as checks using a single Craft or Perform skill of your choice; one of these skills is always a class skill for you. Once each day, you can invoke your patron's reputation or name one of your own prominent works to gain a +2 circumstance bonus

WANT TO READ MORE?

Several additional books provide more perspective and knowledge for your War for the Crown Adventure Path campaign. Listed below are sources that, while not necessary, may prove useful or inspiring while playing through this campaign.

FOR GAME MASTERS

Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Intrigue

Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Taldor, The First Empire

FOR PLAYERS

Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Races

(additional details on the Taldan people)

Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Intrigue

Pathfinder Player Companion: Heroes of the High Court

Pathfinder Player Companion: Spymaster's Handbook

on a single Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check. You begin the game with a masterwork musical instrument or tool appropriate to the Craft or Perform skill you selected, a gift from your patron.

Senatorial Hopeful: While you belong to a noble family, hailing from the outlying prefectures means you lack the pull and wealth needed to rub shoulders with the stars of Oppara's social scene. Your life has been quiet, isolated from the thrum of fashion and pop culture, but you see this as a source of insight and aim to help people by someday joining the senate. It'll be a long journey, but you've already begun learning which hands to shake and how to listen carefully when others tell you what they want. You gain a +1 bonus on Diplomacy and Knowledge (local) checks, and both of these skills are always class skills for you. Once each week you can call on family connections to obtain a single piece of equipment or consumable magic item (such as a potion or scroll) worth up to your character level $\times$ 25 gp. Delivery of the goods you request takes 1d4 days. At 10th level, the potential value of a magical item increases to your character level $\times$ 50 gp, and your requests can also include spellcasting services and wands.

Taldan Patriot: You love your country, its history, and its people... even though they may not love you back. Whether you're a bureaucrat, a minor noble, or a soldier, you want your community to be the best it can be and you channel that love into a position in service to the people of Taldor. You gain a +1 bonus on all Sense Motive and Knowledge (history) checks, and these skills are always class skills for you. In addition, once per

day you can recall a specific fact about a Taldan noble's personality—quirks such as a hobby or pet peeve—including information you would normally learn as a discovery check in social combat.

Young Reformer: Perhaps you were born at the bottom of Taldan society and you're tired of seeing your friends and family toil endlessly with no hope of a better life, or maybe your privileged outlook was shattered by empathy or tragedy. Either way, you know the system is broken, and you've dedicated your life to fixing it. But tradition rules Taldor as much as any Grand Prince, and change requires more influence than you have... so far. You've got a few friends and allies, and plenty of determination, but while you work toward the power you need to change the nation, you'll have to resort to more discrete ways of righting wrongs and curbing the abuses of the upper class. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Disable Device and Knowledge (local) checks, and one of these skills is always a class skill for you. Once per day, you can call upon your coconspirators to have "made arrangements" on your behalf, allowing you to attempt a Knowledge (local) check in place of a single Bluff, Disable Device, Intimidate, or Sleight of Hand check. The DC of this Knowledge (local) check is equal to the DC of the skill check it replaces. Whatever arrangements you make—for doors left unlocked, guards strong-armed out of your way, stolen keys left for you to find—must be reasonable to have anticipated and achieved beforehand; you could arrange to have a noble convinced you're a very important diplomat traveling in disguise, for example, but if a fight breaks out you could not rely on your network of contacts to feint for you in combat. You don't have to use this ability in advance; you can announce its use as you encounter a challenge, implying you foresaw this challenge and made arrangements prior to your arrival.

VARIANT FEAT—NOBLE SCION

You are a member of one of the significant noble families of Oppara, whether or not you remain in good standing with your family. In many cases, these families are Imperialists loyal to Maxillar Pythareus, and as such you either are a black sheep or your family has cut you off entirely.

Prerequisites: Charisma 13 or Child of Oppara trait, must be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Knowledge (nobility) checks, and Knowledge (nobility) is always a class skill for you. You also gain an additional benefit depending on which family you belong to.

Basri: You come from the long line of ambassadors, diplomats, and travelers that make up the Basri, and

your family maintains the strongest ties to the elven nation of Kyonin of any Taldan humans. Select one of the following as a bonus starting language: Celestial, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan. You gain proficiency in one of the following weapons: longbow (including composite), longsword, rapier, or shortbow (including composite). If you gain proficiency in all martial weapons at 1st level, you can instead select elven curve blade.

Clement: Your Garundi and Mwangi ancestors served Taldor proudly during the Sixth Army of Exploration and were awarded titles for their service. Your family, which has maintained their noble titles to this day, is known for keen insights and biting observations. You can substitute your Wisdom modifier for your Charisma modifier when attempting Diplomacy skill checks.

Corcina: Your family came to prominence during the Second Army of Exploration, and maintains a legacy as explorers and sailors. You gain a +1 bonus on Climb and Escape Artist checks, and a +2 bonus on Survival checks to navigate.

Karthis: Yours is a family of distinguished military veterans, charismatic demagogues, and xenophobic zealots. As the rest of the family becomes increasingly Imperialist, you have made no effort to remain in their good graces, but you retain the skills they taught you during a childhood of rigorous training. You can apply your Charisma modifier instead of your Dexterity modifier to Initiative checks.

Kastner: Your stalwart family defines itself by opposing your devil-worshipping Chelish cousins, a grudge that inspired some of Taldor's greatest healers, priests, and negotiators. You gain one additional use per day of channel energy, lay on hands, or mesmerist tricks, or 3 additional rounds of bardic music per day. You gain only one of these benefits, even if you later acquire a second class that provides one of the other class features listed.

Lotheed: Your family ranks include the greatest wizards and arcane scholars in Taldor, and schooling in some of the most comprehensive arcane libraries in the Inner Sea was your birthright. If your Intelligence is 11 or higher, you gain the following spell-like abilities: 1/day—*dancing lights*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *unseen servant*. The caster level for these effects is equal to one-half your class level.

Merosett: The cunning members of your large family, a longtime fixture in Oppara's bureaucracy, specialize in tracking lineages and sidestepping red tape. You gain a +5 bonus on Bluff checks to send secret messages and Sense Motive checks to discern secret messages. You halve the time required to search through archives, navigate government offices, review contracts, or otherwise work

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with the complex bureaucracies your family has mastered for generations.

Stavian: As a close relative of the Grand Prince, yours has been a life of material comfort and indulgence, colored by constant threats and direct influence. You gain a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves against poison and on Will saves against enchantment spells of the charm and compulsion subschools.

Talbot: Your starkly conservative family are merchants and entrepreneurs first and aristocrats second, willing to forgo duty if they can instead pursue profit. They condemn would-be adventurers and readily oust them from the family ranks, leaving you an outcast. You gain a +2 bonus on one Profession skill of your choice. Once per day, you can use this Profession skill in place of a single Knowledge skill check.

Varima: Your family immigrated to Taldor from Vudra hundreds of years ago, and thanks to noble roots, extensive trade contacts, and an unparalleled skill in negotiation, soon developed into a steadfast fixture of Oppara's social scene. Whenever you use Diplomacy to influence a crowd or a room (but not individuals), you can roll twice and use the better result.

Vernisant: Your family is descended from the great general Arnisant, who commanded Taldan forces during the Shining Crusade... and they will never let anyone forget it! Their fierce Imperialist support and nationalist fervor has left you alienated from your relatives now, but their emphasis on scholarship left a mark nonetheless. You gain a +1 bonus on all Knowledge skills in which you have at least 1 rank.

Vinmark: Newcomers and outsiders, your Ulfen family was exalted to nobility 19 years ago, when Stavian III promoted your family patriarch to Baron of Oppara as a reward for service in the Ulfen Guard. Established aristocrats consider your family crude, choosing to leave them on the margins of Taldan politics unless a noble thinks they could use you to curry favor with the Grand Prince, but hard-won practicality and newborn cynicism grant you insight most Taldan nobles lack. Once per day when rolling a Sense Motive check, you may roll two dice and use the better result.

Zespire: Your family runs charities and lobbies heavily for social reform, leaving them with few friends among their Opparan peers but heartfelt support from the common folk and lesser nobility. You gain a +2 bonus on Diplomacy and Perform checks when dealing with common citizens and with nobles whose titles are limited to Lord, Lady, Knight, or Dame.

Special: This is a variant of the Noble Scion trait presented in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea*

World Guide. If you take this version of the feat, you cannot also take the version presented in that book.

TALDOR AT A GLANCE

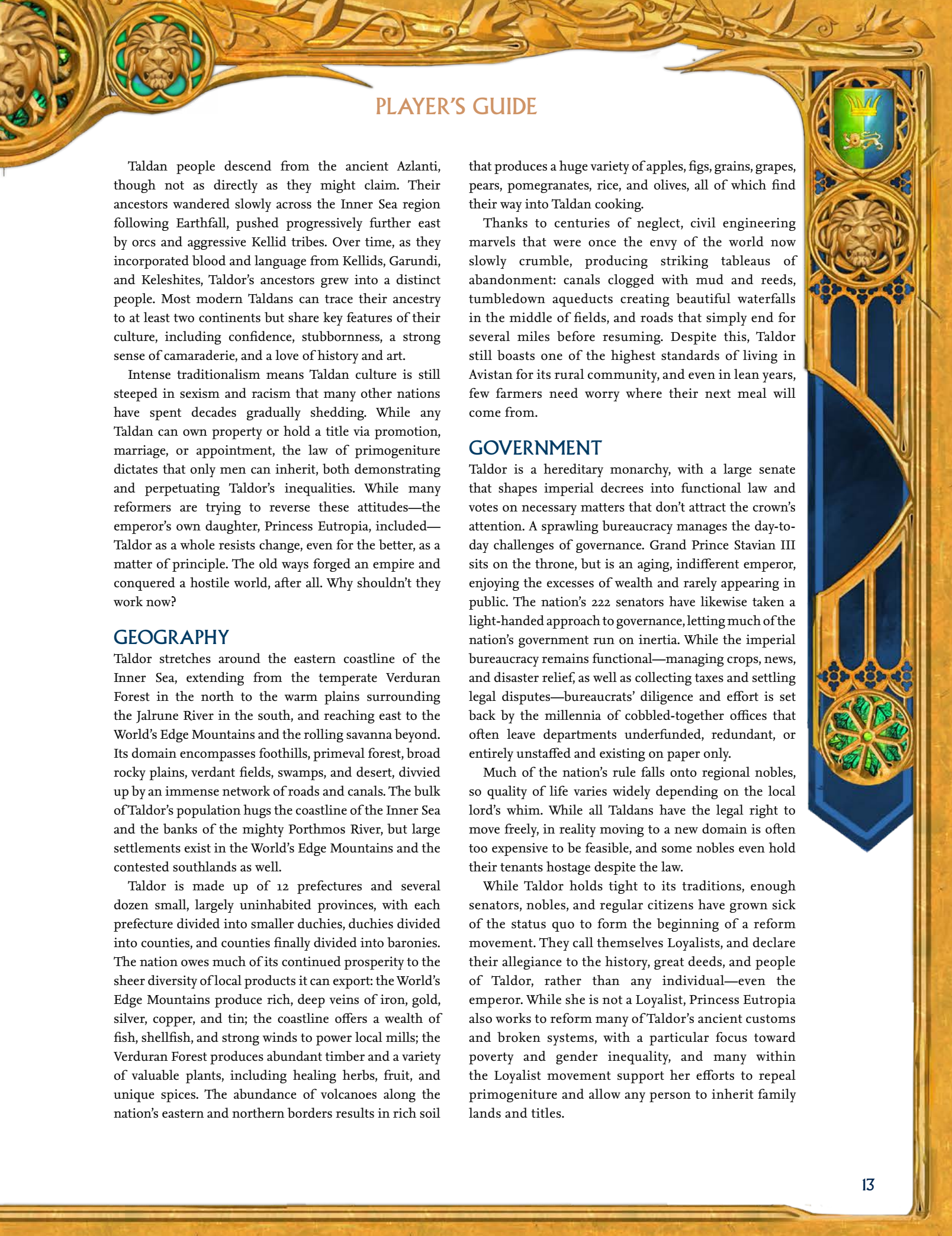
The popular image of Taldor being a nation of inbred fops sipping tea as their empire burns isn't entirely baseless, but reducing the entire nation to only that does a disservice to its citizens and influence. Much of Avistan's culture and language stems from Taldor, and the empire influenced the history of three continents. But, overseen by rulers with more interest in luxury than the nation's well-being, Grand Prince Stavian III being only the most recent, the nation now is a shadow of its former self.

Taldor is a nation of long histories and deep divisions. Following Earthfall and the Age of Darkness, it was the first settlement on Avistan to rebuild itself, allying disparate city-states into an empire. This mythic task, achieved by the legendary First Emperor Taldaris, gave birth not only to a nation but also to a nationalist fervor. Taldan patriotism praised hard work and discipline; the nascent empire channeled these values by mastering cavalry and building roads from Oppara to the Arcadian Ocean unmatched by the rest of the continent's scattered Kellid city-states. Taldor's military might created imperial economic power; Taldans saw their conquests as bringing enlightenment to "backwards" people and inferior states, seeing the empire itself as proof they deserved the great wealth that flowed from their mighty colonies.

Those days of dominion are long gone. Though Taldans still refer to them as "the colonies," Andoran, Cheliah, Galt, Isgar, and Lastwall are all independent nations, their populations and resources no longer subject to Taldan governance or Taldan use. While the nation remains a military and economic juggernaut, it has little to show for its past glories beyond an immense but ever-diminishing treasury, an out-of-touch aristocracy, and nationalist nostalgia. Taldan culture still prizes hard work and discipline, but the common folk are the ones practicing those virtues, for little recognition or reward; the nobility, like their imperial predecessors, profess national pride for its own sake, sure that their continued wealth shows they must be doing *something* right. All the while, Taldor's once-legendary infrastructure of aqueducts, bridges, canals, and highways crumbles, leaving pockets of the population completely cut off from the nation and areas rendered uninhabitable as rural farming collapses. A corrupt, labyrinthine bureaucracy stymies those nobles who do want to improve the system—or even just maintain their lands.



TALDOR



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Taldan people descend from the ancient Azlanti, though not as directly as they might claim. Their ancestors wandered slowly across the Inner Sea region following Earthfall, pushed progressively further east by orcs and aggressive Kellid tribes. Over time, as they incorporated blood and language from Kellids, Garundi, and Keleshites, Taldor's ancestors grew into a distinct people. Most modern Taldans can trace their ancestry to at least two continents but share key features of their culture, including confidence, stubbornness, a strong sense of camaraderie, and a love of history and art.

Intense traditionalism means Taldan culture is still steeped in sexism and racism that many other nations have spent decades gradually shedding. While any Taldan can own property or hold a title via promotion, marriage, or appointment, the law of primogeniture dictates that only men can inherit, both demonstrating and perpetuating Taldor's inequalities. While many reformers are trying to reverse these attitudes—the emperor's own daughter, Princess Eutropia, included—Taldor as a whole resists change, even for the better, as a matter of principle. The old ways forged an empire and conquered a hostile world, after all. Why shouldn't they work now?

GEOGRAPHY

Taldor stretches around the eastern coastline of the Inner Sea, extending from the temperate Verduran Forest in the north to the warm plains surrounding the Jalrune River in the south, and reaching east to the World's Edge Mountains and the rolling savanna beyond. Its domain encompasses foothills, primeval forest, broad rocky plains, verdant fields, swamps, and desert, divided up by an immense network of roads and canals. The bulk of Taldor's population hugs the coastline of the Inner Sea and the banks of the mighty Porthmos River, but large settlements exist in the World's Edge Mountains and the contested southlands as well.

Taldor is made up of 12 prefectures and several dozen small, largely uninhabited provinces, with each prefecture divided into smaller duchies, duchies divided into counties, and counties finally divided into baronies. The nation owes much of its continued prosperity to the sheer diversity of local products it can export: the World's Edge Mountains produce rich, deep veins of iron, gold, silver, copper, and tin; the coastline offers a wealth of fish, shellfish, and strong winds to power local mills; the Verduran Forest produces abundant timber and a variety of valuable plants, including healing herbs, fruit, and unique spices. The abundance of volcanoes along the nation's eastern and northern borders results in rich soil

that produces a huge variety of apples, figs, grains, grapes, pears, pomegranates, rice, and olives, all of which find their way into Taldan cooking.

Thanks to centuries of neglect, civil engineering marvels that were once the envy of the world now slowly crumble, producing striking tableaux of abandonment: canals clogged with mud and reeds, tumbledown aqueducts creating beautiful waterfalls in the middle of fields, and roads that simply end for several miles before resuming. Despite this, Taldor still boasts one of the highest standards of living in Avistan for its rural community, and even in lean years, few farmers need worry where their next meal will come from.

GOVERNMENT

Taldor is a hereditary monarchy, with a large senate that shapes imperial decrees into functional law and votes on necessary matters that don't attract the crown's attention. A sprawling bureaucracy manages the day-to-day challenges of governance. Grand Prince Stavian III sits on the throne, but is an aging, indifferent emperor, enjoying the excesses of wealth and rarely appearing in public. The nation's 222 senators have likewise taken a light-handed approach to governance, letting much of the nation's government run on inertia. While the imperial bureaucracy remains functional—managing crops, news, and disaster relief, as well as collecting taxes and settling legal disputes—bureaucrats' diligence and effort is set back by the millennia of cobbled-together offices that often leave departments underfunded, redundant, or entirely unstaffed and existing on paper only.

Much of the nation's rule falls onto regional nobles, so quality of life varies widely depending on the local lord's whim. While all Taldans have the legal right to move freely, in reality moving to a new domain is often too expensive to be feasible, and some nobles even hold their tenants hostage despite the law.

While Taldor holds tight to its traditions, enough senators, nobles, and regular citizens have grown sick of the status quo to form the beginning of a reform movement. They call themselves Loyalists, and declare their allegiance to the history, great deeds, and people of Taldor, rather than any individual—even the emperor. While she is not a Loyalist, Princess Eutropia also works to reform many of Taldor's ancient customs and broken systems, with a particular focus toward poverty and gender inequality, and many within the Loyalist movement support her efforts to repeal primogeniture and allow any person to inherit family lands and titles.

In opposition to the Loyalists stand a growing movement of Imperialists, who consider the Primogen Crown the one true authority in Taldor, with the senate and nobility existing only to carry out the emperor's will. This disparate group shares the firm belief that Taldor's greatness was rooted in its oldest traditions—and that embracing new ideas was what cost Taldor its imperial might. Their most extreme members insist that no middle ground can exist: either Taldor must reconquer former colonies like Galt and Andoran, or else the empire is doomed to crumble away into nothing.

While not every Taldan belongs to a faction, the increasing polarization of Taldan society is raising tensions across the nation. Other conflicts—growing political instability in Thuvia, rumors that the Seven Houses are undermining Andoran's government, the squashed rebellion in Cheliah, and the secession of Ravounel—serve only to intensify the turmoil. Secret societies and fraternities, a longtime staple of the Taldan aristocracy that until recently amounted to little more than private clubs, have begun maneuvering to gain power or hoard wealth now, with the expectation that Grand Prince Stavian III's passing will lead to a painful and protracted succession conflict.

SOCIAL COMBAT

Every conflict in *War for the Crown* that takes place in salons and ballrooms is just as real—and as deadly—as its daring sword battles through lost catacombs and secret lairs. PCs will need wit and guile as much as a strong arm. The rules here describe the most common types of social interactions the PCs will engage in: winning favor and influencing NPCs. These rules are a simplified version of the rules for influencing an individual presented in Chapter 3 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue*.

Dramatis Personae: For social conflicts, NPCs are presented in a Dramatis Personae section with their social stat blocks. A social stat block provides some basic description, including the NPC's background, appearance, personality, and goals. It also lists rules elements like relevant skill bonuses and the NPCs' biases, strengths, and weaknesses, as well as their starting attitude toward the PCs, the steps needed to change it, and the benefits the PCs gain for improving an NPC's attitude toward them.

Skills: This section lists the NPC's skill bonuses that are relevant to social interaction, usually including but not limited to Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive.

Biases: Biases are subconscious preferences an NPC might not know they have, but that shape who they

listen to, what information they dismiss, when they welcome interaction, and what might cause them to refuse outside input. People or circumstances an NPC has a positive bias toward gain a +2 bonus on all checks to influence them, while those they are negatively inclined toward take a –2 penalty on such checks. The modifier from one bias stacks with other biases, so an elven woman trying to influence an NPC who favors elves (+2) but hates women (–2) would cancel out. These modifiers also stack with strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths: Strengths are particular beliefs, topics, and values an NPC is especially intractable on; any attempt to influence an NPC using one of their strengths takes a –4 penalty. A skinflint politician might have a strength against the plight of the poor, so no matter if a PC tries to sway him using Diplomacy, Intimidate, or any other skill, she takes a –4 penalty if she's trying to discuss charity or suffering of the needy.

Weaknesses: Weaknesses are approaches, frames, and ideas that an NPC is more likely to be swayed by and that are more useful for influencing them, granting a +4 bonus on influence checks when used. Influence checks against a skinflint politician would gain a +4 bonus, for example, if the PC attempting the skill check opts to offer campaign contributions.

Starting Attitude: This section describes how the NPC initially feels about the PC, referencing the attitudes listed under the Diplomacy skill (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 95).

Influence Checks: This section lists the various skills a PC can use to influence the NPC, as well as the DC for each individual skill. Most NPCs will be more easily influenced by talking about work or hobbies than with a simple Diplomacy skill check. The Skill and DC listed in bold is the discovery check to learn what skills may be used to influence this NPC.

Successes Needed: This section lists the number of successful influence checks PCs must collect to either win an NPC's favor in the short term or shift their attitude one step closer to helpful in the long term. The adventure and encounter will list which adjustment the PCs need to accomplish.

Special: This section mentions any special conditions, limited availability, or other modifiers that might apply to influencing this NPC.

Benefit: This section lists what rewards the PCs receive for improving this NPC's attitude.

Story Award: This section lists XP rewards PCs receive for influencing the NPC.

A PC can uncover a bias with a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check, and she can learn an NPC's strength or

weakness with a successful discovery check. These stat blocks also list each NPC's skill bonuses for common social skills, to account for any unusual actions the PCs might take.

SOCIAL ROUNDS

Every adventure will provide a timeline for its social-focused story. Each event or occasion in social combat lists a number of social rounds associated with it. During these social rounds, the PCs can attempt skill checks to influence NPCs or to generally engage with NPCs in a specific area of the location. A PC can attempt only one major action each round, including influencing an area, influencing a specific NPC, or attempting some mission- or objective-related skill check. PCs can also conduct any number of simple actions, such as eating, drinking, wandering to other areas of an event, and communicating with other PCs.

INFLUENCING AN AREA

Sometimes, a PC can attempt to influence a crowd in a room, rather than targeting a single individual. The room's description will list any appropriate skills and their respective DCs. Each area has two thresholds, which represent levels of influence over that area. For every point that the PC's result on one of these skill checks exceeds the DC, one point is added to a pool specific to that area. Once the number of points earned by the party as a whole exceeds an area's threshold value, the GM provides the PCs with the information and story award associated with it.

INFLUENCING AN NPC

Each social round, a PC can move to any location in an event and select a single NPC in that area as her target to influence. She then attempts either a discovery check or an influence check.

Discovery Checks: A discovery check allows a PC to learn either one of the skills she can use to influence the target or one of the target's biases, strengths, or weaknesses. The exact skill and DC required for a discovery check varies; the discovery check to learn a skill that can be used for an influence check normally requires a successful Sense Motive or Knowledge (nobility) check, with the DC listed in parenthesis in the Influence entry of the target NPC's social stat block. Learning a target's weakness or strength requires a successful skill check using the skills and DCs listed in parenthesis in the appropriate stat block entry, and learning a bias requires a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check; the GM can reveal the skills needed to

recognize these statistics without need for a separate discovery check.

Influence Checks: An influence check is an attempt to make a good impression upon or gain the respect of the target. PCs must attempt a skill check using one of the skills listed in the target's Influence entry; they can either determine what those skills are via a successful discovery check or guess based on their target's reputation. A successful skill check against the listed DC counts as one success, indicating growing affection or respect for the PC. Each target's entry lists the total number of successes needed to achieve a desired outcome (see Winning Favor and Changing Attitudes below). At the GM's discretion, PCs can attempt to use a skill that is not listed in an NPC's stat block but is related to the listed skills; however, doing so increases the influence check DC by 5. A PC earns one additional success if her influence check result exceeds the listed DC by 5 or more.

A failed discovery or influence check can be attempted again in subsequent rounds with no penalty unless otherwise noted.

Winning Favor: In some cases, such as making small talk at parties, a PC only needs to win an NPC's favor. The intention is to make a good first impression and be remembered in the future. In these circumstances, a PC only needs to accumulate the specified number of successes to win whatever listed benefits the NPC provides, though said benefits rarely last beyond the social event in question.

Changing Attitudes: Making long-lasting changes to an NPC's attitude is more difficult and time-consuming. Unlike winning favor, where the PCs simply hope to leave a good impression for a night, the PCs now hope to make friends and allies, win hearts and minds, and cause long-term adjustments to NPCs' outlooks. In social encounters where the PCs will seek to change NPCs' attitudes, each NPC's starting attitude toward the PCs is listed in their influence section, and every time the PCs accumulate the listed number of successes, the NPC's attitude shifts one step closer to helpful. The accumulated successes are then cleared and the process begins again. Generally, social rounds are much longer when changing attitudes, and there may only be a few during any given event, but the PCs will have more opportunities to influence these NPCs in the future. This extended time frame can also work against the PCs; for every week that passes without interacting with an NPC whose attitude the PCs are trying to change, they lose one success accumulated toward winning over that NPC. The passage of time and loss of successes can't worsen an NPC's attitude, though special events might.

PRINCESS EUTROPIA STAVIAN

Grand Prince Stavian III's daughter, only child, and constant irritation, Princess Eutropia is a mix of grace and bombastic energy, gratitude and contempt, foresight and improvisation, who fully intends to be the next leader of her nation.

PRINCESS EUTROPIA STAVIAN

CR 12

XP 19,200

Human aristocrat 7/swashbuckler 6 (*Pathfinder RPG*

Advanced Class Guide 56)

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +8; **Senses** Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 17, flat-footed 20 (+7 armor, +3 deflection, +2 Dex, +2 dodge)

hp 110 (13 HD; 7d8+6d10+46)

Fort +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities charmed life 4/day, nimble +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 rapier +16/+11/+6 (1d6+3/15–20 plus 6 precision)

Special Attacks deeds (derring-do, dodging panache, kip-up, menacing swordplay, opportune parry and riposte, precise strike, swashbuckler initiative), panache (3), swashbuckler weapon training +1

TACTICS

During Combat While she generally avoids combat these days and usually travels with guards, Eutropia still participates in the occasional duel. She prefers to use Combat Expertise, letting opponents tire themselves out on her defenses before disarming them. She is still not above fighting dirty when angry or defending herself, and she may occasionally sucker punch opponents, spit in their eyes, or deliver a swift head butt.

Morale Eutropia generally duels to disarm, but she hates losing and won't surrender until reduced below 20 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 28

Feats Combat Expertise, Critical Focus, Dodge, Improved Dirty Trick, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Persuasive, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff +11, Diplomacy +20, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana, engineering, geography, nature, planes, religion) +5, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge

(local, nobility) +13, Perception +15, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +15

Languages Common, Kelish

SQ swashbuckler finesse

Gear +3 mithral chain shirt, +2 rapier, belt of mighty constitution +4, riding jacket of resistance +3 (as cloak of resistance +3), ring of protection +3, Stavian signet ring, teapot, 580 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Affluent Eutropia normally commands considerable wealth, including many unique treasures of Taldor, but she presently has no access to these. She wields better equipment than a standard NPC of her level, but not enough to impact her Challenge Rating.

Princess Eutropia Stavian is the eldest daughter of Grand Prince Stavian III and is his only living child. Her mother Etroffe died shortly after the birth of Carrius II, well before Eutropia formed any clear memories of her. Even so, for much of her childhood, Eutropia, her father, and her brother seemed to live a charmed life. Stavian doted on his children in their youth, playing with them and taking them for outings that other nobles might have entrusted to a nanny. Eutropia was happy and comfortable, and never thought to question the cost of that happiness. Carrius's death opened her charmed eyes to a great many truths about the world—first and foremost the pain of loss, and from there she quickly realized how much the people of Taldor sacrificed every day to support the blessed life she lived.

For a time during school and afterward, Eutropia spent rebellious years making trouble, scandalizing Taldan social circles and enraging her now-distant father. She earned the nickname "Princess Head Butt" after settling a duel with a suitor—the young Duke Zellvyngian—in a most unseemly manner, and rumors even circulated claiming she trucked briefly with adventurers in and around the World's Edge Mountains. Her rebellion eventually lead her to assisting and later leading various charity and reform groups. In time she resumed the role of a respectable, if defiant, noble daughter—backed

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up her omnipresent, if rarely displayed, reputation as a duelist.

Despite her reputation as a troublemaker and even seditionist—according to certain parties, at least—Eutropia is a proud Taldan patriot. She recognizes the incredible heights to which Taldor rose in the past, but she also understands that those great heights required firm foundations—a social network that supported and protected the people and let every citizen shine. She believes in the monarchy so long as aristocrats are held to considerably higher standards, being all too aware after several diplomatic visits how the Andoren style of democracy can fall to corruption just as easily. The fact that this philosophy just happens to empower her personally is a thought that nags at her constantly and motivates her longstanding indecision over whether or not to advance her political aspirations.

Her father made the decision for her when he attempted to marry Eutropia to High Strategos Maxillar Pythareus and appoint the general his official heir. Eutropia found her husband-to-be repulsive, both emotionally and politically, and she resolved to pursue the throne herself. So much of her focus for 15 years has revolved around destroying primogeniture, however, that she has paid little attention to what she will do if actually crowned. A part of her always suspected she would have a decade or more to consider such matters, and now that Taldor has dissolved into chaos, she feels less prepared than ever for the role.

While proud of her nation, Eutropia recognizes the horrible things Taldor has done in the past: the genocide of native Kellids, imposition of strict gender roles, the expulsion of Sarenites. While she isn't sure she can fix or even make reparations for any of these crimes from the past, she hopes she can at least shape Taldor into the sort of nation that doesn't make the same mistakes in the future. This conditional love and historical awareness, combined with her longstanding friendship with the Pathfinder Society, leads many critics to accuse her of putting foreign interests ahead of her own nation or insist that Eutropia's

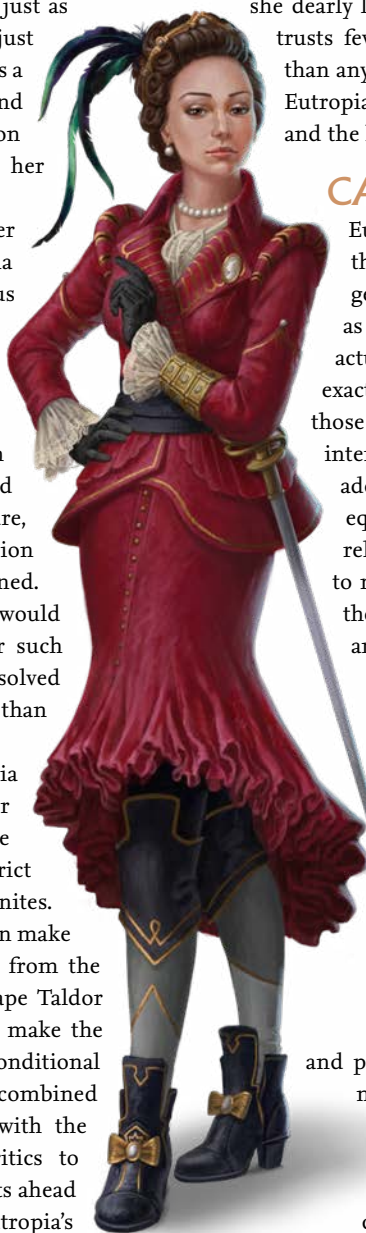
first act upon gaining the throne will be to hand the keys of the kingdom over to Absalom.

Eutropia is outwardly a confident, controlled, and powerful woman, having inherited the distinctive Stavian cheekbones and her mother's scathingly expressive eyes. Inside, she is far less certain about anything she does, questioning and re-questioning her assumptions and motivations. Her anxiety gives way to frequent insomnia, hours which she fills reading about every topic she can find, and many late nights she worries that these same thoughts are what triggered her father's decline in mental health. Though she dearly loves her friends, contacts, and allies, she trusts few souls beyond her dog, Taldogis. More than anything, as the War for the Crown escalates, Eutropia finds she simply misses her little brother and the happy father she used to know.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Eutropia plays a prominent role throughout this Adventure Path, but she generally remains at arm's length. She is as much a figurehead and concept as an actual character, and so you can adjust her exact personality and priorities to mirror those goals important to the PCs. Your own interpretation of the princess may prioritize additional social reforms beyond the gender equality usually attributed to her, from religious tolerance to immigration reform to racial inclusivity: whatever issues the PCs themselves consider equally important and motivating.

Eutropia can be as involved or as distant in your campaign as you like. Some groups prefer to think of their patrons as little as possible, while others prefer a closer relationship. Eutropia could even replace many of Martella's functions in the Adventure Path, assigning PCs their missions directly and advising them as events develop, giving the PCs the chance to feel more directly involved in Taldor's politics and perhaps more influential to its potential new leader. More chaotic, antagonistic, or democracy-minded PCs may instead have a rivalry with Eutropia even as they work toward a common good.



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