

PATHFINDER

ADVENTURE PATH



TYRANT'S GRASP

PLAYER'S
GUIDE



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ADVENTURE PATH

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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 pfrd.info.

<i>Advanced Class Guide</i>	ACG	<i>Bestiary 5</i>	B5
<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Bestiary 6</i>	B6
<i>Bestiary 2</i>	B2	<i>Occult Adventures</i>	OA
<i>Bestiary 3</i>	B3	<i>Ultimate Combat</i>	UC
<i>Bestiary 4</i>	B4	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM

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Tyrant's Grasp Player's Guide

The Whispering Tyrant stirs in his underground prison and flexes his arcane might through his Whispering Way minions, eager to threaten all of Golarion once again. With deadly new magic at his command—capable of destruction on a scale the world has never seen before—his freedom seems all but inevitable, and swift enough to evade the notice of even Lastwall's watchful eyes! Avistan's only hope may lie in the most unlikely heroes: the Whispering Way's newest victims!

COMING TOGETHER

The first adventure of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path assumes all the PCs begin in the small town of Roslar's Coffin, in the southwestern corner of Lastwall. Named for Ervin Roslar, a hero of the Shining Crusade, the town has survived over 800 years despite sharing a frontier with the orcs of Belkzen, even trading peacefully with several tribes who seasonally wander nearby. Lastwall considers the town, which helps establish the local borders and grows much of the flax used in Vigil, important enough to maintain a small garrison of knights there. While its existence has been challenging, Roslar's Coffin persisted largely without issue for centuries until the more violent Twisted Nail tribe pushed the less aggressive orc tribes out of the region and began launching raids against outlying farms. These attacks eventually escalated until the Twisted Nails assaulted Roslar's Coffin itself in 4707 AR, burning its historic buildings, wiping out over a quarter of the population, and scattering the remaining residents. About half the survivors returned the next season to rebuild, only to discover a territorial creature called a red reaver had moved into the Sarenite monastery a mile outside of town, forcing the church to relocate into the newly rebuilt town itself.

Lastwall deployed additional knights to patrol the border regions as Roslar's Coffin rebuilt. These warriors turned back several new raids by the Twisted Nail, who eventually turned their frustrations inward toward Belkzen. None of the knights' efforts managed to dislodge the red reaver from its new lair, however. It continued to plunder nearby farms and assault travelers, and locals quickly learned to simply avoid the grounds and orchards once managed by the church and otherwise went on with their lives. Agents of the prestigious Pathfinder Society arrived last year to investigate the temple, and after a daring battle, finally felled the beast! The church of Sarenrae has made only brief surveys of the damage caused by the monster in its 10-year stay, and they still operate from town. This sudden burst of excitement nonetheless inspired many of the town's youth to spin fantasies about becoming adventurers and Pathfinders themselves.

In addition to the Sarenite temple, Roslar's Coffin enjoys minor fame for Roslar's Tomb, a sizable crypt in the town cemetery that houses the earthly remains of several heroes from the Shining Crusade (although, ironically, not Roslar himself, after rumors of

Theme: Survival Horror

The overall theme of Tyrant's Grasp is survival horror. The player characters will often find themselves in desperate circumstances with limited resources, particularly during the first few adventures. Terrible tragedies are destined to occur as the events of Tyrant's Grasp unfold; often, your objective isn't to prevent these disasters, but to survive them and to display heroism and resourcefulness in their wake. Circumstances will compel the player characters to leave Roslar's Coffin much sooner than you might expect, so characters prepared to travel across Lastwall and beyond are the best fit for this Adventure Path.

a scandal arose upon his death). Faithful of both Iomedae and Gorum occasionally visit on pilgrimage to pay their respects to these fallen heroes of the past, and the town is all too happy to provide accommodations in exchange for newcomers' coin. Thanks to its location along the Tourondel River, the town also sees some traffic in the form of crusaders, messengers, pilgrims, and traders from both Lastwall and Nirmathas.

Player characters might be stubborn residents of Roslar's Coffin, members of the militia dispatched by Lastwall to guard the border, part of the displaced church of Sarenrae, pilgrims visiting the crypt, Pathfinders surveying the temple after their superiors departed, traders, or officials from Vigil. Ideally at least one character is a local—either a lifelong resident or someone who settled in the area as part of the post-Twisted Nail reconstruction. Those PCs who do not hail directly from Roslar's Coffin or Lastwall should at least have a strong interest in the legacy of the Whispering Tyrant and the Whispering Way and hope to minimize the damage these vile forces can inflict on the world.

This guide includes a short gazetteer of Lastwall to help players know what to expect from the self-styled bastion against the dark forces of the world. Additional information on Lastwall and the Shining Crusade can be found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea World Guide* and *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Cities of Golarion*.

CHARACTER TIPS

The overall concept of Tyrant's Grasp—a resurgence of the Whispering Way and their new weapon of mass destruction—is one that likely appeals to a vast variety of characters, but how do you pick just one concept, and what will best fit with the campaign's challenges and mood? Despite the large scope of the storyline, most of the challenges are personal and immediate—the Whispering Way and other minions of Tar-Baphon threaten the PCs directly and personally, and in uncovering and stopping their plot, the PCs will delve into ancient ruins, devastated landscapes, and secret strongholds with nothing to protect them beyond courage and a sturdy shield. The PCs will need to rely on themselves and their fellow adventurers rather than armies or the social order. The following suggestions do not cover every potential character concept appropriate for this campaign; many more possibilities exist, limited only by your imagination

and familiarity with the various options presented over the past 10 years of Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products. For more discussions about characters in the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, visit the forums at paizo.com and share your questions and experiences with others who are playing through this campaign.

ALIGNMENT

Almost everyone, whether good, evil, or purely self-motivated, stands to lose considerable freedom and safety under the rule of Tar-Baphon and legions of the dead, and so alignment isn't necessarily limited by morality or ethos for Tyrant's Grasp so long as characters can agree that the Whispering Tyrant and the Whispering Way must be stopped. As Lastwall is a nation ruled by paladins, lawful good and its immediate neighbors lawful neutral and neutral good are the most common alignments, with citizens expected to work toward the common good for their education, community and nation when they are able, and benefiting from a strong support infrastructure that delivers expertise, protection, and resources where and when they are needed. Even Lastwall's villains tend to adopt a code of honor, leaning more toward lawful evil than any chaotic outlook. Chaotic characters aren't especially disdained, but they have a difficult time finding a place in the well-ordered societies of the border nation. Those who do exist drift toward border communities like Roslar's Coffin or lumber camps in the Fangwood Forest, and many eventually migrate further south to Nirmathas. As always, talk to your Game Master before creating an evil character, as they are not appropriate for all groups.

ARCHETYPES AND CLASS OPTIONS

Most of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path involves battling unrepentant evil and surviving in the face of overwhelming destruction. Many adventures involve difficult scenarios where awful things have already transpired, and the PCs must do what good they can in the aftermath—comforting survivors and healing victims. All character classes are suitable for this Adventure Path, but those who rely on a certain degree of stable infrastructure, especially urban-focused classes and archetypes, may have a harder time finding useful applications for their skills. This Adventure Path also requires considerable travel, and so characters with some ability to navigate effectively, get by on the road, or have some ability to travel faster will find practical application for their skills.

Given their prevalence in Lastwall, paladins are an obvious choice, as are clerics and warpriests, but players of such characters should do so with an open mind, as many important growth moments in the Adventure Path require working alongside the lesser of two evils for the betterment of the world. It's worth pointing out that even the paladin code allows lawful good characters to work alongside evil companions for the greater good, so long as they can curb the dark actions of their allies.

Other classes well suited for the Tyrant's Grasp include fighters, rangers, rogues, and wizards. Druids—residents of the nearby Fangwood Forest—are likewise a local feature, though druid players may find the desolate landscapes visited over the course of this campaign too limiting. Because of the prevalence

of undead opponents, bards (as well as enchanter and illusionist specialist wizards) may find fewer targets for their offensive magic and songs, but their ability to make their companions more resistant to fear will be appreciated nonetheless. Gunslingers and other classes that require very specific equipment might struggle to find places to shop, particularly in the first few adventures. A few monasteries of Iomedae exist within the nation, encouraging enlightenment through martial skill and physical perfection, though they focus on Avistani fighting styles rather than those of Tian-Xia. Among the base classes, cavaliers and inquisitors are most represented in Lastwall, but even summoners and witches are left in peace so long as their gifts aren't turned toward destruction or control. Brawlers, hunters, investigators, and slayers are also found among the nation's heroes, as well as spiritualists and mediums who handle the omnipresent restless spirits still lingering after the original Shining Crusade. Classes of a chaotic bent—barbarians and skalds especially—are not unheard of, but are not as heavily represented among the notably honor-bound culture of Lastwall.

Some potentially useful archetypes are listed below.

- Battle scout ranger^{UC}
- Champion of the faith warpriest^{ACG}
- Crossbowman fighter^{APG}
- Crusader cleric^{UC}
- Daring champion cavalier^{ACG}
- Deliverer slayer^{ACG}
- Divine commander warpriest^{ACG}
- Divine defender paladin^{APG}
- Empyrean knight paladin^{UC}
- Exemplar brawler^{ACG}
- Exorcist inquisitor^{UM}
- Grave warden slayer^{ACG}
- Hedge witch^{UM}
- Knight of Arnisan cavalier (*Pathfinder Player Companion: Armor Master's Handbook*)
- Martial artist monk^{UC}
- Monk of the healing hands^{APG}
- Phalanx soldier fighter^{APG}
- Possessed oracle^{UM}
- Reanimated medium^{OA}
- Scout rogue^{APG}
- Shield champion brawler^{ACG}
- Silver balladeer bard^{OA}
- Skirmisher ranger^{APG}
- Skirmir magus^{UC}
- Spirit warden shaman^{ACG}
- Spiritualist investigator^{ACG}
- Standard bearer cavalier^{UC}
- Trapper ranger^{UM}
- Undead scourge paladin^{APG}
- Witch hunter inquisitor^{UC}

In addition to these options, *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* also introduces the Order of the Shroud for cavaliers, dedicated to putting down undead threats.

BLOODLINES, MYSTERIES, AND PATRONS

While most sorcerer and bloodrager bloodlines are acceptable for the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, those derived from the fiendish planes are sure to earn more than a few suspicious glances. The paladins of Lastwall understand intellectually that a child is not responsible for the sins of his parents—and such characters have nothing to fear as far as their lives are concerned, provided they obey the law—but overtly fiendish heritage or magic still draws second glances and increased scrutiny. The following suggestions are especially appropriate for this campaign: accursed^{UM}, arcane, celestial, destined, undead, verdant^{APG}. The oracle mysteries and shaman spirits with the strongest thematic ties to this Adventure Path include battle, bones, heavens, and life. Suitable witch patrons for the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path include ancestors^{UM}, death^{UM}, endurance, healing^{UM}, light^{UM}, portents^{UM}, spirits^{UM}, strength, vengeance^{UM}, and wisdom.

These choices are only suggestions, and players should not feel obligated to select from only these options. Most bloodlines, mysteries, spirits, and patrons can find their place in the war against the Whispering Way.

FAMILIAR AND ANIMAL COMPANIONS

Because of its unusual nature, the first adventure separates the player characters from any followers, animal companions, mounts, or familiars they may have. Losing a class feature for the duration of an adventure may be challenging, but it is only temporary, and PCs will be able to regain their companions at the beginning of the second adventure. If players can accept this temporary limitation, the following list of familiars are local to Lastwall and make ideal choices for familiars: bat, cat, fox^{B3}, goat^{B3}, hawk, hedgehog^{UM}, house centipede^{UM}, owl, pig^{B3}, rabbit (*Pathfinder Player Companion: Animal Archive*), raccoon^{B3}, rat, raven, skunk^{B3}, sloth^{B4}, squirrel (*Animal Archive*), toad, and weasel. Characters looking for improved familiars will find the following most appropriate to the themes and challenges of tyrant's Grasp: silvanshee agathion^{B2}, cassisian angel^{B2}, harbinger archon^{B3}, carbuncle^{B3}, arbiter inevitable^{B2}, pseudodragon, and nosoi psychomp^{B4}.

The following animals can be found throughout Lastwall and would be good choices for companions or mounts, and are readily available replacements should a character's existing animal companion perish: aurochs, axe beak^{B3}, badger, bear, bird (eagle, falcon, or hawk), boar, small cat (lynx or mountain lion), digmaul^{B5}, dire rat, dog, horse, ram^{B2}, giant raven^{B6}, stag^{B4}, thylacine^{B3}, giant vulture^{B3}, giant weasel^{B4}, and wolf.

FAVORED ENEMIES AND FAVORED TERRAINS

Easily the most obvious and numerous opponent players will face in the course of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path will be undead, which make up the majority of the Whispering Tyrant's forces. The PCs will also face many living opponents in service to Tar-Baphon, including humans and elves. Other common threats will include aberrations, plants, and the new mortic humanoid subtype. The campaign will cover a variety of landscapes, with

underground dungeons—where the dead and their secrets lie buried—being the most common. Other common landscapes will include urban and forest, as well as some time spent in the rolling hills and rugged mountains of Lastwall and Ustalav.

ORIGINS

With the campaign's beginning set in a border town steadily rebuilding after an orc attack a decade ago, most player characters likely hail from Lastwall in general, if not Roslar's Coffe specifically. They may be clergy, engineers, farmers, healers, masons, town watch, or weavers, with the local industry focusing primarily on flax farming, sheep herding, reconstruction, and weaving cloth from the local flax and wool, as well as selling linseed oil and lanolin. Even though the border with Belkzen has been quiet the past few seasons, Vigil maintains a small defensive force in Roslar's Coffe made up of healers, knights, scouts, and soldiers, as well as a few academic observers who report on the reconstruction efforts. Roslar's Coffe attracts trade from Nirmathas and Ustalav, and even the occasional Varisian caravan and Razmiri refugee. The reconstruction effort attracted many souls eager for work, as well as a few opportunistic sorts who saw the local authorities handing out compensation and support to displaced locals and decided to take advantage of this generosity, though most of these have long since moved on now that the charity has dwindled to a trickle.

LANGUAGES

With the bulk of the Shining Crusade's forces originally provided by Taldor, the Taldan common tongue is the language of the area. A large number of Kraggodan dwarves assisted in both the war and reconstruction, and Dwarven remains a fairly common tongue even among humans. Similarly, Lastwall's proximity to Ustalav means that many among the peasantry speak at least a little Varisian—especially to mutter curses and protections. Hallit and Orc are still found on many of the old ruins that predate Tar-Baphon's rule, while Necril was the language of choice under the Whispering Tyrant's iron fist and remains the common tongue of the Whispering Way. The church of Iomedae also commonly commits important messages or prayers in Celestial.

PRESTIGE CLASSES

Characters interested in pursuing a prestige class have many options. Any that emphasize their faith and dedication—especially to the gods Iomedae or Gorum—are prime choices. The following suggestions are the most thematic for the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path.

- Battle herald^{APG}
- Evangelist (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Gods*)
- Exalted (*Inner Sea Gods*)
- Horizon walker^{APG}
- Knight of Ozem (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Paths of Prestige*)
- Prophet of Kalistrade (*Paths of Prestige*)
- Sentinel (*Inner Sea Gods*)
- Stalwart defender^{APG}

RACES

Humans are the overwhelming majority of Lastwall's population, but the Shining Crusade brought defenders from across the Inner Sea region, and almost every ethnicity on Avistan is represented in the local populace. Though the majority of Lastwall's population is at least part Taldan, most citizens carry a blend of Taldan, Chelaxian, Varisian, Kellid, and Garundi ancestry, and Keleshite and Tian heritage have also become more common as trade has increased following Lastwall's independence from Taldor.

Dwarves and halflings are common sights, especially in the military. Gnome and elven visitors—primarily from the Fangwood Forest—are not unheard of, but by far the most common non-humans in Lastwall are half-orcs. Most of the nation's half-orcs hail from the generations of tense but peaceful contact between human border towns and nomadic orc tribes, or even self-sustaining villages of half-orcs that have dwelled along the Mindspin Mountains since the Age of Darkness and that have occasionally adopted human or orc members into the local population. Despite these diverse origins, the negative perception of orcs among humans sees that most half-orcs bear at least some stigma.

Though rare, aasimars and dhampirs both call Lastwall home, and both are treated with a certain level of mistrust—dhampirs for their obvious ties to undeath, and aasimars for their otherworldly origins. Changelings, duskwalkers, and skinwalkers—many immigrants from Ustalav—can also be found in small numbers, but are uncommon enough that they generally don't draw attention as anything more than unusual travelers.

RELIGION

Faith is a cornerstone of Lastwall's culture. Owing to the nation's roots as a religious crusade against overwhelming evil, nearly every citizen pays homage, whether casual or devout, to one or more gods on a regular basis. During the 74 years of the Shining Crusade—and for many years into the recovery era—survival depended on the ability to invoke the light of the gods or find courage and perseverance through faith. Although Lastwall is not technically a theocracy, every watcher-lord has maintained strong ties to one church or another.

Iomedae, the crusader and disciple of both Arazni and Aroden, is the most prominent god of Lastwall, followed closely by the war god Gorum, who is popular with both the crusaders of Lastwall and their orc rivals in Belkzen. Most soldiers worship both. Iomedae is the usual favorite, and the church of Iomedae is all but a branch of the government. Other gods commonly seen in Lastwall include the Taldan pantheon—Abadar, Cayden Cailean, Norgorber, and Shelyn—imported by the earliest crusaders. Sarenites are less common, but were still a strong foundation in the Shining Crusade, especially among healers. Desna, largely important among Varisian settlers, is also a common faith among the civilian citizenry. Many dwarves pay homage to Torag and the rest of the dwarven pantheon.

Many small cults exist to various empyreal lords as well, especially the avenging angel Ragathiel—whom many of the

most violent paladins follow—and Andoletta, who is embraced both by communities hoping to invoke her protection and by veterans who look to her for healing and peace.

SKILLS AND FEATS

A Tyrant's Grasp party will benefit most from a great diversity of skills. A diversity of Knowledge skills will prove valuable to solving puzzles and identifying threats, with Knowledge (history) and Knowledge (religion) being the most useful, and Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (geography), and Knowledge (planes) all having their own applications. Many of the physical challenges in the adventure will provide use for physical skills like Acrobatics, Climb, and Ride. Perception will serve most adventurers well, and classic adventuring standbys like Disable Device, Spellcraft, Stealth, and Survival will all have moments to shine.

Combat with a wide variety of foes is a staple of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, and PCs will benefit from dedicating themselves to one or more combat feat trees. With undead as a common feature, feats like Power Attack and Cleave that allow a warrior to carve quickly through resilient opponents will be handy, as will feats to bolster one's Fortitude and Will saving throws. The Ectoplasmic Spell^{APG} metamagic feat allows spellcasters to more effectively engage incorporeal undead, and feats that augment a cleric or paladin's ability to channel energy will likewise prove useful.

TRAITS

In addition to the campaign traits listed below, several traits from the *Advanced Player's Guide* are common and appropriate among the faith-minded citizens of Lastwall: Armor Expert, Birthmark, Child of the Temple, Courageous, Divine Warrior, Indomitable Faith, Militia Veteran, Reactionary, Resilient, Sacred Conduit, Undead Slayer, and Veteran of Battle.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

The Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path takes players across Lastwall and into Ustalav, as well as to far more distant ports of call. The campaign begins in the border town of Roslar's Coffin, and player characters should be natives of the community or its surrounding environs. Regardless of their backgrounds, every character should have a vested interest in stopping the rise of undeath and evil that threatens to conquer all of Avistan.

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

The Artisan: Precision is important in getting exactly what you want, and you give careful consideration in building everything from homes and vases to roads and empires. Your own attention to detail has proven vital in rebuilding Roslar's Coffin from the orc occupation a decade ago, whether you are an accountant, architect, engineer, or herbalist. Your attention to detail provides you a +1 trait bonus on Appraise and Heal checks, and one of these skills becomes a class skill for you. Once per day, you can spend a full round casting a spell you can cast that has a normal

casting time of 1 standard action to increase your effective caster level for that spell by 1. This ability has no effect on spells with a casting time other than 1 standard action.

The Lawbringer: The frontier is a land of risk and disorder, and while people are welcome to brave those elements themselves, they all too often bring pain down upon folk who never wanted such a risk. You might serve on the town guard or as part of a detachment of soldiers supported by Vigil, or you could be simply a concerned farmer who endures when others cannot, but your purpose is to stand as a bulwark against the cruel whims of fate for anyone who needs it. You gain a +2 trait bonus on saving throws against fear effects. If you have the aura of courage class feature, the bonus provided by your aura increases by 1. Your courage is inspiring; the first time each day you are knocked unconscious or killed, all allies within 30 feet of you immediately gain a number of temporary hit points equal to your level plus your Charisma modifier, as they rally to your defense. These temporary hit points last for 1 minute.

The Optimist: People don't need to take your word that things are getting better; they only need to look around and see the proof before their eyes. The town's recovery from the orc occupation more than a decade ago is all but complete, and the monster in the Sarenite temple outside of town has finally been bested. Your irrepressible sense of optimism seems to fly in the face of the hard life that most residents of Roslar's Coffe face, but you're convinced that your positive attitude lifts up your community. You gain a +1 trait bonus on saving throws against mind-affecting effects. Further, your optimism can be infectious. As a swift action a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum 1), you can grant this bonus to an ally within 10 feet. This bonus lasts for 1 minute.

The Outsider: You don't have a place, but the frontier seems comfortable enough for now. Maybe you're too informal for city life, too selfish for Lastwall's general culture of camaraderie, or too scarred by things you've seen to entirely trust another person. You are accustomed to moving without drawing much attention to yourself, gaining a +1 trait bonus on Stealth and Survival checks, and one of these skills is always a class skill for you. Accustomed to working alone, you gain only half the benefit (+1) from aid another actions, but you're accustomed to doing the job right the first time and so increase the bonus you provide by 1 when aiding another character.

The Pessimist: You expect the worst and have rarely been disappointed. Your dour outlook may hail from the original destruction of Roslar's Coffe at the hands of the Twisted Nail tribe, the exile of the faithful from the nearby Sarenite temple, or some more personal misfortune, but it has set you apart among the largely forward-thinking population of Lastwall.

Your faith that the worst possible outcome will occur grants you a +1 trait bonus on Will saving throws. Your frustrating pessimism can spur friends to succeed just to spite you; once per day as a free action, you can force an ally within 30 feet to reroll a saving throw she just failed, using the better of the two results.

The Reclaimer: You lost something precious in the destruction of Roslar's Coffe 12 years ago—a home, a legacy, perhaps even family—but returned because a soul shouldn't run from pain, but heal from it. Rebuilding your life and preventing that same hurt from dragging down others drives you to serve and protect, perhaps as a politician, charity worker, healer, or soldier, but that same loss fills you with an uncharitable anger that is often difficult to reconcile. Your wary eyes grant you a +1 trait bonus on Perception checks. You gain a +1 trait bonus on attack and damage rolls against any opponent that dealt hit point damage to one of your allies in the previous round.

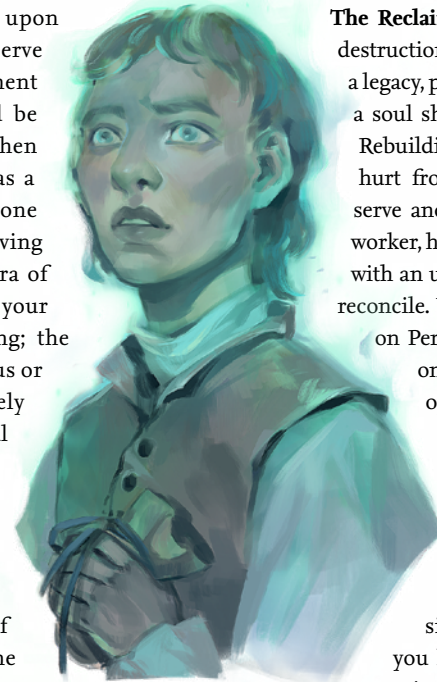
The Snoop: You know a little bit about most everything and everyone in Roslar's Coffe. It may be your profession, as you could be an archivist, crier, or librarian—or you simply make a hobby of gossip. Either way, you have a gift for recall and reading others.

You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge (history) and Knowledge (local) checks, and these both become class skills for you. Once each day you can reroll a single Bluff or Sense Motive check against a creature you have known for at least 24 hours, using the better result.

The Word: In a nation overcrowded with faith, you often worry that your message is drowned out, but nonetheless important. The souls in Roslar's Coffe needed comfort and charity once upon a time, but have bounced back so fully—in part thanks to your hard work—that you worry you've made yourself unnecessary. You are accustomed to long hours, granting you a +1 trait bonus on Fortitude saving throws. Your faith is invigorating, and once per day you can lay on hands as a paladin of half your character level (minimum 1). If you gain the lay on hands ability from a class, you instead gain one additional use of lay on hands each day.

LASTWALL AT A GLANCE

Lastwall is a land of rolling grasslands, primeval forests, and ancient battle scars. Once a landscape of orc holds and Kellid city-states dotted with Taldan supply forts, the Whispering Tyrant began to steadily consume the territory after 3200 AR. Orc and Kellid populations were pressed or enslaved into service, with those who fell—either in battle of ill-fated rebellions—animated to serve mindlessly until their bones crumbled to dust. Tar-Baphon's forces razed entire cities and monuments, leaving only buried foundations that now litter the landscape as dungeons and makeshift crypts. By the time Taldor mobilized against the Whispering Tyrant 5 centuries later, generations of





gloom and toil had rendered the landscape fallow and hopeless. War left new wounds upon the land. Strongholds and cities built to honor the Whispering Tyrant were torn down to the flagstones and used as the building blocks for new fortifications against the wizard-king. Mass battles left landscapes impregnated with shattered bone and bent steel, with many stretches of land still fetid and unable to support crops. Terrible magic and spirits still haunt many ancient battlefields, even a millennium later.

Despite the horror it has seen, those portions of Lastwall held by mortal hands are beautiful and bountiful. Proximity to Lake Encarthan provides ample rainfall and cool summers, albeit harsh and snowy winters. Growing seasons are long enough to support a variety of crops. The Northern Fangwood Forest and foothills of the Hungry Mountains effectively divide Lastwall in half. Eastern Lastwall is far more urban and reclaimed, with vast farms and ranches supporting cattle and the nation's famous horses, as well as the trade city of Vellumis—an ancient Ustalavic port and the largest city in the nation. Western Lastwall is less tamed and more hostile—an irony, given that the nation's capital of Vigil lies in this untamed half—with frequent incursions from Belkzen orcs, occasional resurgences of necromantic energy, and large tracts of land and forest left largely unexplored and untouched by modern hands. Roslar's Coffers—western Lastwall's southernmost town—exists largely by the grace of the Tourondel River, and little in the way of

modern construction exists between it and the fortresses over 100 miles north except a well-guarded stone road and a few hunting lodges. Despite this isolation, the people of Roslar's Coffers squarely consider themselves residents of Lastwall and do what they can to contribute to the nation.

With a strong-hearted and faithful military tradition, the people of Lastwall tend to be community-focused, forthright, and hard working. Their survival depends on trusting each person in the community to do their job to the best of her ability, and every citizen knows his community could fall to the next orc raid or harsh winter if he doesn't give every task his best effort. As a people squeezed between two hostile presences, they are deeply devout, with most residents attending temple services multiple times a week, but as with all things, practicality comes first, and worship must wait if there is work to be done. Most citizens spend the spring planting, summers drilling with weapons and armor, and the autumn harvesting before the first hard freeze. The long, cold winters are a time of respite—orcs rarely campaign in the snow, and freezing temperatures harden the ground and prevent the restless dead from wandering—allowing more attention to hobbies, family, and friends. Feasts and marriages are common in the winter months, though most are generally small, local affairs, as roads during the Lastwall winter can be punishing even for seasoned travelers.

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