

# 7–21 The Sun Orchid Scheme

## GM Notes

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PC	Day 1		Day 2		Day 3	
	place	skill	place	skill	place	skill

## Mechanics

- Any skill can be used if the player can provide a plausible argument why it's appropriate at that time and place.
- PCs do not all have to use the same skills. Because different teams operate in each location each day, the PCs can also switch from place to place between days.
- Recon DC is 14 on low, 18 on high tier. Hitting it earns the team a success. Failure triggers a complication.
- Exceeding the DC by 10 earns another success.
- Each time a PC re-uses a skill at a location, his DC goes up by 3.
- Complications are DC 12/16 to resolve.
- If a complication is resolved, the PC can retry the check and still earn successes. This counts as re-using the skill.
- If a complication is not resolved, bad stuff happens.
- 4-player scaling decreases **ALL** DCs by 2, including ones to handle complications etc.
- Daily workflow:
  1. read location theme
  2. let players pick locations
  3. interact with supervisors
  4. roll reconnaissance
  5. resolve complications
  6. tally successes

## Briefing

Important things to point out to the players.

- Different things happen at both places every day so if you don't go to all of them, you will miss out on important information.
- It's okay to split the party. *Worth mentioning OOC because everyone knows that normally this must be avoided. The only possible combat during infiltration is against a lone halfling, which 2-3 PCs should be able to handle well enough.*
- You will not ruin the mission just by failing a single skill check during the infiltration phase.
- Tell the players the "theme" for each day before they allocate PCs.
- Remind the PCs that this is an infiltration mission, and that doing the same thing every time will become suspicious (*i.e. don't re-use skills*).

# Day 1

## Barracks – Animal Training

The first day revolves around training the convoy's guard animals. Handlers teach tricks to a pack of barely domesticated Thuvian desert dogs—vicious beasts native to the barren wasteland—while recruits learn tactics for fighting with them.

### Creatures

Guldis's beastmaster **Ishyal** (LN female human ranger 5) oversees the stables and animal training regimens. A boisterous Qadiran woman covered with scars, **Ishyal** sees buildings as cages that prevent living souls from reaching their full potential, preferring to train guards and animals in the desert heat. Most recruits avoid her around noon, but those who join her beneath the midday sun earn her favor. PCs who interact with **Ishyal** gain a +2 bonus on their checks by training in the heat, but they must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or become fatigued until the next day. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort take a –4 penalty on this Fortitude save.

### Complications

The following complications could occur on the PCs' first day in the barracks.

*The Hand that Feeds:* A desert dog bites a PC viciously, dealing 1d2 points of Constitution damage unless the PC succeeds at a DC 12 Reflex save. In Subtier 4–5, the dog attack deals 1d4+1 points of Constitution damage unless the PC succeeds at a DC 16 Reflex save.

*Patient Zero:* One desert dog carries the shakes (Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 557) and exposes a PC to infection (DC 13 Fortitude save negates).

*Red-Handed:* **Ishyal** follows a PC sneaking around the barracks, catching the spy unless the PC covers up his espionage with a successful Bluff, Diplomacy, or Stealth check. If the caught PC used a supervisor or thief approach, **Ishyal** warns her superiors, increasing the DC of that PC's subsequent checks by 2. If the caught PC used an animal handler, guard, or mage approach, **Ishyal** punishes the interloper by forcing him to eat dog food, inflicting the sickened condition the next day.

### Development

1. Doggy treats
2. Chocolate
3. Command words

## Workshop – Interior Layout

The Emir's artificers spend the first day completing the transport's interior. Many of the transport's walls and floors were constructed on a previous day, but they have not been fitted together. Some of the artificers focus their efforts on assembling the walls into a finished structure, while others construct and animate the altar to hold fake vials of sun orchid elixir.

### Creatures

A soft-spoken woman named **Temeera** (LN female human wizard 9) manages construction of the main chamber's defenses. A scholar who studies magical constructs, **Temeera** loves to teach enthusiastic students, but often forgets to instruct her creations not to attack her pupils during a lesson. PCs who interact with **Temeera** and do not antagonize her gain a +2 bonus on all skill checks related to infiltrating the workshop for the rest of the day, but the animated altar lashes out at them with a single slam attack (+5 melee, 1d6+2 bludgeoning damage in Subtier 1–2; +9 melee, 1d8+6 bludgeoning damage in Subtier 4–5).

### Complications

The following complications could occur on the PCs' first day in the workshop.

*Keen Eyes:* **Temeera**'s hawk familiar identifies a PC as a potential spy. In order to attempt another check, the PC must succeed at a Disguise or Stealth check to evade her familiar's watchful eye.

*Toxic Waste:* The PC spills contaminated reagents, exposing that PC to mindfire (Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 557).

*Reader Beware:* **Temeera**'s protected her notes with illusory script, and the PC must succeed at a DC 14 Will save (DC 18 in Subtier 4–5) or be subject to a suggestion to return the notes to **Temeera** in person. Giving her the notes subjects the PC to harsh scrutiny, and he takes a –4 penalty on all skill checks on future days to perform reconnaissance in the transport workshop. The PC does not take this penalty in the guard barracks.

### Development

1. Learn characteristics of the altar (see statblock), spot **Temeera** walking in circles.
2. Spot lead-lined compartment. Perception (18/22) to spot the "X" as well.
3. Learn that the altar focuses on anyone holding a glowing vial. Find "X" without check.

## Day 2

### Barracks – Boot Camp

The second day focuses on guard training. Recruits learn combat tactics, proper responses to various threats, and what signals scouts will use to change the convoy's heading or raise the alarm.

#### Creatures

Drill sergeant **Jaravo** (LN male human warrior 5), a towering Garundi man with a penchant for tall tales and flashy combat, who uses hyperbolic anecdotes and threats to strike fear into his trainees and any who question his methods. Any PC interacting with him can exploit his flair for the dramatic by succeeding at a DC 15 Perform check or combat maneuver check (DC 18 in Subtier 4–5). Success impresses the sergeant and maintains his trainees' attention, granting a +2 circumstance bonus to all other PCs attempting checks in the barracks that day. Multiple successes do not stack. PCs can learn about **Jaravo's** penchant for showmanship by talking to the other guards.

#### Complications

The following complications could occur on the PCs' second day in the barracks.

*Pinned Down:* While investigating an off-limits area, the PC accidentally topples a piece of furniture on herself. She must succeed on an Escape Artist or Strength check to escape without being spotted; otherwise her trespassing is exposed. If she is caught, she takes a –4 penalty on her skill checks in the barracks on the following day. She does not take this penalty if she chooses to perform reconnaissance in the transport workshop instead.

*Odd One Out:* The PC draws the ire of the other recruits. Unless the PC succeeds at a Diplomacy check or gives the trainees a 20 gp bribe (100 gp in Subtier 4–5), they vent their frustration on the PC, dealing 2d4 points of damage.

*Jaravo's Favorite:* **Jaravo** takes a liking to the PC, making her the focus of the sergeant's exercises and demonstrations. The PC must succeed at a DC 13 Fortitude save (DC 17 in Subtier 4–5) or be fatigued the next day.

#### Development

1. Learn the *dancing lights* signals.
2. Learn the guards' vices, observe Aspis seductions.
3. Take his place: one PC spellcaster can replace one NPC mage during the convoy encounter.

### Workshop – The Deathtrap

Guldis's artificers take over during the second day, building a complex trap into the transport's walls, designed to make the interior inhospitable. Engineers build and calibrate the trap's components, while spellcasters provide arcane energy to fuel the apparatus. Meanwhile, people without the specialized knowledge to create the trap haul thousands of pounds of trade goods, food, and camping gear into the transport.

#### Creatures

The halfling trapsmith **Lyshna** (LE female halfling rogue 5) oversees the workers assembling the transport's primary trap. **Lyshna** delights in the pain of others, and she loosens up around PCs who accidentally or intentionally hurt themselves. PCs interacting with her can exploit her sadistic sense of humor by succeeding at a DC 14 Bluff or Perform (act or comedy) check (DC 18 in Subtier 4–5), or by willingly taking 1d6 damage (3d6 in Subtier 4–5). Success distracts the macabre halfling, granting a +2 circumstance bonus to all PCs attempting checks in the workshop that day. Multiple successes do not provide a stacking bonus. PCs can learn about **Lyshna's** sadism by speaking with the engineers working on the trap.

#### Complications

The following complications could occur on the PCs' second day in the workshop.

*Right Tool for the Job:* Reverse-engineering **Lyshna's** work requires a specific tool, and the PCs must purchase the part for 20 gp (100 gp in Subtier 4–5), steal it with a successful Sleight of Hand check, or jury-rig it with a successful Knowledge (engineering) check.

*Grinding the Gears:* A PC inadvertently exposes one of the trap's components to the harsh desert winds. The PC must succeed at a Knowledge (nature) or Survival check to effectively protect the component, or the component's imperfect functioning makes the trap harder to disable. Failing this skill check increases the DC of the Disable Device check to disarm the trap at one of the switches by 2.

*Never Forget a Face:* **Lyshna** recognizes the PC as a member of **Temeera's** old team, and allows him to work on her trap only if he agrees to undergo a modify memory spell at the end of the day. The PC can secretly pass information to his allies within the workshop using Bluff or a shared language other than Common, Halfling, Gnome, Osiriani, or Polyglot; otherwise he must succeed at a DC 16 Will save (DC 19 in Subtier 4–5) or lose any successes he achieves this day.

#### Development

1. Learn about Desert Heat trap: function, Disable DC, location of disarm switches.
2. **Lyshna's** notes provide +4 circumstance bonus to disarm the trap. Notice she has Aspenthar jewelry.
3. Know how to disable the trap from anywhere as Move, DC 10 DD/UMD, untrained.

## Day 3

### Barracks – Desert Path

The third day is spent planning the convoy's route. Officers teach navigators how to find hidden desert trails, while guards learn how to scout for threats and maneuver the convoy to safety without getting lost.

#### Creatures

A jumpy, paranoid man named **Enyro** (N male human ranger 5) organizes the routes and scouting missions. Constantly worried about his plans falling into the wrong hands, **Enyro** distrusts anyone without instructions from the Emir himself. Interactions with **Enyro** incur a –2 penalty without written orders from Emir Guldís. Forging Guldís's handwriting requires the PCs to succeed at a DC 14 Linguistics check (DC 18 in Subtier 4–5). If **Enyro** detects the forgery, the PC who presented it takes a –4 penalty on skill checks during all subsequent interactions with him.

**Varnic**, a halfling recruit training as a scout, is actually an Aspis Consortium agent surveying the convoy's defenses. Suspecting the PCs are also investigating the convoy, **Varnic** tries to follow the PCs and interfere as they go about their business. If challenged, he claims that he's been ordered to root out spies within the compound, evading questions by directing them towards **Enyro**. Though he sticks to this story, a PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Sense Motive check (DC 18 in Subtier 4–5) realizes that he is lying. **Varnic** tries to keep a low profile, but he defends himself himself if left no other option. If the players attack the Aspis spy, use the statistics below.

Capturing and interrogating **Varnic** automatically earn the PCs 1 success.

#### Complications

The following complications could occur on the PCs' third day in the barracks.

*Errand Runner:* The PC chose to follow a scout who turned out to be on a supply run. The PC must quickly acquire the necessary goods by succeeding at an Appraise, Diplomacy, or Profession (merchant) check, or by paying 20 gp (100 gp in Subtier 4–5). Failure means the PC wastes the whole day tailing the guard who is simply running errands.

*Cartographer's Code:* **Enyro** used ciphers and decoy maps to disguise his true instructions. The PC must succeed at a Knowledge (geography) or Linguistics check to identify the correct routes or the misinformation gets the party lost before ambushing the convoy. The party can locate the convoy, but doing so requires 1d4 hours of travel in very hot conditions (Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 444).

*Snake Bite:* **Varnic** fears that the PCs are onto him and tries to poison one of the PCs before she blows his cover. The PC can spot **Varnic** spiking her drink with a successful Perception check; otherwise she is exposed to belladonna (Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 558).

#### Development

1. General route (no tracking), start at 60 ft.
2. Ideal ambush site, 1 hour prep, start at 30 ft., automatic surprise, find **Varnic**'s map.
3. Accepted as scouts, start surprise round anywhere on the map.

### Workshop

The final preparations focus on sealing the transport with mechanical and arcane barriers. Craftsmen assemble chains and locks to restrict access, while mages add wards to foil teleportation magic and shunt the transport into an extradimensional space, leaving behind a 10-foot cube of iron that serves as the transport's visible exterior. With the exterior created, another team gets to work covering the cube in chains and locks. Finally, the mages lift the cube onto a collection of floating disk spells.

#### Creatures

A Garundi man with dozens of piercings named **Duciar** (LN male human expert 5) directs the team responsible for the transport's outer trappings. **Duciar** never uses a sentence when a word will do, and often instructs his workers with little more than grunts, gestures, and stern glares. Communicating with him requires a successful DC 13 Perception or Sense Motive check (DC 17 in Subtier 4–5); failure results in a –2 penalty on all checks that involve interacting with the taciturn taskmaster.

#### Complications

The following complications could occur on the PCs' third day in the workshop. *Worker's Jinx:* Someone spots the PC doing some taboo act that the superstitious laborers believe will bring bad luck to the convoy. The PC must perform some minor ritual of restitution with a successful Bluff, Knowledge (local), or Knowledge (religion) check or be thrown out of the workshop.

*For He's a Jolly-Good Fellow:* Workers linger in the workshop after hours to celebrate a birthday. The PC must convince them to relocate with a successful Diplomacy or Intimidate check or the PC loses the opportunity to search the premises.

*Tell No Tales:* The PC stumbles upon the corpse of a guard, killed by an Aspis agent who was caught fiddling with the transport's locks. The PC must succeed at a Heal or Perception check to find the evidence necessary to prove herself innocent to **Duciar**, or a Disguise or Stealth check to make the death look like an accident. Failure results in **Duciar** accusing the PC of murdering a comrade. While these accusations remain unproven, they steel the guards' resolve against the PCs during the heist. All guards gain a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls against that PC during the heist.

#### Development

1. Discover location of secret door.
2. Identify which outer door locks are real. Notice abandoned lockpicks left by someone else.
3. Acquire keys for each real lock, allowing removing the chains as a full-round action without check.

## Heist – overview

1. If the PCs learned the *dancing lights* code on day 2 in the barracks, they can draw off most of the guards. They can also try to do this in other ways. If they fail, a chaperrone cleric of Abadar offers to do this for them but some of the PCs' pay is docked.
2. The PCs face a team of guards, mages and desert dogs. The mages try to signal with *dancing lights* that they need reinforcements. If they manage to do that, reinforcements arrive. (2 guards and 1 dogs on low tier, or 1 guard and 1 dog on high tier).
3. The transport is wound in chains. To open it either the locks must be opened or the chains broken.

There are 12 locks, half of which are fake. All are simple locks, DC 20 Disable Device (full round action). Opening two real locks is enough to undo the chains.

The chains have hardness 10, 10hp and a break DC of 26.
4. After the chains are gone, the secret door must be found and opened. This requires a Perception DC 20 check as a standard action.
5. When people enter the transport, the trap triggers, with 2 rounds of onset. To disable it PCs must make Disable Device checks at the indicated spots on the map. Note that disabling a tricky device takes 1d4 to 2d4 rounds.

The PCs can also just wait it out; the trap works for 5 rounds and does not reset automatically.
6. The secret room with the altar opens up for 1 minute if the PCs make a clockwise tour of the transport, even if they don't know it. Otherwise they'll have to beat down the door.
7. In a cabinet in the altar with a window is a vial of glowing liquid: the dummy dummy elixir. The real elixir is hidden in the hidden safe in the wall, which opens with a button on the "X" tile. If the PCs don't know the location yet, Perception 20 (25) finds it and how to open it.
8. The altar attacks anyone in the room, but always prioritizes anyone with a bottle of flowing liquid.
9. 20 minutes after the PCs begin their ambush, the remaining guards ( $\pm 42$ ) arrive.

## Debriefing

Ziralia asks if the PCs noticed anything suspicious during their infiltration. If they mention anything at all, then she also mentions the Aspis scouts sighted.

## Heat Dangers

Heat deals nonlethal damage that cannot be recovered from until the character gets cooled off (reaches shade, survives until nightfall, gets doused in water, is targeted by endure elements, and so forth). Once a character has taken an amount of nonlethal damage equal to her total hit points, any further damage from a hot environment is lethal damage.

A character in very hot conditions (above 90° F) must make a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort take a –4 penalty on their saves. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and might be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see the skill description). Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking lethal damage (1d4 points per hour).

In severe heat (above 110° F), a character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort take a –4 penalty on their saves. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and might be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see the Survival skill in Using Skills). Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking lethal damage (1d4 points per each 10-minute period).

A character who takes any nonlethal damage from heat exposure now suffers from heatstroke and is fatigued. These penalties end when the character recovers from the nonlethal damage she took from the heat.

## Conditions

**Fatigued:** A fatigued character can neither run nor charge and takes a –2 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. Doing anything that would normally cause fatigue causes the fatigued character to become exhausted. After 8 hours of complete rest, fatigued characters are no longer fatigued.

**The Shakes** Type disease, contact; *Save* Fortitude DC 13; *Onset* 1 day; *Frequency* 1/day; *Effect* 1d8 Dex damage; *Cure* 2 consecutive saves

**Mindfire** Type disease, inhaled; *Save* Fortitude DC 12; *Onset* 1 day; *Frequency* 1/day; *Effect* 1d4 Int damage; *Cure* 2 consecutive saves

**Belladonna** Type poison, ingested *Save* Fortitude 14; *Onset* 10 min. *Frequency* 1/min. for 6 min.; *Effect* 1d2 Str, target can attempt one save to cure a lycanthropy affliction contracted in the past hour; *Cure* 1 save

## Attacking the Convoy

### Convoy Mage

Human sorcerer 1

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex)

**hp** 8 (1d6+2)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** quarterstaff +0 (1d6)

**Ranged** dart +2 (1d4)

**Spells Known** (CL 1st; concentration +4)

1st (4/day)—*color spray* (DC 14), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 14)

0—*dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *ray of frost*

### Bloodline Arcane

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The convoy mages first cast dancing lights to create a warning signal in the sky, alerting nearby guards of an attack on the transport. They cast spells to subdue opponents, using their scrolls if enemies attack in groups.

**Morale** The convoy mages fight until unconscious.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 17

**BAB** +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 12

**Feats** Alertness, Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Iron Will

**Skills** Bluff +7, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +1, Sense Motive +1, Spellcraft +5

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**SQ** arcane bond (familiar [rat named Slivikin]), bloodline arcana (+1 DC for metamagic spells that increase spell level)

**Combat Gear** potion of cure light wounds, scroll of flaming sphere, scroll of floating disk, scroll of summon swarm, 15 gp

## LOW

## CR 5

### Guard

Human warrior 2

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +0

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +1 Dex)

**hp** 15 (2d10+4)

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

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** longsword +3 (1d8+1/19–20) or sap +3 (1d6+1 non-lethal)

**Ranged** longbow +3 (1d8/x3)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The convoy guards engage lightly-armored foes, commanding their Thuvian desert dogs to attack enemies wearing the most armor.

**Morale** The convoy guards fight until unconscious.

#### STATISTICS

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

**BAB** +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Endurance

**Skills** Handle Animal +3, Perception +2, Ride +5

**Languages** Common

**Combat Gear** potion of cure light wounds, mwk arrows (5), tanglefoot bags (2), thunderstone (2); Other Gear leather armor, longbow with 20 arrows, longsword, sap, 48 gp

### Thuvian Desert Dog

### CR 1

N Medium animal

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +7

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+4 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 9 (2d8)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +1

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** bite +5 (1d6+3 plus grab)

**Special Attacks** blood drain (1d2 Con), grab

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 19, **Con** 10, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 11

**BAB** +1; **CMB** +3 (+7 grapple); **CMD** 17 (21 vs. trip)

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Climb +6, Perception +7, Stealth +10, Swim +8; **Racial**

**Modifiers** +4 Climb, +2 Perception, +6 Stealth, +2 Swim

**SQ** tricks (attack, defend, down, and guard), *compression?*

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Blood Drain (Ex)** The creature drains blood at the end of its turn if it grapples a foe, inflicting Constitution damage.

**Compression (Ex)** The creature can move through an area as small as one-quarter its space without squeezing or one-eighth its space when squeezing.

## Snakes in the Sand

### Aspis Guards

Human fighter 1

LE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +2

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield)

**hp** 14 (1d10+4)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** longsword +4 (1d8+3/19–20) or cold iron dagger +4 (1d4+3/19–20)

**Ranged** heavy crossbow +3 (1d10/19–20)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The Aspis guards intercept any PCs attempting to reach Ivira or the pavilion. If at least one of the guards falls unconscious, the rest of the guards each throw an alchemist's fire at the orange tent before returning to combat.

**Morale** As long as Ivira stands, the Aspis guards fight to the death. If Ivira falls, they throw an alchemist's fire at the orange tent before fleeing into the desert.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

**BAB** +1; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness

**Skills** Heal +2, Perception +2, Survival +5

**Languages** Common

**Combat Gear** alchemist's fire; **Other Gear** breastplate, heavy wooden shield, heavy crossbow with 20 bolts, longsword, 3 gp

The guards have good AC, but the Aspis stand little chance of really putting the hurt on the PCs. The high points in this fight should be Ivira using sleep poison and *true strike* to deliver it, and the risk of her burning the evidence. The author clarified that the Aspis do not ignite the tent at the beginning of combat, but only when the fight starts to go against them.

## LOW

## CR 4

### Ivira

Female human investigator 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +5; **Senses** Perception +6

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dex)

**hp** 23 (3d8+6)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3; +2 bonus vs. poison

**Defensive Abilities** trap sense +1

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk rapier +6 (1d6+3/18–20)

**Ranged** hand crossbow +3 (1d4/19–20)

**Investigator Extracts Prepared**(CL 3rd; concentration +5)

1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *endure elements*, *true strike*

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Ivira drinks her endure elements extract every day. She has already applied blue whinnis poison to two of her crossbow bolts.

**During Combat** Ivira uses true strike to target PCs with her poisoned crossbow bolts, boosting her accuracy with inspiration. Once at least one of the guards falls, she throws an alchemist's fire at the orange tent before returning to combat. If brought below 5 hit points, she breaks her toothpick of pyrotechnics, hoping to buy time to drink her remaining extracts and potions.

**Morale** So long as the tent with evidence in it stands—or if the PCs take the evidence from the tent—Ivira fights to the death. If the evidence is destroyed, she attempts to flee.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 16, **Dex** 12, **Con** 13, **Int** 15, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

**BAB** +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Extra Inspiration ACG , Improved Initiative, Rapid Reload (hand crossbow)

**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Appraise +6, Bluff +3, Craft (alchemy) +8 (+11 to create alchemical items), Diplomacy +3, Escape Artist +4, Knowledge (all) +6, Linguistics +6, Perception +6, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +6, Stealth +4

**Languages** Common, Halfling, Osiriani, Polyglot

**SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +3), inspiration (6/day), investigator talent (effortless aid ACG ), keen recollection, poison lore, trapfinding +1

**Combat Gear** potion of cure moderate wounds, alchemist's fire (2), blue whinnis (2); **Other Gear** mwk chain shirt, hand crossbow with 20 bolts, mwk rapier, toothpick of pyrotechnics ACG , bronze Aspis badge, 18 gp

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Effortless Aid (Ex):** The investigator can use an aid another action as a move action instead of as a standard action. An investigator can expend one use of inspiration to instead perform an aid another action as a swift action.

**Blue Whinnis** Poison; injury; **save** DC 14; **frequency** 1/round for 2 rounds; **effect** 1 Con/unconscious 1d3 hours; **cure** 1 save.

## Attacking the Convoy

### Convoy Mage

Human diviner 4

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +8; **Senses** Perception +5

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

**hp** 22 (4d6+6)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** club +1 (1d6–1)

**Ranged** light crossbow +4 (1d8/19–20)

**Arcane School SLAs** (CL 4th; concentration +8)

7/day—*diviner's fortune* (+2)

**Diviner Spells Prepared** (CL 4th; concentration +8)

2nd—*glitterdust* (DC 16), *scorching ray* (2), *see invisibility*

1st—*expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*, *magic missile* (2), *true strike*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *message*

**Opposition Schools** illusion, necromancy

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The wizard casts *mage armor*.

**During Combat** The convoy mages first cast *dancing lights* to create a warning signal in the sky, alerting nearby guards of an attack on the transport. They cast spells to subdue opponents, using their scrolls if enemies attack in groups.

**Morale** The convoy mages fight until unconscious.

**Base Statistics** Without *mage armor*, the wizard's statistics are AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**BAB** +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll

**Skills** Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (arcana, local) +10, Knowledge (geography, history, nobility, religion) +8, Perception +5, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +11

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Orc

**SQ** arcane bond (ring of protection +1), forewarned

**Combat Gear** potion of cure moderate wounds, scroll of flaming sphere, scroll of locate object, scroll of summon swarm, wand of floating disk (23 charges)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Forewarned (Su):** You can always act in the surprise round even if you fail to make a Perception roll to notice a foe, but you are still considered flat-footed until you take an action. In addition, you receive a bonus on initiative checks equal to 1/2 your wizard level (minimum +1). At 20th level, anytime you roll initiative, assume the roll resulted in a natural 20.

**Diviner's Fortune (Sp):** When you activate this school power, you can touch any creature as a standard action to give it an insight bonus on all of its attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks, and saving throws equal to 1/2 your wizard level (minimum +1) for 1 round. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Intelligence modifier.

## HIGH

## CR 8

### Convoy Guard

Human warrior 7

LN humanoid (human)

**Init** +3; **Senses** Perception +8

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, –1 Dex, +1 shield)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +5

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** +1 longsword +10/+5 (1d8+2/19–20) or kukri +8/+3 (1d4+1/18–20)

**Ranged** mwk light crossbow +7 (1d8/19–20)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The convoy guard fires his screaming bolt before entering melee. In melee, he uses his Stand Still feat in order to prevent enemies from approaching the transport, commanding his Thuvian desert dogs to attack any enemy spellcasters.

**Morale** The convoy guard fights until unconscious.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 13, **Dex** 9, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

**BAB** +7; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Stand Still, Weapon Focus (longsword)

**Skills** Handle Animal +9, Perception +8, Ride +3

**Languages** Common

**Combat Gear** potion of barkskin, potion of bear's endurance, potion of cure moderate wounds, screaming bolt, tanglefoot bag (2); **Other Gear** masterwork banded mail, masterwork light steel shield, +1 longsword, kukri, masterwork light crossbow with 20 bolts, masterwork manacles, 114 gp

### Thuvian Desert Dogs

## CR 3

N Large animal

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +5 natural, –1 size)

**hp** 32 (5d8+10)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** bite +8 (1d8+7 plus grab)

**Space** 10 ft; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** blood drain (1d4+1 Con), blood rage, grab

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 21, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 11

**BAB** +3; **CMB** +9 (+13 grapple); **CMD** 22 (26 vs. trip)

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Climb +9, Perception +11, Stealth +10, Swim +11; Racial Modifiers +4 Climb, +2 Perception, +6 Stealth, +2 Swim

**SQ** tricks (attack, defend, down, and guard), compression

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Blood Drain (Ex)** The creature drains blood at the end of its turn if it grapples a foe, inflicting Constitution damage.

**Blood Rage (Ex)** When the creature takes damage in combat, on its next turn it can fly into a rage as a free action. It gains +2 Constitution and +2 Strength, but takes a –2 penalty to its AC. The rage lasts as long as the battle or 1 minute, whichever is shorter. It cannot end its rage voluntarily.

**Compression (Ex)** The creature can move through an area as small as one-quarter its space without squeezing or one-eighth its space when squeezing.



## Snakes in the Sand

### Aspis Guards

Human monk 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +5; **Senses** Perception +10

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 16, flat-footed 18 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 Wis)

**hp** 20 (3d8+3)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7; +2 vs. enchantments

**Defensive Abilities** evasion

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** unarmed strike +5 (1d6+2) or nunchaku +4 (1d6+2) or unarmed strike flurry of blows +3/+3 (1d6+2)

**Ranged** shuriken +3 (1d2+2)

**Special Attacks** flurry of blows, stunning fist (3/day, DC 15)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The monk drinks her potion of owl's wisdom to enhance her AC and Perception, as well as a potion of mage armor.

**During Combat** The Aspis guards intercept any PCs attempting to reach Ivira or the pavilion. If at least one of the guards falls unconscious, the rest of the guards each throw an alchemist's fire at the orange tent before returning to combat.

**Morale** As long as Ivira stands, the Aspis guards fight to the death. If Ivira falls, they throw an alchemist's fire at the orange tent before fleeing into the desert.

**Base Statistics** Without owl's wisdom and mage armor, the monk's statistics are **Senses** Perception +8; **AC** 15, touch 14, flat-footed 13; **Wis** 15; **CMD** 18; **Skills** Perception +8, Sense Motive +8, Survival +3.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 8

**BAB** +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 20

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Stunning Fist, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

**Skills** Acrobatics +7 (+11 when jumping), Climb +6, Intimidate +5, Perception +10, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +7, Survival +5, Swim +6

**Languages** Common

**SQ** fast movement, maneuver training

**Combat Gear** potions of cure moderate wounds (2), potion of mage armor, potion of magic weapon, potion of owl's wisdom, alchemist's fire (3); **Other Gear** dagger, nunchaku, shuriken (20), 30 gp

### Ivira

Female human investigator 6

LE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +7; **Senses** Perception +9

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +3 Dex)

**hp** 53 (6d8+23)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6; +4 vs. poison

**Defensive Abilities** trap sense +2; **DR** 10/magic vs. arrows

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft

**Melee** mwk rapier +8 (1d6+3/18–20)

**Ranged** hand crossbow +7 (1d4/19–20)

**Special Attacks** studied combat (+3, 3 rounds), studied strike +2d6

**Investigator Extracts Prepared** (CL 6th; concentration +9)

2nd—*blood armor*<sup>ACG</sup>, *cat's grace*, *false life*, *protection from arrows*  
1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *endure elements*, *true strike* (2)

CR 2

CR 5

## HIGH

## CR 7

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Ivira drinks her extract of endure elements every day. She has already applied her doses of blue whinnis poison to two of her crossbow bolts. If the PCs do not sneak up on her camp, she drinks her extracts of blood armor, cat's grace, false life and protection from arrows as they approach. The effects of these spells are included in her statistics. Her statistics also include the bonuses she receives from being in her favored terrain.

**During Combat** Ivira uses her alchemist's fire to ignite the orange tent, then targets approaching PCs with her poisoned crossbow bolts, using her inspiration pool to boost her accuracy. If the PCs close to melee with her or her allies, she switches to her rapier. Once at least one of the guards falls, she throws an alchemist's fire at the orange tent before returning to combat. If brought below 20 hit points, she breaks her toothpick of pyrotechnics, hoping to buy time to drink her healing potions or any defensive extracts she was unable to drink before combat.

**Morale** So long as the tent with evidence in it stands—or if the PCs take the evidence from the tent—Ivira fights to the death. If the evidence is destroyed, she attempts to flee.

**Base Statistics** Without cat's grace, false life, and protection from arrows, Ivira's statistics are **AC** 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; **hp** 42 (6d8+12); **Ref** +7; **DR** none; **Dex** 12; **CMD** 18; **Skills** Acrobatics +9, Escape Artist +9, Stealth +11

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 13, **Int** 16, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

**BAB** +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20

**Feats** Extra Inspiration ACG, Improved Initiative, Inspired Strike ACG, Rapid Reload

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Appraise +7, Bluff +8, Craft (alchemy) +12 (+18 to create alchemical items), Diplomacy +3, Escape Artist +11, Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, engineering, history, local, nature, nobility, planes, and religion) +7, Knowledge (geography) +9, Linguistics +7, Perception +11, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +13, Survival +2

**Languages** Common, Halfling, Osiriani, Polyglot

**SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +6), favored terrain (desert +2), **inspiration (9/day)**, investigator talents (effortless aid ACG, terrain mastery ACG), keen recollection, poison lore, swift alchemy, trapfinding +3

**Combat Gear** oil of magic weapon, potion of cure moderate wounds (2), potion of resist energy (fire), alchemist's fire (5), blue whinnis (3); **Other Gear** +1 chain shirt, hand crossbow with 20 bolts, mwk rapier, cloak of resistance +1, toothpick of pyrotechnics ACG, sleeve holster ACG, bronze Aspis badge, 88 gp

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Blue Whinnis Poison**; injury; **save** DC 14; **frequency** 1/round for 2 rounds; **effect** 1 Con/unconscious 1d3 hours; **cure** 1 save.

**Studied Combat (Ex):** Ivira can use a move action to study a single enemy that she can see. She gets a +3 insight bonus to hit and damage against that creature for 3 rounds. The bonus on damage rolls is precision damage, and is not multiplied on a critical hit.

She can have only one target of studied combat at a time, and once a creature has become the target of her studied combat, he cannot become the target of her studied combat again for 24 hours unless she expends 1 inspiration when activating this ability.

**Studied Strike (Ex):** When Ivira hits her studied target with a melee attack, she can make a studied strike as a free action against that target to deal +2d6 precision damage. This ends her studied combat. She cannot use studied strike against a creature with concealment.

**Inspired Strike (feat):** When you damage a creature by using the studied combat class feature, you can expend one use of inspiration to roll an inspiration die and increase the damage by the number rolled.