Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Intrigue
A sharp sword and a powerful spell are not the answer to every problem an adventurer is bound to face. Ultimate Intrigue, the latest hardcover rules reference for the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game, arms players with every bit of charm, grace, innuendo, and insult necessary to defeat even the most difficult social encounters. This expansive 256-page hardcover book delves into the shadowy world of intrigue, giving both players and GMs alike plenty of rules to add to their game. Engage in social combat, dueling with words instead of steel. Participate in a heist, working as a team to steal a valuable object or vital piece of information. Curry favor with the local churches, guilds, and royals with a complete influence system. Give your character an edge in social situations with a wide variety of new archetypes, feats, spells, and gear! Ultimate Intrigue also introduces a new Pathfinder RPG class: the vigilante. Influential socialite by day, avenging warrior by night, the vigilante is ready for anything, but he must take care to ensure that no one learns about his secret life! Ultimate Intrigue includes: a vigilante, a new character class that lives two lives, one as a respected member of the community, another as a crusader willing to do anything to get the job done. a character options for every class that relies on skills to win the day, including the alchemist, bard, druid, hunter, inquisitor, investigator, mesmerist, ranger, rogue, slayer, spiritualist, and more! a complete system of influence, giving the GM a new way to reward players for helping out an organization or community. Rules for social combat and verbal dueling, using words as weapons to accomplish goals and defeat foes. Dozens of feats and spells that can be used in a social setting, some to spy with and some to hide the truth. aand much, much more!

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Admittedly, it has been a bit since we last reviewed a Pathfinder expansion, but I have to say that right off of the bat I was intrigued by this one because it was offering a bunch of new roles to the core line of Pathfinder rules. By and large, I liked what Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Intrigue has to offer, though there are a few weak points in the formula that hold it back from being one of the best core rules books in the series. Probably the most notable addition to the Pathfinder series is the introduction of the vigilante. It has you splitting your time and roles between a cloaked hero and a member of society who does what he or she can to stay unnoticed by those around them. With this comes a variety of archetypes for many of the classes. Probably the most interesting aspect of this book is the way it leverages the use of social skills. If you are looking for a rule book that is focused on combat, this is where Ultimate Intrigue will probably let you down. While there are plenty of skills and feats in here, there is an obvious focus on non-combat ability as well. The first chapter focuses on establishing the vigilante class as a concept. The archetypes are somewhat less effective as some are incredibly cool while others could best be described as lacking. The rogue ones tend to be my favorite, but the rogue class has always been one that made more use of soft skills in a tabletop roleplaying situation. The second chapter delves into the aforementioned feats, and most of these are of the non-combat variety. Most of these were no doubt imagined as part of the Ultimate Intrigue package, but I can see a lot of use for these in non-intrigue settings as well. There might need to be a few tweaks applied here and there, but it is generally good stuff.

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