

Fiery Dragon

MONTE COOK PRESENTS:

IRON HEROES

Dark Harbor



An Adventure for Levels 1-5

Adam Windsor

DARK HARBOR

Adventure and intrigue in a city of corruption and confrontation.

Requires the use of *Monte Cook Presents: Iron Heroes*.

Some additional rules taken from *Mastering Iron Heroes*, however ownership of that book is not necessary to play through this adventure. For ease of reference, this E-Book release contains appendixes of all necessary stat blocks and all maps referenced in this adventure.

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Introduction

Dark Harbor is a mini-campaign adventure designed for parties of four or more *Iron Heroes* characters beginning at 1st level. The adventure is primarily city-based, but also features wilderness and dungeon-based adventuring.

The adventure revolves around a struggle over the riches of the port city of Malador, a thriving center of wealth, corruption, and vice. Originally founded on treasures looted from half-sunken ruins in the coastal waters nearby, Malador has since established itself as a decadent and supremely wealthy trade city, and is thus an attractive target for would-be conquerors. Indeed, as the adventure begins, the ruler of the nearby kingdom of Borat puts into motion his plans to gain control of Malador. This is far from the only threat the adventurers will encounter, however. The ill-gotten riches that flow through Malador attract scoundrels, mercenaries, pirates, and gamblers of all kinds. Everyone in Malador has an angle; everyone's looking out for number one.

This module details the major districts and sites in the boisterous port city of Malador, as well as the primary NPCs who can be found in these areas. From the bustling docks of the Harborside to the opulent mansions of Clifftop to the muddy, rat infested alleys of Beggar's Flow, to the half-sunken ruins that still deliver a considerable part of the city's wealth, the module provides many locations for adventurers to explore, both as part of the main narrative and in adventures of the DM's own devising. By the conclusion of **Dark Harbor**, starting parties of four 1st-level characters should reach 5th level. Providing many hours of game play, this adventure is the perfect way to kick off your new *Iron Heroes* campaign.

About this Module

Dark Harbor is specifically designed for the *Iron Heroes* game, published by Malhavoc Press. The adventure's challenges and rewards have been tailored for the bold, self-reliant characters featured in *Iron Heroes*. Non-player characters (NPCs) in this module make use of the new *Iron Heroes* character classes, feat masteries, and skill groups. If you are intending to run **Dark Harbor**, you should make sure you are familiar with the effects of these new feats, the combat applications of skills, and the mechanics for skill challenges, combat challenges, and stunts. Many of the NPCs in this module make use of these *Iron Heroes* game mechanics to perform special actions or maneuvers.

Additionally, this module makes use of the rules for combat zones, NPC classes, and villain classes from the *Mastering Iron Heroes* book. However, all the necessary information to use these mechanics for the encounters in **Dark Harbor** is included here, in case you do not have access to *Mastering Iron Heroes*.

Although designed as an introduction to the *Iron Heroes* system, and ideal for commencing with a new campaign, **Dark Harbor** is not intended as an introduction to game-mastering in general. It is intended for the use of experienced DMs and includes plenty of scope and opportunity for players and DMs alike to expand the adventure in new directions of their own choosing.

Dark Harbor consists of six chapters, broken down as follows:

Chapter One provides a brief summary Malador's history and an overview of the surrounding lands. It includes a map of the area and of the city and outlines the four principal districts of Malador, as well as identifying the major landmarks within each district. A brief description is given of each landmark and the role it plays in Malador's daily life, as well as any role it plays in this adventure. If the location is described in more detail later in this book, this chapter also includes a page reference for that description. In addition, this chapter details the major NPCs involved in the module, along with their goals, resources, and motivations.

Chapter Two is the beginning of the adventure itself. It covers possible reasons for the PCs to have come to Malador

and provides hooks that can prompt the players to begin uncovering the hidden secrets of the city. During the course of this chapter, the adventurers have their first encounters with several of the major NPCs in the module, gain an understanding of the major political factions at work in Malador, and take part in a dangerous but profitable excursion to the sunken ruins that provide so much of the city's wealth. The PCs should reach 2nd level by the end of this chapter.

Chapter Three sees the rise of illicit blood sports in the slums of the city. Those brave or desperate enough to risk their lives in these brutal encounters can become rich... if they live. Hardened warriors like the adventurers are almost certainly approached to take part in these gladiatorial games, while there are others in the city who would pay them handsomely to put an end to the sports. There is far more to the arena than meets the eye, however, and the PCs might well find themselves caught in a crossfire of spies, mercenaries, and cultists. This chapter also gives the adventurers further opportunities to interact with the major NPCs in the story, and to become aware of the King of Borat's plans for the city. The PCs should reach 3rd level by the end of this chapter.

Chapter Four sees the adventurers' increasing notoriety bring them to the attention of the Council of Malador. This coterie of the city's wealthiest and most corrupt citizens has need of some skilled—and expendable—warriors to deal with the rising challenge of a group of independent pirates. These pirates have taken to raiding the city's expeditions to the sunken ruins, robbing the looters of their "honest spoils." The Council pays handsomely for the end of this threat to its prosperity. The PCs' personal dealings with the council members in this chapter also give them a clear view of the oncoming crisis as the King of Borat advances his plans to annex the city. The PCs should reach 4th level by the end of this chapter.

Chapter Five opens with the murder of one of the city's Councilors, the one member of the seven whose loyalties had not yet been won by the King of Borat or his adversaries. With the council due to vote on alliance with Borat that very night, the adventurers have only 12 hours to discover who murdered the man... a task complicated by the fact that he appears to have been killed *twice*. The results of the player characters' investigation, or at least the results they choose to share, determine the political future of the city. The PCs should reach 5th level by the end of this chapter.

Chapter Six contains suggestions for possible developments in the city, based on the player characters' decisions in the previous chapter, and also provides hooks for further adventures in and around the city of Malador.

No Spokesperson?

This module includes many occasions where the party's progress is much easier if they include at least one character with a focus on Charisma-based skills such as Bluff, Diplomacy, and/or Gather Information. A group lacking in these areas may find the going more difficult than they otherwise should.

Some ways to counteract this problem are:

Warn your players before the campaign begins that Malador is a city of intrigue and double-crosses, and that knowing the right friends and information can be just as important as being the best warrior.

Lower the skill check DCs. It is recommended that you not do this by more than 5 points; characters in *Iron Heroes* have access to far more skills than in other fantasy role-playing games and should be able to invest at least a modicum of points into Charisma-based skills.

Allow your players to gain bonuses on their skill checks due to good roleplaying. This is our preferred option, but it may not suit the style of game you want to run and your players want to play, so do whatever works best for your group!

Chapter One: Secrets of Malador

Malador was not a port city during the reign of the Masters. In fact, the tiny settlement was not even located on the coast. Before the Masters' destructive war, Malador lay 20 miles inland and was a small farming community that provided foodstuffs to the great cities on the shoreline. Near the end of the war, a cataclysmic magical battle between four rival Masters led to devastating seismic activity: mile upon mile of land was first scoured into Ghostlands, and then cast down into the ocean. This unleashed a deluge of water that killed thousands of people in the cities and even swept away parts of Malador. After a few days, the waters receded slightly, but only far enough that the village now found itself perched on the coast.

The settlement did not change a great deal in the first two generations after the war ended. Some few of the farmers turned their hands to fishing, but otherwise the struggle to survive in the dangerous world brought about by the Masters' fall kept most people from venturing far from their small community. Things began to change roughly 50 years ago as an influx of refugees forced an expansion of the settlement and a greater reliance on the ocean for food. (The refugees were fleeing a failed community that had been overrun by strange monsters emerging out of the Ghostlands to the north.)

As more fishing boats were built and launched, the fisherfolk were forced to spread out further in their search for a worthwhile catch. Within a few months, one of the boats ranged far enough from the shore that the men aboard it came in sight of what they at first took to be floating buildings of some kind. After finally working up the nerve to approach this "magical" phenomenon, they discovered that it was in fact the half-submerged remains of the Masters' cities. Many of the buildings were in just a few dozen feet of water or less, and those with many stories or those on higher ground often jutted well above the water line.

Curiosity and greed soon overcame fear, and the crew ventured into the accessible levels of the buildings, swiftly returning with rich furs, gold cups and plates, and many other valuable treasures. They returned home without fish that day, but with their boat filled to the gunwale nonetheless.

Naturally, the discovery of such treasures could not be concealed. Within days, the entire fishing fleet was moored amongst the ruins, the crews searching for more of these once-lost treasures. Many returned laden with riches... but many did not return at all. The ruins were filled with dangers: some treasure hunters drowned when walls or floors gave way, flooding the rooms where they stood. Others fell to ancient traps, which had been left undisturbed until their

intrusion. Most of all, they died at the hands of the many strange creatures that lurked in the half-submerged towers: stunted fish-men with yellow gills; eel-like snakes that swam in the warm waters; sodden and bloated corpses that came to life at the intruders' approach. These were only some of the monsters that threatened those who entered the ruins; survivors brought back incoherent tales of beasts that were far more strange and terrible.

Such dangers were far beyond the capabilities of mere fisherfolk to handle, but the people of Malador knew that there were some who would be willing, and able, to venture into the ruins whatever the dangers. Painful as it was to think of sharing their wealth, they knew that they needed heroes, men and women as hard as the iron they wielded, to bring back the treasures in what they had already come to call the "drowning towers."

The village council sent out the word: Any who were willing to enter the towers would be permitted to keep three-quarters of the treasure they recovered, with the remainder to be taken as "taxes" by the city. The dangers of the wilderness meant that the word traveled slowly. Few were willing to risk leaving their home communities for any reason, let alone to pursue rumors of distant wealth, but gradually a few dreamers and adventurers made their way to the village. Many of these died in their expeditions to the towers, but some survived, returning with great riches. Many were naturally eager to return to the ruins. The leaders of Malador were happy to oblige them, provided they now paid the "full tax rate" of one-half of the treasure they recovered.

The Maladoran strategy had been carefully designed. Seeing the reward for their risk decreased, many of the adventurers chose to leave the city, spreading word of the drowning towers still further. More importantly, these men and women went forth laden with the wealth they had garnered, a fact that inevitably made more of their kind travel to the city, despite the knowledge that the town's leaders would take half of the proceeds for themselves.

Adventurers were not the only people drawn to Malador by confirmation of the wealth in the drowning towers. The promise of great riches brought people of all walks of life, searching for work and profit. The settlement grew into a town, then a city. Districts began to form as the rich separated themselves from the poor and the poor from the destitute. Authorized construction could not keep up with the population growth and illegal shanty-towns sprang up, with homes made of driftwood and whatever other detritus could be found. To this day, these "temporary" slums spread out to the south of the city.



The New Coast

The area around Malador has been known as the New Coast ever since the day the Masters' battle swamped the land and severely altered the shoreline. Although this happened more than a hundred years ago, no-one has seen any need to change the name.

Each of the areas of the New Coast is described below. At the DM's discretion, some or all of the information presented here can be uncovered by PCs using either Knowledge (geography or history) or Gather Information checks (DC 15).

The Gray Steppe

North of the city, the ground rises into scrub-covered steppe. The earth here is gray and powdery, giving the area its name. It was over this region that the refugees fled to Malador 50 years ago. Before the Masters' war, these lands were lush and fertile farms. The magical energies unleashed in the great conflicts scoured this territory, burning much of the once-rich earth into arid dust. Pockets of fertile land still exist, forming a series of oases that make it possible to cross the region, but there are few who do so. The terrain gets steadily more and more desolate and dangerous the further one travels northward, until it becomes true Ghostland some

120 miles from the city. Harsh winds often blow from this direction, whipping up blinding, choking clouds of gray dust. A human can suffocate in such storms, even assuming the wind brings with it nothing more dangerous than its own scouring blasts out of the Ghostlands.

Other than the arid terrain and choking dust storms, the most common danger of the Gray Steppe are roving bands of bestial humanoids. While only misfortune might cause a traveler to encounter these creatures in the arid stretches of the steppe, they are often found at the oases. A band, usually forty or fifty strong, remains in a fertile area until its waste has fouled the water to the point where it is no longer safe to drink, then moves to a new location. By the time it returns, the effects of the last visit have abated, allowing the humanoids to repeat the cycle.

Strange monsters, spawned in the Masters' war, also prowl the Gray Steppe. They emerge from time to time from the Ghostlands, and may be of almost any size, shape, or nature. Such beasts occasionally travel far enough south to threaten Malador itself. When this occurs, the city council offers a reward for the creature's destruction.

Typical Encounters: Ankheg, bugbear, bulette, chimera, digester, gnom, goblin, griffon, hobgoblin, mantico, troll, yeth hound.

Bleakwater

To the south, the land barely rises above sea level. Many streams and watercourses, most of them brackish or outright saltwater, cross the area in intricate and complex patterns. The water's salinity has leached into the land: Anyone digging here finds salt crystals in the earth, and the bushes and trees grow stunted from the lack of good water. More so even than in the Gray Steppe, the lack of potable water here is a major impediment to travel across this region. Fortunately, the Bleakwater is much smaller in size—a mere 50 miles or so from end to end, it can be crossed in six days by those who have the determination to force their way across the water-logged and muddy terrain.

Despite the lack of fresh water, few people live long enough to die of thirst in their attempt to cross Bleakwater. There are numerous dangers that can quickly overcome anyone, let alone those weakened by the effects of dehydration: The area is infested with reptilian beasts of all sizes, from foot-long lizards to snakes as long as a man, to 10-foot long or larger caiman (crocodilian beasts that prefer low-lying wetlands and have no aversion to salt water) that can weigh hundreds of pounds. The area is also home to flesh-eating birds that have little compunction about picking over the still-living body of a traveler who has become too weak to fight back.

There are many rumors of tribes of intelligent creatures (human or otherwise) living in the Bleakwater region, but until recently such tales were mere gossip. A small group of humans has recently established a secret settlement in the area. They intend to use this as a base for conducting their own raids on the drowning towers—a purpose the council of Malador will bitterly oppose when they discover it (see Chapter Four for more details).

Typical Encounters: Assassin vine, dragon (black), caiman (as crocodile), fungus, hag (green), hydra, kobold, lizardfolk, naga (water), ogre (merrow), shambling mound.

Borat

To the west of Malador lies the kingdom of Borat. The capital and largest city of this state, also named Borat, is less than half the size of Malador. However, in total, the kingdom has a population more than five times that of Malador. Unlike Malador, which is ruled by a council of humans, Borat is under the control of one of the First, who styles himself “King” Darragan.

The terrain of Borat consists mainly of low, rolling hills. The most fertile land is in the valleys between the hills, which are well-watered by rivers and streams. The vast majority of Borat’s settlements are located in these valleys. Most such communities consist of only a few hundred people, with much of the land given over to farming. Although it was unaffected by the deluge that swamped the lands to the east, the Borat region suffered considerable damage from other battles of the Masters’ War. The land retains much of its fertility, but many of the settlements were burned to the ground, and the rebuilding process has been long and difficult.

The upper slopes of the region’s hills are heavily forested. They are a primary source of timber for building, but also a primary source of danger for travelers. Wild beasts, many of them magically tainted, make their lairs in the woods and often come down to the roads in search of food. The Borati military conducts patrols on the major routes, but most of the beasts instinctively avoid large groups of armed men. They focus their attacks on those traveling alone or in small groups. The patrols have put an end to the banditry once endemic to the area, however.

Typical Encounters: Barghest, digester, dire animal, ettercap, gray render, krenshar, ogre, owlbear, worg.

Note: The kingdom of Borat plays a major role in **Dark Harbor**. Refer to “King Darragan’s Proposal” on page 28 for details.

The Drowning Towers

Created by the devastating collapse of the shoreline during one of the Masters’ titanic battles, the ocean between Malador and the Drowning Towers rarely attains a depth of more than 50 feet, and there are many patches where a human could comfortably wade. Only small, shallow-draft boats can safely navigate this area, often sailing over the remains of sunken villages. Once the home of human families, the ruined cottages of these flooded settlements are now the home of hundreds of fish.

Twenty miles across these waters are the Drowning Towers, the flooded ruins of the Masters’ ancient cities. The towers thrust upward to heights between 10 and 60 feet above the water and, depending on the depth of the seabed, descend 30 to 50 feet below the surface. Constructed of black stone that seems unaffected by its long immersion in sea water, the towers show no sign of significant structural decay from the outside. The interior of the towers is another story, however: Many of the inner walls and floors were constructed of lesser stone or even wood, and have deteriorated to a dangerous degree.

The Towers represent the lifeblood of Malador. Without them, the city would be just another isolated town. To protect this vital source of wealth, Malador’s council has authorized the construction of six great rafts, each large enough to hold 20 archers and a pair of small catapults. Moored in a circle around the towers, at least two of the rafts can target any approaching vessel, regardless of the route it takes. The commanders of these floating fortresses have explicit orders to sink any ship that draws near without permission.

Chapter 2 contains more details on the Drowning Towers.

Typical Encounters: Chuul, dragon turtle, hag (sea), locathah, naga (water), sahuagin, sea cat, tojanida.

The City of Malador

Much of the action and intrigue in **Dark Harbor** is set within the confines of Malador proper. While there are extended sequences in the Drowning Towers and Bleakwater, the impetus and final resolution of these sequences are in the city. The following section provides information about Malador itself: its geography, social structures, government and customs. You are encouraged to become familiar with its contents in order to give your players a better sense of the city the characters are exploring.

With a population of approximately 11,000 people—the exact number is unknown, being in a constant state of flux—Malador is by far the largest city known to its inhabitants, or to almost any of the travelers who come there. Certainly,

CLIMATE

Malador gets a large portion of its wealth and food from the sea. As a consequence, the weather is of considerable importance to its prosperity. The city and its surrounding lands are in a cool temperate zone. Thanks to warm offshore sea currents, the extremity of both winter and summer temperatures is reduced; this makes the weather in the area comparatively mild, at the expense of an increased likelihood of rain throughout the year.

The tables below provide all the necessary detail to generate daily weather for Malador randomly. The events of **Dark Harbor** are assumed to begin during early spring, though this can be changed if you desire. If you do change the starting time of the module, then you should change the period of time between adventures so that the climax of events occurs at the end of spring, just before the beginning of the summer, when it is easiest to move and supply armies for warfare. Moving the start of the module to allow more time between adventures is particularly appropriate if you have any player characters who wish to make use of Craft skills during the campaign.

SEASON	TEMPERATURE	SPECIAL CONDITIONS (ROLL D20)
Spring	Day: 40+3d10° F Night: 20+3d10° F	1 storm; 2–3 precipitation; 4 severe wind; 5–6 strong wind; 7–10 fog; 11–20 no special conditions.
Summer	Day: 60+3d10° F Night: 40+3d10° F	1–2 precipitation; 3–5 strong wind; 6–20 no special conditions.
Fall	Day: 40+3d10° F Night: 10+3d10° F	1–2 storm; 3–8 precipitation; 9–10 severe wind, 11–14 strong wind; 15 fog; 16–20 no special conditions.
Winter	Day: 20+3d10° F Night: 10+3d10° F	1–3 storm; 4–10 precipitation; 11 severe wind, 12–15 strong wind; 16–18 fog; 19–20 no special conditions.

The effects of special weather conditions are outlined below.

Fog: Whether in the form of a low-lying cloud or a mist rising from the ground, fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. Creatures 5 feet away have concealment (attacks by or against them have a 20% miss chance). When it occurs, fog generally begins to form at night (1d4 hours after sunset) and clears during daylight hours (1d4 hours after sunrise).

Precipitation (Rain or Snow): Precipitation in Malador is generally rain, but it may (50% chance) be snow if the daytime temperature is less than 30° Fahrenheit. All precipitation reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a –4 penalty on Listen, Spot, and Search checks. Precipitation also automatically extinguishes any unprotected flames, and has a 50% chance to extinguish protected flames (such as those of lanterns). Ranged weapon attacks suffer a –4 penalty. All movement costs in outdoor environments are doubled during snow. Movement costs in outdoor environments such as that of the Beggars' Flow (see page 9) are doubled during precipitation of any kind.

Storm: The combined effects of precipitation and wind that accompany all storms reduce visibility ranges by three-quarters, imposing a –8 penalty on Spot, Search, and Listen checks. Storms make ranged weapon attacks impossible, except for those using siege weapons, which suffer a –4 penalty on attack rolls. A storm automatically extinguishes candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames and causes protected flames, such as those of lanterns, to dance wildly and have a 50% chance to extinguish these lights.

Winds: The wind can create a stinging spray of sand or dust, fan a large fire, heel over a small boat, and blow gases or vapors away. If powerful enough, it can interfere with ranged attacks, or impose penalties on some skill checks.

Strong Wind: Gusts that automatically extinguish unprotected flames (candles, torches, and the like). Such gusts impose a –2 penalty on ranged attack rolls and on Listen checks.

Severe Wind: In addition to automatically extinguishing any unprotected flames, winds of this magnitude cause protected flames (such as those of lanterns) to dance wildly and have a 50% chance of extinguishing these lights. Ranged weapon attacks and Listen checks are at a –4 penalty.

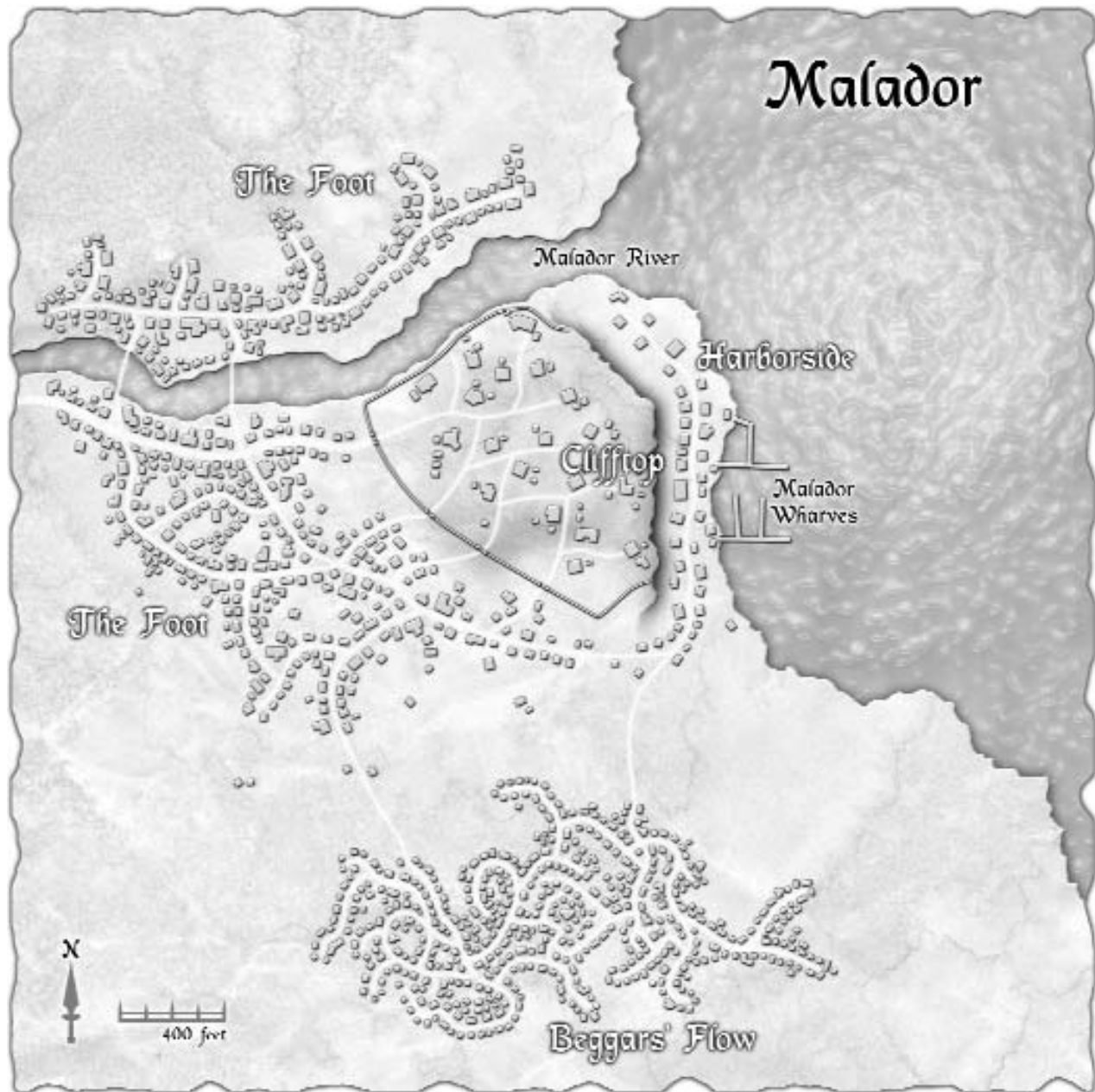
there is no comparable settlement within a hundred miles, which is further than most people will travel in their lives.

Before the Masters' War, Malador was a village of a few hundred souls, living in cottages scattered over the crest and upper slopes of a large hill. When the deluge came, the eastern side of the hill collapsed, destroying the cottages and barns that were built there. Dozens of people were crushed in the rapid subsidence, but few drowned; the collapse was only partial, leaving what remained of that side of the hill a few feet above the water. The new eastern face of the hill was a near-vertical cliff of earth and stone, which had to be shored up with a retaining wall in order to prevent it from collapsing farther and destroying the remaining homes. This low-lying waterfront and the cliff-like heights above dominate the geography of the city to the current day; they form

the core around which Malador has formed, and to this day they are centers of power and commerce.

Due to its size and explosive growth, Malador lacks the defensive walls that are common to many other settlements in the Swordlands. A wooden palisade was constructed during the Masters' War, but much of it destroyed during the deluge, and the remainder was demolished to make way for new buildings several years later. As the city has expanded, each area has taken on particular and distinctive characteristics. Today, there are four widely recognized neighborhoods within Malador.

At your discretion, some or all of the information presented here can be uncovered by player characters with Knowledge (usually *local*, but occasionally some other type as indicated



in each area's description) or Gather Information checks; where applicable, such checks have DCs indicated in each area's description.

Harborside

The oldest district of the city, Harborside is built on the low-lying waterfront that was created by the collapse of the hill. It occupies the same site as many of the homes in the original village of Malador. None of the original cottages remain, having been replaced by wharves, warehouses, and the city's giant fish market.

Now, thousands of people come here daily to buy fresh fish, and there are also dozens of smoking, salting, and pickling houses, where the remains of the daily catch are preserved

for winter. This feature, along with a giant excise house built by the Council, has made Harborside the commercial heart of the city. More than two-thirds of the city's shops, stores and trade halls can be found in this section of town.

Most buildings in Harborside are constructed of wood (the Excise House is the notable exception) and all stand at least two stories high, with three or four stories being more common. Most are narrow but deep, and terraced in groups of six or eight. All but a handful of these structures are used wholly or partly for commercial purposes. Merchants and artisans often live in the same building as their store, usually on the upstairs levels. Sometimes, two or even three businesses share a building, each on a different story of the structure.



Harborside bustles with people throughout the daylight hours, and even in the dead of night the streets are not entirely empty. Some businesses in Harborside, including the Excise, are open constantly, while a few (often more questionable) enterprises open only after dark; as well, there are numerous night-fishing boats that leave and return to the wharves between sunset and sunrise. In order to cope with the heavy traffic they receive, the streets of this district are cobbled with large stones, a necessity that prevents them from turning into a muddy quagmire from all the heavily-laden carts and barrows that move through the Harborside.

Next to the aristocratic neighborhood of Clifftop, Harborside is the safest district in Malador. Guard patrols are frequent, keeping the streets clear of suspicious individuals and ensuring that the wealth passing through the Excise House remains secure.

Typical building: Wooden exterior and interior, 1d3+1 stories tall, 1d4+2 squares wide by 2d4+5 squares deep. Each has 1d4+1 rooms per story, of which one is designed as a shop-front and takes up at least half the area of the level. There is a 90% chance the first floor is used as a business place, and a 50% chance for other stories. Doors are generally good (Break DC 18) with good locks (Open Lock DC 30). Windows are barred or shuttered (Break DC 25), though the latch on shutters can sometimes be worked loose (Open Lock DC 25).

Clifftop

Despite its name, the district of Clifftop runs not just along the crest of Malador Ridge, but also consumes more than three-quarters of the hillside beneath it. Although this area was occupied at the time of the deluge and many of the

buildings there survived the event, none of them are still standing. Over the years, Clifftop's dominating position overlooking Malador has made it a favored location for the city's rich and powerful. All of the original cottages have been demolished, replaced with opulent stone mansions and extensive landscaped gardens.

Although Harborside is the center of commerce for Malador, Clifftop is the true center of wealth, and also the center of power. Only the richest and most politically powerful families in the city own property there, and they actively conspire to keep outsiders from gaining entry. With all members of the Malador Council hailing from this neighborhood, this task is usually easily accomplished.

Although Malador lacks a city wall, the inhabitants of Clifftop have funded the construction of a 10-foot-high stone wall around their community. Lacking battlements and pierced by four large gates, the wall is all but useless as a defensive measure, but it is not intended as such; its purpose is instead to prevent intrusion by "undesirable elements"—which in the view of those who live in Clifftop is essentially everyone else in the city. Entry is prohibited to any outsider who lacks an invitation, and any "vagrant" found within the walls is arrested and imprisoned.

Every home in Clifftop—and with the exception of the Council Hall, they are all homes—is a huge and sprawling affair. Most have two stories, while a few have three, but they spread most of their size across the ground. A single mansion in the Clifftop might take up as much room as eight or ten buildings in the Harborside or the Foot. The mansions are invariably decorated in opulent fashion, though the level of taste in the décor is by no means as consistent as the luxury. As if the buildings themselves were not extravagant

enough, each also has grounds at least as large as the mansion itself. These gardens and lawns are usually enclosed in a head-high or taller stone wall, though some are bounded with tall hedges instead.

The roads of Clifftop are wide, and paved with broad, fitted stone to give the carriages of the rich a smooth and comfortable ride. Foot traffic is rare; even the patrolling groups of town and private guards travel mounted. (These patrols are frequent and regular.) Anyone seen afoot is immediately suspected of being a vagrant or, if dressed in livery of some kind, a servant.

Typical building: Stone exterior, stone and wooden interior; 1d3 stories tall, plus attic; 2d6+8 squares wide by 2d6+8 squares deep. There are 2d4+2 rooms per story, with at least one chamber of no less than eight squares to a side on the first floor (used for hosting balls and parties). Attic space is often used for servants' quarters. Doors are generally strong (Break DC 23) with good locks (Open Lock DC 30). Windows are barred or shuttered (Break DC 25), though the latch on shutters can sometimes be worked loose (Open Lock DC 25).

The Foot

As money and people began to flow into Malador fifty years ago, many new buildings were constructed at the western foot of Malador Ridge. The construction took place in such haste and confusion that many people simply gave their address as "at the foot of the hill," an appellation that was soon shortened to just "The Foot."

Although hastily built and utilitarian, the buildings of the Foot are solid and well constructed. Fashioned of a mixture of wood and stone with a thatched roof, most are single-story cottages. They were generally built without interior walls, though their owners have often added these since the original construction. The fronts of these buildings generally open onto the road, but most also have room for a small herb or vegetable garden at the rear.

In many ways, the Foot is the most diverse neighborhood in Malador. It provides homes to many different classes of people, from those barely above the poverty line to wealthy merchants, and features a wide variety of stores and workshops. The majority of such businesses are situated in Harborside, a district with a better reputation and lower crime rate, but the Foot is the best alternative for those who cannot afford Harborside's higher property costs.

The Foot is the one district of Malador that was built along a prescribed plan. Its roads follow a grid-like pattern, interrupted every four or five blocks with cobbled squares. Each square is provided with either a well or a rudimentary

pump, depending on how close it is to the river. Although the squares are cobbled, most of the roads simply have gravel poured over them to prevent them from turning into muddy quagmires during rain.

Typical building: Stone and wood exterior and wooden interior, 1 story; 1d3+6 squares wide by 1d3+4 squares deep. Each has 1d3 rooms, and may have bedding in the roof space, accessible via ladder. Any building here is 90% likely to be a residence. Buildings used for commercial purposes are usually larger, with multiple stories. Doors are generally good (Break DC 18) with average locks (Open Lock DC 25); windows are shuttered (Break DC 25), though the latch can sometimes be worked loose (Open Lock DC 25).

Lodgings for Player Characters

The Foot is the most likely part of town in which player characters might establish their base of operations. There are numerous taverns and inns in this section of Malador, offering lodgings ranging from some floor space in the tap room to private rooms with a hot bath included. It is also a decent location to purchase equipment as many items can be acquired at the regular markets held in the district's many squares.

Beggars' Flow

The largest of Malador's neighborhoods in both area and population, Beggars' Flow is also the newest. It formed as the influx of immigrants to Malador began to vastly exceed the city's ability to house them. With no other recourse, the new arrivals scrounged for driftwood, broken lumps of stone, torn boat sails, and any other bits of refuse that could be cobbled together into makeshift shanties. Several times the Council sent town guards to drive these squatters out, but the shanties simply sprang up in a new area each time. Eventually the city authorities accepted the inevitable and declared the plains southwest of the Foot to be suitable for "temporary housing." Forty years later, many of those "temporary" houses—or their replacements, at least—are still here.

Constructed from whatever materials its inhabitants could find to use, the neighborhood now known as Beggars' Flow is a rambling warren of narrow, twisting streets that curve back on themselves, stop in unexpected dead-ends, or cross other roads completely without warning or any form of signs to tell a traveler where he might be. Many people have gotten lost in the Flow, and not all of them have survived to tell of the experience. Gangs of thugs prowl the muddy streets, fighting over territory, stealing whatever they can find, and accosting strangers with demands for food or

money. The thugs have no fear of the town guard, which ventures here only when it must.

As its name suggests, Beggars' Flow is home to the poorest and most desperate of Malador's citizens. Exactly how many people live here is unknown, though it is probably close to half of the city's total population. Failed adventurers, camp followers, orphans, thieves, and every other manner of destitute, indolent, or otherwise unsavory specimen of humanity ends up in these dirty, half-finished hovels, amidst the tangle of muddy, dangerous streets. The district's name was originally bestowed by the sneering inhabitants of Clifftop, and has been adopted with a kind of spiteful pride by the people of the Flow.

Beggars' Flow is the only district of the city where the dead are buried: in other parts of Malador, the bodies are taken to funeral ships at the docks and disposed of at sea, going back to the ocean that provided them with food and wealth while they were alive. The folk of the Flow simply take their dead to "body pits" (deep, quicklime-lined holes dug by city workers) and dump them there. The pits are rumored to attract ghouls and—even more foul—living cannibals, though the authorities deny these tales. The body pits are covered up at the end of each month and new pits dug elsewhere, so their location changes regularly, but they are always within a quarter mile of the edge of the Flow, and at least half a mile from any other part of the city.

Although it has a deserved reputation for violence and crime, it would be an incorrect assumption that all inhabitants of Beggars' Flow were fundamentally dishonest and dangerous... it would, however, be a prudent one. Desperation can push people to do things they would never normally consider, and there are very few in the Flow who aren't desperate. The Flow is also a favored hiding place for those who have committed serious crimes in the other districts of the city. Make it to the Flow before being captured, then wait out any watch the town guards set up, and you're unlikely to ever be arrested for the crime.

In recent months, the desperation that marks so many of the Flow's inhabitants has made it a fertile breeding ground for the Crimson Path. Refer to Chapter 3 for more details of this secretive cult and their unsavory plans for the flow.

Typical building: Wood and cloth exterior and interior, 1 story; 1d3+1 squares wide by 1d3+1 squares deep; 1d2 rooms. Doors are generally average (Break DC 13) with poor locks (Open Lock DC 20) or none at all. Windows are thinly shuttered (Break DC 20), though the latch on such shutters can usually be worked loose (Open Lock DC 15).

Option Zone (makeshift structure): Useable once per building. Buildings in Beggars' Flow are often structurally

unsound. As a full-round action, a character may attempt to collapse any building in melee range. Make a base attack, Strength, or Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check against DC 15: If the check succeeds, the building collapses, inflicting 2d6 points of damage on all inside and on those within 5 feet of its exterior. Victims may make a Reflex save (DC = the collapsing character's check result) to negate this damage.

Government of Malador

Malador is ruled by a Council, a body whose title suggests a degree of democracy that does not actually exist. New Council members *are* elected by vote, but only on the death or dismissal of one of the current Councilors. Additionally, only those who have paid for electoral licenses may take part in the vote. In theory, purchase of the 100-gp license proves the voter's commitment to the success and stability of Malador. In practice, especially as there is no limit to the number of licenses an individual can buy, it puts all electoral power in the hands of the rich. Not surprisingly, all the Councilors for the last forty years have come from the Clifftop district.

There are seven Councilors at any given time. As noted above, appointment is for life unless the Councilor is dismissed, an event that can occur only with the unanimous vote of the other six Council members. Otherwise, a simple majority vote is enough to carry all other decisions.

In theory, Councilors are not paid a salary for their work. In practice, they have control over all of the city's financial decisions, including taxation, business licenses, municipal projects, and so forth, which gives them several highly lucrative sources of income:

- (i) All seven Councilors regularly receive "benefices" from persons with an interest in upcoming Council decisions. These gifts may take the form of valuable works of art, free samples of a merchant's wares, or an out-and-out bribe of gold pieces.
- (ii) Councilors have the right to charge the city for expenses incurred in their work, and the definition of "expenses" is notoriously vague. Councilors have charged the city for such diverse purchases as clothing, a new carriage (and horses to draw it), theater tickets, meals, and their servants' wages.
- (iii) The Councilors are in the perfect position to ensure that lucrative monopolies end up in their own hands, or in the hands of their immediate families. Councilors own controlling interests in the Excise House, Malador wharves, the boatyards, and the Lost Angel Theater, as well as many other important businesses and properties throughout the city.

In short, Malador's government is based on a system of blatant graft and corruption. Power is concentrated in the hands of the wealthy, and everything is set up to ensure that the power—and the wealth—stays where it is. There are frequent grumbles about this in the tap rooms and market places of the city, but no one really expects things to change nor has tried to change them. There's a general assumption (actively encouraged by agents in the pay of the Council) that any new regime would be just as corrupt, and probably more oppressive than the present one.

Trade and Finance

The city of Malador raises its finances from three sources:

1. *Excise/Taxes*: Due to the complexity of monitoring trade in most items, Malador charges tax on only three types of goods: treasure, seafood, and arms and armor.

- Treasure recovered from the Drowning Towers is assessed at a rate of 50 percent of its appraised value. This is achieved by having Excise officials calculate the total value of the items recovered and pay half that value to the agents who recovered them.
- The sale of arms and armor within the city is subject to a tax of one-fifth of the price for which they are sold. This means that weapons and armor purchased within the city generally cost 25% more than normal list prices, though one enterprising metalsmith has found a loophole in the law (see *Shimth's Foundry* on page 23). Player characters should still be allowed to purchase their initial equipment at standard prices.
- The tax on seafood is not likely to impact player characters unless they take to the life of fisherfolk: catches brought to Malador wharves are charged a tax of 17 copper pieces for every 10 pounds of fish. This rate is a recent increase (it was previously 15 copper pieces), and any fisherfolk the player characters speak with will complain bitterly about the "ruinous" increase.

2. *Fines*: Malador's legal system imposes fines as a standard form of punishment, with floggings or time in the stocks reserved only for those who cannot pay the fines. See "Crime and Punishment in Malador" for more details.

3. *Licenses*: Anyone seeking to open a place of business in Malador must pay an annual fee for the privilege of maintaining his or her profession. This fee is assessed based on the physical size of the place of business (which is one of the reasons shops in the Harborside tend to be small), as well as on the type of goods sold. If the proprietor manufactures the goods he sells, the rate is 1 gold piece for every 25 square feet of space. The same rate applies for those who sell food

and other necessities (as defined by an exhaustive list). For those who sell goods not on this list, the price is 3 gold pieces for every 25 square feet.

Proprietors of market stalls may instead choose to pay a daily rate of 1 (or 3) copper pieces per 25 square feet of their stall, rather than the same number of gold pieces for a yearly license. This allows those who only work their stalls on a part time basis, or who are just starting out and have little capital on hand, to operate with some chance of making a profit.

Regime Change

Idealistic heroes may conspire against the Council's corrupt administration in pursuit of a more equitable government. Player characters with more "flexible ethical standards" may conspire against it in pursuit of snatching power for themselves. Whatever the motivation, any such conspiracy faces some difficult challenges.

The Council is well entrenched, and has an established network of spies and false revolutionaries to sabotage any such efforts, as well as the support of the Malador Town Guard. However, overcoming challenges is what *Iron Heroes* is all about, and if your players are interested in fomenting revolution, there's plenty of opportunity for exciting adventures while doing so. It can also be particularly rewarding for those heroes who have invested in Social feat masteries, such as Devious Manipulator and Political Mastermind.

While the forces arrayed against a regime change would be extensive, there are some possible allies available to the heroes. The King of Borat might be willing to provide military support in exchange for access to the wealth in the Drowning Towers, for instance, while the destitute folk of Beggars' Flow have plenty of untapped resentment against the Council. There's no guarantee either group wouldn't double-cross the heroes, of course... but that's one of the risks revolutionaries have to take if they want to succeed.

Malador also requires boat-owners to purchase a license to moor their vessels in the harbor. This license costs 1 gold piece per year per foot of length of the vessel.

While PCs are unlikely to acquire trade licenses, they need a weapons license if they intend to carry weapons or wear armor in public places within the city. These licenses cost a daunting 2 gold pieces per week, payable in advance. Few people can afford such an extravagant sum, but an alterna-

tive does exist, as is explained in “Defenses of Malador,” below.

Performing any licensed activity without a license is a crime; individuals found enacting such a crime must immediately pay for the required license, plus a 1 gold piece “processing fee,” or be arrested. See “Crime & Punishment in Malador” for details of sentences for those who are arrested.

Defenses of Malador

In theory, Malador is wide open for conquest. It not only lacks a city wall, but it has no standing army. Instead, the city’s defense is left in the hands of a volunteer militia, much as it was in the days when Malador was still a village. As a volunteer force, the militia is unpaid, but members are permitted to go armed on the city streets without paying for a weapons license, since they must be ready to defend the city at any time. Since the only requirement on members is that they attend at least one training session per month, most adventurers and mercenaries who live in Malador sign up with the militia in order to save themselves the cost of the license.

There is some debate over how much value the 700-strong militia would be in the event of an actual battle, due to their lack of high-level organization or standardized equipment, but many are skilled warriors (in some cases much more skilled than the people who “train” them once a month), and could be very effective if competently led. The Council has prepared detailed mobilization plans in case the need arises to defend the city against a large scale threat. These plans never mention the source of the threat, but the plans are clearly designed with Borat as the expected invader. Under the plans, the militia is organized as auxiliary units under the command of officers from the Malador Guard.

Membership in the militia is open to all adults who retain the use of all four limbs and at least one eye. Although there is no pay, militia members are guaranteed certain considerations in the event that they are mobilized by the city:

- 50 gold pieces for reporting to a town guard barracks building within 4 hours of a mobilization being announced
- 50 gold pieces per limb or eye lost while defending the city during a period of mobilization

Militia members who fail to respond to a mobilization announcement within 8 hours, or who fail to follow orders once mobilized, are automatically considered guilty of treason. The punishment in all cases is immediate execution without trial.

Crime & Punishment in Malador

Malador has a Town Guard approximately 200 strong. This force is split into equal shifts for night and day, with each shift working 12 hours. These guards wear bright red tabards and leather armor, and carry a spear, a club, or both. They usually travel in groups of five, consisting of 4 guardsmen and a squad leader (statistics on page 79). Higher-ranking guards are generally not encountered on the streets of the city, but PCs may meet them if they visit a guard barracks.

The hundred guards on active duty at any one time are usually distributed as follows:

- 20 to guard the entrance gates to Clifftop
- 30 on duty in the streets of the Harborside
- 30 on duty in the streets of the Foot
- 5 on duty in the Harborside barracks
- 15 on duty in the Foot barracks buildings (5 per building)

The guards do not maintain a regular presence in Beggars’ Flow, though from time to time they make a large-scale incursion (30 or more guards) therein.

The Clifftop Guard is employed by the inhabitants of the Clifftop district rather than the city. Similar in ability to their more common counterparts, these 40 men and women are nonetheless substantially better trained and equipped and are mounted on horses. (See Appendix for statistics.)

It’s important to understand that neither group of guards is a police force in the modern sense. They do not investigate crimes and track down culprits. Their job is merely to arrest anyone they catch committing a crime, and to respond to any hue-and-cry raised by citizens. In theory, this means that only guilty persons are arrested, and therefore the onus is on the defendant to prove innocence when brought before a judge.

Arrested characters are immediately placed in a cell at the guard barracks, where they generally remain for until the next trial date. Trials are held at the end of every week. During the time they are in the cells, the prisoner is given water once a day, but no food unless they have the funds to pay for it. Once brought before the court, the accused theoretically has an opportunity to plead his or her case; in practice, the charges are only ever dropped when the judge is bribed.

JUSTICE IN MALADOR

Maladoran justice recognizes only three types of crimes. These are *crimes of property* (arson, burglary, theft, or vandalism, and performing a licensed activity without a license), *crimes of person* (assault, murder, or rape), and *crimes of state* (treason).

Crimes of Property: The standard sentence for a crime of property is a fine equal to three times the value of the stolen or damaged goods. Of this amount, one-tenth goes to the guards who captured the culprit, one-half goes to the victim, one-fifth to the judge, and one-fifth to the Malador city coffers.

Crimes of Person: The standard sentence for a crime of person is a fine based on the nature and extent of the injury. For common assaults that leave no permanent injuries, the fine is 10 gold pieces. For assaults that leave permanent injury, the fine is 100 gold pieces. The fine for sexual assault is 500 gold pieces. Murder is always punished with death by hanging.

If the accused cannot pay the fine assessed for a crime of property or person, he is given an alternative sentence based on the fine amount. For fines under 30 gold pieces, he is placed in the stocks for three days. For fines between 30 and 300 gold pieces, he is given twenty lashes, then three days in the stocks. For fines above this amount, he is hanged until dead.

Crimes of State: The punishment for all crimes of state is death by hanging.

A character sentenced to the stocks is manacled in a public place where passers-by can throw refuse and stones at him (or her). He is given water once per day during the ordeal, but no food. Unless someone deliberately attempts to harm him during this time, he suffers no damage, but is fatigued at the end of the experience. An Escape Artist check (DC 30) can be used to escape the stocks.

A character who receives a lash effectively suffers 1d3 points of nonlethal damage (so 20 lashes is 20d3 nonlethal), almost certainly knocking him unconscious for an extended period.

Landmarks of Malador

The map of Malador on page 8 has many locations marked upon it. Some of these locations are central to the events of **Dark Harbor** while many others are not. The latter are included below only because they are significant landmarks within the city—places that most locals will know of, and that your heroes may wish to visit during the course of their adventures in Malador.

Oiling the Gears of Justice

The Malador town guards rarely have much stomach for a confrontation with armed adventurers: Hence, PCs can often bribe a group of guards to “look the other way.” Success requires a bribe of at least 1 gold piece and a Diplomacy check with a base DC 10, modified as follows:

- +20 to the DC if the victim of the crime is present
- +10 to the DC if neutral bystanders are present
- +5 to the DC if the guards are Clifftop guards, rather than town guards
- +5 to the DC if the crime was committed against a resident of Clifftop
- +5 to the DC if the arrested character is a resident of Beggar’s Flow
- –1 to the DC for each doubling of the base 1 gp bribe (–1 for 2 gp, –2 for 4 gp, –3 for 8 gp, and so on)
- –2 to the DC per armed companion of the character present at the scene (including other player characters)
- –5 to the DC if the crime was committed against a resident of Beggars’ Flow
- –10 to the DC if the arrested character is a resident of Clifftop

All modifiers are cumulative.

Characters can also bribe judges to find them innocent of the charges against them; alternatively, you might use the wealth feats from Chapter 5 of *Mastering Iron Heroes* for this purpose. If you use the former method, the base bribe required is 100 gold pieces, rather than 1 gold piece. A Diplomacy check is still required, with a same base DC and modifiers as above. The court generally has neutral bystanders present, but the victim of the crime rarely (10% of the time) attends.

Each landmark is identified with a unique number. In addition, they are collected into 15 categories, each of which is designated by a different letter code after the location number. For instance, “Location 4L” is the fourth landmark described below, and is also a Lodging landmark (i.e., a place where characters can get meals and overnight accommodation).

The chart on the following page lists the categories of landmarks.

Category	Code	Description
Commercial	C	This category includes any building where equipment or services other than lodging or entertainment are available for purchase.
Entertainment	E	This category includes any building that provides entertainment or recreation, such as a theater, as its primary purpose.
Government	G	This category includes any location owned and operated by the Malador Council as part of the city administration.
Judicial	J	This category includes any location relating to law enforcement in the city, including guard barracks, courts, and places of punishment.
Lodging	L	This category includes any location where characters can purchase meals or accommodation on a daily basis.
Manufacturing	M	This category includes any manufacturing location, such as the boatyard, armorer, and similar establishments.
Religious	R	This category includes houses of worship of all kinds.
Sights	S	This category includes all locations notable solely as landmarks, such as statues, fountains, and so forth.

It is not the objective of the descriptions below to give exhaustive information about each location. In some cases, detailed information about the location (including maps and room by room descriptions) can be found elsewhere in this product; where this is the case, a page reference for this information will be included below. Otherwise, the purpose of the location descriptions in this section is to give you seeds you can flesh out in the course of describing Malador to your players, so that the city feels more vibrant and “alive” during your game.

Most of the information presented in these location descriptions is common knowledge in Malador. Generally, this information can be learned automatically by visiting the location, or by making a DC 5 Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check. If there is specific information that cannot be learned simply by visiting the location, this has been placed into a separate paragraph. The required Gather Information or Knowledge check to learn this information is also noted at the end of the paragraph. If a Knowledge category other than local applies, it is also noted there.

Each description also includes a list of the typical numbers of NPCs present there. In the case of artisans and professionals, this description also includes the appropriate Craft or Profession skill.

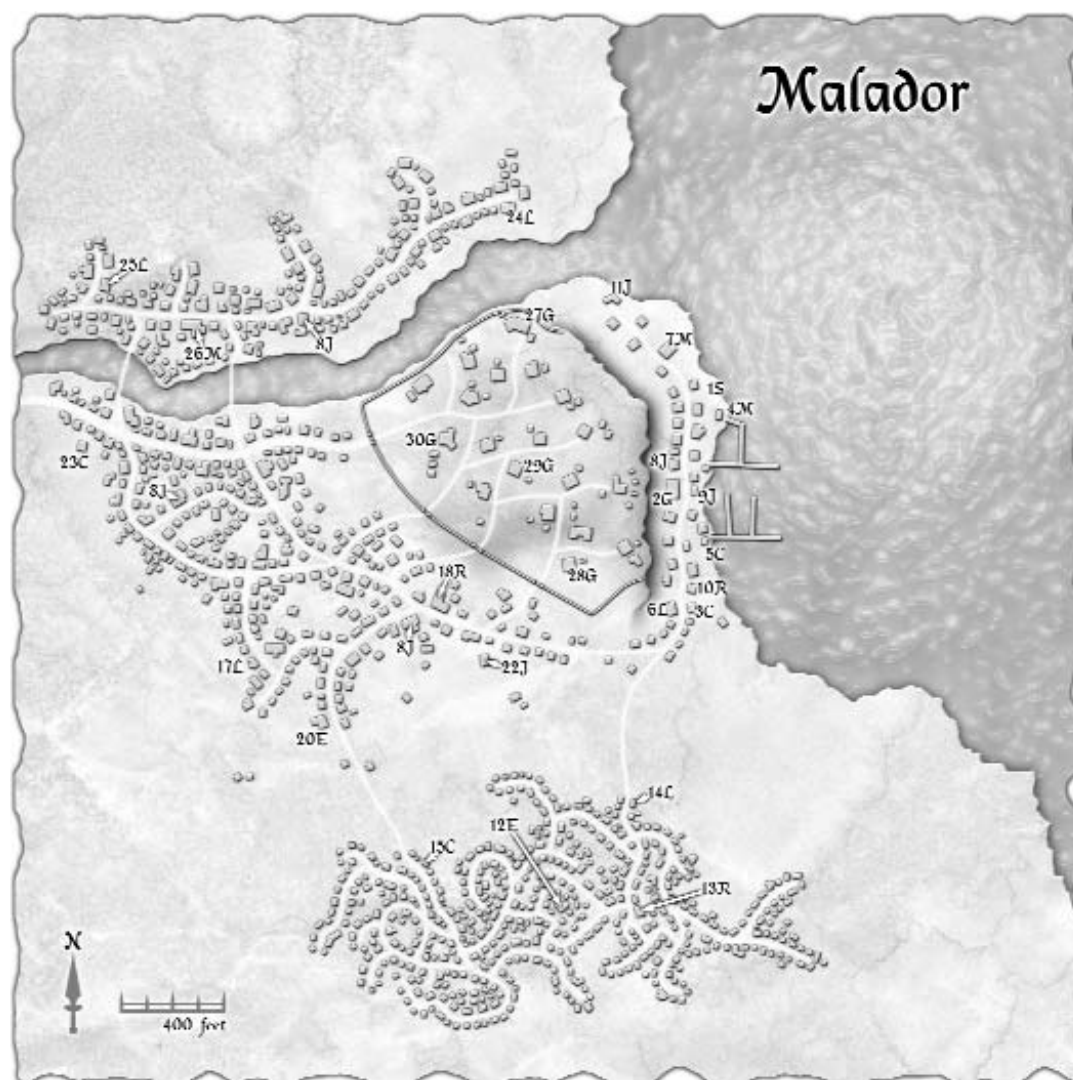
1S. Deluge Memorial

The Deluge Memorial was professionally sculpted from stone, and seems almost to celebrate the coming of the deluge. It depicts a huge wave as it engulfs a small village; yet, emerging from the other side of the wave is a great city, resplendent with towers and banners. The memorial is 12 feet high from its base to the crest of the wave, and nearly 20 feet across. The tallest buildings in the memorial stand some 3 feet high, while the cottages of the swamped village are no more than 6 inches to a side.

This is actually the second such memorial. In the immediate aftermath of the deluge, the people of Malador constructed a memorial for those who had died: a cairn built of stones from the victims’ destroyed homes. The cairn stood for over eighty years until the Council determined to tear it down and replace it with a new memorial. The Council felt that the original memorial lacked grandeur, and had no connection with the majority of Malador’s citizens. (After all, the city had been only a small farming village in those days.) The decision caused a small amount of controversy at the time, but has been forgotten by all but a handful of locals today (DC 15 Knowledge [local or history]).

2G. Excise House

This two-story stone building overlooks the wharves and boatyards of Malador’s Harborside. Broad, flat steps lead up to the front of the building, where double doors open into a large hall. Above the doors is a great bronze shield embossed with the city’s crest: a ship and a tower.



Within the hall is a roped-off queue that wends its way to a series of desks on the far side. Any ship's master entering the harbor must report here with a stamped cargo manifest from the Wharves Office (Location 5C). He must then pay any duties listed on the manifest, after which he is issued a moorage token. This token must then be returned to the Wharves Office as proof that all excise has been paid and that the vessel has official permission to remain in the harbor. The Excise House is open throughout the day and night to process traffic (and to collect taxes).

Characters returning from expeditions to the Drowning Towers must also come to the Excise House in order to get their haul to assessed and be paid for what they've recovered. This is the most likely reason for PCs to come here, and they will find the excise officials brisk and efficient. The officials are well paid and closely monitored to ensure their honesty and integrity—and they know it.

A large flight of stairs (marked "Officials Only" in both Common and Sea Speech) leads up from the hall to offices

on the second story. Officials in these offices collate the paperwork received in the hall and store the collected excise revenue in a series of metal chests. These chests are constantly rotated, with town guards arriving to collect a loaded chest and replace it with an empty one every 2 hours (DC 10 Gather Information).

Every Excise official has a brass handbell concealed under his or her desk. These bells are sufficiently loud to be heard anywhere within the building and up to 50 feet away outside the building. (This allows the town guards in the barracks next door to make a DC 15 Listen check to hear the alarm.)

NPCs: 1d4+2 Excise officials, 1d12 sailors, 1d4 merchants.

3C. Exotic Treasures

Those items recovered from the Drowning Towers need to be sold in order for the Council to profit from the expeditions, and Exotic Treasures is where those sales take place. A

four-story wooden building on the outskirts of the Harborside, the shop is unusual for taking up all four floors of the building and for its brilliant, cobalt blue paintjob and bright yellow signs.

Most of the stock in the store consists of jewelry and works of art recovered from the Masters' towers. These include statues, statuettes, bracelets, necklaces, rings, torcs, circlets, and many other decorative items fashioned from precious materials such as jade, coral, onyx, gold, silver, and other precious stones and metals of all kinds. The store's stock is organized according to its value.

The most common and least expensive items are on the first floor; this the only floor that can be accessed without an appointment. In specific terms, the first floor offers goods valued up to 15 gold pieces; entrance to all other floors is permitted only to those who have made prior arrangements and have convinced the proprietor they have the means to purchase his more valuable goods.

The second-floor items are valued from 15 to 250 gold pieces, and the third-floor items from 250 to 1,000 gold. Items in excess of these amounts, including those rare artifacts that appear to have some kind of enchantment upon them, are stored on the fourth floor. Gaining entrance to the upper floors requires at least 48 hours notice and a demonstration that the applicant has at least as much disposable cash as the minimum cost of an item on that floor.

However, although it is not common knowledge, one can convince the proprietor to waive the appointment requirements. Doing so requires a successful Diplomacy check with a DC of 20 for the second floor, DC 30 for the third floor, and 40 for the fourth floor. Similarly, the 48-hour notice period can be waived with successful Bluff checks, using the same DCs as above (by floor). Both checks are required in order to waive both requirements.

The proprietor of the store is Halgyn Polle (see Appendix), a retired fortune-hunter who in his adventuring days undertook several expeditions to the Drowning Towers. A skilled warrior and also a learned man, Polle enjoys whiling away the hours by relating tales of his adventures to his customers, telling them how the items in his store were recovered. He is always ready to chat to others who have been to the Towers, and to hear their stories in exchange for his own. Despite his glib and hearty nature, however, Polle is sharp-eyed and careful. He keeps a keen eye on anyone in his store.

Development: The PCs might get it into their heads to try to rob this store. This is not a good idea, as the security is notoriously tight. Not only do the town guards keep a close eye on the store, but Polle (who lives in the building) is not your typical store-keep. He is a competent fighter and also a

skilled trainer of animals who owns 4 well-trained guard dogs, one per floor; the upper stories of the building are also protected with several dangerous traps (CR 2 on the second floor, CR 3 on the third, and CR 4 on the fourth). (A DC 20 Gather Information check allows a PC to learn something of Polle's history and accomplishments; his actual ability in a fight and the traps in the building are known only in very vague terms.)

Statistics for Polle and his dogs can be found in the Appendix.

If the heroes visit Exotic Treasures more than four days after returning from the Drowning Towers, they almost certainly see at least some of the items they recovered amongst the shop's stock.

The exact contents of this store have been left for you, the DM, to determine. As noted, most items are simply jewelry and works of art, but the contents of the fourth floor may include any unique item (magical or otherwise) that you desire.

NPCs: Halgyn Polle, 4 guard dogs. In daylight hours, add 1d3 customers (professionals or a specific NPC of your choice).

4M. Malador Boatyards

The boatyards occupy the northern part of the waterfront. There are four dry-docks here where ships can be built, repaired, or overhauled. The dry-docks are almost always occupied, and there are often a number of other vessels waiting to be called in for work.

Owned by Council member Lox Virrenet, the boatyards employ some twenty carpenters, metalworkers, and sail-makers on a more-or-less permanent basis. The exact number and composition of the staff varies according to the work being done. The boatyards are designed to handle the construction, repair, or maintenance of two classes of vessel, with two dry-docks designed for use with each class of vessel.

The boatyard is busy and noisy throughout the daylight hours, with a constant sound of hammering and sawing, as well as frequent shouts and arguments between the crews working on the boats. The workers are kept very busy, and rarely have time to stop and talk. Attempts to Gather Information here suffer a -2 circumstance penalty unless the questions relate to Councilor Virrenet, in which case they do not suffer the penalty and instead receive a +2 circumstance bonus.

NPCs: Head Carpenter Alisha Koter, 2d6+12 artisans (daylight only).

SHIPYARD WARES

Keelboat: These flat-bottomed long ships form the bulk of Malador's fishing fleet, though a few are also built for trading (usually going upriver to Borat), or used for expeditions to the Drowning Towers. The two keelboat docks can hold vessels between 50 and 60 feet in length and 15 to 20 feet wide. Keelboats are slow (about 1 mile per hour) but versatile. They can make sea voyages as well as traveling up rivers, and are equipped with a small number of oars to supplement their single, square sail. They can hold up to 40 tons of cargo.

Building a keelboat takes 8 workers approximately three months, and a new keelboat costs 3,000 gold pieces to purchase. Repairs are commensurately cheaper and faster depending on the extent of the damage the vessel has suffered.

Rowboat: These 8- to 12-foot-long boats are capable of holding two or three passengers. They are powered solely by oars and can attain a top speed of about 1.5 miles per hour. In Malador, they are used primarily for fishing in the Malador River, or for the transport of crew between the shore and vessels moored in the harbor. A rowboat can typically hold perhaps 600 to 650 pounds before taking on water.

Building a rowboat takes two workers approximately 1 week. A new rowboat costs 50 gold pieces to purchase. Repairs are commensurately cheaper and faster depending on the extent of the damage the vessel has suffered.

5C. Malador Wharves & Fish Market

The wharves occupy the southern half of the waterfront. They consist of six long wooden piers, overlooked by an equal number of warehouses. Vessels dock here to unload their cargo and then moor out in the harbor for the remainder of their stay. The wharves are busiest at sundown and sunrise: Depending on whether a boat's occupants are daytime or night fisherfolk, this is when most fishing vessels are either leaving the harbor or arriving at the docks.

Ships' masters must come to the small office in between the warehouses in order to show their moorage tokens after they have paid their excise. If a ship's master fails to produce a moorage token within 24 hours of arriving in the harbor, his or her vessel is subject to being seized. This is a crime of property with a fine equal to three times the amount of excise due on the ship's cargo (to a minimum of 10 gold pieces).

Once a ship is ready to depart the harbor, its master must pay the moorage fees before being issued a pilot's token. Without one of these tokens, no harbor pilot will agree to guide the vessel back out to sea.

The warehouses overlooking the wharves are the site of the

daily Malador Fish Market. This market is thronged with people throughout the day, either buying fresh fish or else busily salting, pickling, or drying yesterday's catch in preparation for the winter. The sheer number of people makes this a good place to hear rumors and to catch up on news; attempts to Gather Information about the Harborside or the Foot gain a +2 circumstance bonus.

NPCs: 3d6 sailors, 2d10 or more customers (any background).

6L. Mast & Mainsail

This three-story wooden building is the only inn on Harborside. There are many taverns in the district, serving various kinds of food and drink, but the Mast & Mainsail is the only one offering nightly accommodation.

Run by retired fisherman Delohan Jex, the inn caters mainly to the occasional passengers who take berths on the trading vessels that travel up and down the Malador River. Delohan doesn't think much of the "inland sailors" who ply the river, if truth be told, but he's more than happy to take their money for food and drink and to provide their passengers with accommodation.



The Mast & Mainsail has four private rooms for hire at 1 gp a night. The rooms are suitable for two guests each, and are plainly furnished but comfortable. The inn also has a common room on the second floor with eight beds. Each of these can be rented for 3 sp a night, and are as good as those in the 2-person rooms—they just don't offer the same privacy.

NPCs: Delohan Jex, 1d6+1 sailors, 1d4–1 other *NPCs* (any background).

7M. Municipal Construction

Municipal Construction has a monopoly on major engineering and architectural projects in the city. If bridge needs to be built or repaired, a new road installed, or a major new city building constructed, Municipal Construction is all but sure to get the work. It is owned by Councilor Atrem Neele, one of the very people who make the decisions as to who will get the city's contracts.

Municipal Construction's facilities on the Harborside are basically just a front office for handling the administrative needs of the company. Apart from two clerks who make appointments and handle the company's billing and payroll requirements, the opulently appointed two-story building is usually empty. A large "office of the president" is located on the second floor, but goes almost entirely unused: the Councilor visits the building for no more than an hour a week.

NPCs: Cara Inneman and Quodis Vah (scribes) during daylight hours only.

8J. Guard Barracks

There are actually four of these buildings in the city: one at the Harborside, right next to the Excise House, and three in the Foot. Each is a single-story stone building with a metal door. A shield hangs from a post at the front of each building, emblazoned with the city's symbol. Bright red banners, matching the color of the guards' tabards, also hang from the post.

Five guardsmen are always on duty at each barracks room, and there are facilities for five more. There are also three cells in each building, with each cell capable of holding up to 8 prisoners comfortably, and twice that if the guards simply shove in as many as will fit.

The PCs are most likely to see the inside of these buildings if they give the guards cause to arrest them. They might also come here to interrogate a prisoner, but if they do so they had best have written authority from the Council to do so, for the guards have little patience with strangers "interfering in their work."

NPCs: There are 5 Malador Guard (4 guardsmen and 1 squad leader), plus 1d6–1 other *NPCs* (generally drunken artisans or workers, or else Beggars' Flow thugs or burglars).

9J. The Stocks

Criminals who cannot pay their fines are brought here for flogging and placement in the stocks. There are two whipping posts where prisoners are manacled for their floggings, and six sets of stocks.

Floggings take place only once a week, immediately after sentencing, but there are 1d4+2 characters in the stocks at any given time. Heroes who visit this area several times over the space of a week or more may see a number of different people chained up. If they come back often enough over a long enough period, they probably recognize some repeat offenders.

There are usually two or more baskets near the stocks containing stones or rotten vegetables. People passing by can stop to throw these at the prisoners if they wish.

For details on the effects of the stocks and of flogging, refer to "Crime & Punishment in Malador" (page 12).

NPCs: 1d8–1 miscellaneous *NPCs* (mainly Beggars' Flow thugs or burglars).

10R. Temple of the Mariner

Prior to the deluge, the people of Malador were not a particularly religious folk, more interested in the here-and-now than the hereafter. Having seen their world completely altered in the blink of an eye, however, some people began taking a lot more interest in questions of religion.

Given the destructive power the sea had demonstrated during the Master's War, and their newfound reliance on it for a large part of their diet, it is no surprise that one of the dominant theologies to emerge in the last hundred years was centered around a nautical deity known as the Ancient Mariner.

Those who follow the Rite of the Ancient Mariner believe that the world was originally entirely ocean, under the lordship of a powerful deity they call the Mariner. However, the Masters raised land out of the waters and sought dominion over it. For thousands of years they succeeded, until the Mariner finally tired of their arrogance and their warring and cast them down into the oceans once more. Followers of the faith believe that only by offering the Mariner their propitiation and reverence prevents him from destroying the land that remains. (DC 15 Knowledge [religion] or Gather Information.)

The temple itself is a large wooden building with a ramshackle appearance. It is built entirely from the “Providence of the Mariner”: driftwood and other materials washed up on shore. The building could plausibly hold a hundred people or more, but there are rarely more than forty at any one service. These services are held every day at high tide, but only priests of the Rite are expected to attend them all. Laity may attend whenever they are able. At each service, the priests implore the Mariner not to engulf the world, and offer him gifts for his forbearance.

Despite the somewhat apocalyptic nature of their religion, the followers of the Rite are generally quite friendly and open with strangers, provided these outsiders are not openly opposed to their beliefs.

NPCs: Head Priest Akros Methelan, plus 1d3 other clergy. During services, add 2d10+30 miscellaneous NPCs (mainly sailors and artisans).

11J. The Yardarm

Located at the mouth of the Malador River, at the end of Harborside Road, the yardarm is a ship’s mast that has been converted into the city’s gallows. Next to the gallows are eight metal gibbets on poles, into which the corpses of executed criminals are placed after being hanged.

Executions are actually fairly rare in Malador (mainly due to the culprits of serious crimes not being captured), but all eight of the gibbets are almost always occupied, even if by wholly skeletal remains. The authorities leave the corpses of executed criminals in place until they have a new candidate to replace the older ones.

NPCs: Unless an execution is being held, there are 1d8–4 macabre NPCs here gawking at the bodies in the gibbets.

During an execution (there is a 40% chance of 1d2 criminals being executed per week), the crowd consists of 5 Malador Guard (4 guardsmen and a squad leader), 2d20 miscellaneous NPCs (any kind), and a hooded executioner (generally a Beggars’ Flow thug who has been hired for the task).

12E. Bloody Banner Arena

Within the Flow, the arena is well known as a site of deadly gladiatorial fights, but rumors are only just beginning to trickle out to the other districts about what goes on here. (DC 20 Knowledge [local] or Gather Information anywhere except in the Flow. This is also true of the paragraphs below.)

This large, ramshackle building lies in the heart of Beggars’ Flow, dominating the area around it. It stands half again as high as the common shanties of the Flow and is unusual because much of it is constructed from earthen bricks and stone. Only the doors and roof are built of the traditional Beggars’ Flow materials: cast-off planks from lumber yards on the outskirts of the city and discarded sails from the harbor.

In addition to its unusual height and construction materials, the arena is distinctive for two other reasons. The first is its girth: roughly circular in shape, it is close to 100 feet in diameter. The second is the series of red banners that hang from the outer walls. There are twenty of these in all, ranging in color from a bright crimson to a dark purplish-red stain.

The Bloody Banner Arena is described in full detail in Chapter 3. The “makeshift structure” option zone (see page 10) does not apply to this building.

NPCs: See Chapter 3.



13R. Cult of the Crimson Path

The Crimson Path is the most secretive and dangerous religion to arise out of the aftermath of the Masters' War. Its adherents believe that it is the nature of all sentient creatures to destroy themselves; the Masters have done it, and now, as the successors to the Masters, it is the turn of humanity. Given that this destruction is inevitable, those who follow the Path take the nihilistic view that they will ultimately cause the least pain and hardship by bringing the end about as swiftly as possible.

Knowing that its presence will not be tolerated if it becomes public knowledge, the cult does everything it can to conceal its activities. Although this nondescript series of shanties is its actual base of operations, it uses the Bloody Banner Arena as a way to give its members an outlet for their destructive impulses and as a source of new recruits, all the while making secret preparations for the destruction of the city.

The above details of this secretive cult and its unsavory plans for the Flow and Malador in general cannot be learned except through the events of Chapter 3, in which the cult plays a major part.

The "makeshift structure" option zone (see page 10) does not apply to this building.

14L. The Rat's Burrow

The Rat's Burrow is unique not just as the only inn within the Beggars' Flow, but as the only inn in Malador whose rooms are underground. This latter feature is a matter of necessity rather than choice; the typical building materials used in the Flow are not suitable for structures as large as an inn needs to be, nor are they safe enough that many would pay for the privilege of staying there. (DC 10 Knowledge [local] or Gather Information.)

The Burrow squats on the edge of the Flow. Above ground, the only things that distinguish it from the other shanties in the area are a rudimentary copper still that sits beneath a canvas awning, and a series of strangled rats that hang from the lip of that awning. (DC 10)

Run by a foul-mouthed ex-bravo everyone calls "Adder" (see appendix), the Burrow offers two products: First, it has a series of six tiny (10-foot-by-5-foot) subterranean rooms, each with a simple straw bed. These rooms can be hired for 5 sp per night—an expensive rate for the amenities, but not for the security that Adder and his two bouncers Talsin and Nurdo offer their guests.

Secondly, it offers a brutally raw alcoholic spirit Adder calls "rat's blood." Though he promises that the titular substance is not an ingredient, he does so with a sly smirk that makes

many of his customers nervous. A mug of rat's blood costs 2 cp. Anyone drinking an entire mug of this substance must make a Fortitude save (DC 5) or become nauseated for 1d4 minutes. Most people are already sufficiently inebriated not to care by that stage, however. (DC 15)

NPCs: "Adder" Arasp and a bouncer (either Talsin or Nurdo; stats as typical Beggars' Flow thugs, but with Strength and Constitution 15+), plus 2d4–2 customers (generally Beggars' Flow thugs or burglars), most of whom are here for the rat's blood.

Tactics: If a fight breaks out, Adder attempts to blind an adversary with a mug of rat's blood and then stab him to death as he tries to clear his eyes. If this is not sufficient to end the fight, he attempts to flank his opponents with the two bouncers he keeps at the Burrow, and makes use of his Tumble skill to make tumbling attacks that might catch his opponents off guard.

Option Zone (rat's blood): One use per mug. A character can dash a mug full of rat's blood into the face of an opponent within 10 feet by making a melee touch attack. If the attack is successful, the target must make a Reflex save (DC 13) or be blinded for 1d4 rounds by the stinging alcohol.

15C. Ulric's Herbarium

All information below requires at least a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check or, if from outside the Flow, Gather Information. Normal Gather Information DCs apply inside the Flow.

The Herbarium is one of only a handful of buildings in Beggars' Flow to possess a second story, though those seeing it for the first time often wonder how it is that the structure remains standing. Its cantilevered walls and crooked design seem like they would blow over in a strong wind, even if they were built from proper materials. Ulric's store is built from the usual cast-offs common to Beggars' Flow, making it even more remarkable.

The Herbarium is also unusual in its simple function. Stores of any kind are rare in the Flow, due to the risk of theft or burglary. Ulric has had few such problems, however—not after the first four people who tried to rob him ended up dead in a rather spectacular fashion. It's rumored in the Flow that worse things happened to those men *after* they died, a rumor Ulric does nothing to deny.

Ulric only opens his business after dark and closes at first light. Although the Herbarium does sell medicinal herbs of all kinds, Ulric also sells poisons he has created through use of his Venom Mastery feats, and many of his customers prefer the cover of darkness. (DC 25)

Ulric conducts his sales on the first floor of the building. He has his living quarters and venom-making tools on the upper story. He keeps his pet viper Anamelle in his quarters, as well as two skeletons, all of whom he can summon to deal with any threats to his own safety.

The “makeshift structure” option zone (see page 10) does not apply to this building.

NPCs: Ulric Blayne, Anamelle (snake, Medium viper), and 2 human skeletons. At night, add 1d6–3 customers (any kind of NPC). See statistics for all of these in the Appendix.

Tactics: If attacked, Ulric immediately summons his skeletal minions and pet snake Anamelle and tries to use them to hold off his attackers while peppering the enemy with eldritch darts. If he gets a chance, he takes actions to generate parry tokens so that he can preempt his opponents’ actions later in the fight. He also makes use of his Intimidate skill to demoralize his opponents (using the “mass intimidate” skill challenge).

16E. Bath House

Overlooking the Malador River as well as the main caravan road from Borat, the Bath House is an impressive stone edifice, bounded on all sides by a deep verandah with a sculpted fence and colonnade. Within, the building features an airy atrium surrounded by ten private rooms, each containing an in-ground bath. Tunnels have been cut into the riverbank to allow water to flow into large copper tanks under the building, where the water is trapped and heated, then passed through to the bathing rooms.

Each private room costs 1 gold piece per hour to rent. This price includes as much hot water and soap as is wanted. Up to four people can share a booking. The bath house is a popular meeting place for lovers and business associates alike, as the staff are circumspect and the noise of the plumbing tends to drown out the sounds of low conversation.

The Bath House is open every day from dawn until midnight.

NPCs: During open hours, there are 5 staff members and 2d6–2 customers. When the place is closed, there is a lone guard (equivalent statistics to a Malador Guard soldier) on duty.

17L. Bell & Whistle

This two-story wooden building is the largest inn in Malador, capable of hosting no less than 110 guests: 90 in the fifteen large private rooms and the remainder in a single large dormitory.

The Bell & Whistle is clean and comfortable, with an efficient, helpful staff. It also has a popular tap room, with several varieties of ale and wine and hot food available in generous portions. The innkeep, Joshana Friel, has been running the business for nearly half of her sixty years. Almost all of the staff are her adult children and their families, and most of them grew up in the building.

Sleeping arrangements in the private (maximum six-person) rooms cost 5 sp per night per bed. Joshana reserves the right to fill empty beds in these rooms with strangers. Groups who want privacy therefore have to pay for any beds they aren’t going to use. Beds in the 20-person dormitory cost 2 sp per night.

NPCs: Joshana Friel, plus 2d4 staff on duty and 10d10 customers (all varieties, including some adventurers).

18R. Covenant of the Return

In the immediate aftermath of the Masters’ War, the Covenant of the Return was a popular theology, but it has diminished as years have gone by without the promised return. (DC 15 Knowledge [religion] or Gather Information.)

According to the precepts of the Covenant of the Return, if the Masters’ War demonstrated anything, it was the immense power of that ancient race: these were clearly beings with powers beyond any mortal’s attainment. Those who follow the Covenant believe that the Masters were deities, or at the very least the personal servants of deities, and they have disappeared from the world not because they were destroyed but because they now battle in the heavens themselves. One day, the Covenant asserts, the Masters will return to judge those mortals they left behind.

The Covenant’s temple is located not far from the boundaries of Clifftop, a symbol of the respect it once held. However, the building is aging and in poor repair, with paint peeling off the wooden window shutters and poorly-patched holes in the roofing, a symbol of its declining fortunes.

Only two priests remain in the Covenant’s clergy, and the congregation has dwindled to only a few dozen people at each weekly service. Anyone talking to the two remaining priests (who live in the back rooms of the temple) quickly gets a sense of their being defeated men. They know their faith is dying, and they don’t know how to renew it.

NPCs: Saldar Bornit and Thogan Manesh (clergy). During weekly services, add 4d12 worshippers (any profession or social class, but mainly older men and women).

19S. Golden Towers

This grandiose (some would say monstrous) piece of statuary overlooks the main caravan road from Borat, located not far from one of the Clifftop gates. A 20-foot-high sculpture of bronzed (supposedly gilded) towers jutting out of a graven sea, the piece was commissioned by the council 30 years ago. This work of art is seen by some as a monument to Malador's wealth, and by others as a hideous eyesore.

NPCs: There are generally 1d6–3 NPCs viewing the Golden Towers with varying degrees of interest. These are almost always people who are new to Malador.

20E. Lost Angel Theater

The Lost Angel Theater is the “Best Show in Town” according to the signs on its front wall. It's also the only show in town. The various inns and taverns might hire a dancer or a minstrel for a few evenings at a time, but none of them offer the varied array of performers that the Lost Angel puts on week after week.

The theater is housed in a large brick and wood building on the outskirts of the city. This was the only location where Alban Relt, the theater's owner, could afford a building large enough to house both the stage and seating for an audience of up to 100 persons. Despite its location, Relt still had to purchase land in a somewhat run-down location, which gives the Lost Angel an ambience of being slightly seedy.

Of course, seediness is a characteristic the Lost Angel would possess even if it were in the most opulent and well-maintained building in Clifftop. It's not just that Alban Relt looks like an oily shyster—which he regrettably does, despite being a fundamentally honest man—but also the theater's line-up of acts. As much as Relt would like to host quality theatrical productions at the Lost Angel, the fact of it is that his attempts to do so have met with total disinterest from the people of Malador. In order to keep the theater financially viable, he's had to hire sub-par acts that draw ticket sales. (DC 15)

At the beginning of **Dark Harbor**, the line-up of acts at the Lost Angel is as follows (DC 10):

- **Serpentia, Queen of Snakes:** A buxom young woman who dances on stage while draped in two constrictor snakes... and very little else;
- **Mad Jordi Konton:** A young man with a seemingly endless repertoire of bawdy songs;
- **The Malador Players:** A distinctively second-rate group of actors who perform short theatrical skits that are either mildly suggestive or outrageously slapstick;

- **The Brothers Maletti:** Two theatrical swordsmen who choreograph mock duels for the stage;

- **The Veil Dancers:** A group of 8 attractive young men and women who dance while wearing only fractionally more clothing than does Serpentia.

This line-up of sex and violence seems quite popular with the folk of the city, including such notables as Councilor Varas Rohdell. If Relt stuck to it and nothing else, he would probably make a tidy sum. However, he regularly sinks his profits into futile attempts to host “real” theatre. (DC 15)

Development: At the beginning of Chapter Four, one of the Brothers Maletti is injured in a performance, so they are replaced by the Twelve Marvels, a troupe of acrobats and fire-eaters. At the beginning of Chapter Five, Mad Jordi Konton goes missing, and is hurriedly replaced by Farouk of the Hidden Lore, a stage magician.

The Lost Angel Theatre is described in further detail in Chapter Five.

NPCs: Alban Relt, plus 2d6 performers (rehearsing) and 1d4 other staff. During performances, all the performers are present as are 5d10+50 customers (various NPCs) and, 75% of the time, Councilor Varas Rohdell.

21L. Malador Arms

The Malador Arms is the most expensive inn in the city. All the rooms here are opulently, if somewhat tastelessly furnished. Equipped with four-poster beds and thick carpets, the rooms are designed for two people to share. Rooms cost 5 gp a night, which includes hot water for the tin bath located in each room.

Unlike the other inns in the city, the Malador Arms is not privately owned, but operated by the city itself. The staff at the inn can be more than a little impersonal, and sometimes even rude toward guests. Slipping them a few silver pieces each night does wonders for their attitude, however. (DC 15)

The Malador Arms is a two-story stone building with a massive crest of the city on each of its walls. It has eighteen rooms available for rent.

NPCs: At any time, there are 2d4+2 staff and 6d6 guests.

22J. Courthouse

This impressive stone building has the crest of Malador emblazoned on its wall, but with the familiar ship and tower overlaid by a pair of giant iron manacles. Most of the time the building goes unused, but once a week Judge Mawen holds court, administering sentences to the criminals brought before her. Sentencing usually takes a matter of only a few hours, making the judge's job one of the easiest and most profitable in the city. It's probably not a surprise that Judge Mawen is related (by marriage) to Councilor Chyra Delorri.

The building is not especially large, despite its fortress-like walls. It contains a single courtroom (designed to hold a maximum of 20 persons), a chamber for the judge, and four holding cells for the criminals who are due to be tried. The judge's chamber and the courtroom are opulently appointed to convey a sense of power and authority (and corruption, according to the more cynical—or astute—of Malador's inhabitants).

NPCs: When court is in session, Judge Arella Mawen, 5 guards (4 guardsmen and 1 squad leader), and 3d6+2 criminals (various, but mainly Beggars' Flow thugs or burglars) are present.

23C. Stockyards

While many people who live in the Foot maintain a few chickens for their eggs and an occasional meal, there is little room within the city itself for larger animals. Instead, creatures such as sheep and cattle are raised in villages outside boundaries of Malador and then shipped to this Stockyard when they are ready for slaughter.

The stockyard contains twenty pens, each 40 feet to a side. Roughly three-quarters of these are given over to sheep, from which mutton is sold to the inhabitants of the Harborside and the Foot; the remainder of the pens contain cattle, whose more tender (and expensive) meat goes mainly to the people of Clifftop.

The stockyard is located on the edge of the city furthest from the ocean, downwind of the city proper.

NPCs: There are generally 1d4+6 stockpersons and handlers here.

24L. The Old Pirate

Proudly proclaiming itself the loudest, crudest, and most boisterous inn in Malador, the Old Pirate is owned by Pesk Dannitch, a retired guard from the floating fortresses near the Drowning Towers. Whereas most of the guards viewed

the adventurers who entered the towers as nothing more than hired mercenaries, Pesk always admired their courage, and when she retired she decided to establish an inn where these often larger-than-life folk would feel at home.

Pesk, a gray-haired but still spry woman in her mid-fifties, adopts a motherly attitude to any adventurers who cross her doorstep. She feeds them hearty meals, warns them about the dangers of the towers, and then sees them off on their dangerous task with a cheery wave. More than one adventurer has wondered if she's entirely sane—before reflecting that he probably isn't the best person to judge...

Pesk has a variety of rooms available, nine in total: three capable of holding one person, three that hold two, and three for four persons. A single-person room costs 4 sp per night, the two-person is 7 sp, and the four-person 12 sp. She also offers a ferry service to the Harborside from a short jetty below her inn. She can ferry two people across at a time, in a round trip taking about 10 minutes. The trip costs 2 cp per person per trip.

NPCs: Pesk Dannitch (as a tower guard, but middle-aged), plus 1d3+2 staff and 2d4+2 customers (usually adventurers).

25L. Sardoc's Tavern

Sardoc's is really just a drinking hole, and a fairly rough and ready one at that. However, while it has no rooms for hire, Sardoc is willing to rent out his tap room floor to those who are desperate. This isn't the most restful of options; characters who take it must make a DC 10 Constitution check or be fatigued the following day due to insufficient rest. However, at 4 cp a night, it *is* cheap.

Sardoc's serves ale and wine at the usual prices, and sometimes offers cheap and greasy food to go along with it. Sardoc himself is a retired dock-hand who chose the location of his bar because it was as far from the Harborside as he could get: after 40 years working on the waterfront, he has no desire to go anywhere near it ever again.

NPCs: Sardoc Warede, plus 1d4 staff and 2d6 customers (any).

26M. Shimth's Foundry

Yrgan Shimth (*male commoner* 5) is a clever man—so clever, in fact, that he's found a way to avoid the Council's excise tax on arms and armor. Shimth stocks only raw materials in his store. His customers can purchase the necessary materials for any weapon or armor they desire and then pay him to craft those materials to their specifications. If those specifications just happen to create a weapon or a suit of armor, well... that's just a coincidence.

Shimth hasn't sold a weapon to date, not since his shop opened: he has "sold" only some raw materials and the use of his skills. Neither of these things is taxed. Understandably, he keeps this technique quiet to prevent the Council from closing the loophole in the laws. (DC 15 Gather Information, but only if the PCs are seeking information about good places to buy weapons or armor.)

The downside of Shimth's technique is the time it takes: he has to construct a weapon or a suit of armor as it is required. For normal weapons, that's not usually much of an issue (assuming that he doesn't have other jobs to do), but for top-quality goods such as heavy armor or masterwork weapons, the process can take weeks or even months. As a consequence, Shimth also keeps apprentices working 'round the clock for those customers who don't want to wait.

Other than the clever techniques of its owner, Shimth's Foundry is a fairly typical smithy, a squat brick building filled with heat and smoke and the clanging of metal on metal.

NPCs: Yrgan Shimth, plus 1d3 apprentices. During daylight hours, add 1d2 apprentices and 1d6–4 customers (usually adventurers).

27G. Council Hall

Located at the highest point of the Clifftop region ("So they can look down on *everyone*," according to popular wisdom...), the Council Hall is as much a monument as a government building. Standing a square 60 feet to a side, it towers an impressive four stories into the air with a capacious attic above that. The walls are basalt, purchased at great expense, while the roof is constructed of slate tiles. A gigantic depiction of the city's emblem, over 20 feet across, is set into the front wall over a pair of bronze double doors.

Anyone entering the hall finds herself in a marble-tiled lobby with a ceiling two stories high. Elegant, sweeping staircases lead up to a series of offices on the second floor, as well as the grand staircase to the meeting hall on the third story. There are also numerous offices surrounding the lobby on the first floor.

Visitors are immediately interrogated by a group of guards as to their purpose at the building, and directed either to their appointment (if they have one) or to the exit (if they do not). Those who ask how they can make an appointment are grudgingly directed to a desk on the far side of the lobby. There, two officials take requests for appointments. Depending on whom they want to see, visitors can expect to wait 1d4+1 hours (for a public servant) or 2d4 days (for a Councilor, assuming one agrees to meet the visitor at all).

The Council's meeting chamber dominates the third floor of the building. It has mahogany-paneled walls, thick carpets, and a massive oak table surrounded by large leather-upholstered chairs. Oil paintings of previous Councilors look down from the walls, while a huge window in one wall provides a view of the ocean. A drink cabinet, filled with expensive spirits in crystal decanters, sits against one wall. The Council meets here three times a week to discuss city affairs. (DC 15)

The fourth floor of the building contains a private office for each of the seven Councilors. Only the Councilors themselves have keys to these rooms, each of which has a lock of exceptional quality (Open Lock DC 30) and a sturdy door (Burst DC 23). (DC 20)

The attic space of the building is used for filing the copious paperwork generated by Malador's government. Some of the books and scrolls stored here have not been opened since they were first penned fifty years ago. (DC 15)

Your PCs almost certainly have cause to visit the Council Hall during Chapter Five.

NPCs: There are always 5 Clifftop Guards (4 soldiers and 1 squad leader) posted here without horses. During daylight hours, 1d4 Councilors are normally present (or all seven if a meeting is in progress), as well as 2d4+12 city officials.

28G. Councilor Rohdell's Home

Councilor Rohdell's home is an object lesson in excess. It has floors of marble and rare hardwood, vaulted ceilings adorned with murals and supported by pillars of engraved stone, works of art on all the walls, and substantial gardens carefully tended by servants. Even the carriage house, located in the north-west corner of the grounds, is larger and more luxurious than most homes in the Foot. Everything about the estate, which is bounded by a 10-foot-high stone wall set with two wrought iron gates, is designed to show the wealth and power of its owner.

Councilor Rohdell's home is described in detail in Chapter Five. It can be used as a template for the homes of other Councilors should the PCs ever visit them.

NPCs: Councilor Rohdell is 50% likely to be here during daylight hours, and 85% likely at night. He has 4 staff (detailed in Chapter Five), all but one of whom live on the estate.

29G. General Juthe's Mansion

As the adventure progresses and the King of Borat announces his intention to send an official envoy to Malador, there is considerable controversy as to where the Borati rep-

representative should be housed. The people of Clifftop are far from happy about having the envoy—whom they see as a representative of a hostile foreign power—living amidst them. Some on the Council argue that, since the King has chosen to send an envoy, it is the King’s responsibility to arrange housing. This stance is opposed by those who wish to avoid any potential insult to the ambassador: If Borat is hostile, they argue, it is vital not to give the King a pretext for hostilities. In the end, prudence wins out, and the Oramo House (empty since the last of that family married into the Delorris) is made available to the ambassador. (See Chapter 2; DC 15 Knowledge [nobility & royalty] or Gather Information.)

The Oramo House is one of the smaller homes in the district, the family having never been amongst the city’s true leading lights. More than one Clifftop local takes some small pleasure from the relative impecuniosity of the Borati envoy’s accommodations. Of course, what the people of Clifftop consider “impecuniosity” is still the lap of luxury by most other standards. (DC 20)

The Oramo House technically belongs to Chyra Delorri (refer to “Leaders of Malador,” below), and may be visited by the heroes during Chapter Five.

NPCs: After the arrival of General Juthe in Malador (see Chapter 2), he is 50% likely to be here during the day and is always here after dark. He is accompanied by 6 elite Borati soldiers (statistics equivalent to those of a squad leader from the Clifftop Guard). In addition, Malador’s Council has provided him with a maidservant named Cassia Loth and a manservant called Hekar Bilthone. General Juthe assumes (quite rightly) that these two are spies in the pay of the Council, but neither he nor the Council suspects that Bilthone is also an agent for the Crimson Path.

30S. Malador Fountain

Constructed in the midst of Clifftop at tremendous expense, including the construction of an underground channel bringing water from the river, the Malador Fountain is notable not only for its great ugliness (constructed of pink marble, it is a truly hideous edifice), but also for the fact that it’s never actually worked. According to the design, the flow of water through the underground channel was supposed to power the mechanical pumps that would lift the water up 95 feet to the fountain above. Unfortunately, the pumps simply weren’t capable of lifting that much water that far, and in the 18 years since it was installed, not a single drop of water has sprayed from any of the fountain’s many apertures.

NPCs: It is rare for anyone to linger here. The only reason the Council hasn’t torn the fountain down is that then they would have to admit it was a failure. Instead, it is permanently listed as “requiring renovation.”

Leaders of Malador

The following section provides biographies of four important NPCs in Malador. These characters play important and recurring roles in the central plot of **Dark Harbor**. The heroes hear the names of these people several times during the course of the adventure, and have passing encounters with each of them early enough that the PCs should quickly (i.e., well before the climactic events in which all four play a central role) become aware of their importance within the city.

Most of the information presented in these location descriptions is reasonably common knowledge in Malador: Generally, this information can be uncovered by making a successful DC 10 Gather Information or Knowledge (nobility & royalty) check. If there is specific information that requires a higher DC, this fact is noted in a separate paragraph. (If a Knowledge type other than nobility & royalty applies, it is also noted.) Information in the “Roleplaying Tips” section of each NPC description is *never* discoverable via skill checks.

Statistics for these characters can be found in the appendix.

Councilor Chyra Delorri

The only daughter of Brotus and Nydia Oramo, Chyra was the last of her family. An extremely attractive young woman, she caught the eye of Rellam Delorri, a man twenty years her elder and on the cusp of becoming a member of the Malador Council. The two were soon married and Chyra left her family home (which became empty when her parents died) to join her husband’s household.

For the next four years, the new Councilor and his young trophy wife were the center of the Clifftop social scene. Rellam’s political acumen combined with Chyra’s natural poise forged success for them both, and they appeared a happy, contented couple. They had a young son, named Brotus after his maternal grandfather, and were talking of further children when Rellam was murdered by one of his own guards.

The assassin was a young man, apparently driven to an insane rage by his infatuation for his master’s beautiful wife. Dozens of rambling love letters to her were found in his quarters, letters he apparently never sent. There were whispers at the time that perhaps the young woman had led the guard on, but such rumors were never given serious investigation, and the killer was himself slain while trying to flee the murder scene. (DC 20 Knowledge [local] or Gather Information; DC 25 Knowledge [history, nobility & royalty])



[DM's Note: Delorri's complicity in her husband's death has deliberately been left vague. That she is capable of having someone murdered is not in doubt, as the events of Chapter Five demonstrate, but it has been left to you to decide whether or not she encouraged the guard to become a killer should your players investigate that possibility.]

After her husband's untimely death, Delorri announced her intention to stand for his seat on the Council. Most assumed the young widow had no chance of success, but they had not reckoned for her judicious use of bribes and the way she played on the sympathy engendered by her recent bereavement. She won the position, and in the twenty years since then has gone on to become a leading member of the Council. Now in her mid-forties, Delorri has not re-married, nor shown any interest in so doing, even though she has not lacked for suitors. Her focus appears to be entirely upon her

work in the Council, and in building both her wealth and power to the utmost extent possible.

Delorri is generally considered to be both one of the most hardworking Councilors, and also one of the most corrupt. Under her leadership, the Delorri family has won majority control of the Excise House, as well as four of the fortress rafts at the Drowning Towers. The income from these interests, as well as from various properties in the city which they rent out, makes the Delorris one of the wealthiest families in the city. (DC 15)

Currently, Delorri leads the "Sea Captain" faction within the Council. Named for the nautical interests of its three constituent members, this faction regards Borat as a hostile power seeking to take control of Malador for its own purposes and profit. The Sea Captains warn that any kind of union with Borat will result in increased taxation to pay for Borat's army, an end to private expeditions to the Drowning Towers, and many other measures designed to increase the power and prestige of Borat, all at Malador's expense. Of course, while they do not say so publicly, their most important objection to Borati rule is their belief that it will lead to a serious decline in their own personal power and wealth. (DC 15)

Roleplaying Tips: Chyra is a consummate politician, capable of appearing compassionate while acting on entirely selfish principles. She is expert at manipulating others for her own needs, and she is utterly ruthless in pursuing what she desires. Her entire focus is on accumulating power and wealth, both for herself and as a legacy for her son. She has no compunctions about selling out her allies if she needs to, nor any shame about how she does so. The only stratagem she never employs is sexuality.

General Maxxen Juthe, Borati Envoy

General Juthe has come to the city to present King Darragan's proposal of a union between his realm and Malador (see "King Darragan's Proposal" on page 28). He is a veteran of the Borati military who has participated in several of Darragan's campaigns to expand his territory. A career soldier, he is known to have come up from the ranks and has only recently been promoted to the upper echelons of Borati society. Now in his mid-fifties, he is a balding, weathered-looking man with a gray beard. He wears a dress uniform whenever he is out in public, including a decorative but functional sword.

As a military commander, Juthe demonstrated subtlety and skill in his battle plans. In person, however, he is known to be direct and pragmatic, with little patience for those who dissemble or flatter to get their way. He tends to be brusquely formal in his conversation, every inch the military man.

The only crack in this stern façade is Juthe's doting affection for Borxus, his dog. This vile little animal is almost hairless, with a squashed-in face and the prima-donna temperament of a thoroughly spoilt pet. (DC 15)

Juthe's arrival as envoy to Malador caused a considerable stir in the city. Rumor has it that all the negotiations he has ever been involved with in the past have been with defeated opponents, and his resolutely military demeanor is seen as a not-so-subtle reminder to Malador that Borat possesses a vastly larger, more experienced, and better organized military than Malador. Some have gone so far as to say that if King Darragan really meant to negotiate with Malador, he would have sent a diplomat, not a soldier. (DC 15; local or history)

Roleplaying Tips: Juthe is a former common soldier whose uncommon courage and tactical skills raised him to a role in which he is not really comfortable. His brusque military correctness conceals his genuine concern that he is not the best man to negotiate with the Malador Council, whom he sees as a vicious pack of liars, cheats, and sycophants. Given his choice, he'd rather march on Malador and crush whatever resistance he'd face. However, his liege sees things differently, and Juthe is doing his best to adapt to the task he has been given.

Councilor Varas Rohdell

Varas Rohdell is an obese, self-indulgent libertine of some 45 years, notorious throughout the city for his debauchery and licentiousness. In a city like Malador, such notoriety is not easily earned. Rohdell is the last member of his family, or at least the last legitimate member—there is no telling how many illegitimate children he has fathered and abandoned.

Some have wondered how, even in Malador, such a thoroughly reprehensible person became a Councilor. The answer is simple: extravagant bribery. Varas bought his way into office 10 years ago, using a liberal portion of the massive fortune his family had accumulated. The Rohdells own large swathes of the Harborside, and have somehow gained almost total control of the lumber industry. Given the vital importance of lumber to Malador's building and ship construction industries, this has been very lucrative for them. (DC 15)

Ever since his election, Rohdell has been a thorn in the side of the other Councilors. He votes erratically, more or less according to his whim. He even has the gall to vote against a motion after accepting a perfectly good bribe to vote for it, or vice versa. Despite his unreliability, however, few feel they can afford to cross him. As the Council becomes increasingly polarized between the Unionist and Sea Captain factions, Rohdell's influence and importance has grown. He

is the deciding vote between two opposed camps, and such a powerful position would engender corruption in characters far more ethical than he. However much his fellow Councilors dislike it, they must endeavor to keep Rohdell's favor. (DC 20)

Rohdell is known to exert only the bare minimum of effort on his role as a Councilor. He attends the thrice-weekly meetings of the entire Council, but does not otherwise venture to the Council Hall, preferring to spend his time on his own entertainment and leisure. He is known to be a regular patron at the Lost Angel Theatre. (DC 20)

Roleplaying Tips: Should the PCs encounter Rohdell before his untimely death in Chapter Five, it should immediately be clear to them that he is a reprehensible individual. Unless they have something to offer him (money, narcotics, or an attractive woman), he has no interest in them or anything they have to say. He is crass and rude, his fine clothes often fouled with scraps of food or the stink of having been worn for several days.

Councilor Toban Wellaw

Toban Wellaw is a tall, austere man in his early 50s. Silver-haired and long-nosed, he is every inch the regal patrician, overlooking the city with a stern but fatherly eye. At least, that's the image he wants people to have. Despite his considerable political acumen, there is an air of rigidity and condescension in his personality that often undermines his efforts. People are willing to work with him because they know he gets things done, but they rarely like and respect him the way he wants them to. (DC 15)

Wellaw is one of the most prominent Councilors, as well as the leader of the Unionist faction, a group within the Council that favors closer relations with Borat. King Darragan has paid handsomely for Wellaw to take this position, and unlike some of his compatriots, Wellaw has at least enough integrity to stay bought. The fact that Wellaw and the others have taken bribes from Borat is universally assumed by the people of Malador, but few can work up any great outrage over the fact. They know that the Sea Captains oppose union with Borat for reasons just as selfish and mercenary.

The Wellaw family can trace their ancestors back to the original village. They were farmers of the land then, and they remain connected to the land now. They own large portions of the Foot, Toban's grandfather Ilthan having been the civic designer of that district and architect of many of the buildings there. The company Ilthan founded, Municipal Construction, has since been sold to the Neele family, but the Wellaws continue to receive a portion of the profits as well as substantial income from rents.

Toban attempts to live in a manner that befits his self-image as a patrician of the city. He is a faithful husband and has been a caring (if somewhat distant) father to his three children. Like his rival Delorri, he is one of the hardest-working Councilors.

Wellaw dislikes lacking control over a situation. It does not match his image of himself as a symbol of authority and leadership. The current political situation is practically his

Other Councilors

Councilors Wellaw, Rohdell, and Delorri are the most important members of the Malador Council, both in terms of political power and in terms of their role in **Dark Harbor**, but your PCs are likely to ask questions about the other four councilors as well. Here are brief details of each of the four. Unless otherwise specified, the information below can be uncovered with a DC 15 Knowledge (nobility & royalty) or Gather Information check.

Councilor Shelith Arco: Arco is a slender, dark-skinned woman in her early 50s, with spiky white hair and a scar on her cheek that pulls the right side of her mouth upward in a permanent sneer. She got the scar during an expedition to the Drowned Towers as a young woman. Embittered by the results of her misguided adventure, she has a hostile attitude toward those who successfully enter the Towers on the Council's behalf. Arco is a member of the Sea Captain faction. Together with Delorri, Arco controls the Excise House and commands the personal loyalty of the guards on two of the defense rafts at the Drowning Towers.

Councilor Atrem Neele: A squat, barrel-chested man in his late 40s, Neele has close-cropped gray hair and a broad, weather-seamed face. He walks with a slightly rolling gait, reminiscent of someone who has spent many years at sea, but actually the result of a bad case of hemorrhoids (discoverable with a DC 25 Gather Information check). Neele has a brusque manner and a tendency to pace as he talks. He is a member of Wellaw's Unionist faction. His Municipal Construction company employs the best architects and engineers in the city, and "wins" most of the city's improvement contracts.

Councilor Lox Virrenet: A near-sighted septuagenarian with only wispy white tufts of hair on his head, a councilor for more than 30 years, Virrenet is a member of the Sea Captain faction. He often appears vague and confused, but this is simply because his hearing is poor and he often misses parts of the conversation. He owns the boatyards and controls the income from mooring licenses in the harbor. His loyalty to Delorri's faction stems from an innate fear of change.

Councilor Reyna Yoth: At 38 years of age, Yoth is the youngest of the Councilors. She has served on the Council for only eighteen months and was the surprise winner of the last election. Although her family is one of the oldest and richest in the city, she was considered too young and green a candidate by most of her kin, and did not have their support. How she managed to buy enough votes to win the seat is unknown, but those with an ear to the ground (Gather Information DC 25) say that all evidence points to Councilor Wellaw. Certainly, this would explain her loyalty to the Unionist faction. Yoth and her family make their money as landholders: they own dozens of buildings in the Harborside, which they rent out to merchants.

worst nightmare: a major political decision where the deciding vote lies in the hands of the volatile and self-indulgent Varas Rohdell. As the events of **Dark Harbor** progress, this situation weighs more and more on his mind, and he becomes steadily more arrogant and condescending in an attempt to conceal his concerns. (DC 30, and only by using Diplomacy on Wellaw himself to get him to open up.)

Roleplaying Tips: Wellaw is meticulously formal, verging on prim and proper. He has a permanent trace of disdain in his voice when talking to anyone who is not in his inner circle of friends, a trace of which he is entirely unaware. He holds himself in a very straight posture and tilts his head back slightly when talking, giving an impression that he smells something mildly offensive. He's never outright rude, but it's clear that he doesn't really consider most people to be on his level.

King Darragan's Proposal

Local lore has it that King Darragan stands fully 7 feet tall and has the strength of a giant. While this is a colorful exaggeration, Darragan's prowess as a warrior and general is quite genuine. He has forged his kingdom at the head of an army, cowing other nations and settlements into obedience or conquering them if they choose to resist.

Despite his success in achieving control, it is yet to be seen if the King can maintain it. Many inhabitants of the region feel no attachment to the nation of Borat. They are loyal to their family, their neighbors or, at most, their home settlement. Those who feel loyalty to a "country" imposed on them by outsiders are rare to the point of non-existence. It's true that there are equally few who are willing to risk their lives to oppose Borat's authority, but it takes more than a lack of opposition to sustain a nation: it needs officials to implement and maintain the laws, workers to build the roads and buildings, and troops to protect them all. Most of all, it needs money to pay for all these people.

King Darragan has learned this lesson, and he needs more gold for his treasury—a great deal more gold. And on the New Coast, the one name associated with gold is Malador. Unless Borat can get access to some of the wealth that flows through Malador, his nascent nation will remain financially crippled for years, with an ever-increasing risk of collapse.

At a minimum, the King needs a steady flow of gold from the city: a permanent (and extensive) trade treaty, or an "alliance" where Borat promises military protection to Malador in exchange for a regular payment of gold. However, while either of these options should cover the King's needs if they were fairly negotiated and honestly administered, Darragan knows better than to expect such behavior from Malador's Council without at least the threat of reprisals to keep them in line.

The King's strategy is thus to send an envoy to the Council, proposing a union of the two states. Under the proposal, Darragan becomes regent over Malador, with ultimate control of the city's revenues. The Council becomes a subordinate organization responsible for the administration of the city, with its members paid only a fixed amount per year (rather than the open avenues of graft they currently enjoy).

Naturally, all things being equal, the Council would not agree to such a proposal, but the King has used two strategies to tilt the deck in his favor. First, he's paid substantial bribes to the four Councilors he believes might be persuaded to vote in his favor (the three members of the Unionist faction and the wild card Varas Rohdell). Second, he's picked one of his most successful generals as his envoy; this is a pointed reminder to the Council of Borat's military power, and of the possible methods the King might "be forced to employ" if his proposal is refused.

CHAPTER TWO: SECRETS OF THE HARBORSIDE

During the course of this chapter, the PCs should go on their first expedition to the Drowning Towers (whether they go on any more is up to them); they also witness the arrival of General Juthe in Malador and begin to learn about the political situation in Malador.

A party of four heroes should earn enough experience to progress to 2nd level by the end of this chapter.

Welcome to Malador

Your players may already have developed reasons for their characters to travel to Malador, but if any of them need assistance with this element of their background, here are some suggestions:

- A character may have come to Malador in order to brave the Drowning Towers; perhaps simply in search of fame or fortune, testing his or her abilities against the Towers' renowned dangers and winning gold and glory as a result; or to recover a specific artifact, either for him- or herself or on behalf of a mentor or master (which would mean smuggling it past the city's officials).
- Malador is a center of trade, and a character may have come here with the purpose of buying a rare and specific item.
- Many people can see that there is potential trouble brewing between Malador and Borat. Mercenaries are flocking to one city or the other in expectation of a busy season of warfare and plunder ahead.

At the outset of **Dark Harbor**, the King's envoy is just about to arrive in Malador. Over the next two months, he and the Councilors debate and negotiate over the particulars of the proposed union, prior to a final, binding Council vote as to whether to proceed. Fairly early in the process, it becomes clear that three Councilors (the Unionists) are solidly behind the proposal; likewise, three (the Sea Captains) are resolutely opposed; and one (Varas Rohdell) holds the balance of power in his hands. As time ticks down toward the final vote and it becomes increasingly clear that Rohdell will not commit to either side until the last moment, tensions arise on both sides: tensions that culminate in Chapter Five, with both Delorri and Wellaw ordering their agents to assassinate Rohdell.

Word on the Street

Rumors are a fact of life in Malador, as in any community: Everyone knows someone who's heard something meaningful to someone else. Here are five tales commonly repeated on the streets during the time in which this chapter takes place. They can be dropped into conversations by NPCs, or can be used as additional tidbits of news gained from a Gather Information check.

"There's some kind of gladiatorial arena down in Beggars' Flow. Apparently just killing each other wasn't good enough for those people—now they do it for entertainment!" (*True.*)

"This whole thing with the Borati Envoy is a trick: King Darragan's not interested in a treaty, he's just looking for an excuse to go to war." (*Mostly false.*)

"This whole thing with the Borati Envoy is a trick: The Council's just trying to scare us so we won't complain about their tax hikes." (*Entirely false.*)

"I heard the last group to come back from the Towers brought a mechanical man with them, and now he's working at Exotic Dreams!" (*Partly false.* The last group fought a construct and brought back its inert remains, which are now available for sale at the Exotic Dreams shop.)

"Watch out for the kids around Harborside. There's a gang of them'll pinch your belt pouch as soon as look at you." (*True, but relevant only if you wish to use it.*)

Naturally, you are free to add or change entries on this list to fit your campaign. There are many other snippets of information about locations and NPCs that the heroes might pick up instead, for example.

Hooking the Heroes

The heroes, newly arrived in Malador, are all on the same stretch of street when a squad of Town Guard arrives and begins checking for weapon licenses. The PCs may all be in the area due to happenstance, or because they were already traveling companions before arriving in Malador, as appropriate to the character backgrounds. In either case, they are informed by the squad leader—a solid-looking, respectful woman called Belia—that they must purchase a license (2 gp per week, plus an initial 1-gp administrative charge) or join the city militia if they wish to bear arms and armor in Malador; otherwise, she is required to arrest them.

As she explains this, Squad Leader Belia asks whether the characters are new in town, and if they plan to try their luck at the Drowning Towers. If the heroes answer in the affirmative to the first, and at least seem interested in the second, she informs them, discreetly, that they can receive their licenses free of charge provided they agree to go to the Excise House and speak to a clerk named Tremance.

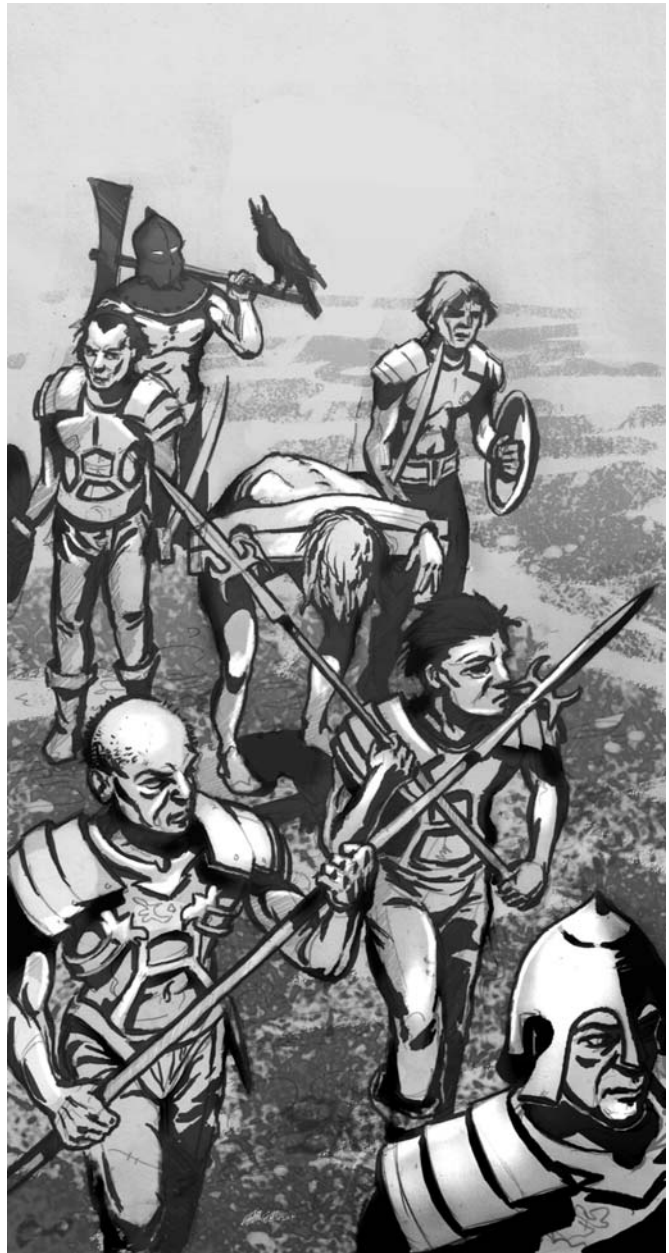
Chapter Two Event Encounters

Below are three short encounters that can occur at any time during Chapter 2 when the heroes are on the streets of Malador. Slot them in whenever an appropriate opportunity arises. In each case, the heroes have little to do within the scene except be there to observe it. The function of these encounters is simply to make the PCs aware of some of the current events and cultural practices of the city.

1. The Envoy Arrives: A large burgundy carriage, drawn by a team of 6 black horses, clatters down the center of the street. Riding behind it come a squad of mail-clad soldiers, grim-faced veterans by their looks. Both the riders and the carriage bear the emblem of Borat (DC 5 Knowledge [nobility & royalty]). Within the carriage is a stern-looking man in his mid-50s, bald and dressed in a fine uniform. As the carriage continues out of sight, passers-by exchange a few speculative words to the effect that the Borati Envoy has arrived, and that this should cause a stir up at Council Hall. Some seem pleased by the idea; others are nervous.

2. The Lost Angel Crier: A hired crier passes the characters on the street, ringing a bell and exclaiming loudly regarding the “many wonders and marvels” to be seen at the Lost Angel Theater this very night.

3. Dead Man Walking: Some time when the characters are at the Harborside, an execution procession passes by. This consists of 5 guards, an executioner, and the man to be hanged, as well as several curious onlookers in search of a spectacle.



Tremance's Offer

Although a relative newcomer to the Excise House, Tremance, a lawyer, is no fool; he's noticed that the treasure manifests of certain expeditions to the Towers do not quite match the actual goods recovered. This happens from time to time due to clerical error, of course, and in all cases the actual amount of the treasure items has been accurate; it has just been mislabeled on the documentation. Most people would think nothing of this, but Tremance has noticed that it happens regularly with expeditions using one particular boat. In fact, it is happening with almost every voyage that uses this vessel.

Tremance isn't sure how, but he is sure that the boat's owner is getting away with something underhanded. Accordingly, he wants a group of first-time Tower explorers, men and women he knows can't already be in on the scam, to take the next trip out on the boat and see if they can work out what the captain is up to. If they do, Tremance promises he'll make sure his superiors—and through them the City Council—know of the heroes' efforts. He can't promise what reward might be given for their help, but he assures them that being favorably known to the Council can only profit them all. (He clearly includes himself in this statement, making it evident that he believes what he says.) Assuming the PCs agree to Tremance's proposal, he wishes them luck and gives them the name of the boat owner: Covis.

Tremance's last piece of advice is for the characters not to take matters into their own hands; he is not authorized to have them do anything further. They should simply work out what Covis is up to and report back. The proper authorities can then deal with the man and ensure he receives the appropriate punishment.

If the players turn Tremance down, they miss out on the potential rewards of putting an end to Covis's scheme, and they do not receive weapon licenses for free. They can, however, still go to the Drowning Towers, so much of the remainder of this chapter remains useable. They might even try to find Covis to try to get involved with his scheme!

To the Drowning Towers

When the heroes are ready to go to the Drowning Towers, they need to make their way to the Wharves Office and register their interest. They are given a list of boat owners who are authorized to travel to the Towers, and instructed to make arrangements for transport with whoever of those is available. There are four such owners currently in harbor: Dereol Philten, Covis Elassy, Leyra Nowell, and Stamett Ruun.

Any of the four can take the heroes to the Towers, a voyage of approximately 24 hours in each direction. All except Covis can be ready to leave the next morning. He says he needs an extra day to give his crew some shore leave, but offers a discounted price for the journey to make up for it: instead of the going rate of 5 gp per person, he'll do it for 4 gp per person.

Whomever the heroes choose, they have some time to themselves in the city before setting out. This could be a good opportunity to run one of the Chapter Two Event Encounters (see sidebar), if you desire.

The actual voyage to the Towers is uneventful. The characters have time to get to know the master of their vessel, if

they so choose. Assuming this is Covis (as the rest of this chapter does), he is friendly enough, though he doesn't usually talk much about himself. Only dedicated effort and good Diplomacy checks on the part of the heroes convince him to discuss anything more than his knowledge of the Towers (he knows everything listed about them in the Introduction of this module), and the fact that he has been taking explorers out to them for nearly a year.

Covis's Scheme

Goods have been successfully smuggled out of the Drowning Towers before. The problem is this: expeditions that conceal part of their takings quickly become evident, for they consistently bring back less treasure than other groups. Covis is the first to hit on a plan that allows him to smuggle goods without reducing the overall take of his vessel's journeys.

Covis is in contact with a group of thieves in the city. Before he sets out to the Drowning Towers, he contacts this group and arranges for them to give him a satchel of items too difficult to fence through normal channels. This requires an extra day or so once he has been commissioned to sail someone out to the Towers.

During the night, while his vessel is sailing out to the towers, Covis has one of his trusted men slip overboard without being observed and tie the satchel to the hull of the ship, a relatively easy task due to the darkness and the size of the vessel. The only hint of what has occurred is that, after the satchel is attached to the hull, there is a slight sluggishness to the handling of the boat, as if he hadn't cleared the hull of barnacles in a long time. Noticing this sluggishness requires a DC 20 Profession (sailor) check. Concealing the satchel in this way prevents its being found and inventoried by the tower guards when the vessel reaches the Drowning Towers.

During the night on the return journey to Malador, Covis has the satchel recovered. He then swaps the items in the satchel for the most similar items that the heroes have recovered. The guards' written description of goods recovered (e.g., "one golden drinking vessel") thus approximately matches those of the goods handed in upon his return, and no one is the wiser that Covis has a satchel full of items he can now sell back in Malador.

At least, that's how it is supposed to work.

Catching Covis

In order to succeed at the task that Tremance has set them, the heroes need to work out what Covis is up to. Below are some options for doing this. Your players may come up with others.

Bribery or Intimidation: Most of the ship's crew have some idea of what Covis is up to, but he pays them well not to "notice" anything they shouldn't. They also know that, as accessories to his crimes, they have a lot to lose if Covis is found out. Still, if the heroes can talk to one of the crew alone, they might be able to learn something: Diplomacy or Intimidate DC 25+, but reduced by offers of money, amnesty against punishment, or physical violence.

Watchfulness: If one or more PCs stay awake at night to keep an eye on things, they might spot the sailor when he hides or retrieves the satchel (Spot DC 20), or they may see Covis exchange the goods in the chests (Spot DC 5, but he will only do this if he believes all the heroes to be asleep, which, if not the case, requires a Bluff check against his Sense Motive).

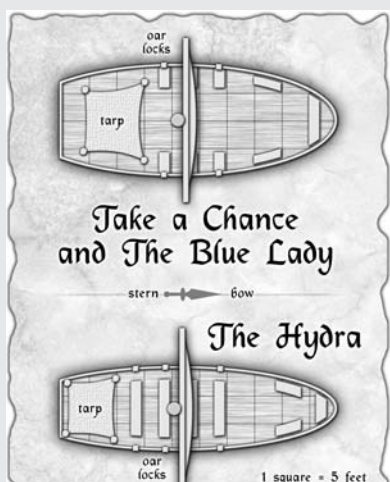
Trailing Covis: If the heroes follow Covis around the city, either before or after the voyage to the Towers, they can see him meet his associates. This requires Hide checks against his Spot, and may lead to the heroes into some dangerous parts of the city.

The Fortress Rafts

Not long after the Towers themselves come in sight, shortly after dawn on the second day of the journey, the heroes spot the Fortress Rafts. There are six of these floating defenses anchored around the Towers. Each is some 40 feet to a side and garrisoned by 15 Tower guards (see appendix). Each is also equipped with a light mangonel, a three-man siege engine that can hurl a 50-pound rock or a barrel of oil up to 1,500 feet, wreaking havoc on any vessel it strikes.

Covis pulls his boat up alongside one of the rafts and a group of three Tower guards comes aboard to inventory every item on the vessel. They repeat this process when the boat leaves the Towers; any new items are considered to be plunder from the expedition, subject to seizure at the Malador wharves (in exchange for one-half of their assessed value, of course).

The Tower guards are very efficient about their task, and do not stop for conversation. They are very firm about searching every inch of the vessel, and all characters aboard it, but they do not send divers down to check the hull, a flaw in their security which Covis has been exploiting for some time.



The Take A Chance

Covis's vessel is a 50-foot keelboat called the *Take A Chance*. It has a crew of 10 (including Covis), a single sail, and rowing positions for up to six oarsmen if becalmed. There is no deck or hold: it's simply an open vessel (similar to a Viking longboat). There is a tarpaulin spread out over some poles at the stern of the vessel, where cargo or passengers can get shelter from the sun or rain.

Apart from this, the only furnishings are a few chests (some for storing food; other for items recovered from the Towers) and some benches near the bow of the ship for passengers to sit on. Crew and passengers alike sleep in the bottom of the boat.

Gurghan's Tower

As one of his men drops anchor next to the tower chosen for today's expedition, Covis points out the windows set into it some 50 feet above sea level. The heroes have to enter the tower through these openings. They could climb a further 10 feet to the balcony above, instead, but there are a pair of blood rooks (see appendix)—aggressive, carnivorous sea birds about the size of an eagle—nesting up there, and they attack any character that approaches that close. Covis saw the birds attack an adventurer on his last visit, and relates with great relish the way the man screamed as he slipped and fell 60 feet to the water below.

Climbing the side of the tower without a rope requires a DC 25 Climb check. With a rope, the DC drops to 10. Securing a rope to the window requires either that someone climb up there, or that a grappling hook to be thrown up: A DC 20 Use Rope check is required to securely fasten the grapple in this case. Should none of the PCs have a grappling hook, Covis can loan them his spare anchor, which works as a crude substitute (–2 circumstance penalty on the check), although he expects a few silver pieces in exchange. There is also plenty of rope aboard the ship, which Covis lets the heroes use without charge.

If the heroes decide to chance the blood rooks, remember that climbing characters lose their active bonus to defense unless they accept a skill challenge on their Climb checks.

Standard Tower Features

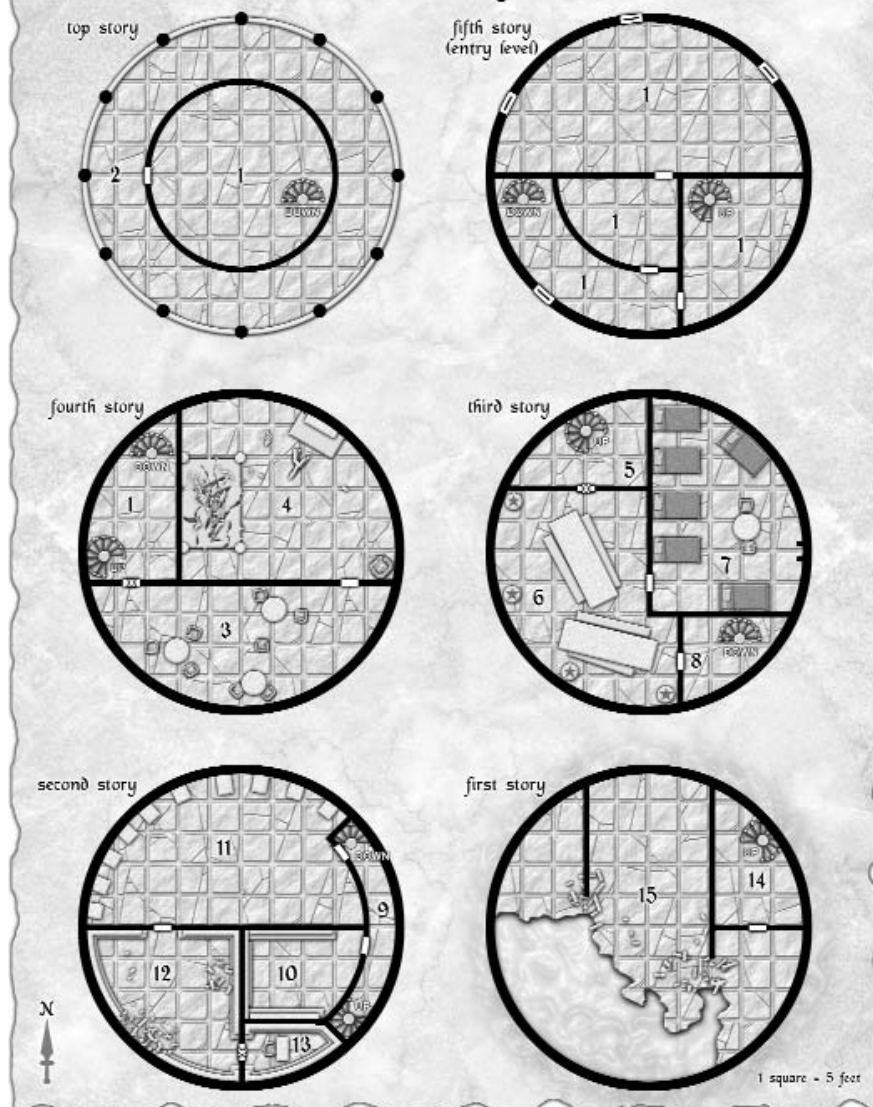
Unless otherwise noted, the ceilings in the Gurghan's Tower are 10 feet high. The walls and floors are made of stone, with heavy wooden support beams beneath the floors. Doors are made of wood, with iron bindings that have begun to corrode in the salty air. Most rooms have multiple windows, each little larger than arrow slits and certainly too small for a human to enter. The fifth story is an exception: it has large windows as noted on the map.

Exterior Walls: Hardness 8; hit points 90; Break DC 35.

Interior Walls and Floors: Hardness 8; hit points 45; Break DC 30.

Doors: Hardness 5; hit points 15; Break DC 18 (unbarred) or 25 (barred); Open Lock DC 25 (if locked).

The Drowning Tower



1. Previously Plundered Rooms

The furnishings of these rooms have all been ransacked and overturned, wall hangings ripped down, and walls and floors searched thoroughly for secret compartments. There are even a few patches of floor that have been forcibly torn up.

A number of half-decomposed creatures are scattered throughout these rooms: 4 monstrous centipedes (1 Medium, 3 Small), 2 dire rats, and a monstrous spider (Tiny).

2. Blood Rook Aerie

A 10-foot-wide balcony runs around the exterior of this level, its peaked and tiled roof supported by a series of twelve stone columns evenly spaced around the perimeter. Each col-

umn is capped with a solid cube engraved on each side with a serene and slightly inhuman face. The bone structure of these faces is angular and fine, while their impossibly high foreheads are bereft of any suggestion of hair. Running between the columns is a 3-foot-high wrought-iron fence.

The floor of the balcony is covered in thousands of small glazed tiles, but many of these are difficult to see under a layer of refuse: the remains of hundreds of mostly devoured fish, long tendrils of seaweed, and years of accumulated bird droppings.

Creatures: The balcony is home to a mated pair of nesting blood rooks (see appendix). These carnivorous birds are similar in size to an eagle, and they are extremely aggressive when protecting their eggs or their young. They attack any characters who come onto the balcony, fighting to the death.

Blood rooks (2): hp 5, 5.

Treasure: The blood rooks' nest is located on the southern side of the tower. It is a 6-foot-wide bowl of twigs, seaweed, and other flotsam. Nestled in its base are 3 blood rook eggs; if kept warm and handled properly, these could be returned to Malador and sold to a falconer for 10 gold pieces each.

Option Zone (wrought-iron fence): Reusable. By taking a standard action and making a DC 20 Strength check, a character can wrench one of the metal posts from the rusting fence. The post can be used as an improvised club.

Condition Zone (slippery floor): The refuse on the balcony floor makes footing treacherous. Any character lacking a fly speed who wishes to run or charge on the balcony squares must make a Balance check (DC 10) in order to do so. Failure indicates that the character does not move. Additionally, due to the poor footing, there is a -2 penalty on checks to resist bull rush, overrun, or trip attempts while on the balcony.

Combat Zones

Many of the encounter areas in this and subsequent chapters have “Condition Zones” and “Option Zones” in them. These zones can be used to affect any combat taking place in that area.

Option Zones give characters additional methods of attack or means of gaining some other form of advantage. An option zone may be reusable (which means it can be used as often as needed) or have a limited number of uses. Option zones do not have any effect unless a character attempts to make use of them.

Condition Zones automatically affect any character who interacts with them, such as by moving through the area. A condition zone may apply for a whole combat or for only part of it (in which case a duration is noted). Such effects may be detrimental or beneficial.

When drawing an encounter area for your players, be sure to describe the effects of any combat zones, at least in general terms. For instance, in the case of the wrought iron fence in Area 2 of Gurghan’s Tower, you might say, “The posts in the fence each look to be about the size of a sturdy tire iron, and you figure you could pull one loose.”

See *Mastering Iron Heroes* for more on combat zones.

3. Grand Study

The western door in this room is barred on the southern side. Characters attempting to open it from the north must either bash it open or burst it with a single, sharp push. The door on the eastern side of the chamber is shut, but the bottom left corner has been gnawed away, leaving a gap about a foot high and wide.

This semi-circular chamber was once a study belonging to one of the Masters. Several carpets lie on the stone floors, once thick and luxurious but now faded and badly torn. It looks much like someone has slashed at them with a small, jagged knife (actually, this is the work of the giant beetles in the bedroom to the north, who have used some of the carpet fabric for their nests). A number of leather chairs and wooden tables dot the room, giving an idea of the quiet and convivial atmosphere that might once have dominated here. The chairs have suffered badly in the salt air, and are cracked and damp from sweating.

Faded tapestries on the wall depict images of a fabulous city, filled with strange creatures and scenes of great magic. The tapestries have not suffered the same damage as the carpets, but they are quite fragile due to their age and cannot survive being moved.

Development: Two minutes after the PCs first attack the western door (either with weapons or in an attempt to break it down), the fire beetles from Area 4 enter this chamber to investigate the disturbance and attack immediately.

Treasure: On one of the tables stands a silver goblet worth 15 gp. It has a black stain in the bottom of the bowl, presumably from whatever was in it at the time the land fell. A second goblet, slightly dented but of equal value, lies on the floor beside another table, surrounded by shards from a glass bottle.

4. The Burnt Bed

This large chamber was clearly a bedroom. A massive four-poster bed, easily 15 feet wide and 10 long, dominates the western wall. The bed has seen far better days, however. The canopy has collapsed, leaving the four posts jutting into the air much like the Tower itself. The main body of the bed has been torn open, as if by something burrowing out of it, with decomposed woolen bedding strewn in a stinking pile all over the lumpy remains of the bed.

Also in the room are a large wardrobe and a dresser, the latter sports a silvered mirror and has many small items strewn across it. An overturned wooden chair lies in front of the dresser, while a larger leather-bound chair stands upright in the south-eastern corner. A single large rug, even more badly damaged than those in the study, lies in the center of the chamber. The room’s six windows are situated such that the sun always shines through at least one of them and onto the golden symbol in the centre of the carpet. What that symbol once depicted can no longer be seen, but it must have shone gloriously a hundred years ago.

Creatures: There are 3 giant fire beetles that make this room their lair. They have a nest burrowed out of the remains of the bed, supplemented with materials torn from the grand study. If not already encountered in that room, they aggressively attack any hero who enters this chamber.

Giant fire beetles (3): hp 5, 4, 4.

Treasure: The furnishings and the clothes in the wardrobe are too far gone to be of any worth to anyone, but the dresser has several objects of value. First is the mirror, which is a perfect piece of silvered glass nearly 3 feet across. It is worth 100 gp, though it must be handled carefully to keep it intact. Also on the dresser is a small velvet pouch filled with 84 gold pieces. The pouch has long since rotted, but there is nothing amiss with the coins (although they are of an old and unusual mint). Finally, there is a wax-sealed crystal bottle; the wax is hard and dry, but the seal is intact, protecting the valuable perfume inside. The perfume and bottle together are worth 30 gold pieces.

Option Zone (wardrobe): One use. With a standard action and a DC 12 Strength check, a character can push over the wardrobe. The character may choose two squares that are adjacent both to the wardrobe and to each other. Any creature in these squares takes 2d6 points of damage (Reflex half, with a DC equal to the result of the Strength check).

5. Trapped Stairwell

This is an empty stone chamber with stairs leading down from the fourth floor to the third. The top four steps are rigged to collapse as soon as more than 100 pounds of weight is applied to them.

Collapsing Stair Trap: CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Reflex DC 20 avoids; 10 ft. (1d6, fall); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20.

Creatures: A shrieker grows under the stairs, planted here by the skags as an early alarm system. If the heroes set off the trapped stairs, the creature begins to howl. Even if the characters themselves did not fall, it is alerted by the rain of debris. If the heroes manage to disarm the trapped stairs before progressing down, they should be able to get the jump on the fungus and destroy it before it starts shrieking, assuming they recognize it in time.

Shrieker (1): hp 11.

6. Guard Chamber

This large chamber has four statues evenly spaced along the outer wall. Each is about 7 feet high, including its narrow stone base. The statues depict armored humans bearing swords and shields. The face of the northernmost statue has been smashed with some kind of heavy, blunt object; it is unrecognizable.

The room also contains two large wooden tables, each about 15 feet long and 5 feet wide. Low, rickety benches sit on either side of each table. One of the tables is covered in what looks like a large pile of seaweed and a scattering of shells. There is no sign here of the once-opulent furnishings found in the floors above.

Creatures: There are 4 skag warriors stationed in this chamber at all times. However, unless the heroes managed to disable the shrieker before it could make a sound and then smashed open the door to this room with their first attempt, one skag (the 4-hp one, being the smallest) has left to alert the rest of the tribe while the other three are ready and waiting for the heroes.

Skag warriors (3 or 4): hp 8, 6, 5 (and 4).

Tactics: The skags turn a table on its side to gain cover and then prepare to throw their darts at the first person through



the door. They continue the barrage of missiles until the heroes manage to get within 10 feet, at which point they switch to the traditional skag tactics of net and spear.

In the unlikely event that the heroes manage to achieve surprise, all four skags are taking their ease when the attack begins. They fight back in a disorganized fashion, although one of them does immediately try to run to raise the alarm.

In either case, the skags fight until only one of their number remains standing. This survivor attempts to flee through Area 8 and down to Area 9, where it hopes any pursuers will follow it into an ambush.

Treasure: Other than the personal belongings of the dead skags, this room contains a partially finished seaweed net and some tools made out of deep-sea shells. The net is worthless (dozens have been brought back to Malador already), but the shell tools are worth 5 gp in total due to the unusual materials from which they are made.

Condition Zone (statues & tables): A statue or an overturned table provides cover against any creature attacking through the square the object occupies, provided the target is fewer squares away from the object than the attacker.

7. Guard Quarters

This room appears to have once been a mixture of dormitory and kitchen. There are six narrow bunks along the inner walls, each covered with the remains of what was once a thin straw mattress. The center of the room features a small wooden table with two chairs set against it. Hooks are set into the ceiling above the table and also along the outer wall of the room. Several rusted iron pots, pans, and utensils hang from these hooks, while there are four bundles of dried fish on the table. Unlike the pots and pans, the fish appear to have been placed there recently, not more than a few days ago.

The outer wall also features a small fireplace, with a narrow flume leading up to what is presumably a short chimney jutting from the side of the Tower. The fireplace does not appear to have been used for a long time.

Treasure: This room contains enough dried fish (equivalent to trail rations) to feed one Medium person for 8 days. Additionally, one of the prior inhabitants used to keep his most prized possessions hidden behind a loose stone in the fireplace. Anyone searching the area might discover this secret niche (Search DC 20): Within it are a dagger with a jeweled hilt (30 gp) and a bag of 15 semi-precious stones (total value 72 gp).

8. Privacy Door

This is an empty stone chamber with stairs leading down from the third floor to the second. An engraved bronze sign on the eastern side of the door reads, in Ancient Speech, "Private. Do Not Enter."

9. Skag Ambush

This is a long, curving corridor connecting two flights of stairs.

Creatures: This area is protected by 1 elite skag warrior and her skag-mount, together with 1 common skag warrior; if the heroes pursue quickly, the small skag from Area 6 might also still be here. The skags fight to the death against any intruders; the mount fights as long as its rider is still alive.

Elite skag warrior (1): hp 12.

Skag-mount (1): hp 21.

Skag warriors (1 or 2): hp 6 (and 4).

Tactics: Assuming that one of the warriors from Area 6 managed to reach this location to sound the alarm, he and the warrior from this location may taking cover in the doorway to Area 10, while the elite skag and her mount cling to the ceiling just out of sight around the bend in the hallway. As soon as the heroes move into the hall to engage the warriors, the elite races her mount into the combat. She gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls for higher ground due to being on the ceiling.

If the alarm has not been raised, the two skags from this location are talking casually in the middle of the corridor as the heroes arrive.

10. Storage

This windowless interior chamber is lined with dozens of shelves on which rest piles of linen, most of them so dry from age that they have become hard and brittle. Several piles have spilled onto the ground and lie in heaps on the floor.

Treasure: In the north-western corner are a series of 6 lacquered wooden boxes, all stacked on top of each other. Engraved with restful carvings of streams, birds, and trees, each box used to contain a set of silk sheets. The silk has long since crumbled to dust, but the boxes themselves are worth 2 gp each.

11. Shards of Glass

This large chamber has an unusually large number of narrow window slits in its walls, giving it more light and air-flow than most of the other rooms. In fact, it almost feels as if there is a slight breeze in the room (there actually *is* a breeze—see *Creatures*, below).

The walls of the chamber are lined with nearly a dozen tables. Each table is covered in oddly shaped bits of metal, as well as hundreds of shards of glass. Indeed, the room must once have held a very large number of glass objects, for there are so many shards that they have spilled onto the floor, and crunch underfoot as the heroes move into the room.

Whatever these bits of metal and glass once were, they appear to have been thoroughly destroyed now. Many of them bear stains, and there are several tables that appear to have been damaged by acid or some other dangerous substance.

Creatures: This room was once the Master's laboratory. He kept a minor air elemental here for the purpose of driving out any dangerous fumes from his experiments; this creature has been bound to this room ever since the Master's death. At first, it waited patiently for his return. After several decades, however, it became frustrated and destroyed everything in the room that it was strong enough to lift: hence the devastation to all the laboratory equipment. The elemental fearlessly attacks any intruders until they leave the room or it is destroyed.

Air elemental, Small (1): hp 9.

Treasure: Some of the oddments of metal remaining in the room are tarnished silver. The heroes may discover this with a DC 13 Appraise, Knowledge (arcana), or Search check. In total, it is possible to collect 3 pounds of silver from the chamber, for a total value of 15 gp.

Condition Zone (shards of glass): Any character who falls prone in this area must make a Reflex save (DC 11 if he or she dropped prone intentionally, DC 15 otherwise) or suffer 1d4 points of slashing and piercing damage from the glass on the floor. Damage resistance from armor protects normally against this damage.

Option Zone (storm of glass): Reusable. When the air elemental uses its whirlwind ability, it lifts the broken glass around it into a deadly whirlwind of razor-sharp shards. Every creature within 10 feet of the elemental suffers 2d4 points of damage (Reflex DC 14 half); DR from armor applies.

Note: Because the combat conditions in this room favor the air elemental so strongly, the heroes should be awarded 50% more XP than normal for overcoming this challenge.

12. Library

This chamber was obviously a library at one time: The walls are lined with shelves, and each shelf is bowed down with dozens of ancient tomes. Unfortunately, the years have not been kind. Several of the shelves have torn loose from the wall, and dozens of the books lie scattered on the floor. Even those that remain in place are basically worthless: time and dampness have left them rotted and mildewed, their pages stuck together or crumbling to pieces.

Not a single book in the room is of any value.

13. Secure Shelves

The door to this chamber is barred and locked. The bar is on the western side, and can be easily removed by any character in the library. A bronze plaque is mounted on the door with the following inscription written in Ancient Speech: "Private. Do Not Enter."

Inside, the room is a narrow chamber lined with bookshelves. There is a small reading desk in the middle of the room with a simple chair before it. An open book, its pages decorated with gorgeous, gleaming illuminations sits on the desk. The room has no windows, and the air is cool and dry. The books show none of the damage suffered by those in the main library.

The Master of the tower left a magical stun trap on the contents of the room to prevent his most prized works from being tampered with: If any book from this room crosses the threshold, every creature within 5 feet of the doorway is struck by the stunning blast.

Stun Trap: CR 2; magic device; proximity trigger; automatic reset (1 hour); magical effect (7th-level arcanist, 5d6 non-lethal and stunned 1d6 rounds; Fortitude DC 15 halves and negates); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 23.

Treasure: Anyone examining the collection discovers that it consists of 41 works on a variety of esoteric subjects: alchemy, arcane theory, astronomy, comparative biology, history, philosophy, and so forth. In total, the collection weighs in at 82 pounds and has a value of 355 gp. If the heroes were to take only the ten most valuable works (Appraise or Search DC 15), they would weigh 20 pounds and have a value of 200 gp.

14. Last Landing

This is an empty stone chamber with stairs leading up from the first floor to the second.

Development: Any hero listening at the southern door may (Listen DC 25) here the soft snuffling sounds of Chief

Gurghan's mount in the next room. To those who have not heard them before, a skag-mount sounds something like a loud, wet version of a pig's grunt.

15. Gurghan's Stand

It is no longer clear to what use the three (or possibly more) rooms that once comprised this large, oddly shaped chamber were intended to be put. All that remains of them now is most of their stone-tiled floors and parts of the walls that once separated them.

In the south-west portion of this area, the floor has been deliberately smashed through, revealing the water level only a foot or so below it. The water is reasonably clear, and submerged and sodden furniture can be seen several feet beneath the surface.



Creatures: Chief Gurghan waits here for the heroes. He is riding his favorite skag-mount and is accompanied by 4 skag warriors (or only three if the small warrior from Area 6 didn't manage to make it this far...).

Gurghan: hp 15.

Skag-mount (1): hp 24.

Skag warriors (3 or 4): hp 7, 6, 5 (and 4).

Tactics: Gurghan prefers to linger at the rear of combat, directing his followers in their attack. He makes full use of the fact that his mount can climb across walls and ceilings with him on its back. He also makes frequent use of his strategy token pool (from the War Leader feats) to give increased flanking bonuses and extra attacks of opportunity to his allies; as well, he uses his tactical token pool to provide extra cover to himself and his allies, or to reduce his opponents' cover. He begins the fight clinging, on his mount, to the south-west wall, just over the water.

Despite his preference for hanging back, however, Gurghan fights vigorously in melee if an enemy manages to reach him, or if it seems his troops need his aid. If either he or his mount is reduced to 6 hp or less, he attempts to escape into the water and swim to safety.

The skag warriors initially attack from cover at the water's edge, launching darts at the heroes as they enter the area. If this does not drive the PCs away, the warriors close in, first using their nets to entangle opponents, then stabbing them with their spears.

Gurghan, his mount, and the skags can all move as easily in the water as on land (in fact, they are faster in the water). This allows them to move around the room by jumping in and out of the water, an option not available to the heroes, and one of which the skags take full advantage.

The skags may also try to knock enemies into the water, but only if the heroes give them a good opportunity; they know that they are generally too small to succeed in a bull rush against a human opponent. The warriors fight for as long as Gurghan remains in the battle, but flee as soon as their chieftain is killed or retreats. Gurghan's mount flees if its rider is slain.

It is very unlikely that the heroes will achieve surprise over Gurghan and his warriors. Even if no warriors escaped from Area 6, Gurghan is very likely (Listen DC 8 or less, as appropriate) to pick up the sounds of any fighting in Area 9.

Treasure: In addition to the personal effects of the skags, Gurghan keeps a treasure chest in the watery chamber just below this one. If he flees the battle, he does not have time to

recover this, and the heroes are likely to notice it (Spot DC 10). Someone must swim down and recover the chest, however, which weighs nearly 100 pounds; it is filled with water, and should cause a substantial penalty on Swim checks if anyone simply tries to swim up with it. A better option is to tie a rope around it and haul it to the surface that way.

Inside the chest, which gushes water from a dozen small holes as soon as it breaks the surface of the water, are the following: a bag containing 10 small pearls (worth 350 gp in total); 8 conch shells, each a foot in length (2 gp each); 14 large pieces of coral (150 gp in total); and an assorted collection of ancient coins totaling 312 cp, 106 sp, and 88 gp.

Option Zone (loose flagstones): Reusable. There are many loose or half-lifted flagstones in this area. As a move-equivalent action, a character can automatically pick up one of these loose stones, which can then be used as an improvised thrown weapon (range increment 10 ft., damage 1d3, weight 1 lb).

Aftermath: The Return

After the heroes return to Malador, and assuming they took his offer, Tremance will contact them to ask what they have learned—if anything—of Covis's scheme (see the sidebar on page 31). What the PCs tell Tremance is up to them. They might reveal the scheme; they might report nothing amiss and blackmail Covis for a share of his profits; or they might

do exactly what Tremance told them not to and stage a raid on Covis and his associates (a trio of Beggars' Flow burglars). This would allow them to capture any additional loot the group had gathered. The details and the success or failure of such schemes are left to you to determine, and may form the basis for future adventures of your own devising.

Rewards

If the heroes successfully discover how Covis is embezzling, award them 100 XP each. If the heroes then deliver these findings to Tremance, he brings them to the attention of his superiors. The matter is referred to the Council, and 1d6+3 days later the PCs receive a reward of 100 gp (total) to share. They should also receive an additional 100 XP apiece; giving up the short-term profit they could steal or extort from Covis for recognition with the Council is a wise move that deserves a reward.

Before the Next Adventure

The events of Chapter 3 are intended to begin roughly two weeks after this adventure concludes, though you can increase or decrease this delay to better suit your campaign. The heroes may well want to return to the Drowning Towers (assuming you want to design another tower similar to the first), or you may have an adventure of your own to slot in, or the PCs could simply use the time to rest, spend some of their treasure, and get to know the city a little better.

CHAPTER THREE: SECRETS OF BEGGARS' FLOW

During the course of this chapter, the PCs learn of deadly gladiatorial games being held in the Beggars' Flow. These games are merely the front for the secretive Cult of the Crimson Path, which seeks to destroy Malador and everybody in it. The heroes must act to stop them, but there are also other groups who are interested in the cult's plans: are these others friends or foes?

A party of four heroes should earn enough experience to progress to 3rd level by the end of this chapter.

Hooking the Heroes

There are a couple of ways the heroes could become involved in the events of this chapter. The first is that they might decide to investigate the Bloody Banner Arena of their own accord. Rumors of the arena have been circulating the city for several weeks, and players may well be interested enough to have their characters investigate without you needing to do anything.

Word on the Street

Just as in Chapter 2, there are a few tales commonly repeated on the streets during the time in which this chapter takes place; as always, you can add or make changes as you see fit.

- "They say the ghouls at the body pits are worse this spring than ever before. It's got so you can't tell which ones are live or dead, any more." (*True.*)
- "Word is that King Darragan's envoy offered the Council a union between Borat and Malador. He'll need deep pockets to pay them to do that." (*True.*)
- "You know, Borat's envoy told the Council to swear fealty to King Darragan or they'll take the city at swordpoint. It's going to be war, I tell you!" (*False*, at least for the duration of this module.)
- "I heard there'll be another execution this week. Some ship's master got caught smuggling from the Towers. They'll stretch his neck good." (*True*. Assuming the heroes caught Covis, this rumor refers to him; if they did not, it is some other would-be smuggler.)
- "It's true, I tell you! A full-sized keelboat with a five-headed prow, and I saw it sail right into the Bleakwater! It's probably a Borati invasion!" (*Partly true*. This rumor comes from a drunken fisherman; although his conclusions are incorrect, he *did* see a ship—the *Hydra* from Chapter 4.)

Your PCs might also get involved with the arena if they get in trouble with the town guard. As everyone in Malador knows, the best place to lay low from the guards is Beggars' Flow, and a group of tough adventurers with a grudge against the city is just the kind of thing the owners of the arena are looking for.

The third and most likely option is for the heroes to be approached by a representative from Councilor Toban Wellaw. In fact, even if the PCs seem ready to investigate on their own, you should have Wellaw's agent contact them, as certain events later in this chapter better demonstrate Malador's factionalized government if the heroes are working for Wellaw, or at least aware that he wants the matter investigated.

The Beginning

One night while taking their evening meal, the adventurers are approached by an agent of the Council. This young man wears the city's livery and carries a sealed letter in his hand. After requesting the name of one of the heroes ("I have a missive for one whose description matches your appearance, but I wish to be sure you are the one I seek"), he hands over the note.

The letter is brief and to the point:

Councilor Toban Wellaw requests the honor of a meeting with yourself and your companions at Council Hall, midday on the morrow. Your discretion in not discussing this appointment publicly is both expected and appreciated. Please bring this letter to show the guards.

Wellaw

An Audience with Wellaw

Assuming the heroes attend the appointment, Councilor Wellaw is waiting for them at midday the next day. He is his usual stuffily formal self, but the proposition he has for them is a little out of the ordinary. [Read aloud the boxed text in the next column.]

The PCs are likely to have questions; here are some answers for those most likely to arise. Unless noted otherwise, Wellaw is being truthful:

1. What's in it for us?

"You will be paid handsomely for your efforts. Shall we say 100 gold pieces for you to share now, and a further 200 each at the conclusion of your investigation? I shall also ensure that you receive further rewards should you apprehend or kill the ringleaders of any conspiracy against the Council."

"You may have heard the talk of the town regarding a gladiatorial arena in the Beggars' Flow. I confess I did not at first give such tales much credence, but their persistence and specificity has forced me to review my original skepticism. It appears the 'arena' in question does exist. This in itself might not be a cause for alarm, but I have heard from reliable sources that several of the more prominent figures at the arena have been making seditious remarks during or after their events.

"The Council does not usually pay much heed to such grumblings when they are heard on the street. The common folk are as entitled to their opinions as the rest of us, and I daresay they feel their complaints are justified. But such comments made to an audience of hundreds of people come dangerously close to sedition and an incitement to riot.

"I wish to hire your group to infiltrate the arena and determine whether there is anything more sinister afoot than the vile blood sports these people practice. If there is, I want you to put an end to it. Provided any violence you commit is in pursuit of this goal, I will personally ensure you are not charged with any crime."

(Wellaw refuses to give a specific figure for this reward, insisting it would have to be agreed by the full Council and would depend on the severity of the threat. He assures the heroes that it will be generous.)

2. Why not send in the guards?

"That might provoke the very violence I am trying to prevent."

(Wellaw also isn't sure the guards can handle it; a Sense Motive against his Bluff check is required to detect that there is more to the story. Wellaw gets a +2 circumstance bonus to his check since his response is partially truthful.)

3. Why did you choose us?

There are two possible reasons: If the heroes successfully exposed Covis, then that success is the reason Wellaw gives. Otherwise, he indicates merely that his sources told him they appeared to be suitable candidates for the job. Whichever reason he gives, he rather primly adds, "And you look like you should be able to blend in amongst the folk of the Flow."

4. How do we infiltrate the arena?

"You will need to become gladiators, one assumes. I believe you should have the skills to succeed at such a task, yes? I expect that if you demonstrate your abilities to the arena owners, you are likely to have a good chance of employment."

5. *Won't they be suspicious of us if we just knock on their door asking for a job?*

"Possibly... though there is no reason to believe they are terribly intelligent, for otherwise they would not be in Beggars' Flow in the first place. Nonetheless, if there is some way you believe I can help you alleviate or avoid such suspicions, I will do what I can."

(One possible way Wellaw can help is to send a group of guards to "arrest" the heroes at their inn. The heroes can then "escape"; Wellaw asks only that they not kill anyone in the process. They should then "flee" to the Beggars' Flow, where they would presumably be welcomed as criminal brethren—and yes, he actually says "*brethren*.")

6. *What do we know about the gladiators and/or the arena?*

"Very little. We know the fights are held in a large building near the center of the Flow, and that it can be identified by large red banners hanging on the walls. The fights are said to be to the death, with substantial prizes for those who survive."

7. *Does the rest of the Council know you're hiring us?*

"I have discussed the matter with my colleagues."

(Wellaw is not being entirely honest here; he has discussed the matter only with his own faction within the Council. He believes the Sea Captains have also sent an agent to the arena, though he does not know who that agent might be. A Sense Motive against his Bluff check is required to detect that there is more to the story: Again, Wellaw gets a +2 circumstance bonus to his check since his response is partially truthful.)

Life in Beggars' Flow

Assuming that the PCs agree to undertake Wellaw's assignment, they must now make a life for themselves in Beggars' Flow. They need to find a base of operations, make contact with the staff of the arena, and commence their investigation.

The Investigation

There are many ways in which the heroes could pursue their investigation and learn of the Crimson Path. They might identify persons they believe to be suspicious and force them to reveal what they know; they could attempt to use their skills to trail suspects to the cult's hideout; they could trick somebody into revealing more than he or she intended; or they could ingratiate themselves with the owners of the arena and eventually be invited into the Crimson Path directly.

Chapter Three Event Encounters

Below are two short encounters that can occur at any time during Chapter 3 when the heroes are in an appropriate part of Malador. In each case, the heroes have little to do within the scene except be there to observe it.

1. A Brush with Borat: As the heroes are about to enter or leave a building, the Borati Envoy's carriage pulls up and the gray-haired, uniformed traveler inside—Borati ambassador General Juthe—steps out. He carries a small, repulsively ugly little dog in the crook of one arm, while his other hand rests on the sword as his side. He barks some commands to the soldiers riding behind his carriage. Two of them dismount and follow him into the building.

This is a good encounter to run as the heroes are arriving for or leaving their meeting with Councilor Wellaw, but could also be fit in at any non-Beggars' Flow location the heroes visit. General Juthe could be attending a meeting, or attempting to purchase a specific item for diplomatic purposes.

2. Rohdell's Indiscretions: In the very early hours of the morning, a dark blue carriage with the city's seal on its side pulls up in the streets and a young woman is unceremoniously pushed out. She lies crumpled on the ground, unconscious. The heroes might observe this because they are on the streets for some reason, or because one of them happens to be awake and hears the carriage outside.

The young woman does not stir unless someone helps her. If someone does go to her aid, it is clear that she has been beaten into unconsciousness. When she awakes, she refuses to say who did this to her, since "if he found out I did, he'd only do worse." A Diplomacy check (DC 28) is needed to make her identify Councilor Rohdell as the culprit.

Alternately, a successful DC 15 Gather Information or Knowledge (local or nobility & royalty) check tells the heroes that the carriage they saw was one of the Council's, and that it can be used by any of the Councilors whenever they require it. Subsequent investigation might uncover the particular Councilor who had that particular carriage that night, but this should be a very difficult thing to prove without the victim's testimony...

The means by which this last method can be accomplished is discussed under "Reputation," hereafter.

Reputation

Gaining a reputation in the Beggars' Flow largely comes from one source: making it clear to everyone else that you are dangerous people to cross. Having a strong reputation gains respect on the streets and prevents gangs from has-

sling you. It can also lead to the PCs getting an invitation to join the Crimson Path, allowing them to see the true extent of the danger threatening Malador.

The group's reputation starts at 0, and can be modified by the following actions. Unless otherwise noted, a given modifier applies only once.

CONDITION/EVENT	REPUTATION MODIFIER
Winning a fight in the arena	+1*
Yielding in a fight in the arena	-2*
Offering to help Elahna (see "Planned Encounters")	+1
Successfully rescuing Feren (see "Planned Encounters")	+2
Capturing at least 2 ghouls for the Arena	+1
Publicly criticizing the Council after an Arena victory	+1
Exposing the Borati and/or Sea Captain agents to Amarana Sart	+3
Being revealed as agents of Councilor Wellaw	-10
Arriving in the Flow after a fight with the town guards (real or faked)	+1
Fighting off a Beggars' Flow gang	+1

* This modifier can be applied more than once.

You may also assign other modifiers if your players to something not listed above that you believe ought to have a significant impact on the way they are perceived in the Flow.

The table below shows the effects of the group's reputation:

REPUTATION	EFFECTS
-2 or less	Kicked out of the arena; always attacked by gangs if seen on the streets.
-1 to 0	No effect. Characters with this level of reputation are allowed to stay in the arena if they have already joined it, but are not permitted their first match without first proving themselves worthy of the opportunity.
1 to 2	Minimum required reputation to be offered a first duel in the arena.
3 to 5	A gang offers membership to the group; no one attacks them on the streets.
5 or more	Invited to join the Crimson Path, but only if they have either publicly criticized the Council or have done so privately in the hearing of Amarana Sart, and if they have not been revealed as agents for Councilor Wellaw.

Running this Chapter

This chapter does not present a great number of pre-scripted encounters (though there are some). Instead, you are presented with the adventure locations and details of the NPCs who can be found there—their statistics (in the Appendix), the information they hold, and their agendas.

There are literally hundreds of ways that events can play out in this chapter, and no attempt has been made to address them all. Instead, we've given you all the tools you need to know who is involved and what they are trying to do. It's up to you to determine how these motivations and plans interact, and what effect the actions of your heroes have upon them.

There are four remaining sections in this chapter:

Agents and Adversaries covers the major NPCs active in Beggars' Flow, noting their allegiances, motivations, and personalities, as well as their typical locations. These are the characters who are actively involved with proceedings at the Bloody Banner Arena and/or the Cult of the Crimson Path.

Planned Encounters outlines the plotted encounters for the heroes in Beggars' Flow, including the matches they are assigned if they become gladiators in the arena.

Beggars' Flow Locations provides details of the three principle locations for this adventure: the Body Pits, the Bloody Banner Arena, and the Crimson Path's hidden stronghold.

Aftermath details the events that follow the heroes' investigation, and the rewards they receive if they succeed in destroying the cult.

Agents and Adversaries

Detailed below are the six major NPCs with whom the heroes are likely to interact during their time in Beggars' Flow. Statistics for all six can be found in the Appendix.

ILOYA HARVLE

Usual Location: Bloody Banner Arena; the Rat's Burrow.

Public Identity: Gladiator groupie.

Secret Identity: Agent hired by Councilor Delorri to look into the arena and its activities.

Agenda: Iloya is a burglar who was facing a probable execution when Councilor Delorri plucked her out of a cell and offered her a chance to live. She's been given a week to get results. After that, she must either make a report that satisfies Delorri, or she can consider herself a dead woman the next time she gets caught. She's already been in the Flow for two days when Wellaw talks to the heroes.

Iloya's main problem right now is that, lacking the combat skills to be a successful gladiator herself, she's not really in a position to learn anything useful. Amaranda Sart clearly has no interest in people who aren't able to make it in the Arena itself.

When the heroes arrive on the scene, Iloya quickly seizes on them as her best opportunity to get out of this whole mess alive: They're obviously a cut above the average gladiators. If she can attach herself to one of the male heroes as his "adoring girlfriend," she might be able to learn something from him during pillow talk. Iloya's not thrilled about resorting to this kind of thing, but she's even less thrilled about getting killed.

If the heroes come to suspect Iloya of being more than she seems and confront her about those suspicions with a successful opposed Intimidate or Diplomacy check, she confesses her true identity and throws herself on their mercy.

Roleplaying Tips: Iloya does her best to act like an adoring, not terribly bright young woman with a serious crush on one of the heroes. She fetches things he needs, says "You really do love me, right?" before sleeping with him, and feigns jealousy if he spends any time with Amarana, all in the hope that he'll tell her what they really spoke about.

Note: If the heroes successfully identify Iloya as a spy, regardless of what they do with that information, they should receive XP as if they had defeated her in battle.

VOLTURN MADIC

Usual Location: Bloody Banner Arena.

Public Identity: Chief of Arena Security.

Secret Identity: None.

Agenda: Madic is hopelessly infatuated with Amarana Sart; simply put, he does whatever she tells him to. He is aware she is a member of the Cult of the Crimson Path, but he has no knowledge of or interest in the Cult's theology.

If the heroes attack Sart while Madic is present, he fights to the death to protect her. If Sart is killed while he is not present, he almost certainly finds out the heroes killed her (not a difficult task, since their achievement will be widely known), hires 6 Beggars' Flow thugs to help him, and ambushes them on the streets of Malador at some point before the heroes leave for the Bleakwater in Chapter 3.

Roleplaying Tips: Madic is big, surly, and ill-disposed toward any other male Amarana Sart seems to personally favor. He'd never do anything openly against one of her favorites, since he knows she would be furious with him, but his antagonism toward them is obvious. If he can, he organizes especially dangerous arena matches for them.

The Crimson Path

The Bloody Banner Arena is secretly operated by the Cult of the Crimson Path, an apocalyptic sect that believes the ultimate destiny of all life is to destroy itself. The Cult seeks to aid in the process of that destruction, and it has identified Malador as a city ripe for their nihilistic theology to take hold.

The Cult's purpose in establishing the Arena is twofold. Firstly, arena events desensitize the people of the Flow to violence, while simultaneously giving them figures to admire and respect. The gladiators who rise to success in the ring are cheered by those who watch them. Already, many of the street gangs are adopting the colors and mannerisms of the highest-profile gladiators, seeking to imitate the deadly warriors they have seen in the arena.

Second, the Cult is looking for candidates amongst the gladiators who seem susceptible to their cruel message: men and women who have reached rock bottom and are left with nothing but anger and hatred toward the world. The Crimson Path invites these people into their secret ranks and then turns their hatred against the city of Malador, which has left them to fight for scraps in the gutter-district of Beggars' Flow.

In time, the Cult will unleash these gladiators on the city, putting them at the head of their adoring fans. Whipped into a frenzy by the bloody duels of the arena, urged on by their new idols, the people of the Beggars' Flow will become a howling mob, intent only on revenge and slaughter and looting. Malador's streets will run with blood and its buildings will burn, and thus the Cult's purpose here will have been served.

SANDELT

Usual Location: Bloody Banner Arena; Crimson Path Stronghold.

Public Identity: Reigning Arena Champion.

Secret Identity: Recent Crimson Path recruit.

Agenda: The warrior called Sandelt—she gives no other name—is completely dedicated to becoming the most deadly warrior possible, without regard to any other consideration,

including such things as ethics or morality. Although quite even-tempered, even likeable under most circumstances, she is an utterly cold killer, verging on psychopathic. All in all, Sandelt is exactly the kind of person Amarana is looking for.

Sandelt kills without a second thought, and feels no repugnance for the Crimson Path's ideals of annihilation. Indeed, Amarana has successfully convinced her that taking part in the destruction of a great city such as Malador would be a true test of Sandelt's skills. As a consequence, Sandelt has recently joined the Crimson Path, though she takes no part in its overarching plans. She is simply a weapon Amarana can unleash against anything or anyone who gets in her way.

Sandelt's personal plans are to continue fighting in the arena every chance she can. Challengers have become rare, however, for she insists that there be no option to yield: every duel she fights must be to the death.

If the heroes prove successful in the arena, Sandelt encourages their best warrior to face her in the arena: "After all, you can never be the best unless you beat me." Other than to that end, she takes an interest in the PCs only if Amarana does.

Roleplaying Tips: Sandelt is calm, cool, and collected at all times. Though she is soft-spoken, she obviously has complete confidence in her abilities, and she always looks her opponents in the eyes. The heroes should get the impression that this is someone who doesn't kill for pleasure, but who kills without hesitation or regret.

AMARANA SART

Usual Location: Bloody Banner Arena; Crimson Path Stronghold.

Public Identity: Operator of the Bloody Banner Arena.

Secret Identity: Leader of the Crimson Cult.

Agenda: Amarana is in the process of carrying out the Crimson Path's agenda within the Beggars' Flow (see sidebar, page 43). To this end, she is seeking possible candidates to become leaders of the mobs of rioters she plans to unleash upon the city. With the right people to lead them, she believes those mobs will be more than just angry looters: they will be the instrument of Malador's destruction.

Amarana regularly lets Madic—whose devotion to her she ruthlessly exploits—appraise new gladiatorial candidates for her. She observes them only from afar to begin with, but after they have a successful match or two under their belts, she introduces herself and begins the process of determining whether they are appropriate candidates for the *real* work she has in mind.

Amarana regularly checks to make sure she is not being followed when she travels between the Cult Stronghold and the Arena, but an enterprising group of heroes might still be able to track her between the two.

Roleplaying Tips: Amarana is an intense personality, always pushing herself and those around her to do their utmost. She speaks in whip-like sentences, and does not hesitate to heap scorn on those she judges unworthy. Any praise she offers must be earned three times over. Once she decides that a character is a suitable recruit, however, her entire demeanor changes. She becomes instantly attentive to the best means of coaxing him or her into the Cult of the Crimson Path, offering whatever rewards the character seems to value most highly: glory, wealth, pleasure (or all three combined), or something else.

OLLOMAN WAYWRIGHT

Usual Location: Bloody Banner Arena.

Public Identity: Arena bookmaker.

Secret Identity: None.

Agenda: Olloman is in the Arena to make money, and making money is what he does best. He takes bets on every match, cheerfully chalking up the odds of death for each participant, and willingly accepting bets from participants: "Money upfront though, lads! I don't want to have to try and get it off you if you're dead."

Olloman makes it a point to know everyone who works in the arena, as well as every regular in the crowd. He'll be among the first to introduce himself to the heroes—not out of any impulse of friendship, but because the better he knows the competitors the better he can judge the odds and the more money he can make.

Should he ever be threatened physically, Olloman is an utter coward. However, he lacks any knowledge the PCs can use. He knows there's something more than just fights going on at the Arena, but he decided some time ago that there was more risk than profit in knowing what that was, so he's purposefully avoided finding out any more about it.

Roleplaying Tips: Jovial and completely amoral, Olloman values only *things*—precious things. He's always cheerful, charming, and friendly, but he's the same kind of cheerful, charming, and friendly with every person he meets. Anyone who observes him for any length of time will begin to understand that there is not a sincere bone in Olloman's body. He tends to ask a lot of questions about characters' previous combat experience, trying to judge their abilities and chance of survival.

“QUODAN ZEE”

Usual Location: Bloody Banner Arena; Rat’s Burrow.

Public Identity: Street peddler.

Secret Identity: Borati spy.

Agenda: The man called Quodan Zee (his real name is Abram Maiveux) arrived in Malador just over two weeks ago. His role was to gauge the feeling toward the Council and towards Borat within the city, and to report his findings to General Juthe. By the original plan, he should have left Beggars’ Flow for another district after only a week, but the Arena and the many rumors swirling around it have kept him in the Flow much longer than he or his superiors had originally planned.

Zee now finds himself with a real problem: his role as a middle-aged street peddler is ideal for avoiding attention, but it’s no good at all for getting access to the inner workings of the Arena, and he lacks the physical abilities to become a gladiator and gain access that way. Zee’s current plan to overcome these problems is to make himself useful to the actual gladiators, finding them the special goods they might need and listening in on what he can of their conversations. It’s slow work, but he’s learned enough to make him hopeful.

Unfortunately for the heroes, Zee would be perfectly willing to sell them out to Amarana Sart if he learned that they were agents of Councilor Wellaw: A coup like that would surely catapult him into Sart’s trusted circle. If they are foolish enough to discuss such affairs at the Arena, his ever-attentive ears are liable to pick them up.

Of course, Zee is also at risk from the heroes. Should they notice the way he lingers near interesting conversations, they may become suspicious of him. Zee also has to report to General Juthe every few days, and the heroes may become suspicious of his “trading trips” to the rest of the city or follow him to one of his meetings with Juthe.

If he is still active when the heroes begin fighting the Crimson Path, Zee does his best to shadow them in an attempt to gather intelligence for his superiors.

Roleplaying Tips: Quodan is a gregarious though slightly scattered individual, chatting amiably about matters until he loses his train of thought and then fretting about what it was he was talking about. When it comes to trading, however, his mind is like a steel trap, and he drives a hard bargain (thanks to his high Diplomacy skill).

Note: If the heroes successfully identify Quodan as a spy, regardless of what they do with that information, they should receive XP as if they had defeated him in battle.

Planned Encounters

The following encounters should take place in order during the PCs’ time in the Flow, but only as the conditions listed under “Occurrence” become manifest.

1. Child-Snatchers

Occurrence: Any time after the heroes reach the Flow, but before they go to the Arena.

A woman comes running into the street nearby. She is hysterical, screaming “They took him! They took him!” over and over again. Passers-by ignore the woman, and eventually she collapses, sobbing. If the PCs calm her down (Diplomacy DC 20), they learn that the woman’s name is Elahna and that her infant son, Feren, has been stolen from the house: “The ghouls did it,” she sobs, “the city built the Pits too close to the houses this time, we all know they did. The ghouls came and took my Feren!”

Feren, a one-year-old boy, has only just been taken, and the heroes may decide to try and rescue him. Elahna can’t offer them any reward for this, but helping her gives them a reputation increase, as described in “Life in Beggars’ Flow.”

2. Gang Trouble

Occurrence: At any time where the heroes’ reputation is less than 3.

A gang of ruffians (1 Beggars’ Flow gang leader, 2 burglars, and 7 thugs; see Appendix) accosts the heroes in the street, demanding payment of 1 gold piece per PC for the use of “their” street. Secure in their greater numbers, the gang members do not readily back down from a fight (opposed Intimidate check against the gang leader, who gets a +10 circumstance bonus to the check).

If the gang leader is killed, each gang member must make a DC 10 Will save or run from the battle. All gang members automatically run if at least four of them are killed or if the number of them remaining in the battle is less than the number of conscious heroes.

Beggars’ Flow gang leader (1): hp 13.

Beggars’ Flow burglars (2): hp 4, 3.

Beggars’ Flow thugs (7): hp 9, 8, 7, 7, 6, 6, 5.

Condition Zone (muddy street): The slippery mud of the road makes footing treacherous. Any character lacking a fly or climb speed who wishes to run or charge on street squares must make a Balance check (DC 10) in order to do so. Failure indicates that they do not move. Additionally, due to the poor footing, all characters suffer a –2 penalty on checks to resist bull rush, overrun, or trip attempts while on the street.

Option Zone (mud): Reusable. As a standard action, any character can scoop up a handful of mud that can then be thrown at an opponent's face in an attempt to blind him. The mud attack has a range increment of 10 feet. The attacker and defender make opposed base attack checks, with a +4 circumstance bonus for the defender (the attacker must also apply any applicable range penalty on his check). If the attacker's check succeeds, the defender is blinded for 1d3 rounds.

The "makeshift structure" option zone (see page 10) applies to all buildings on either side of this street.

3. Gang Worship

Occurrence: At any time when the heroes' reputation is 3 or more.

One of the gangs in the Flow "adopts" the heroes as its favorite gladiatorial team. The gang starts wearing colors that match those the heroes use in the arena, and its members are eager to do them small favors, such as finding them good things to eat, roughing up anyone the heroes dislike (and who doesn't seem too dangerous), and so forth. However, it still takes a near miracle or remarkable speech to convince the gang to fight the Crimson Path (Diplomacy or Perform [oratory] DC 25).

The gang consists of 1 Beggars' Flow gang leader, 2d4 thugs, and 1d2 burglars.

4. Catch-a-Ghoul

Occurrence: If the heroes apply to become gladiators and have not previously cleared out the Body Pits.

Madic listens to the heroes' application to become gladiators at the Arena. With a surly grunt, he expresses his doubt as to their capabilities, but since he's "in a good mood, and the Arena needs something a little exotic for the next show anyway," he offers them an opportunity to prove their worth. If they bring him two ghouls "either dead or alive, as long as they're still moving—and how you do it is your business, not mine," he'll give them a match.

5. First Match

Occurrence: After the heroes successfully complete "Catch-A-Ghoul," or if they successfully rescued Feren (see Planned Encounter #1).

Madic schedules the heroes' first match to take place in two days, against an equal number of standard gladiators (see Appendix). Unless the PCs insist on a "no yielding" match, any PC or NPC can yield at any time after he or she been

injured. The NPC gladiators must make a Will save (DC 20) each round to keep fighting after they are reduced to 5 hp or less; a failed roll means that gladiator yields.

Gladiators (1 per hero): hp 2d8+7 each.

The entry fee for this match is 5 gp (see "Arena Matches" on page 48).

6. Second Match

Occurrence: Five days after the heroes win their first match.

The heroes' second match is against an equal number of elite gladiators (see Appendix). Otherwise, treat this match as the first, including rules regarding yielding to enemies.

Elite gladiators (1 per hero): hp 3d8+9 each.

Unlike the first match, this match is scheduled by Amarana Sart herself; after the match, if the PCs win, she introduces herself to them for the first time. Sart takes this opportunity to ask the heroes about their backgrounds and to subtly gain some idea of their suitability for candidacy to the Crimson Path.

The Entry Fee for this match is 10 gp (see "Arena Matches" on page 48).

7. A Crimson Opportunity

Occurrence: When the heroes have a reputation of 5 or more and have criticized the Council under circumstances where Amarana Sart will hear of it.

Sart invites the heroes to the stronghold of the Crimson Path under the pretext of a "mutually beneficial business opportunity." Once the PCs arrive, she takes them to the main temple, Area C3, and gives them the Crimson Path sales pitch while Sandelt, 4 Crimson Path cultists (including her two bodyguards), and 2 dretches look on. (Stats for all of these are found in the Appendix.) The remaining cultists are all upstairs in the shanties, with the trapdoor open so they can hear what goes on below. If the heroes appear reluctant to join the cult, Sart shouts for her fellows above and the entire cult descends on the room in an effort to kill the heroes and prevent them revealing the cult's existence. The six cultists from the shanties arrive at a rate of two per round.

Amarana Sart: hp 19.

Sandelt: hp 28.

Crimson Path cultists (10 total):

hp 10, 9, 8, 8, 7, 7, 7, 6, 6, 5.

Dretches (2): hp 14, 13.

Tactics: Amarana prefers to soften up her foes by first sending in any muscle she has available to her, depending whether she is in the arena or the cult's stronghold. Meanwhile, she throws daggers at unengaged opponents and chooses a target for her executioner's eye ability. Once the chosen enemy is engaged and she has built up a couple of tokens against him, she tumbles past and attacks from the rear, attempting to kill the enemy as quickly as possible before repeating the process on a new opponent.

In melee, Amarana attempts to gain additional tokens as a free action every round. She also makes extensive use of her Tumble skill to make tumbling attacks, depriving her opponents of their active defenses. Sart *always* attempts to escape if the fight turns against her. While she is not afraid to die for her bizarre beliefs, she doesn't intend to do so until

Malador is destroyed. She flees if reduced to less than 10 hit points—first to the cult's stronghold, then into the city at large if the stronghold is attacked.

Sandelt closes to melee as rapidly as possible, throwing her spare handaxes as she comes, and then tries to stick as close as possible to her opponent and cut him to ribbons. She fights to the death in all cases.

The cultists fight with their usual disregard for their own lives, dying gladly in service to their faith. This is undoubtedly the worst possible situation for the heroes to be in for the final battle, but with good tactics and use of the terrain they can still emerge victorious. Of course, it would be better if they can dissemble enough to catch Amarana off guard in the first place!

Beggars' Flow Locations

There are three main locations used in this chapter of **Dark Harbor**. Each is described in detail below.

The Arena

The heroes are almost certain to visit the arena at some point; each of the areas within is described below.

Standard Features

Ceilings in the arena are 15 feet high. The exterior walls are made of a mixture of stone, brick, and wood, while interior walls are mostly wooden; floors are usually just packed earth. All but one door is made of wood. There are many narrow windows all over the building, except for Area A8.

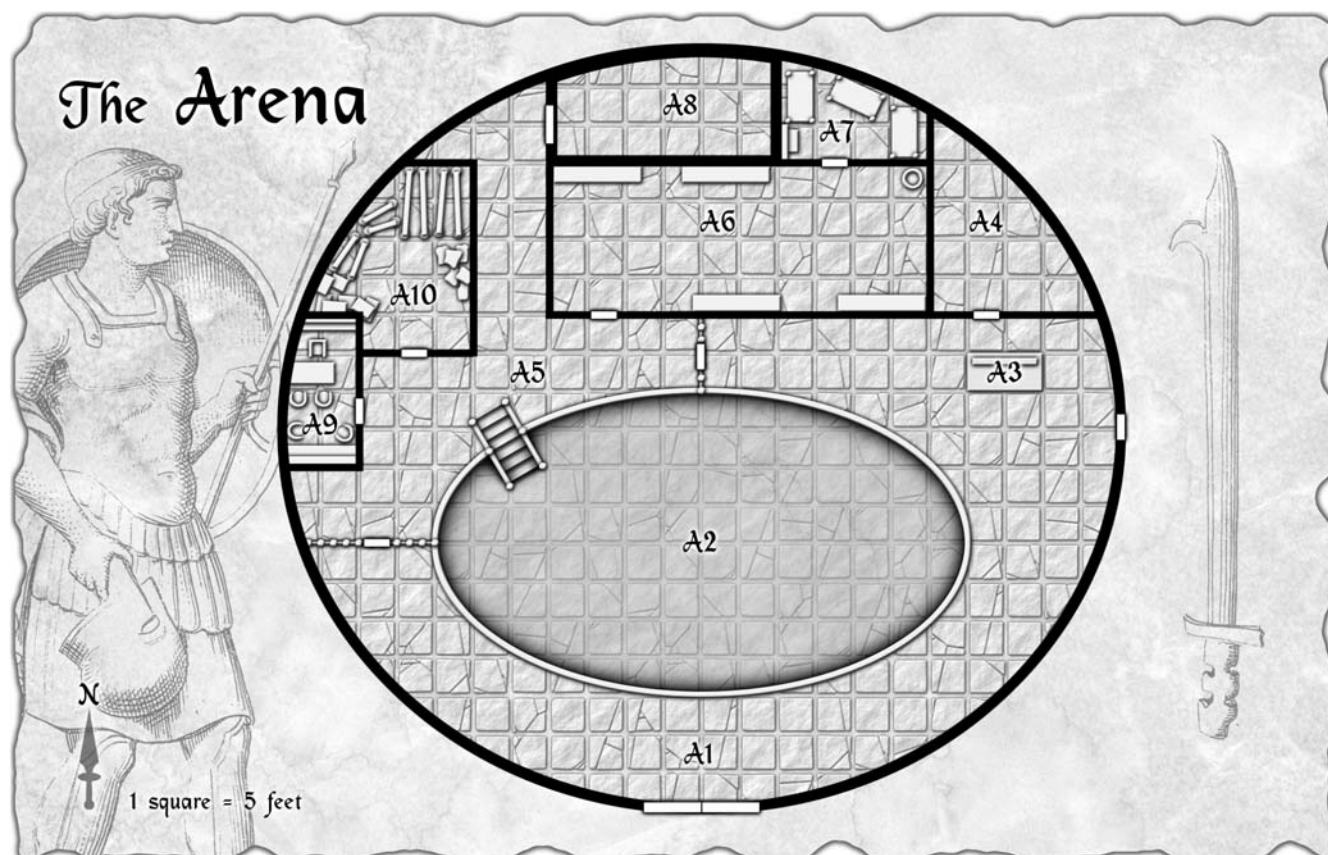
Exterior Walls (including A8): Hardness 8; hit points 90; Break DC 35.

Interior Walls: Hardness 5; hit points 30; Break DC 23.

Typical Door: Hardness 5; hit points 15; Break DC 18.

Iron Door (A8): Hardness 10; hit points 60; Break DC 28.

Iron Fences and Gates (A1/A5): Hardness 10; hit points 20; break DC 23.



ARENA MATCHES

Before a match, each participant is required to pay an Entry Fee. This is generally an amount between 5 gp and 20 gp, as determined by the arena management. This money is collected before the fight and given the winner(s) after the match is over, less a 10 percent handling fee that is kept by the Arena.

A typical arena match is fought with an equal number of gladiators on each side (usually from 1 to 4). Each participant has the option to yield at any time after they have been injured. Deaths do occur, either because of a deadly blow that never gives the victim an opportunity to yield, or because a character chose to keep fighting and then suffered a lethal injury.

A match normally continues until all participants on one side have yielded or have been killed or disabled. No medical attention is given to a fallen gladiator unless one of the participants in the match chooses to help him.

The equipment of any character slain in the arena is considered property of the gladiator who struck the killing blow. That gladiator may choose to share the spoils with his or her allies in the battle, but is not compelled to do so.

In some cases, extra stipulations can be added to the match:

Handicap Match: In this match, the number of gladiators on each side is not equal.

Battle Royale: This match features 2d6+6 gladiators, all fighting as individuals. The last fighter who has not yielded or been killed or disabled wins the battle.

No Yielding: Some matches are fought with a “no yielding” clause. These matches must end in the death of all losing participants. Both sides must agree in order for this match to go ahead.

In order to make fights in the area more interesting, Amarana Sart often has her staff add 1d6+4 pieces of “scenery” to every match. Such scenery acts as a combat zone, with several examples given below.

Condition Zones

Rubble, Light: Small rocks and gravel are strewn across 2d6 adjacent squares, making nimble movement through the area more difficult. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks in this area increases by 2.

Rubble, Dense: As light rubble, except the squares are covered with rocks of all sizes, including large pieces that can be used as improvised weapons. The DC of Balance and Tumble checks on dense rubble increases by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square with dense rubble.

Wall, Low: A removable wall 1d6+1 squares in length is placed in the arena. This wall is roughly 4 feet tall, enough to provide cover for the gladiators. A character can cross a low wall by spending 2 squares of movement unless she is of Small size, in which case she must clamber over it (Climb DC 10).

Barrel: A barrel fills the square it occupies. A character adjacent to a barrel can gain cover from it as normal. As well, one can step on top of a barrel with a Jump check (DC 5), gaining the +1 bonus to attacks for higher ground when you do so.

Option Zones

Barrel (rolling attack): Reusable. A character can kick a barrel on its side and roll it toward her opponents, knocking them to the ground as the barrel careens over them. She must make a Strength check (DC 15) as a full-round action to knock the barrel over and send it hurtling along. The barrel travels in a line with a range of 15 feet. Any opponent in the line's effect must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + the rolling character's Strength modifier) or suffer a number of points of bludgeoning damage equal to 2d6 + double the character's Strength modifier. The barrel stops on its side at the end of the line.

Death from Above. 1d4+1 charges. Every now and again, the staff suspends sealed, water-filled barrels on ropes from the ceiling rafters. In any match that evening, any gladiator can attempt to sever the rope holding a barrel. The barrel crashes to the ground, dealing 4d6 points of bludgeoning damage on any character in the square where it lands, and 2d6 points of piercing damage on any character in an adjacent square due to splintered wood flying in all directions. All affected characters may make a Reflex save (DC 10 + the severing character's Dexterity modifier) to reduce the damage by half. The ropes supporting the barrels are 30 feet above the arena; each has Defense 16, hardness 0, and 2 hit points.

A1. Public Stands

This open area circles around most of the arena itself. A crude, waist-high brick wall prevents anyone from falling in to the arena, and a pair of iron fences with gates set into them separates the public area from the gladiators' facilities. As in most of the rest of the building, the floor here is simple earth, packed hard from having hundreds of people walking and standing on it every few nights.

On nights when shows are scheduled, it costs 5 cp to enter this area through either of the two doors (gladiators and other staff do not have to pay, of course). At other times, the doors are both locked, though the guards respond if the heroes knock.

Creatures: There are 4 guards (Beggars' Flow thugs, a pair at each door) here at virtually all times. When matches are on, add 5d10+50 spectators (mainly commoners, but with a number of Beggars' Flow thugs and burglars scattered throughout), plus Quodan Zee and Iloya Harvle.

Iloya Harvle: hp 7.

Quodan Zee: hp 15.

Guards [as Beggars' Flow thug] (4): hp 7 each.

Tactics: Quodan is the archetypical skulker in combat. He never fights openly when he can knife someone in the back, and he never knifes someone in the back when he can simply hide or run away. He makes extensive use of his high Jump and Tumble skills to stay out of harm's way, and assiduously avoids melee combat as best he can. If he must defend himself, he makes regular use of his Bluff skill to feint, and uses Hide skill to make shadow strikes.

Iloya is utterly noncombatant; if attacked or even seriously threatened with violence, she uses her Overwhelming Presence to gain a Defense bonus and always attempts stunts using Diplomacy to gain defense bonuses (*Iron Heroes*, Chapter 8).. She most likely bursts into tears (largely unfeigned) and throws herself on the mercy of anyone nearby who seems likely to take pity on her and protect her. If she absolutely must, she draws her poisoned dagger and prepares for the worst.

A2. The Arena

This huge pit (roughly 70 feet by 40 feet at its widest points) is 10 feet deep. The walls are of packed earth, with regular struts and supports of timber to prevent them from collapsing. The floor of the arena is packed earth.

Creatures: Usually none. When matches are on, this area may contain either 2d4 gladiators or 1d3 elite gladiators, or else 1d4+1 staff members putting up or taking down scenery.

A3. Olloman's Odds-Making

This small wooden stall has a large blackboard set up behind it, and several different colors of chalk piled ready for use. The "Olloman's Odds-Making" sign over the stall has seen better days, its paint fading and cracked.

Olloman Waywright (see Appendix) can be found here at pretty much any time. If there are matches on, he is chalking up odds and taking bets as fast as he can, usually with one or two assistants. If there are no matches, he is simply loitering, possibly playing dice with the guards from Area A4 (though they have long since refused to play for money against Olloman, a notorious gambler). Olloman gladly calls over the heroes to chat with them for a while, trying to find out about their past and their combat abilities.

Creatures: Olloman Waywright, plus 30% chance of 2 guards from A4. During matches, add 1d2 assistants and 2d4+2 gamblers, plus the 2 guards are always present.

A4. Security Office

This spartanly furnished wooden room contains a table, four chairs, and an empty weapon rack. An oil lantern hangs from a hook in the ceiling, providing dim light and leaving a wide black mark on the roof. This is Voltturn Madic's office and bedchamber; he keeps a bedroll stowed in one corner, unrolling it each night. When the heroes apply to become gladiators, this is where they are sent.

Creatures: When no matches are scheduled, Voltturn Madic is here; there is a 70% chance of 2 guards being present as well. When matches are on, this room is empty.

Voltturn Madic: hp 31.

Guards [as Beggars' Flow thug] (2): hp 7, 7.

Tactics: Madic is infatuated with Amaranda Sart, blindly loyal to her; he follows her orders to the letter in combat, even if those orders mean certain death. If fighting without Sart to guide him, Madic looks for the biggest, strongest opponent and hits him until one of them drops, then moves on to the next largest and strongest opponent, and so on.

A5. Staff Area

Although no different from the Public Stands in appearance, this region of the building can be reached only through the gates in the iron fences or by jumping down into the arena and the using the stairs at the other end. The guards object to the latter method of entry, however.

The gates in the fences are usually kept locked. Madic has a key for them, as do the two guards in this area. Should an

emergency arise, it takes a guard 1 full round to open a gate, after which the guards can move toward the source of the trouble.

Creatures: There are almost always 2 guards (Beggars' Flow thugs) here, one per gate. During matches, there are also 1d4+1 members of the arena staff here watching the fight unfold.

Guards [as Beggars' Flow thug] (2): hp 7, 7.

A6. Gladiators' Chamber

This is where the gladiators can relax before or after matches. It is a large room, fitted on each long wall with low, broad benches. The walls and ceiling are wooden, except for where it adjoins Area A8: There, the walls are brick, regularly braced with timber posts.

A barrel filled with water sits in one corner of the room, along with several clay goblets. This is drinking water for the gladiators, and is replaced every couple of days.

Creatures: Normally this room is empty. When matches are on, it holds 2d6+3 standard gladiators, 2d4+1 elite gladiators, and Sandelt. These numbers should be reduced by any gladiators actually in the arena (Area A2).

Sandelt: hp 28.

Elite gladiators: hp 3d8+9 each.

Gladiators: hp 2d8+7 each.

A7. Healers' Room

Injured gladiators are brought here for first aid after their matches. (Dead gladiators are dragged out of the building and dumped into the Body Pits at the earliest opportunity.) Like the gladiators' chamber, this room is largely constructed of wood, except where it adjoins Area A8.

The room also contains a chest with dozens of rolls of bandages, needles, thread, and other medical supplies sufficient to count as several dozen healer's kits.

Creatures: Normally, this room is empty. When matches are on, it holds 2 healers and 2d4–4 injured gladiators who are receiving treatment.

A8. Creature Cells

From time to time, the Arena holds novelty matches involving dangerous animals or other creatures. This is a rare event, as such beasts are difficult to obtain and transport to the Arena, and a huge crowd is guaranteed whenever such a match is scheduled.

Once the beasts are brought to the Arena, they are stored in this chamber, the strongest and most resilient in the entire building. The walls are double-brick, reinforced with heavy wooden posts on the outside and clad with planks on the inside to protect the bricks from the creatures' claws. The floor and ceilings are similarly double-bricked and timber-clad. The single door has a sliding grill so that the creatures' handlers can look in and locate their charges before opening the chamber, and the door itself is solid iron with reinforced hinges.

Creatures: Usually none, though it may contain 2 ghouls and/or living ghouls if the heroes succeeded at the "Catch-a-Ghoul" Planned Encounter. This room may also be used for the temporary incarceration of any spy discovered by Amarana Sart.

A9. Sart's Office

When Sart is at the Arena—that is, only when matches are scheduled or when she has called in some specific gladiators to speak with her—this is the room she uses as her office. Although constructed with simple wooden walls, much like the rest of the Arena, this room also has wooden floorboards and a better quality of furnishings to make it more comfortable than the other areas.

In addition to a large wooden desk with a leather-bound chair behind it, there are four wooden chairs for guests; a small, locked drink cabinet stocked with wine and spirits (Open Lock DC 20), and several carpets and wall hangings. There is a discernible red theme to the furnishings, Sart's sly reference to the Cult of the Crimson Path.

Heroes who sneak into this room hoping to find incriminating evidence are destined for disappointment: Sart keeps nothing of this nature in writing. However, she does sometimes discuss Cult matters with Sandelt in this room; a hero perched on the rafters (see sidebar) might be able to listen in on this conversation and glean an understanding of the Cult's agenda.

Creatures: When no matches are on, this room is empty. When matches are scheduled (but not actually taking place), Sart may be present, with 2 guards (Crimson Path cultists) at her office door and Voltorn Madic at her side. When fights are actually taking place, she and her companions are out in the staff area watching the bloodshed.

Amarana Sart: hp 19.

Voltorn Madic: hp 31.

Crimson Path cultists (2): hp 8, 8.

Tactics: See Planned Encounter #7 (page 46) and Area A4, respectively, for Amarana's and Voltorn's tactics.

Up in the Rafters

It is possible to climb up to the rafters in the Arena and then move around up there, if one is careful (Balance DC 5). From there, it is possible to listen in to conversations in the rooms below: A character on the rafters must make a DC 10 Listen check to hear a typical conversation in the room below.

However, while stationary, he must also make a Hide check against the Spot checks of all characters in the room, in order to go unobserved; when moving, he must make Hide *and* Move Silently checks each round against the occupants' Spot and Listen checks. However, the skulking character gains a +5 circumstance bonus to all Hide checks due to cover and the fact that people do not regularly look upwards.

Trouble at the Bloody Banner

It's possible that the heroes might end up starting an "unscheduled match" at the Arena, especially if they're obviously caught spying. If a fight breaks out, the following characters react in prescribed ways:

Sart's guards, Madic, and Sandelt fight the heroes to the death.

Sart fights until reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, then retreats. She has no compunction about cutting her way through spectators to escape.

Arena guards fight the heroes until they are reduced to half hit points or less, then flee.

Spectators initially watch the fight and cheer. If any of them are injured as a result of the fight, however, it sparks a stampede for the exits. Area A1 becomes subject to a stampede (see below).

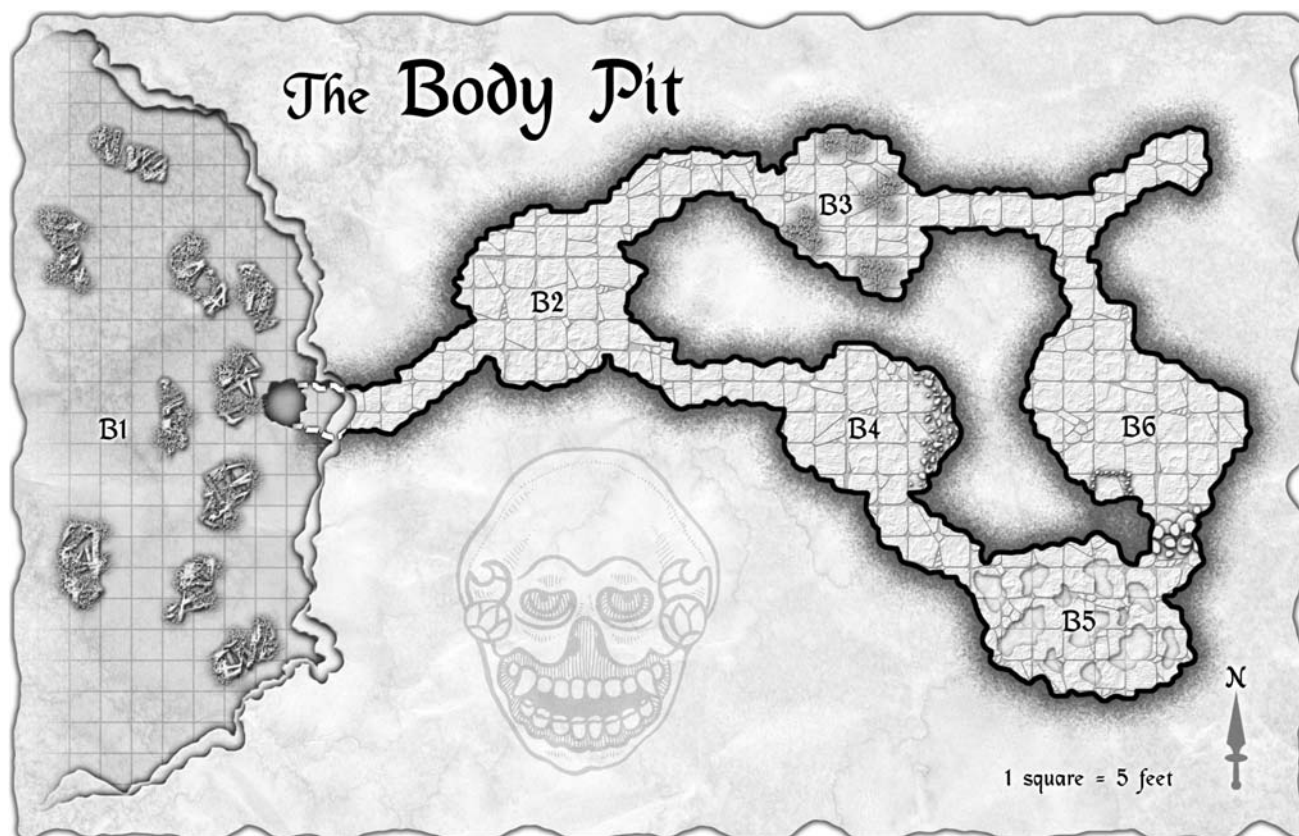
All other characters try to stay out of the fight.

Condition Zone (stampede): If a character wishes to move in the same direction as the crowd, he must make a DC 5 Strength or Escape Artist check (player's choice); if he succeeds, he can do nothing but take a move action in the same general direction as the crowd. If he makes a DC 10 Strength or Escape Artist check, he may (i) take a standard action as well as moving with the crowd, (ii) stand stationary as a full-round action, or (iii) move half his base speed in a direction of his choice as a full-round action. If either check fails, he is jostled to a prone position and suffers 1d6 points of nonlethal damage.

To stand up, a character must make a Strength check (DC 10) as a standard action. If at the end of his action a character remains prone in the crowd, he takes another 1d6 points of nonlethal damage.

A stampede blocks line of sight but not line of effect. If a character tries to take an action other than a move, he suffers a -4 penalty to attacks, checks, and saves as the crowd pushes past.

The stampede lasts 2d4+4 rounds, after which all spectators have left the building.



A10. Storage

This wood-panelled room is where the various pieces of arena scenery are kept between matches. There are 10 large sacks filled with rocks, 12 barrels, and 8 removable walls of various lengths stored here.

The Body Pits

The heroes are likely to come to the Body Pits for one of two reasons: either because they have offered to try and save Elahna's son Feren (see Planned Encounter #1) or because Madic has sent them here to recover 2 ghouls for him (see Planned Encounter #4).

B1. The Pit

The ragged-edged pit is roughly circular, approximately 60 feet in diameter. At the edges, the walls are about 3 feet deep, but the bottom slopes down toward the middle, eventually reaching a depth of nearly 10 feet. Dotted around the edges of the pit are the huge piles of earth that were excavated to make the hole. The base of the pit is heavily dusted with white quicklime; the air has a bitter, caustic taste. There are about thirty bodies in the pit, scattered wherever they have been thrown. Most are wrapped in dirty rags and little more. There are also eight crumpled bundles of rags with no bodies in them.

Development: The heroes have two options for locating the ghouls' lair: they can search the pit, or they can wait for the ghouls to appear and then follow them. If they came here in search of Feren, of course, the latter option is going to greatly reduce their chances of rescuing the boy.

Searching for the ghouls proves comparatively easy: Few people venture down into the pit, yet there are numerous tracks through the quicklime, running directly to the empty bundles of rags. A DC 5 Survival check allows one to track the ghouls back to their point of origin—a ragged hole concealed by two bodies sprawled across it. A sharp-eyed hero might even notice the hole from the edge of the pit (Spot DC 25).

If the heroes wait for ghouls to emerge, a pair of living ghouls does so 1d3 hours after the PCs begin watching. The ghouls are alert for watchers, though; compare Hide, Move Silently, Spot, and Listen checks to see who notices whom first. If the ghouls realize they are outnumbered, they quickly retreat into their caves.

Living ghouls (2): hp 10, 8.

Condition Zone (quicklime): Characters who venture into the pit begin inhaling quicklime, which is caustic and poisonous. For every minute spent in the pit, a living character must

make a Fortitude save (DC 10) or suffer 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. A character wearing a damp cloth over her mouth gains a +2 circumstance bonus on the first save.

Standard Features

Unless otherwise noted, the ceilings in the ghoulish caverns are 6 to 8 feet high, while the tunnels between them are about 5 feet in diameter. Walls, ceilings, and floors are bare earth.

There is very little light in most of the complex, and none at all in some areas. In all tunnels, and in all caverns noted as "pitch dark," there is no light at all. Any creature lacking darkvision or its own source of light is treated as being blind in these areas.

In all other caverns (except in Areas B3 and B6, which are dimly lit throughout), a creature with low-light vision can see as if in shadowy conditions up to 10 feet away. (See "Vision and Light" in Chapter 9 of *Iron Heroes*.)

The following condition and option zones also apply throughout the ghoulish caverns and tunnels:

Condition Zone (close confines): Medium characters suffer a –2 circumstance penalty to Jump, Balance, and Tumble checks within the caverns or tunnels. Additionally, due to their narrow confines, Medium creatures are deprived of their active bonus to defense unless they make an Escape Artist check (DC 5) each round. This latter penalty does not apply in the caverns, which are large enough to allow more freedom of movement.

Option Zone (unstable terrain): Reusable. As a standard action, a character may strike the wall or ceiling with a slashing or bludgeoning melee weapon and attempt to shower a single opponent they threaten with loose dirt and earth. The target must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + the character's Strength modifier) or be dazzled by the clod of dirt for 1d4 rounds.

Response to Intrusion

With one exception (noted in the appropriate location descriptions), the inhabitants of these caverns do not investigate the sounds of combat in other areas. They are used to hearing violent squabbles over food between their neighbors, and assume that the heroes' battles are simply more such scuffles.

B2. Ghoulish Greetings

The tunnel leading from the surface is only 3 feet across. Medium characters must make an Escape Artist check (DC 5) in order to squeeze through before eventually emerging into this crudely dug hole in the ground. The walls here are bare earth, clods of which fall away if the heroes brush

against them. What looks like an abandoned piece of sail is stretched across the roof, pulled taut by ropes attached to four posts in the approximate corners of the room. The floor is slightly muddy, cold and slimy but too viscous to be slippery.

Two tunnels lead out of the far side of this chamber. A dim glimmer of light can be seen somewhere down the northern tunnel.

A tripwire runs across the middle of the room, submerged just below the surface of the mud and connected to two of the wooden posts. If the heroes cross this line without detecting the trap, they yank the two posts out of the mud, and the tarpaulin collapses, dropping dozens of rocks.

Rockfall Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; Atk +12 ranged (2d4, rocks); multiple targets (all targets in 10-foot square at center of room); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Development: Exactly 4 rounds after the trap is triggered, the 3 ghouls from Area B4 arrive here to investigate the disturbance. If the PCs are still present, the ghouls attack; if the heroes have moved on, the ghouls follow after them, drawn by the scent of blood.

B3. Living Ghoul Larder

This area is dimly lit throughout; treat the entire area as being shadowy unless a character or creature has low-light vision, in which case it can see normally here.

This irregularly shaped cavern is dimly illuminated by a number of crude candles. From their bright, sputtering flames and the black smoke they give off, it seems likely the candles are made from animal fat, amongst other things. The walls, ceiling, and floor of this area are much like those in Area B2, although there is no tarpaulin stretched across the roof here.

The muddy floor of this chamber is littered with a dozen corpses, some of them half-consumed. The stench of rotting meat is hideously thick, strong enough that the heroes can almost taste it.

Creatures: If the heroes waited for the ghouls to appear in Area B1 and then pursued them into the caverns, or if they set off the deadfall trap in B2, then 5 living ghouls have concealed themselves amongst the bodies in this chamber. They wait for the heroes to move into the center of the cavern or to start investigating the bodies before they leap to their feet and attack. Roll a single Hide check for the ghouls; each hero whose Spot check fails to equal or exceed the Hide check is surprised.



If the heroes somehow managed to reach this cavern without meeting either of the two stated conditions, then the ghouls are busily feasting on the corpses here. They are not surprised, however, unless the heroes are moving stealthily and are not carrying an exposed light source.

The ghouls fight to the death.

Living ghouls (5): hp 11, 9, 8, 8, 7.

B4. True Ghouls

This area is pitch dark.

This chamber is much like B2, except that dozens of bones and skulls stick out of the muddy floor, so that the PCs are likely to crush these bits of human remains under their feet.

On the eastern side of this cavern, the floor, ceiling, and walls are studded with rocks, ranging in size from that of a human fist to that of a human head. Creatures making use of the “unstable terrain” option zone (see the “Standard Features” sidebar) in this area of the cave not only potentially dazzle their opponent, but deal 1d3 points of bludgeoning damage from flying rocks.

Creatures: Unless they were already encountered elsewhere in the complex, this cave is home to 3 ghouls, which move rapidly to attack any living intruders. They fight to the death.

Ghouls (3): hp 14, 14, 12.

B5. Ghoul Pool

This area is pitch dark.

The earthen walls here are even more damp and slippery than in the rest of the complex, before opening out into a quagmire of a cavern that is dotted with muddy pools of water.

A tunnel leading north from this chamber is blocked by several large stones. The stones have clearly been placed here deliberately, as there is nothing else like them in the area, and they neatly block off the tunnel. (While living ghouls do not generally need to fear undead creatures, they prefer not to leave the true ghouls with too many ways of entering their caves). Pushing these stones out of the way requires a DC 20 Strength check.

Condition Zone (slippery mud): Any character attempting to run, charge, or fight here must make a Balance check (DC 5) each round or fall prone.

B6. Feast of the Ghoul King

This area is dimly lit throughout; treat the entire area as being shadowy unless a character or creature has low-light vision, in which case it can see normally here.

Fayrsh, the leader of the living ghouls, makes his lair here with his three mates. The cavern itself is not much different than the others of the complex, though a little larger and more spacious. Like the larder (Area B3), it is lit with crude candles; in the south-west corner is a crudely built wooden cage.

Special: If the heroes came into the caves to rescue Feren (see Planned Encounter #1, page 45) and they have not delayed in their pursuit, then the boy is in the cage. If the PCs came for another reason, or if they have delayed for an hour or more since learning of his disappearance, then Feren is no more.

The tunnel leading southward from this chamber is blocked with stones; see Area B5 for more details.

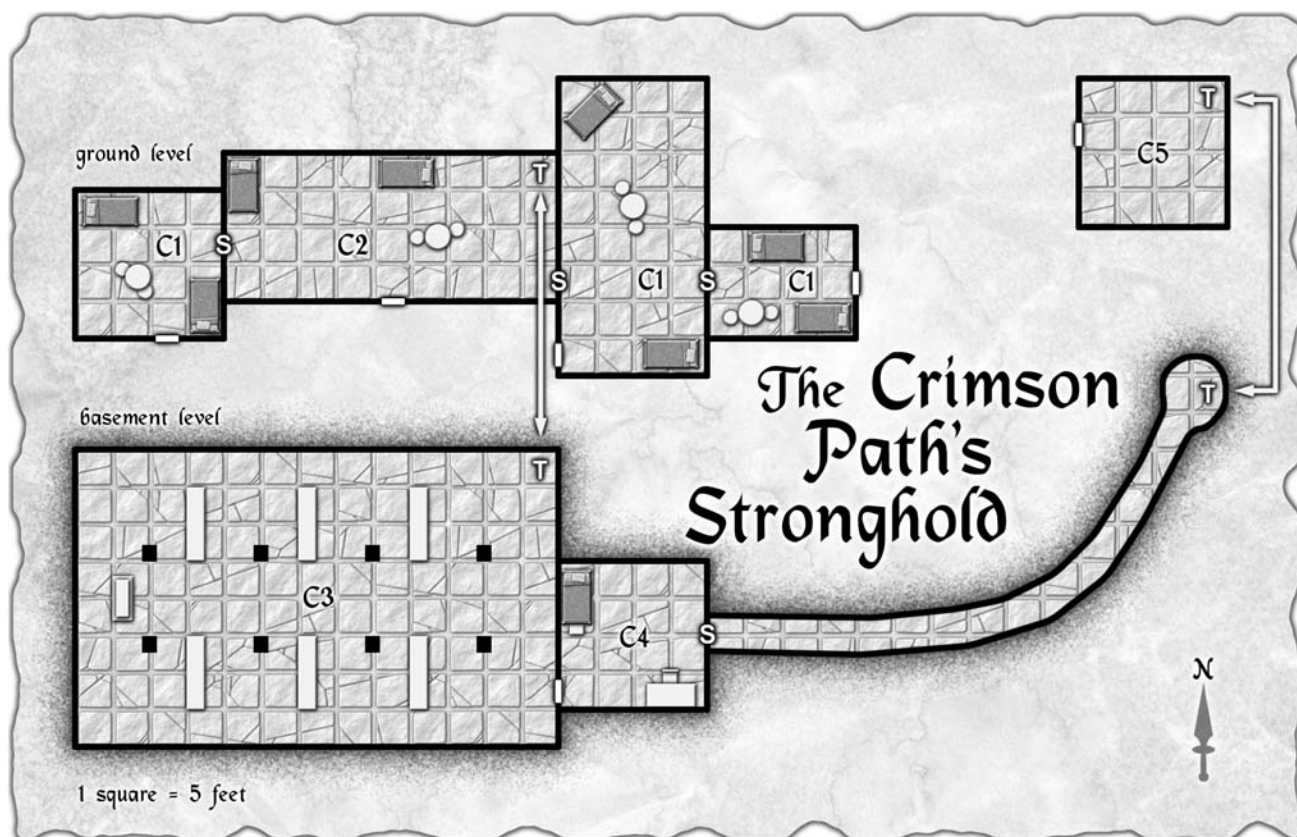
Creatures: As noted above, this chamber is home to the leader of the living ghouls and his harem of females. These foul creatures fight to the death.

Fayrsh: hp 18.

Living ghouls (3): hp 9, 9, 7.

Treasure: Fayrsh keeps a secret stash of treasure under a large, flat stone—the very one on which he usually squats. Discovering this trove requires a successful DC 15 Search check. Fayrsh’s collection contains many items of negligible value; his mind is no longer rational, and he has hoarded these items more from dim memories of his life before he contracted the *hunger rot* than from any sense of their value.

In addition to dozens of random pieces of broken glass, pottery, and mundane metal implements such as knives and spoons, the following items are stored in the trove: a silver signet ring (worth 20 gp), a bronze goblet (5 gp), 2 small pieces of ivory (10 gp each), 27 cp, 13 sp, and a garnet (35 gp).



The Crimson Path Stronghold

Five shanties form the public face of the cult's "stronghold." Four stand within the same city block, their fragile walls supporting each other, while the fifth is separate, just across one of the muddy tracks that pass for streets in Beggars' Flow.

C1. Outer Hovel

These dirty, makeshift buildings are indistinguishable from the hundreds of others that surround them. They have bare earthen floors and makeshift walls of whatever materials their builders could find: canvas, wood, stones, bricks, and so forth.

Within, each hovel features a pair of stools, a small table, and two rudimentary beds of rags and stolen straw. A few wooden or clay bowls are usually stacked on the table, while a cleared space just outside the door is marked with the ashes of a firepit.

Secret Door: Each hovel features a panel in one or more walls that is designed to slide away and allow unobserved movement between that shanty and those adjacent to it. These panels are well concealed from casual observation, but are fairly easy to find in a thorough search (Spot DC 28, Search DC 15).

Creatures: Two of these three buildings are always occupied by two Crimson Path cultists. The third is empty, depending on the time of day, for its two occupants accompany Amarana Sart as bodyguards. Unless they know Amarana to be slain or fled, all Crimson Path cultists in every location fight to the death, asking no quarter and offering none in return. If they know Amarana to be dead or missing, the cultists surrender as soon as they are injured.

Crimson Path cultists (4): hp 7 each.

Development: Characters in one of the other hovels automatically hear any normal combat taking place here (and vice versa) and move to investigate.

C2. Entry Hovel

This shanty is distinguishable from those around it for only two reasons: first, it is *always* occupied by 2 Crimson Path cultists, never unoccupied. Second, there is a wooden trapdoor set into the northwest corner of the floor. This second feature is the reason for the first.

Secret Trapdoor: The trapdoor is concealed with a scattering of dirt, but this is intended only to protect it from a cursory inspection (Spot DC 25, Search DC 15): Should anyone learn enough of the cult to be in this building and searching carefully for trapdoors, Amarana figures that they will be capable of finding the trapdoor.

Although Sart sees little point in hiding the trapdoor, she is certainly not about to leave it untrapped. Anyone opening the trapdoor without first slipping her fingers underneath to unhook the cord located there is subject to a spring-loaded javelin trap.

Javelin Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; Atk +16 ranged (1d6+4, javelin); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 18.

Creatures: As noted, there are 2 Crimson Path cultists in this room at all times. Sandelt, if alive, also stays here when she is not at the arena.

Sandelt: hp 28.

Crimson Path cultists (2): hp 8, 8.

Development: Characters in one of the other hovels automatically hear any normal combat taking place here (and vice versa) and move to investigate. The sound is too muffled for creatures below the surface to hear anything, however.

C3. Main Temple

A rope-ladder descends 15 feet from the trapdoor in Area C2 to the floor of this location. Although carved out of the earth, the temple's walls, ceilings, and floors are clad with planks of wood, which both reinforce the structure and make it look more impressive. Thick lengths of lumber, stolen from camps outside town, have been set up in two rows that march down the length of the room, giving additional support to the roof. The columns and walls are all hung with drapes of red canvas, which reflect the light from the dozen candelabras scattered about the room, giving the whole place a bloody glow.

Simple wooden benches form makeshift pews for the cultists, all facing toward a large stone altar that looks as if it was carved out of bedrock uncovered during the excavation of the room. A dagger and a bronze bowl sit on top of the altar, which is flanked by four of the room's twelve candelabras.

Creatures: This chamber is always occupied by 2 Crimson Path cultists and 2 dretches, who attack anyone they do not recognize unless he or she is accompanied by Amarana.

Crimson Path cultists (2): hp 10, 9.

Dretches (2): hp 14, 13.

Treasure: The bronze bowl on the altar is worth 25 gp. The 12 candelabras are made of iron, but are worth 2 gp each. The sacrificial dagger is actually a masterwork dagger. If you think your heroes will struggle to win a battle here (especial-

ly if they are undertaking Planned Encounter #7: "A Crimson Opportunity"), consider making the dagger a cold iron weapon, allowing one of them to bypass the dretches' damage reduction.

Option Zone (canvas drapes): 1 use per 5-foot wall section or pillar. A character standing next to a column or wall can use a standard action with a slashing melee weapon to cut down the canvas drape that hangs there, causing it to fall on an opponent with whom they are in melee. The target must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + the attacking character's Dexterity or Intelligence bonus) or be blinded and entangled by the canvas. The target can escape from the canvas automatically with a standard action, or with a DC 10 Escape Artist check as a free action.

Option Zone (benches): Reusable. With a standard action and a DC 12 Strength check, a character can pick up one of the 10-foot-long, 50-pound benches. He can then either use this as an improvised reach weapon that can also attack adjacent targets (2-handed, 1d8 bludgeoning), or he can use it to ram opponents. While he carries the bench, he gains a +4 bonus to bull rush attempts, and can attempt to bull rush two adjacent targets at once. Attacks of opportunity against these bull rush attempts are 50% likely to hit the bench rather than the character.

Condition Zone (columns): A column can be used to gain cover.

C4. Sart's Chambers

The door to this chamber has a lock (Open Lock DC 25), but Amarana usually leaves it unlocked when she is present in the stronghold. She possesses the only key. If she flees into this room at any stage, she pauses to lock the door behind her (a standard action).

Like the main temple, this smaller chamber is lined on all surfaces with wooden planks, and the walls are hung with red canvas drapes. A bedroll, several blankets, and a rag-stuffed mattress make up a bed in one corner, while a writing desk and chair sit in another. A wooden chest sits at the foot of the bedding; it is not locked, but anyone opening it without first disabling the poison needle trap in the lid is subject to the trap's effects (see below).

Poison Needle Trap: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; +8 ranged (1 plus poison—Fortitude DC 12, initial 1/secondary 1d4 Con and 1d3 Wis); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 20.

Secret Door: Two of the planks in the eastern door are designed to pull free, revealing an escape tunnel for Amarana (Search DC 20).

Treasure: Inside the chest are several changes of clothes, a bag containing 213 gp, and a copy of the Crimson Path's holy text, *Followers of the Path*, in which Sart has scribbled notations about how the divine edicts can be applied to the destruction of Malador.

The writing desk has a small clay bowl half-filled with ash, such as from a pipe. The PCs are not likely to recognize the significance of this item, at least not for some time, but it signifies that Amarana was recently in contact with Hokar Bilthone (see Chapter 5).

C5. Escape Shanty

The tunnel from Amarana's room leads to a rope ladder up to a trapdoor into a deserted and boarded-up shanty. This shanty is identical to those of Area C1, except that it is solidly boarded from the inside, preventing access from the exterior without considerable effort. A claw hammer rests on the floor of the shanty, making escape from the inside a simple matter.

Amarana uses this secret tunnel as her escape route, should the heroes seem on the verge of destroying the Cult's operation.

Secret Door: The trapdoor in this shanty is better hidden than that in Area C2. It requires a Search check (DC 20) to locate. Naturally, it is obvious to anyone approaching it from beneath. The trapdoor is trapped in identical fashion to the one in C2. The trap can be spotted and disarmed automatically by any character approaching the trapdoor from Amarana's room.

Javelin Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; Atk +16 ranged (1d6+4, javelin); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 18.

Aftermath

After the heroes return from Beggars' Flow, Wellaw sends them an invitation to meet with him and tell him what occurred. Assuming they have discovered the Crimson Path's activities, secured Sart's holy text as evidence, and put an end to the threat, he is very pleased with their efforts and congratulates them on a job well done.

Rewards

If the heroes offer to help Elahna when her son is stolen by the ghouls, award them 100 XP each.

For each of the following actions or accomplishments completed successfully, Wellaw rewards each of the heroes 50 gp:

- Discovering the Crimson Path's activities
- Returning with evidence of these activities (such as captives or Sart's holy text)
- Killing or capturing more than 10 cult members (not including Sart)
- Killing or capturing Sart
- Identifying Iloya Harvle as Councilor Delorri's spy and either having her eliminated or advising Wellaw of her identity
- Identifying Quodan Zee as a Borati spy and either having him eliminated or advising Wellaw of his identity

Before the Next Adventure

The events of Chapter 3 are intended to begin roughly four weeks after this section concludes, though you can increase or decrease this delay to better suit your campaign. You may have an adventure of your own to slot in, or the PCs may have plans or interests they want to follow up on.

Remember also that if Voltorn Madic is still alive and the PCs either killed or captured Amarana Sart, he hires 6 Beggars' Flow thugs to assist him and ambushes the heroes on the street one day during the week after the heroes' investigation is completed.

CHAPTER FOUR: SECRETS OF THE FOOT

A group of pirates has carried out a successful raid on the Drowning Towers. This has never happened before, and threatens to cripple Malador financially if the feat proves repeatable. Fresh from their success against the Crimson Path, the player characters are called upon to identify and capture the pirates' co-conspirators, and then put an end to the pirates themselves. This task takes them deep into the Bleakwater, where the pirates have made their lair.

A party of four heroes should earn enough experience to progress to 4th level by the end of this chapter.

Word on the Street

- "They say there was a bloodbath in the Flow last month — even more so than usual, that is." (*True.*)
- "I hear there was some trouble at the Bath House yesterday. A fight or something." (*Partially true.* If the heroes investigate, they discover that an attractive young attendant refused the advances of a guest—Councilor Rohdell, they discover, if they dig further—and had her wrist broken in the process.)
- "The Council is going to sell the city out to Borat, you just watch: As long as they get their cut of the action, they don't care about the common folk." (*Partially true.*)
- "I heard there was some panic up in Clifftop last week. Seems the Borati Envoy's dog went missing. Can you believe they had *town guards* looking for it? Yeah, it turned up fine." (*Partly true.* Juthe's dog indeed disappeared, but that it came back "fine" is arguable: It has secretly been replaced by a barghest. See Chapter 5 for more details.)
- "I have a cousin who works for the Council, and I heard that they're deadlocked on the whole Union thing up there, with only that pig Rohdell left undecided. It's going to get ugly before this thing is done." (*True.*)

Hooking the Heroes

As this chapter begins, the heroes receive a personal visit from Councilor Chyra Delorri. With two out-of-uniform noble guards as protection, she rides to their inn in a hooded cloak, enters via a rear door, and takes out one of the vacant rooms. This done, she sends the innkeeper to fetch the PCs with a message that a private citizen wishes to discuss an urgent and potentially profitable matter.

When the heroes arrive in the room, Delorri introduces herself and explains the situation:

"I am sorry for the subterfuge and secrecy, but there is good reason. First, I must make it clear that I am here as a private business owner, not a member of the Council. Second, before I say anything further, I must make it clear to you all that the matter I wish to discuss is extremely sensitive. While you are under no compulsion to agree to my proposal, I must ask for your word that you will not speak to anyone else about what I have to say."

Delorri waits for the heroes' assurances, using her Sense Motive skill (+8 bonus) to gauge whether they are telling her the truth. Assuming the heroes truthfully give their word, or manage to fool her if they lie, she continues her explanation.

"A pirate vessel has been attacking Maladoran ships as they return from the Drowning Towers. This has never previously been a problem, both due to the difficulty of locating vessels as they return from the Towers, and because those vessels are usually carrying people who have survived a Tower expedition: men and women who are more than capable of fighting off the usual sort of rabble who take up piracy."

"But the crew of this new vessel—which we believe is called the Hydra—have now successfully raided three of our ships, making off with a great deal of treasure and killing any aboard the vessels who tried to resist. You have recently proven your abilities and survival instincts in the Beggars' Flow, and I believe you may be able to help with this matter as well."
[Note that this tract assumes the heroes successfully completed Chapter Three; you may need to change this wording if that is not the case.]

Delorri's Offer

Chyra Delorri is making her offer "as a private citizen" because she and her allies in the Sea Captain faction know that, should the news become public, it would be a great propaganda weapon for the Unionists (who could argue that Malador need never worry about pirates if it had the military might of Borat to protect it). It might also panic many of the merchants and nobles of the city, who rely on the wealth from the Towers for their livelihoods.

Accordingly, she wants the whole matter resolved quietly. Note that Delorri doesn't explain her reasons beyond calling her purpose "a sensitive political matter," but astute heroes can piece things together for themselves with a DC 20 Knowledge (nobility & royalty) check.

Unlike some employers, who simply say "go fix the problem," Delorri has a plan to offer the heroes, as well as some additional information.

First, she can tell them that all three attacked ships were carrying first-time Tower explorers, generally people who were young and untested before their expeditions. This makes

Delorri believe that there is someone feeding information to the pirates: a clerk down at the wharves, a harbor pilot, or someone else involved in sending the Tower missions on their way. Of course, there are too many such people to arrest them all, and by the time an investigation found the culprits, they would likely have got wind of it and disappeared.

Second, she can tell them that the attackers are led by a howling beast of a man: powerful and vicious, he seems driven to ever-increasing bloodlust the longer the battles continue. The pirates also count among them a heavily armored warrior, whom one survivor insists fell out of their vessel and then walked across the sea floor to climb back up onto the *Hydra*!

Third, the *Hydra* can be recognized easily by its remarkable prow, which features five painted serpent heads all rearing up to strike.

Delorri's plan is simple enough: The heroes are to make a new voyage to the Drowning Towers, setting out on the same date as the next group of neophyte explorers. However, once at the Towers, the two groups are to swap vessels, so the heroes will return in the neophytes' ship. Then, when the *Hydra* attacks, the heroes (fresh and rested since they have not actually ventured into the Towers) can defeat them and capture the pirate vessel. From there, Delorri indicates, they should make the surviving pirates take them back to their base, kill or capture any more of the band they find there, and try to discover the identity of the person who is sending them information from Malador.

If the heroes accept the offer, Delorri offers them "a minimum of 200 gold pieces each if you capture the *Hydra*. Deal with the pirate base as well or discover the identity of their leader, and I will pay you still more."



Chapter Four Event Encounters

Below are two short encounters that can occur at any time during Chapter 4 when the heroes are in an appropriate part of Malador. As with Event Encounters in previous chapters, the heroes have little to do within each scene except to observe it.

1. Abandoned Treasures: While in Harborside, the heroes notice a small crowd outside Exotic Treasures. Those in the crowd are peering in through the darkened windows of the shop, banging on the door, and holding a confused conversation. It seems Halgyn Polle has not opened the store, and no one knows why. Within an hour, a squad of guards surrounds the building, which remains closed for three days until Polle is replaced with a new shopkeeper. *This encounter works best if the new shopkeeper is brought in before the heroes are contacted by Councilor Delorri.*

2. Changes at the Lost Angel: A hired crier walks past the heroes on the street, calling out news of "a new, even more spectacular act" at the Lost Angel: the Acrobatics Spectacular. "Fire-breathing! Death-defying tumbling and stunts! Never before seen in Malador!"

Against the *Hydra*

Assuming the heroes agree to Delorri's offer, she immediately puts her plan into effect. The heroes are registered for another voyage to the Towers on the same day as a group of first-timers. Unless the heroes wish to do so, they need not meet these newcomers. If they do, they are warned that the newcomers know nothing of Delorri's plans, so the PCs should say nothing of them. As well, there is the potential for some light-hearted interaction between the "old vet" PCs and a wide-eyed group of neophytes, who have doubtless heard something of the heroes, or perhaps for a budding rivalry between the "new and old guard," depending on your players' temperaments.

The voyage to the Drowning Towers and the exchange of ships (which comes as a complete surprise to the new adventurers) pass without incident, and after remaining near the Towers for a day, the heroes' new vessel begins its journey home. It is perhaps 3 hours before sunset when the *Hydra's* sail appears; within an hour, the other ship is clearly in view, rapidly closing the distance between the two vessels.

The *Hydra's* great speed comes from the fact that it is somewhat narrower than a typical Maladoran keelboat, giving it a more streamlined shape, and from having 10 two-man oarlocks, instead of the typical vessel's 6 one-man oarlocks. These changes make it uneconomical as a cargo vessel; it can carry less than half as much with a crew twice as large. But trade was not what it was designed for...

Drowning Towers, Take Two

Your heroes may want to take this opportunity to explore another of the Drowning Towers, rather than simply turning back with an empty vessel in order to launch their ambush on the *Hydra*. Alternatively, you may wish to send them on another expedition in order to give them a little extra experience, especially if you feel they need a bit more advancement before taking on the rest of this module. The details of any other Towers are left to the DM's discretion and design.

The Attack

Eventually, the *Hydra* pulls up alongside the heroes' current vessel, the *Blue Lady*, and its crew throws grappling hooks to draw the two ships alongside. The pirates then pour onto the heroes' ship, making loud demands for surrender as they come. Anyone who seems inclined to resist is attacked immediately.

The *Blue Lady* is identical in design to the *Take A Chance* (see page 59). Her crew of 10 have all been picked for their value in a fight. During the *Hydra* battle, to make matters simple, you should assume that these crew members manage to keep half (i.e., 8) of the pirate crew occupied, leaving the heroes to account for the other opponents.

Creatures: Troke and Gwent both stand out from their 16 piratical companions, who are a typically desperate and dirty-looking group of ruffians. Gwent is about 30 years of age, foppishly handsome, dressed in fine silks that have wilted badly in the salt air; Troke is a burly, half-naked barbarian with only half his teeth, faded white scars criss-crossing his chest.

Vilian Troke: hp 40.

Omar Gwent: hp 9.

Animated armor (1): hp 31.

Pirates (16): hp 11 each.

Tactics: Troke leads the charge into any battle. When assaulting an enemy vessel, he usually begins by taking a standard action to stoke his fury, activating his berserk strength, and then uses a move action to leap across to the other vessel. Once there, he focuses his attacks on whichever opponent seems the most skillful, trusting to his fury and his incredible reserves of energy (through the berserk toughness ability) to carry him through the battle. Troke always uses full Power Attack.

Omar remains on the *Hydra* during attacks, firing into the battle at any opponent who seems to be gaining an advantage in the melee. He moves back and forth on his own vessel as needed to get clear shots, but does not venture onto the enemy ship until all resistance is at an end. If an enemy returns fire at him, Omar focuses all his attacks on that character. If anyone seeks to engage him in melee, Omar uses Tumble to get clear and then shoots the offending character.

The animated armor itself simply advances on the nearest opponent every round, bludgeoning him or her with its fists until the opponent falls.

The normal pirates flood onto the heroes' vessel in Troke's wake, spreading out and trying to get two-on-one odds on those heroes not engaged by Troke (whom they do not trust to separate friend from foe...) or the animated armor (which they fear as being highly unnatural).

Of all the pirates, only Troke and the animated armor fight to the death in every circumstance. The rank-and-file pirates



The Animated Armor

At first glance, this ancient construct of the Masters appears to be just a man in a suit of full plate. However, the sharp-eyed (Spot DC 15) quickly notice the stiffness of its movements and the unnatural ways in which its limbs sometimes bend. The animated armor's every movement is also accompanied by a scraping of iron on iron.

Discovered by a group of adventurers in the Drowning Towers, the damaged remains of the animated armor were brought to Malador, where Halgyn Polle succeeded in repairing the suit and activating it by reading the runes of Ancient Speech engraved inside its skull. When he left Malador, he took the armor with him, recognizing that it would be useful to the pirates' cause.

The armor's hardness and immunity to critical hits makes it hard to damage. The heroes might need to consider other means of defeating the armor, such as pinning it in a grapple and tying it up, or knocking it off the boat (the latter doesn't destroy it, but it cannot get back to the surface unless someone lowers it a rope to climb). If you think these options may not be enough, consider adding several flasks of acid to the equipment on the PCs' ship: acid does full damage to objects.

fight to the death while Troke still stands, but thereafter surrender as soon as they are injured. If Troke is dead and at least 4 of their peers have already died or surrendered, the rest surrender en masse. Omar Gwent surrenders when the remaining pirates do, or as soon as he is injured by a melee attack, whichever occurs first.

Combat Zones: The following condition and option zones apply on the *Blue Lady*:

Condition Zone (pitch and yaw): The rocking of the vessel makes the footing unsteady. Any character who does not have the Sea Child background trait suffers a -2 penalty to all Balance, Jump, and Tumble checks during this combat.

Option Zone (oars): Reusable. With a move action, a character can pick up one of the *Blue Lady's* 10-foot oars, which can be used as improvised reach or double weapons (1d6/1d6 damage). A character can switch from using the oar as a reach weapon to a double weapon or vice versa as a free action once per round. An oar can also be used to trip an opponent, and the wielder can opt to drop the oar rather than suffer an opponent's retaliatory trip attempt if his own trip attempt fails.

Option Zone (tarpaulin): One use. With a full-round action and a DC 12 Strength check, a character can pull down the tarpaulin at the rear of the *Blue Lady*. This can then be used

as an improvised weapon that entangles an opponent like a net, except that it can only be thrown up to 2 range increments; it affects all characters in a 10-foot-by-10-foot area rather than just a single square.

Victory at Sea

Once defeated, the pirates can be interrogated. They are initially resistant to any suggestion of betraying their comrades at their home base, but can be browbeaten (Intimidate DC 20) or talked into it in exchange for leniency (Diplomacy DC 20, or DC 15 if the pirates are promised freedom and actually believe the heroes).

The pirates have their encampment about 3 miles inland in the Bleakwater, along a channel of deep water only they know about. The camp consists of two wooden houses constructed from logs brought in by ship and a wooden palisade to keep out the swamp's dangerous wildlife. The *Blue Lady's* skipper suggests that two of his men go aboard the *Hydra* with the heroes and help them sail it up this channel to the pirate base. They will also need one of the pirates with them to provide directions. He, meanwhile, heads back to Malador with the prisoners and hands them over to the authorities.

The Pirates' Contact: All of the surviving pirates claim to have no idea who the group's contact in the city might be. With the exception of Omar Gwent, they are telling the truth. Gwent isn't much of a liar, so if he is asked the heroes might well become aware that he knows the answer. Despite his cowardice about many things, however, Gwent does not give up the name of the contact, even under threat of death. Of course, this heroic resistance is so at odds with his normal character that it should be immediately apparent the contact is someone to whom he feels great loyalty (it is in fact his brother).

The Pirate Encampment

The locations within the pirate encampment are outlined below. These descriptions include the creatures present in these areas at the time of the heroes' arrival.

Do not think of the encampment as a static environment, however. If the alarm is raised, such as by one of the tower bells being run, by Aletha Polle sounding her conch horn, or just by the general commotion of battle, the various creatures within the camp react to these developments (as seems appropriate to the DM).

Standard Features

Unless otherwise noted, ceilings inside the pirate buildings are 8 feet high. The walls, ceilings, and floors are of wood: whole logs for the exterior walls, planks for everything else. Due to the salty air and marshy terrain, the buildings are constructed without nails, which would rust. Wooden spikes are used instead. Most rooms have simple, square windows large enough to admit a human being if they wanted to climb through.

The camp is also surrounded by a 10-foot-high wooden palisade designed to keep out the swamp's dangerous wildlife. There's no battlement on this wall, but there are three towers along it.

Every room in the camp's two buildings also contains a lantern for illumination, but these are kept lit only when a room is currently occupied.

Palisade and Exterior Walls: Hardness 5; hit points 45; Break DC 25.

Interior Walls and Floors: Hardness 5; hit points 15; Break DC 18.

Doors: Hardness 5; hit points 15; Break DC 18 (unbarred) or 25 (barred).

1. Central Yard

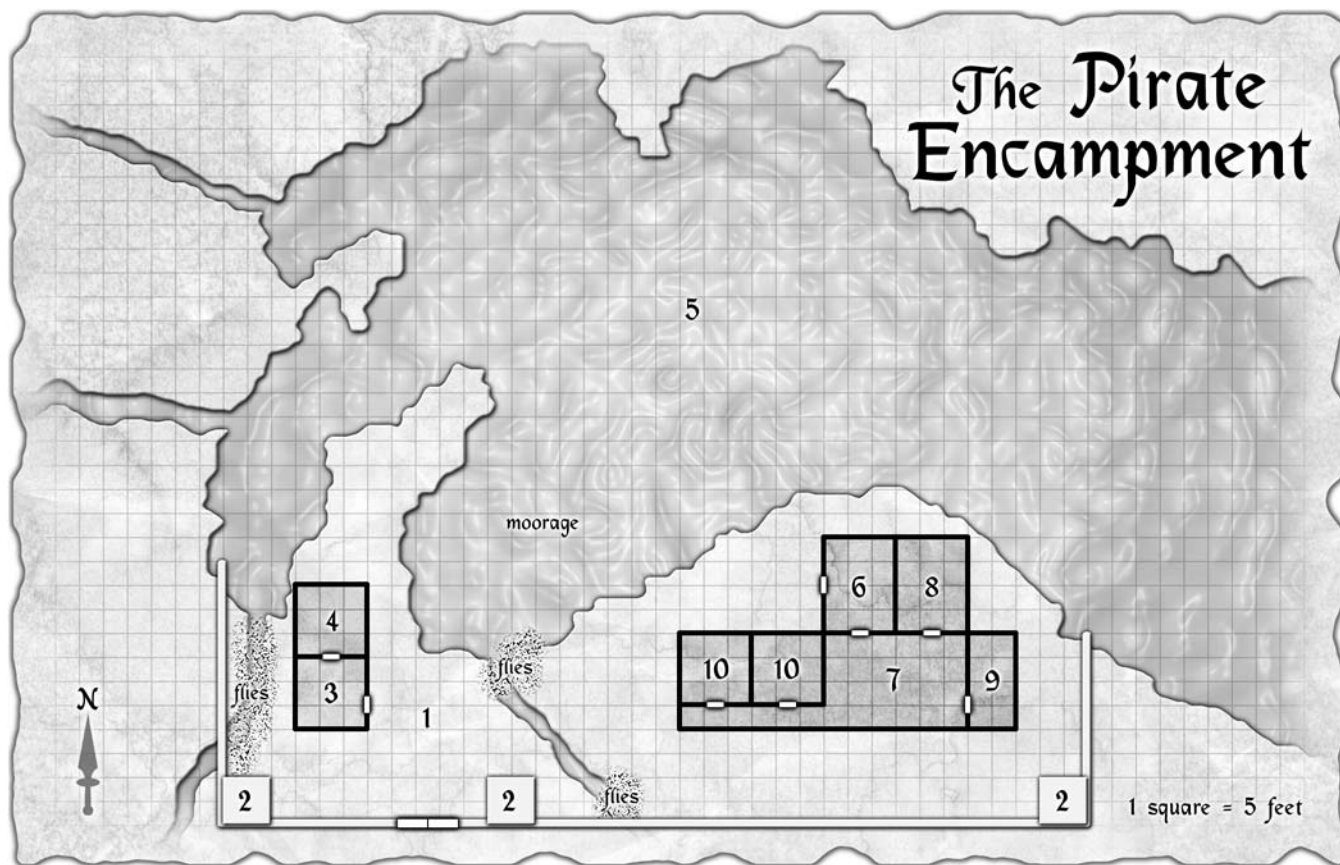
The pirate encampment consists of two buildings separated by a wide, marshy area some 80 feet by 40 feet in size. The ground is rough and uneven, with several shallow, stagnant pools and even a couple of small streams.

Creatures: Roosting on the roof of the buildings in the camp are 6 blood rooks (see Appendix). These creatures were raised from eggs by Aletha and respond to her commands alone. They do no attack humans unless she orders them to do so or the humans attack them first (which jumpy heroes might do after their experience in the Drowning Towers).

Blood rooks (6): hp 8, 7, 5, 5, 4, 3.

Condition Zone (biting swarms): Large swarms of flies, mosquitoes, and other relatively harmless biting insects exist in the marked areas; these bugs are too small to inflict damage on a character, but their relentless bites prove distracting. Every character who remains in an affected area must make a DC 13 Fortitude save each round or suffer a –2 penalty to attacks, checks, and saves for that round.

Condition Zone (bog): All squares adjacent to the lake or to the streams marked on the map, as well as the streams themselves, have deep mud or standing water about 1 foot in depth. It costs double the normal movement to move into



these squares; as well, the DC of Tumble checks in such squares increases by 2 and characters therein suffer a –2 penalty on Move Silently checks.

Option Zone (mud): Reusable. As a standard action, any character can scoop up a handful of swamp mud that can then be thrown at an opponent's face in an attempt to blind him. The mud attack has a range increment of 10 feet. The attacker and defender make opposed base attack checks, with a +4 circumstance bonus for the defender (the attacker must also apply any applicable range penalty on his check). If the attacker's check succeeds, the defender is blinded for 1d3 rounds.

2. Watch Towers

These three wooden towers look out over the palisade. Each consists of a wooden platform 6 feet off the ground, with a sloped plank roof another 8 feet above that. A rudimentary wooden ladder leads up to each platform, and a bronze bell hangs from each roof.

A watch is kept from each tower for swamp creatures or other enemies, and the bells are rung immediately if anything dangerous seems to be making its way toward the camp.

Creatures: There is one pirate on guard duty in each tower.

Pirates (3): hp 11 each.

Development: The watchers ring their alarm bells if they see people in the camp whom they do not recognize. However, as their attention is focused *outside* of the camp, they suffer a –2 penalty on all Spot checks to notice events occurring within the palisade walls or on the lake. They don't have any penalties to Listen checks, however, so they should hear any alarm raised in the complex.

3. Halgyn's Workshop

This is a small but well-equipped smithy, with furnace, anvil, and a full suite of metal-working tools. In order to prevent fires, the wooden surfaces of the room are all covered in Hessian cloth, which is regularly dampened with buckets of swamp water.

Creatures: Halgyn Polle works here most days, trying to puzzle out how to build another animated armor. He has had no success so far, and many partially complete pieces of armor, modeled after the animated armor, are scattered around the room.

Halgyn Polle: hp 38.

Tactics: Halgyn begins shouting at the top of his lungs as soon as a fight breaks out, in an attempt to draw help. He also makes extensive use of his *Foe Hammer* feats to wind opponents and injure their limbs so that they have difficulty fleeing. If he finds himself facing a heavily armored opponent, he uses his *Appraise* skill to look for weak spots in the armor, and also uses *Power Attack* as necessary to punch through high DR.

Treasure: Although none of the suits of armor are complete, any character who spends a few hours and makes a DC 15 Craft (armorsmithing) check can put together a suit of masterwork banded mail from the completed pieces lying about.

Halgyn's masterwork smith's tools are also here.

Option Zone (furnace): Reusable. As a standard action, any character adjacent to the furnace can use one of the utensils nearby to scoop out a small bundle of hot coals and throw them at an opponent within 10 feet. This requires a ranged touch attack. If the attack is successful, that target takes 1d6+1 points of fire damage.

Alternatively, with a full-round action and a DC 15 Strength check a character adjacent to the furnace can choose to push it over. This automatically triggers the "flammable" condition zone below. The character suffers 1d4 points of fire damage from the hot metal whether or not the Strength check succeeds.

Condition Zone (flammable): The wet Hessian cloth is designed to prevent sparks from causing fires, not to prevent flames from whole handfuls of coals. Every time a character uses the "furnace" option zone to throw a small bundle of coals at an opponent, there is a cumulative 10% chance of a fire breaking out. The fire begins in the targeted square and doubles in size every 5 rounds unless extinguished, until the entire building is ablaze. Anyone passing through a burning square at any point during their action suffers 1d6 points of fire damage, plus an additional 1d6 fire damage if they end their turn in a burning square.

Option Zone (water buckets): 4 uses. Each bucket can be used to automatically put out one square of fire as a standard action. Extinguishing a square without a bucket of water requires a full-round action and a DC 15 Dexterity or Wisdom check to beat out the flames.

4. Halgyn's Quarters

Halgyn keeps a simple room: The only furnishings here are a writing desk with a chair, a chest for holding his clothes, and a bed. On the floor at the foot of the bed are a collection of old blankets smelling distinctly of wet dog fur.

Creatures: Halgyn brought his guard dogs with him when he left Exotic Treasures. There are usually 2 dogs dozing on the blankets in this room. They don't react to the sound of weapons clashing (since they are used to Halgyn hammering in the next room), but they come instantly awake at a shout from Halgyn or Aletha, or at the sound of Aletha's conch horn.

Aletha and Halgyn, but no others, can command the dogs.

Guard dogs (2): hp 14, 12.

Treasure: The writing desk has 2 leather-bound books upon it. Both are written in Ancient Speech and discuss alchemical formulae and the necessary steps to imbue non-living objects with a kind of life. The concepts they discuss are beyond any mortal arcanist of the current age, but they are nonetheless worth 50 gp each to a student of arcane lore.

A false floorboard under the bed conceals a secret compartment (Search DC 20). This compartment is trapped with a springloaded box of darts (see below) and contains documentation of the entire piracy conspiracy, as well as the amounts invested and by whom, the portion of proceeds each conspirator is to receive, and the minimum standards of public investment all participants are required to make. (See the "Piracy Conspiracy" sidebar for more information.)

There is also a pouch containing 100 gp in the compartment.

Fusillade-of-Darts Trap: CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; Atk +18 ranged (1d4+1, dart); multiple targets (1d8 darts per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 25.

5. Hydra Lake

This is a deep lake, unremarkable in every way except for the fact that a five-headed hydra lives in a half-submerged cave on the northern bank. The hydra was raised from infancy by Aletha, and is utterly loyal to her. If anyone blows Aletha's conch horn, the hydra arrives on the southern bank of the lake in 1d4+1 rounds, and proceeds to attack anyone who is attempting to harm Aletha.

Hydra, 5-headed (1): hp 55.

6. Base Entry

This plain wooden room is empty except for a bearskin rug on the floor and a row of three barrels against the eastern wall. Two of these barrels are filled with oil (100 flasks' worth apiece), while the last is only one-quarter full.

The Piracy Conspiracy

There's more than just mere piracy on the minds of some of the people involved in the *Hydra's* escapades. Hylgan and Aletha Polle, together with Senturn Gwent (*male human commoner 2*; Omar Gwent's brother), conceived the idea of the pirate vessel as a means of redistributing the wealth of the city to a wider audience.

Senturn, a clerk at the Excise Office in Malador, became disgusted by the sheer wealth he saw coming in to the city and remaining in the hands of a privileged few, who then spent most of their unearned gains on maintaining their own power and privilege at the expense of everyone else in the city. Halgyn, at the Exotic Treasures store, saw the same thing as was similarly disturbed.

While Aletha scouted out a location for a base, Hylgan and Senturn began contacting those amongst the Foot's middle class who had spoken out against the corruption in the city. They requested that these men and women help finance the construction of a fast new vessel capable of chasing down the treasure ships. Hylgan and Senturn would then assemble a crew capable of wresting the treasure from the adventurers on board. These men and women would be paid well for their actions, but the bulk of the proceeds would be returned to the investors, who would first recoup their investment, plus a moderate profit, then spend the excess funds on projects that would lead to the betterment of the city as a whole.

Hopelessly idealistic? Perhaps, except for one factor: Halgyn and Senturn control the only source of income in the conspiracy. That means they can cut off any investor who shirks his responsibility to provide for the city. Of course, what that really means is that the conspiracy's ideals last only as long as both Senturn and Halgyn remain honest—and the heroes are about to cut that particular question short of an answer.

Only Senturn, Hylgan, and Aletha (and their investors) know the true purpose behind the pirate attacks. If Hylgan and/or Aletha are taken alive, they try to persuade the heroes to release them by giving an explanation of what they were trying to accomplish. The hidden documents in Halgyn's quarters also outline what they were doing, and it names the seventeen investors in the conspiracy.

7. Common Room

The largest room in the camp, this is a common area for the pirates to gather in, eat, talk and relax. It contains two tables, each 10 feet square, and eight chairs for each table. There is also a side counter that usually has a broached keg of ale upon it, and several relatively clean flagons. Tucked into the north-west corner of the room is a large ironbound chest.

Creatures: Aletha and 3 pirates are in this room when the heroes first arrive in the camp. They are gaming with dice

and talking loudly, but not so loudly that they cannot hear an alarm bell ring, should that occur.

Aletha generally relates better to animals than to people. It is important to emphasize her appearance to the heroes—she wears leather armor studded with barbed stone spikes, jangling whalebone jewelry on her arms and legs, and thick, deliberately patterned scars on her bald head.

Aletha: hp 19.

Pirates (3): hp 13, 11, 8.

Tactics: Aletha begins battle by calling her pet hydra (Area 5) with her conch horn, if it lives, and she then whistles for her trained blood rooks (Area 1) to attack. Thereafter, she sticks close to her father if he is nearby, attacking in tandem with him and trying to use her Savage Appearance trait to force enemies to attack her instead of him.

Treasure: There is a pile of 42 sp and 67 cp on the table where the brigands are playing dice. Additionally, one of the flagons on the sideboard is nicely engraved copper; cleaned up, it would be worth 5 gp.

The chest in the corner contains the pirates' pay. Halgyn and Aletha keep the chest in plain sight so that all the pirates know where it is and keep an eye on the money. With so many eyes on it all the time, everyone has to stay honest—or at least that's the idea.

The ironbound chest is locked (Open Lock DC 30) and trapped with a bladder of acid that sprays its contents upon anyone opening the chest without first removing it (see below).

Acid-Spray Trap: CR 3; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; +4 ranged touch (2d4 acid/round for 2 rounds); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 27. *Note:* The acid-bladder's interior is coated with a non-reactive grease to prevent the acid from eating through it, but it is very fragile (hence the check to disable it is high). The contents of the bladder could be poured into glass vials if it was successfully removed, however. There is enough acid to fill three vials.

Treasure: The chest contains 436 gp, a healer's kit, and 3 spare alarm bells.

8. Kitchen

The kitchen is fitted with wooden benches along every inch of the walls, except for a 10-foot space on the northern end where the fireplace is located. The fireplace is the only part of the whole building that is of stone, and the floor in front of it is spread with damp Hessian cloth. A large iron pot hangs over the banked peat coals of the fire, keeping the fish-and-eel stew it contains warm enough to eat.



Option Zone (ironwares): The kitchen is filled with knives, pots, pans and other iron cooking utensils. As a move action, any character within the kitchen can pick up an improvised weapon that deals 1d3 points of damage and can be used either in melee or as a thrown weapon with a range increment on 10 feet.

9. Aletha's Quarters

Aletha keeps an even more sparse room than her father. There is a hide bag hanging from a hook in the wall, and two large piles of blankets rest on the floor. A weapon rack containing several different weapons is set up against one wall. Apart from this, the room has no furnishings.

Creatures: Halgyn brought his guard dogs with him when he left Exotic Treasures. There are usually 2 dogs dozing on the blankets in this room. They don't react to the sound of weapons clashing (since they are used to Halgyn hammering in the next room), but they come instantly awake at a shout from Halgyn or Aletha, or at the sound of Aletha's conch horn. Other loud commotions also draw them, but more slowly: they react after 1d6 rounds to such disturbances.

Aletha and Halgyn, but no others, can command the dogs.

Guard dogs (2): hp 15, 12.

Treasure: The weapon rack contains a spear, a morningstar, a longsword, 4 daggers, a light crossbow, 20 bolts, a sling, 20 bullets, and a glaive. All are of normal quality, but the haft of the spear is made from a single piece of straight bone decorated with sharkskin tassels. It is worth 30 gp as a piece of art, apart from its value as a weapon.

10. Pirate Barracks

Each of these rooms contains three double bunks, allowing six people to get a (crowded) night's sleep. There is space under each set of bunks for a pair of clothes' chests, but nothing more can fit in here.

Creatures: When the heroes arrive, each of these two rooms holds 3 sleeping pirates. It takes these villains 2d4+4 rounds to awaken, dress, and respond to an alarm being raised within the compound.

Pirates (6): hp 16, 13, 11, 11, 10, 9.

Aftermath

On their return to Malador, the heroes need to report their exploits (or at least as much of their exploits as they want to report) to Councilor Delorri so that they can receive their reward.

Rewards

If the heroes learn that Senturn Gwent is the person providing information to the pirates, they should each receive a bonus of 200 XP. If they learn the full story behind the pirate conspiracy, they should receive a further bonus of 200 XP.

As promised, Delorri pays the heroes 200 gp each if they capture the *Hydra*. She pays another 100 gp each if they capture the pirate base, and a further 200 gp each for Senturn Gwent's identity. If the heroes learn of the conspiracy and disclose it to Delorri, together with names of (at least some of) the participants, she adds a further 300 gp per person.

Repercussions

It is possible that some heroes might voluntarily choose to give up some or all of their reward by not handing over the information they uncovered. Remember that Delorri has a good Sense Motive bonus and thus might notice if the heroes lie about this; she asks specifically if any of the pirates are alive yet not in custody and if the heroes learned the name of the pirates' spy, so a lie will be necessary.

Delorri cannot take open action against the heroes for allowing some of the pirates to go (at least, not as long as the threat of further attacks is at an end), but she may instigate some more subtle forms of retaliation if she feels the heroes have acted against the city's (read: her) best interests.

CHAPTER FIVE: SECRETS OF CLIFFTOP

As the all-important Union Vote approaches, Councilor Vohdell is found murdered in his bed. The vote must take place in 12 hours, and the culprit must be found before then... a task made difficult by the fact that Councilor Vohdell appears to have been killed not once but *twice*.

A party of four heroes should earn enough experience to progress to 5th level by the end of this chapter.

Word on the Street & Event Encounters

Due to the compressed nature of the events in this chapter, all of them designed to take place within a 12-hour time-frame, there are no specified rumors or encounters. Naturally, you can add some of your own if you wish.

Hooking the Heroes

Two weeks after the conclusion of Chapter 4, a Council carriage draws up to wherever the heroes' are staying, and a messenger arrives to hand them a scroll:

To [names of heroes],

Your immediate attendance is required at the estate of Councilor Varas Rohdell. Please proceed there without delay — an urgent matter has arisen which requires your attention.

You will be fully compensated for your time and effort.

On behalf of the Malador Council,

*Toban Wellaw
Chyra Delorri*

Player characters with a good grasp of local politics—that is, anyone with a +5 or higher bonus in Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (nobility & royalty)—is well aware that Delorri and Wellaw are bitter factional rivals within the Council. Any matter that could make them both put their names to the invitation is likely to be as important as they make it sound.

Murder!

Assuming that the heroes respond to the invitation (and if they do not, a squad of Clifftop guards arrives an hour later to insist that they do so), they are rapidly taken to Rohdell's estate by carriage, and then led upstairs to the master bedroom.

It is immediately clear that Rohdell has been murdered. His body lies on its back in his bed, and although most of its impressive bulk is covered by the bedsheets, his head and shoulders are exposed, revealing that his throat has been torn out.

The Council Vote

Waiting in the room are Councilors Wellaw and Delorri. Both greet the heroes with strained politeness, and then get right down to business. Wellaw, as the older, longer-serving Councilor, does most of the talking.

"My friends, as you can no doubt see, Councilor Rohdell was murdered. Under any circumstances, such a crime would be an outrage to Malador's honor, but now, at this time, it is even more serious. Tonight is scheduled to be the final vote on the matter of Union with Malador, when this city would join in a bright future with her neighbor—"

"Or remain in glorious independence," Delorri interjects. Wellaw continues without acknowledging her.

"However, Councilor Rohdell was—as you may have heard—the 'swing vote' in tonight's decision. His death at this juncture can only be construed as a politically motivated assassination. It is imperative that the instigators of this foul crime be found and punished before tonight's vote. That means you have only twelve hours to discover the truth."

Wellaw produces a scroll from his robe. "As we recognize that this is a difficult task, we have prepared this Writ of Deputization to assist you. It gives you extensive powers of investigation for the remainder of the day, and also specifies that, should you identify the persons responsible for this crime, you will be paid one thousand gold pieces each."

Once the heroes agree to take part in the investigation, the Councilors leave.

Who Done It?

Both Delorri and Wellaw paid assassins to kill Rohdell. Both also believe that they are under no risk of being found out for the crime.

Delorri chose an assassin who leads the troupe of acrobats currently performing at the Lost Angel Theater. She knew Rohdell went there every week and ate a large meal every time he was there. This gave the acrobats a perfect opportunity to poison him. The leader of the acrobats, Potul Nardren, has assured her that the poison used does not leave any tell-tale signs and that, even if it did, he has a contingency plan worked out to divert suspicion elsewhere. In any case, since Rohdell has clearly been murdered by means other than poison, Delorri is insisting on an independent investigation in the hopes that Wellaw's faction will be implicated in Rohdell's death.

Wellaw agreed to the investigation because to argue against it would imply he had something to hide. Additionally, he believes his own assassin is impossible to trace. He left the task in the hands of Hoka Bilthone, a spy he had planted in General Juthe's household when the Borati Envoy arrived. Wellaw knows that Bilthone is a dark sorcerer of some kind, and assumes that the creature summoned to slay Rohdell has already returned to whatever hell it came from. He's not quite accurate in this assumption: The beast that tore out Rohdell's throat was actually a barghest, which has taken the form of General Juthe's pet dog, Borxus.

Rohdell's Last Hours

Rohdell has been milking the two factions of the Council by wavering between them, slowly driving up the bribes he was being offered to vote one way or the other. Yesterday, Juthe visited Rohdell in the mid-afternoon to discuss the upcoming vote. Rohdell, irritated at being pestered with Council business at home, was uncooperative and confrontational. The two men had a sharp argument about the Councilor's refusal to commit his vote to either side. After Juthe left, Rohdell penned a letter to Delorri telling her what a productive meeting he and Juthe had. (This was a standard tactic by the Councilor, who expected the news to prompt Delorri into increasing her offer.)

Unfortunately for Rohdell, Delorri's patience was exhausted. Believing (accurately) that Rohdell would vote whichever way he pleased in the end, she took the drastic step of ordering his assassination—better to defer the vote and try to bribe the next Councilor, who would hopefully be a more reasonable individual.

Meanwhile, Rohdell called for his carriage and departed for the Lost Angel Theater at the usual time. While taking dinner in his private box, he was poisoned by the acrobats, who have made a practice of assisting the theater's overworked kitchen staff with meal deliveries. After the show, Rohdell returned home, where he went immediately to bed. Already feeling ill (though naturally unaware of the cause), he did not call on his maid Ossaria to join him in bed, which he normally does after viewing the provocative Lost Angel show.

During Rohdell's visit to the theater, General Juthe met with Wellaw and informed him of the argument between himself and Rohdell. Wellaw, his patience as exhausted as Delorri's, gave the nod to Hoka Bilthone to assassinate the Councilor. Wellaw then remained at Juthe's mansion for several more hours, making plans for the upcoming vote as if nothing untoward was about to happen.

An hour after Rohdell went to sleep—slowly dying from the poison—the barghest entered the grounds of the estate in the guise of Borxus, General Juthe's dog. It then changed into human form to climb the wall, changed back into dog form to squeeze through the bars on the window, and then adopted its true shape to rip out his throat. Thereafter, it left in the same way that it entered.

The Writ of Deputization

The current date is clearly noted at the top of the scroll. Beneath this, the text reads as follows:

The bearers of this scroll are hereby granted the status of Special Investigators, for this date only, within the City of Malador. In pursuit of those responsible for the murder of Councilor Varas Rohdell, they are granted the authority to question, and to interrogate, by any means necessary, any Citizen of the Foot, the Beggars' Flow, or Harborside, without fear of harm or repercussion from the City Authorities; and also to exercise Justice on any Citizen of Malador that may be found responsible for this vile crime, howsoever they deem it appropriate, and irregardless of the culprits' identities.

The bearers of this scroll are also granted freedom to enter any part of the City of Malador in pursuit of their investigation; and, are guaranteed a reward of 1,000 gold pieces each, should they bring the perpetrators of this murder to Justice.

Any Citizen of Malador presented with this scroll is required to render all assistance required and requested by the bearers.

On behalf of the Malador Council,

Toban Wellaw

Chyra Delorri

In legal terms, this writ gives the heroes the right to use any means at their disposal to find the murderer(s), including torture and intimidation—as long as the subject is neither someone from Clifftop nor a member of the Borati delegation. Further, should the heroes have proof a person's guilt, they can administer “justice” on the spot (even if the subject is not a Clifftop resident, but not a Borati), up to and including execution. The heroes can also “draft” NPC experts should they lack a skill that is needed for the investigation (such as Heal), or commandeer any necessary equipment or transportation.

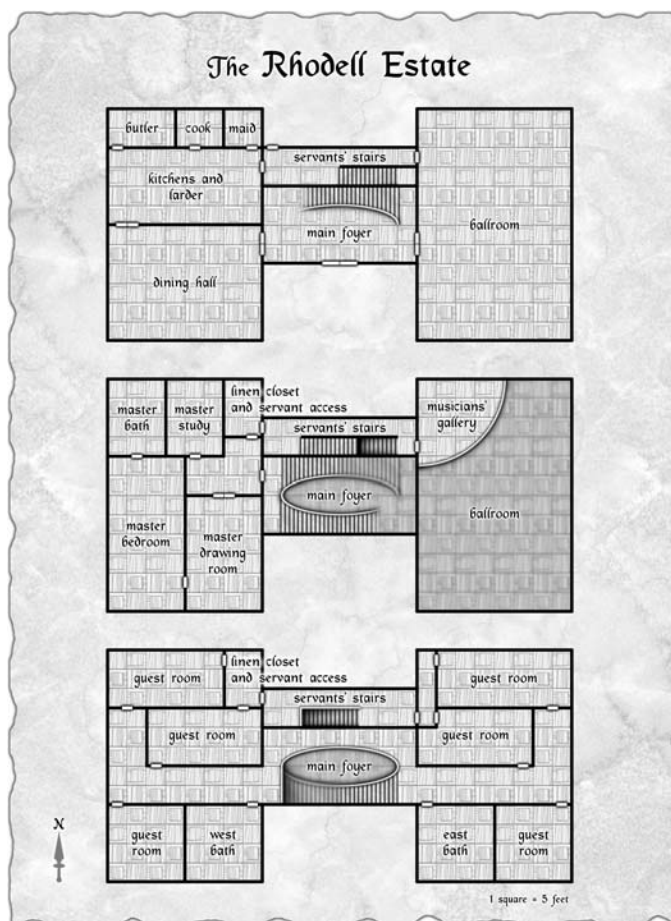
Conducting the Investigation

The rest of this chapter is separated into four sections: one for each of the three principal locations the heroes are expected to visit, and an Aftermath detailing the likely outcomes of whatever facts the PCs reveal.

Each of the first two locations is further broken down into sub-sections:

Crime Scenes covers particular areas within the location where the heroes can find physical evidence of use to the investigation.

Suspects and Witnesses covers the NPCs at the location whom the heroes are most likely to interrogate, the information those characters know, and the means by which they can be made to share that information with the heroes.



Rohdell Estate

The heroes are almost certain to begin their investigation at the Rohdell Estate. After all, they are already present, in the very same room as the victim's body.

The estate is much as described in the Introduction to this adventure: an immense three-story mansion surrounded by an extensive garden, complete with a carriage house where one of the Council's carriages is permanently stationed.

Dining Hall: This large room features a massive table, 18 feet long and 6 feet wide, of polished mahogany. It is permanently set with a dinner service of silver cutlery, porcelain plates, and crystal. The walls are paneled in teak, hung with oil paintings.

Kitchens: The kitchen is a practical workspace with plain stone walls and simple wooden benches. A massive stone trestle table, two brick ovens, and a traditional fireplace fill the western wall. A large, well-stocked larder and a glorious wine cellar adjoin this space.

Servants' Quarters: These plain rooms all feature a bed, a chest for storing clothing, and a small bedside table. The butler's and head cook's rooms each feature a writing desk and chair, for them to keep track of their work in purchasing household goods.

Main Foyer: Built of white marble and featuring a huge, intricate crystal chandelier, this 30-foot-high room has oak stairs rising up to each of the floors above. Massive, beautifully carved doors lead out of this area.

Ballroom: The ballroom's tiled floor continues the marble theme, while its vaulted columns and ceiling are decorated with engravings of ships and mermaids. An oaken balcony in one corner provides seating for musicians when dances are held. Three chandeliers provide lighting.

Master Wing: The second story of the western wing is given over to Councilor Rohdell's personal rooms. The color scheme is dark green, except in the study where the walls are painted tan for better lighting. The heroes may wish to investigate the study; there are extensive details of Rohdell's private and business dealings there, as well as several legal documents... many of which might motivate murder, so that's of little use.

Third Story: This floor is given over to guest rooms. Each is predominately decorated in a different color (blue, red, white, yellow, orange, and brown) and sumptuously furnished. None appear to have been used recently.

Crime Scene: Rohdell's Corpse

Rohdell lies on his back in the middle of his four-poster bed, which is large enough that six people could sleep in it comfortably. He is covered up to his shoulders by bedclothes. His throat has clearly been torn out, but careful scrutiny shows that there is surprisingly little blood (Heal DC 15): his heart was already failing when he was attacked. To those experienced with such injuries (Heal or Survival 6+ ranks), the wound is assuredly from the bite of a large predatory beast, such as a big wolf, not the work of a weapon.

Rohdell is naked under the bedclothes, and his stomach and groin have ugly purple blotches on them. Any character with the Venom Mastery feat, Healing Lore (4), or who makes a DC 20 Heal check recognizes these marks as being symptomatic of the early stages of "Tursimm oil" poisoning. These marks usually fade during the last stages of the poison's progression through the system, but in this case those stages apparently did not happen due to his sudden death of unrelated causes.

Characters with a background in the performing arts or in professions that involve wooden materials are those most likely to know the properties of Tursimm oil. A successful DC 15 Perform (any) or Craft (wood-related) check or a DC 20 Profession (sailor) check gains the following information: Tursimm oil is used for dissolving grease and oil-based paints, or for preparing certain types of resinous wood for use in construction. Though faintly aromatic and not unpleasant to the taste, it is poisonous if ingested (Fortitude DC 16; 1d2 Con/1d2 Con per dose). It is commonly bought



and sold, and the most likely places to find it are at art suppliers, furniture makers, and theaters.

Crime Scene: Rohdell's Bedroom

There is no sign of a struggle in the room or of any forced entry. The windows of the room are all barred; the iron bars are approximately 4 inches apart, and all are intact. The interior door was not locked, so it would be possible for someone to have entered that way if they entered the house from elsewhere.

A thorough exploration (Search DC 20) does turn up small tear marks in the room's carpet, similar to those a large animal's claws might make.

Crime Scene: The Garden

The barghest attempted to hide its tracks, but observant heroes might (Survival DC 20) find a partial print of a bare human foot in the garden bed below the window, as well as scuff marks on the wall that suggest somebody climbed up here. There are, however, no other bare-footed human tracks around. The only other fresh tracks (i.e., less than a day old) are those of a larger booted foot (which can be confirmed as belonging to the groundskeeper, Alud Tybranch—see below) and of a Tiny dog.

Crime Scene: The Carriage

Once they learn that the Councilor went out in the carriage the night he died, the heroes might examine it. A thorough investigation (Search DC 22) turns up some faint marks of dried blood, but these look to be several weeks old, at least.

Suspects and Witnesses

Rohdell has four servants whom the heroes may wish to interrogate. Most of the information below can be learned simply by asking what you feel is an appropriate question, but some require a skill check at the specified DC due to the need to coax the NPC into remembering or admitting a certain detail. Either Intimidate or Diplomacy can be used to meet this DC, and other heroes can use the aid another option in the attempt:

Alud Tybranch is a sour-looking man in his early 40s. He is responsible for the care of the grounds, as well as driving the Councilor's carriage and tending to the horses. His demeanor toward the heroes is a little surly and defensive, but he answers their questions as best he can.

- Alud worked in the gardens all day, then drove the Councilor to the Lost Angel Theater in the evening.

- After dropping Rohdell off at the theater door, Alud went home and had his evening meal with his wife.

- He returned and picked up Rohdell from the theater at the usual time, then drove him to the estate.

- The Councilor seemed a little more subdued than normal after the show.

- Rohdell was the one who beat up the girl the heroes saw dumped in the street about six weeks earlier, and Alud was the one who dumped her there (DC 25).

- Yes, there's been a "damn ugly little dog" hanging around the estate in the past week or so. Alud has chased it off a few times (DC 15).

- He heard the Councilor with a male visitor yesterday, but he didn't see them.

Ossaria Elden is the maidservant, a pretty but timid-seeming young woman in her late teens. She has a fading bruise on the side of her face and more on her arms. She tries her best to be helpful to the heroes and answer their questions as best she can, but there are certain things she is ashamed of and is thus reluctant to reveal.

- Ossaria worked in the house yesterday, as usual.

- Rohdell had a male visitor yesterday, though she doesn't know his identity.

- The Councilor went to the theater last night, as usual, and returned at the normal time.

- She went to bed shortly after Rohdell got home.

- She checked all doors and windows were locked or barred before she retired.

- Rohdell usually calls her to his bedroom on nights when he has been to the theater, but did not do so last night. She doesn't know why. (DC 20; she cries if pressed into admitting this.)

- Rohdell caused her bruises (DC 20; as above)

Mertha Yuste is Rohdell's head cook. She is a tall, angular woman in her late 60s, with iron-gray hair pulled back in a bun and a fastidious manner. She answers questions promptly and completely.

- She prepared the Councilor's breakfast and lunch yesterday, but not his dinner. "He always eats—ate, rather—at the theater when he attended a show there."

- General Juthe came to visit in the mid-afternoon, to discuss some Council business. She knows this because his footman was sent to the kitchen while the General and the Councilor talked.

- Councilor Rohdell demanded to see Rouden the butler immediately after the General left.

- The General had a “truly ugly little dog” with him, which she was very glad was *not* sent to the kitchens. Such beasts are unsanitary.

Rouden Dewer is the butler. A portly man in his mid-50s, he has a rather florid temperament and is a little too proud of his privileged role in the household.

- He discovered the murder when he went to wake the Councilor; the bedroom door was closed as normal.

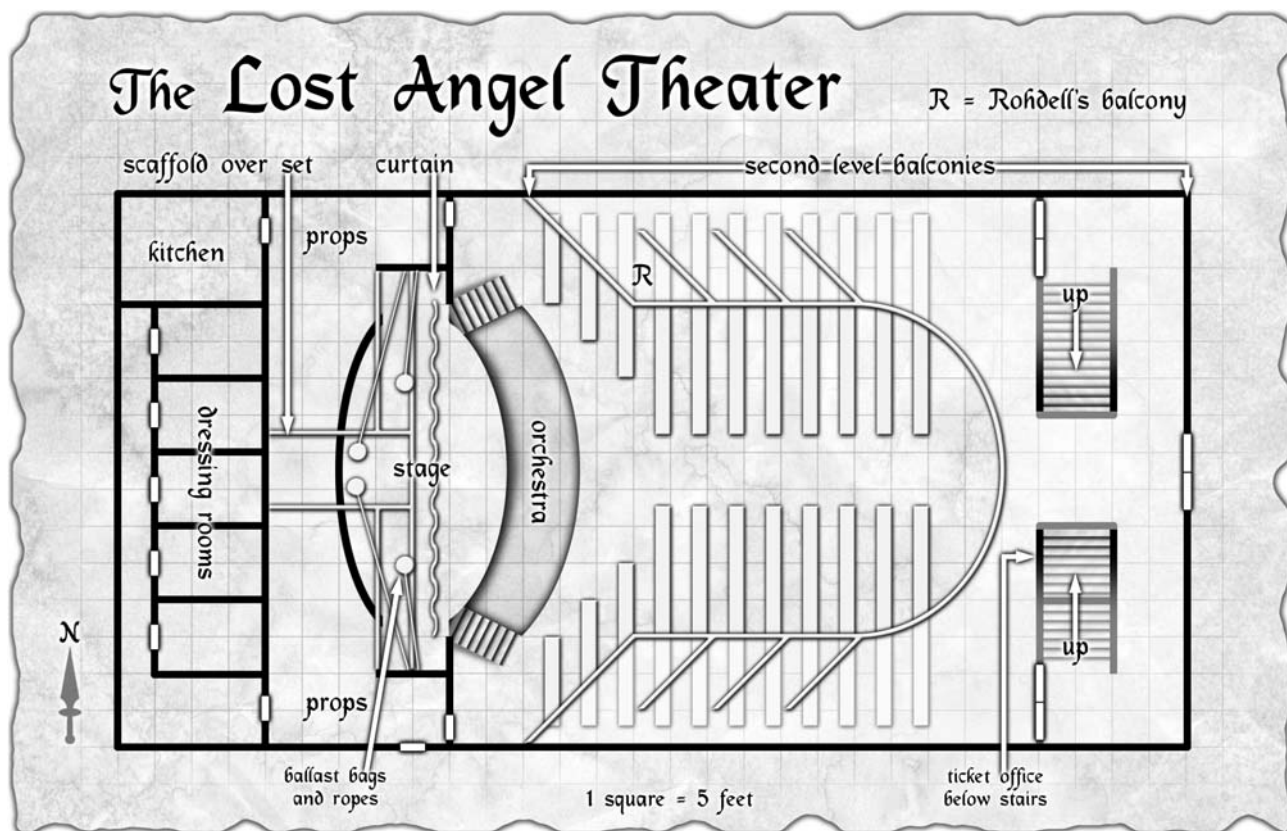
- He double-checked all doors and windows were barred or locked before retiring for the evening.

- General Juthe came to visit in the afternoon to discuss Council business. Dewer did not hear what was said, of course, but the exchange seemed heated at times.

- After the meeting, Councilor Rohdell dictated a message for Councilor Delorri stating that he and the General had outlined some important ways in which Malador would profit from accepting the Union.

- Yes, this did appear at odds with the tone of the conversation that actually took place, but that was quite a common occurrence with Councilor Rohdell.

- The Councilor went out as usual to the theater, but seemed subdued upon his return and went immediately to bed, complaining of feeling unwell.



Lost Angel Theater

The Lost Angel Theater is likely to be one of the PCs' first stops in their investigation. Housed in a large but rather run-down building, the theater has a series of parish paintings on the front wall, one of which appears to have been done in only the last few days to judge from the bright colors of the paint. It touts “Mighty Magician, Farouk of the Hidden Lore!”

Main Hall: Past the Ticket Office (private boxes 3 gp; stalls 2 sp) lies the main bulk of the theater; nine rows of seats with room for well over a hundred paying customers. The wooden seats are fitted with cushions, though some of them look decidedly lumpy and uneven. The seats run down to an orchestral pit (5 feet deep and as wide as the stage), with a short flight of stairs on either side leading up to the stage itself.

Stage: Except for immediately before and after shows, the curtain is kept raised so that it does not interfere with rehearsals. The backdrop is a plain dark blue screen: only the Malador Players use scenery in their performances, and they generally make do with a few pieces of furniture.

Upper Gallery: Upstairs in the private boxes, the furnishings are in better condition, though some of the fake gilding on the banisters has seen better days. The boxes can each hold up to 4 persons, at 3 gp per box. They each contain four comfortable chairs, set in two pairs, with a small table between each pair.

Backstage: The dinginess of the Lost Angel becomes readily apparent only backstage. The dressing rooms are small and crowded, pieces of scenery are piled anywhere there is space, and the unadorned walls occasionally sweat moisture, especially during warm weather. Each act has its own dressing room, all neatly labeled.

Crime Scene: Rohdell's Box

It's possible that the heroes will want to see the box Rohdell sat in. It is the same one he always used; in fact, he kept it booked for months in advance to ensure it would always be available to him. Unfortunately, there is nothing to be learned here.

Crime Scene: Farouk's Dressing Room

This is a small, dingy room. It features a box of various props for stage magic, a wardrobe with three separate "mystical" outfits, and a cage with a rabbit in it. There's also a small make-up desk with various oddments of stage makeup on it and a battered metal mirror.

Tucked away in the back of the wardrobe under a couple of old blankets (Search DC 10) are four empty flasks labeled "Tursimm oil" and a couple of stale sweetmeats from the theater kitchens that smell like they have been dosed with the stuff.

Suspects and Witnesses

When the heroes first arrive at the theater, the only person present is the manager, Alban Relt. However, the various members of the acts come in and out throughout the day to rehearse, and Relt knows their schedules.

Alban Relt is the manager of the Lost Angel. He is horrified to hear of Councilor Rohdell's death (Sense Motive indicates this to be genuine) and opines that, "Say what you like about the Councilor's lifestyle, he was always a patron of the fine arts." Relt is given to such somewhat pretentious turns of phrase. Despite "coming over rather faint at the thought of a murder," he assists the heroes with whatever knowledge he has.

- All of his acts have been with him for several months, except Farouk, who was added rather suddenly when a previous act vanished without warning, and the Acrobats Spectacular, who have been there for two weeks since a previous act was injured.
- Rohdell came to the theater every week, always used the same private box, and always made "extensive use of the kitchen facilities."
- The food last night was served by the usual kitchen hands, as well as some of the performers. "Definitely the acrobats," Relt says, "although I was occupied with running the show and might have missed it if someone else helped out."
- Relt did not notice anyone unusual hanging around the theater recently.
- Farouk is not expected to come to the theater today, but has rooms not far away in the Bell & Whistle, about 5 to 10 minutes' walk away.
- The acrobats are expected to arrive for rehearsals in an hour and a half.

Farouk (real name Rook Ilderow) is a young man just trying to make a start on the stage. He's got a nervous disposition to begin with, and if the heroes are aggressive he dissolves into confused whimpering, claiming repeatedly that he doesn't know what they are talking about.

- He claims to have no idea the Tursimm oil was in his room (Sense Motive indicates this is true).
- Yes, it is his room, but it's not kept locked. It's possible someone could have put something in there after the show, and he wouldn't know about it until he went back.

The **Acrobats Spectacular** aren't just suspects, they're culprits. Last night, those members of the group who were taking food to Councilor Rohdell secretly dosed everything with Tursimm oil, so that he ingested a fatal quantity of the substance. If questioned about the events last night, their leader, Potul Nardren, does all the talking, pitting his Bluff skill (+9 bonus) against the heroes' Sense Motive.

Nardren occasionally bellows at his acrobats to practice even as he answers the heroes' questions, getting them up on stage and warming up. He himself moves to stand on the edge of the stage, near the tumblers.

- In his opinion, Farouk ("that's obviously not his real name") is a shifty sort.
- Yes, some of the acrobats helped the kitchen out last night.

- None of them noticed anything unusual about the food. (He suffers a -4 circumstance penalty on this bald-faced lie, since he doesn't even bother to ask the acrobats before replying.)

- No, the heroes can't speak to the acrobats directly; the team needs time to rehearse (at this point, he turns to them and shouts for them to work harder); he's the only one, as the director, who can spare the time.

Any character whose Sense Motive check beats any of Nardren's Bluff checks by 5 or more discerns that he's clearly trying to hide something.

Showdown at the Lost Angel

It is unlikely that the heroes take Nardren's words at face value even if he bluffs them successfully, especially when he refuses to let them talk to the acrobats directly. For his part, Nardren can't afford to let the acrobats get questioned since they aren't expert liars like he is. If the heroes push the point, invoking the powers granted to them by the Council's letter, Nardren orders his men to the attack, likely by surprise.

Potul Narden: hp 32.

Acrobats (8): hp 14, 13, 11, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7.

Acrobats (firebreathers) (2): hp 6, 5.

Tactics: Nardren uses his great speed and mobility to stay at a distance from dangerous opponents unless he can set up a flanking situation with one of his allies. He uses his tactical and strategy token pools to his and his allies' advantage as much as possible, utilizing the space of the stage and seating areas to outmaneuver foes (remember that he moves full speed while tumbling due to his combat mobility, and that he can make Tumble checks to move unhindered through difficult squares). He also likes to trip or disarm opponents with his flail, though he avoids doing so against characters who seem strong or skillful enough to trip or disarm him in return.

While he happily sacrifices his allies' lives to aid his own escape, Nardren has no interest in dying for a cause and surrenders if reduced to below 10 hp. He was personally hired by Delorri and willingly sells her out for a promise of leniency, or if browbeaten into it.

The acrobats fight as a team, trying to flank opponents and cut them down with sneak attacks, using Tumble to move around quickly without being injured. At least one of them attempts to ride a ballast bag (see below) up into the scaffolding so as to drop further ballast bags down on the heroes.

If Nardren is killed or rendered unconscious and more than half of them are down, the acrobats scatter and try to escape.

Condition Zone (scaffold): Anyone up on the catwalk above the stage is 20 feet in the air. Moving or fighting on the scaffold requires a DC 10 Balance check each round. Failure means the character does not take any planned action. Failure by 5 or more means a fall for 2d6 points of damage. Being injured while on the scaffold requires a Balance check with a DC equal to the damage suffered; failure at this, even by 1 point, means the character falls.

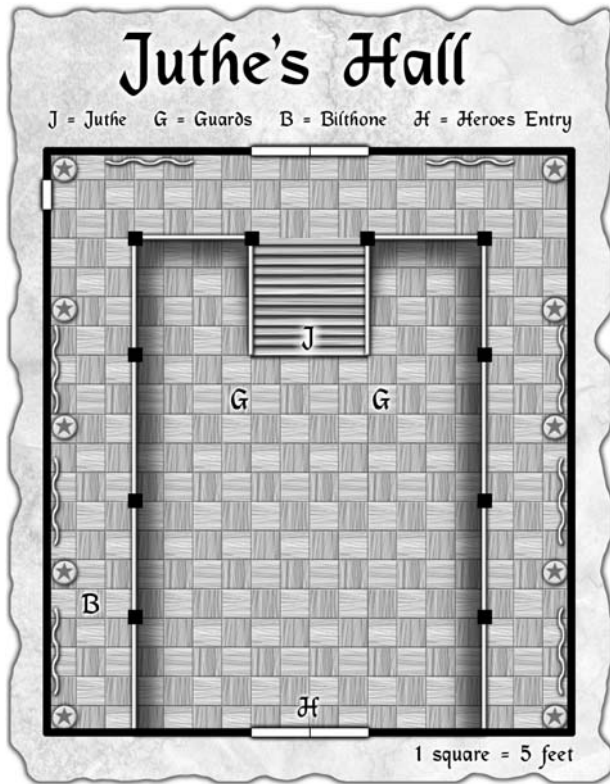
Characters on the scaffold gain the benefits of cover from opponents on the ground. A character on the scaffold can cut the rope of any ballast bag to which he or she is adjacent.

Option Zone (ballast bags): These tough canvas bags are filled with sand and used as counterweights for scenery and the main curtain. The ropes holding them up are shown on the map. These ropes each have Defense 14, hardness 0, hp 2. If one is cut, its ballast bag comes crashing down, dealing 3d6 points of damage to any character in that square. The affected character gets a Reflex save (DC 10 + the cutting character's Dexterity modifier) to negate the damage.

Additionally, if a character still has a move action remaining after cutting a ballast rope, he may make a DC 12 Use Rope check to grab the severed rope and be carried up to the scaffold, ending his turn in any scaffold square adjacent to the ballast bag's position.

Option Zone (main curtain): The rope holding the curtain open is located in the square at the northern end of the stage. It has Defense 14, hardness 0, hp 2. If a character cuts this rope, the curtain drops immediately, and any character in a square adjacent to the curtain (possibly including the one who dropped it) must make a DC Reflex save or take 1d2 points of nonlethal damage and be knocked prone.

Development: Ideally, the heroes take at least one of their opponents captive since they are going to need to interrogate someone. The acrobats are as willing as their leader to sell out Councilor Delorri, though they do not know her name. They did, however, see her meet with Nardren, and can thus identify her on sight if given the opportunity.



General Juthe's Estate

By the time the heroes go to see him (since he was one of the dead man's last visitors, they have reason to do so), General Juthe has heard about Rohdell's murder from Councilor Wellaw. His guards have been left word to escort the heroes to the main hall of his temporary home, where he meets them personally.

Front Hall

This 80-foot-by-100-foot room has a 20-foot-high ceiling and is bounded on three sides by a 10-foot-wide balcony. Marble pillars support both the roof and the balcony, which can be reached by a single 20-foot-wide staircase. Juthe takes a position standing on the third-lowest step, with two guards standing on the floor just in front of him. The General has his pet dog Borxus in his arms. Juthe's footman, Hoken Bilthone, watches silently from the balcony.

The dressed stone walls of the room are broken up by a series of statues and colorful banners (hung at both the lower level and the balcony level), while the polished hardwood floor and banisters give the white and grey room some much needed color, as do several murals and tapestries depicting nautical scenes.

General Juthe begins the interview with a short speech.

"I have been informed of the dire news regarding Councilor Rohdell. I offer my government's deepest condo-

lences the to the people of Malador, and naturally I am willing to do whatever I can to assist you in your investigation, provided it does not infringe on the political interests of my own people."

This is Juthe's polite way of reminding the heroes that he doesn't have to help them at all; as a citizen of Borat, he is not under their jurisdiction. However, he is genuinely willing to assist in the investigation if he can, for he has nothing to hide and does not know that his close ally Wellaw does.

Here are the things Juthe knows and is willing to discuss:

- As far as he knows, his dog has only been to the Rohdell estate once, which was during his visit there yesterday. However, Borxus did go missing briefly a few weeks ago.
- His footman, Hoken Bilthone, located the missing dog; apparently he found him near the fountain.
- He did visit Councilor Rohdell yesterday; it was the first time he has done so.
- He cannot discuss the specifics of their conversation due to their political sensitivity. He can confirm that they discussed the Union Vote.
- If someone has told the heroes that it sounded like he and Rohdell were at odds in their conversation, then he observes that that was how it *sounded*—but he can't confirm or deny the truth of that. He adds, "I have gotten so used to the staff here eavesdropping on my conversations that I should probably have expected the same in other households as well."
- The staff members of the General's household are not Borati; only he and his guards are. If the heroes wish to speak with the staff, he has no objections. "I have nothing to hide, and I am not the one to whom they truly answer" (a reference to the fact that they are spies, as he well knows).
- He admits discussing the results of his and Rohdell's meeting with Councilor Wellaw, and no one else. He immediately dismisses the possibility that Wellaw had anything to do with the murder: "Even were he capable of arranging such a thing, he did not have the opportunity. We discussed the Vote until the early hours of the morning, which means that unless he somehow organized it while speaking with me, he could not be responsible."
- Why, yes, Councilor Wellaw *did* speak with one of the staff during his visit: Hoken Bilthone.
- No, Borxus was not present at the meeting with Councilor Wellaw; he had been put to bed by then (if he gets asked this, Juthe looks very confused). "What can that possibly have to do with anything?"

Ideally, the heroes will realize after a few Sense Motive checks that Juthe is being honest in his answers. This may prompt them to ask useful questions that can lead to them wishing to speak to Hokar Bilthone.

Hokar, for his part, has no intention of being questioned. If the heroes suggest it (and then Juthe agrees, as he will), then Bilthone immediately steps behind the cover of the nearest pillar and begins summoning a gargoyle to protect himself, while “Borxus” the barghest leaps from Juthe’s arms and transforms into his true form to attack the PCs.

Creatures: If a fight breaks out in this location, the following creatures are present.

Hokar Bilthone: hp 28.

Barghest (1): hp 33.

Bodyguards [as Clifftop Guard squad leader] (2):
hp 12, 11.

Gargoyle: hp 37.

Tactics: If it is possible, Bilthone uses his conjuration power before engaging in combat, ducking behind cover to do so. He commonly summons a gargoyle, a powerful and versatile combatant that few foes can injure. He also calls on aid from the barghest impersonating Juthe’s dog Borxus. While the gargoyle and barghest engage the enemy at close range and hold them off, Bilthone uses his arcane bolts to target enemy opponents. He focuses first on ranged combatants, then on those that seem difficult for his minions to hit, then on those with heavy armor. If an opponent manages to get into melee with him, Bilthone uses his mesmerizing glance in an attempt to turn her on her allies. Once he engages an enemy, Bilthone fights to the death, his Crimson Path beliefs dictating that it is fitting to either kill or be killed, but not to flee.

If given the opportunity to ambush foes or called upon to fight by Blithone, the barghest does so eagerly in the hope of an opportunity to feed. He targets whichever of his enemies appears to be physically weakest, hoping for a quick kill. Despite his willingness to fight, however, he has no interest in dying and flees if reduced to 11 hit points or less. If unable to flee, he surrenders. “Borxus” knows Wellaw hired Blithone, and he willingly sells them both out in exchange for a promise of leniency for himself, provided he believes the promise to be genuine. He can also be browbeaten into it.

Unless he is attacked or the heroes really seem to need the help, General Juthe does not fight in the battle. However, his guards treat any attempt to move within 10 feet of the General as an aggressive act and attack anyone who does so. This includes anyone attempting to run past the General to go up the stairs. A hero can prevent or stop these attacks by making a DC 20 Diplomacy check as a full-round action, or by moving more than 20 feet away from the General without having attacked him.

Damage Reduction

Both the gargoyle and the barghest have considerable damage reduction. Characters in *Iron Heroes* do not have ready access to magical weapons and must overcome damage reduction mainly by doing more damage, either through class abilities (such as sneak attack or deadly shot) or feats (such as Power Attack or Weapon Specialization).

If your group lacks characters who can dish out large amounts of damage in a single attack, the DR of the gargoyle in particular may present them with a great deal of difficulty. If you are concerned about this, consider replacing the gargoyle with a different CR 4 creature that does not possess damage reduction, such as a griffon. The barghest should not need to be altered. Its DR is only 5/magic, and any party of 4th-level *Iron Heroes* characters should be able to penetrate that sufficiently often.

Condition Zone (statue): A statue provides cover against any creature attacking through the square the statue occupies. A combatant can step onto the pedestal of a statue with a DC 5 Jump check, thus gaining the +1 bonus to attacks for higher ground.

Condition Zone (pillar): A pillar provides cover against any creature attacking through the square the pillar occupies. If a character makes a Jump or Tumble check while adjacent to a pillar, he or she can push off from the pillar instead of the ground and gain a +2 bonus to the check.

Option Zone (wall hangings): 1 use per hanging. A character standing next to a wall hanging can use a standard action with a slashing melee weapon to cut it down from the wall, causing it to fall on an adjacent opponent. The target must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + the character’s Dexterity or Intelligence modifier) or be blinded and entangled by the wall hanging. The target can escape from the hanging automatically with a standard action, or with a DC 10 Escape Artist check as a free action.

Development: The heroes should take at least one opponent captive, since they are going to need someone to interrogate. Bilthone is a tough nut to crack, but a few hours of work can get him to admit Wellaw as being his employer, especially if he learns that Delorri has also been implicated (since he hopes this double murder destroys the Council’s credibility).

“Borxus,” on the other hand, sells Wellaw out in an instant if he is convinced that he might receive leniency in exchange for cooperation.

Wellaw and the Crimson Path

Councilor Wellaw has no idea that his spy, Hokar Bilthone, is an agent of the Cult of the Crimson Path. He is horrified if this is revealed to him. Bilthone’s plan, if it can be wrung out

of him, was to murder Rohdell on Wellaw's instructions, and then use blackmail and threats of assassination to force Wellaw into supporting Bilthone's chosen candidate as the new Councilor. A loyal member of the Cult of the Crimson Path, this Councilor would then lead Malador and Borat into a deliberately flawed union, dragging both nations down into chaos, warfare, and disorder.

Aftermath

Sooner or later, the PCs have to present the results of their investigation to the Malador Council. The developments that follow their meeting depend on two main factors. The first is what the heroes actually learned. The second is how they choose to use that knowledge.

Just because the heroes discover one or both Councilors' complicity in Rohdell's murder does not mean they have to share this information. Depending on their political loyalties and ethical and moral persuasions, the characters may choose to conceal the guilt of one side or the other; they might even choose to conceal the guilt of both sides.

Sooner or later, the heroes are going to have enough evidence to accuse of involvement in Rohdell's death. If the heroes privately confront Councilor Wellaw or Councilor Delorri, he or she initially attempts to deny any involvement. However, the Councilors quickly change their tune if presented with damning evidence, such as eye witnesses. At this point, they offer the heroes 1,000 gold pieces each to "dispose" of any and all evidence against them. If the heroes indicate that they also have evidence against the rival faction, the Councilor doubles this offer.

Of course, in reality, the Councilors are each willing to pay tens of thousands of gold pieces, and possibly rewards more significant than mere wealth, to save their own skins and, ideally, to bury their opponent as well. If the heroes are inclined to drive a hard bargain over this, you should decide for yourself what upper limit of financial reward you are willing to give them, and set an appropriate amount as each Councilor's "best and final offer." At an absolute minimum, either Delorri or Wellaw would happily pay five times the original amount in this circumstance.

The long-term implications of the heroes' investigation are manifold, and may or may not be important in your campaign. If you are planning to have the PCs leave Malador after the investigation concludes, for instance, then only the immediate results of the Council's vote matter. Further possible long-term implications are discussed in Chapter 6 should you need them. The sections below discuss only the immediate outcomes of the vote.

Impasse

If the heroes do not publicly announce the culprits of the murder (either because they have failed to discover them or have been paid to keep quiet), the Council remains at a temporary impasse while the factions are locked at three votes apiece. After nearly three weeks of deadlock, the two sides come to a compromise. Malador agrees to a treaty of alliance, rather than union, with Borat.

The city retains its independence, but Borat agrees to send troops to the city's aid if the Council ever requests it. In exchange, the Council agrees to pay a portion of its revenues to Borat every month, to "cover the expenses incurred by maintaining troops in readiness for the aid of our city." By this compromise, the Council retains the all of the power and much of the wealth they already enjoy, while King Darragan gets the gold his struggling nation needs (though not as much as would have liked).

Unionist Triumph

If the PCs demonstrate only Delorri's guilt, Wellaw and his Unionist faction win the Council vote. Councilors Arco and Virrenet try to divorce themselves from any association with their disgraced leader. Within two weeks, Borati troops move into the city and the Council is dissolved. Each of the retiring Councilors receives a generous income from the King of Borat in order to prevent them from having second thoughts about their decision.

This outcome leaves many other Clifftop families dissatisfied, so it is likely to only be a matter of time before they begin to agitate against the new rulers.

Captains of Their Own Destiny

If the heroes demonstrate only Wellaw's guilt, Delorri and her Sea Captains faction win the Council vote. Councilors Neele and Yoth publicly maintain their support for the Unionist movement (they've been paid too much by Borat not to do so), but acknowledge that Wellaw's action was "unconscionable" and accept the results of the vote as a temporary setback for their cause.

Collapse of the Council

If the PCs demonstrate the guilt of both Delorri *and* Wellaw, the repercussions shake the whole city. Riots break out in the Beggars' Flow, quickly spreading to the Foot and Harborside. If left unchecked, the unrest continues to rise over several days, leading to a mob storming into Clifftop to loot and burn the estates there. Hundreds of people are injured and dozens killed. Within two weeks, King Darragan announces plans to send troops in order to "restore order to the city."

Rewards

Regardless of what they do with the information, each of the heroes should receive 300 XP if they identify Delorri's involvement in Rohdell's murder, and the same amount again if they identify Wellaw's role.

Assuming they do not cause the collapse the Council, the heroes should also receive the 1,000 gp each that they were promised.

CHAPTER SIX: SECRETS YET TO COME

Although your players may have completed **Dark Harbor**, this certainly doesn't mean they have exhausted the opportunities for adventure in Malador and the surrounding lands. This chapter offers ideas for continuing your campaign once the events of this module come to their conclusion.

Your options for using the material in this book after the end of **Dark Harbor** are manifold, and can be as complex or straightforward as you desire. The ideas below generally focus on large, multi-session campaign ideas that you can use to develop several months of gaming, but there is also plenty of scope for stand-alone adventures as a change of pace.

For instance, the Drowning Towers are a ready-made dungeon just waiting to be explored. These ancient, half-sunken buildings are filled with monsters, treasures, and traps. An adventuring group could have many enjoyable sessions exploring these dangerous halls, without much more motivation than the danger and the rewards.

Similarly, the Gray Steppe and Bleakwater offer many opportunities for wilderness adventuring. The heroes could face feral tribes of humanoids on the steppe, explore the marshes in search of hidden treasures, or launch an expedition into the Ghostlands themselves. Many adventure modules for other Open Game License games can easily be adapted to fit into these settings, giving you a host of options to work with.

However, **Dark Harbor** deliberately leaves open several issues as the module comes to a close. Whatever decision the heroes made over their investigation into Rohdell's murder, it is unlikely that they managed to satisfy all parties. Will their solution endure?

The Crimson Path are still a force to be reckoned with; do they act against the city once more, and are the heroes among their first targets? Is there an end to the wealth in the Drowning Towers, and, if such a thing should come to pass, how will Malador survive?

Borat

Whatever the outcome of the final vote in **Dark Harbor**, the contest of wills between the King of Borat and the leaders of Malador is far from over. If Malador retains its independence, the King redoubles his efforts to bribe and blackmail the Council into his camp. If this proves impossible, as it would if Councilor Wellaw's crimes are publicly known, then he may resort to more direct means: the Borati army marches on Malador in the summer. Heroes who have joined the militia to save a few gold pieces suddenly find themselves drawn to the front lines of a war where none of their commanders has any experience.

Alternatively, if the Council voted for union with Borat, there are many rebellious elements within the city who want Malador to recover its freedom. The King will be looking for agents to quietly dispose of such threats, while the rebels need heroes to aid them. Both sides actively seek recruits, and there's a great deal of profit and adventure to be had in the struggle.

Even the compromise resolution of "Impasse," above, need not endure for any length of time. Malador's wealthiest citizens didn't gather their fortunes by giving their gold away, and they'll use every trick they can to keep funds in their hands and not Borat's. The confrontation may be longer in coming, but sooner or later the King's patience or his treasury will wear thin, and war will soon follow.

The Cruel Sea

After fifty years of adventurers plundering their homes and murdering their people, the skags unite under a single duke who is determined to strike back against the drylanders. Assembling an army of warriors, they sink the fortress rafts from below, drowning all those aboard, before wreaking havoc in the harbor. Their attempts to storm the city itself are defeated, but the waters now belong to them.

Any attempt to launch a boat meets with failure, as skags smash holes in the hull from below. Without the riches of the Drowning Towers for its treasury, and the catches of the fishing fleet for its kitchens, how can Malador survive?

Is it possible for some kind of peace to be brokered with the skags? How is the language barrier to be breached? And if peace is not possible, how can the threat be overcome?

(To increase the difficulty of this task for higher-level characters, replace the skags with sahuagin, which have moved into the Drowning Towers and enslaved the previous occupants.)

The Crimson Path

The heroes may have overcome two attempts by the Crimson Path to plunge Malador into chaos and violence, but the Cult's efforts need not be at an end. Some possible activities for the Crimson Path in future adventures include the following::

- Participation in the race for the Bleakwater Artifact (below).
- Secretly backing the Prophet in "The Covenant Fulfilled" (also below).
- Specifically targeting the heroes for assassination after their interference.
- Uniting the humanoid tribes of the Gray Steppes under a single warlord for an invasion of Malador.
- Systematically murdering Councilors to paralyze the city's government.
- Opening a "Poor House" that distributes diseased blankets or food to the needy, rapidly spreading a plague.

The Bleakwater Artifact

An ancient text recently recovered from the Drowning Towers speaks of a "Creation," hidden somewhere in the Bleakwater, that allows its owner to turn the land itself against any intruder. The last and greatest invention of one of the departed Masters, this artifact quickly becomes the objective of many different groups, including the Council, the King of Borat, and the Crimson Path. Huge rewards are being offered for the artifact's return, and grave danger would result if it fell into the wrong hands.

The artifact is protected by massive crocodiles and wild lizardfolk; it lies at the heart of the swamp, amidst a bub-

bling morass of explosive swamp gases. Ancient ruins, lying forgotten in the swamp, contain murals that depict the lost Master bringing forth strange and terrible reptiles for the defense of his home. And at the heart of these ruins, in a half-collapsed towers, waits the greatest of his creations indeed: a mighty dragon, whose very breath causes the vegetation to stir to life, grasping at intruders and drowning them into the swamp's foul waters.

Many artifacts can kill you: this one can rend you limb from limb.

The Covenant Fulfilled

A new prophet emerges from the ranks of the Covenant of the Return, foretelling that the Masters will soon tread the Swordlands once more. At first, his claims are met with amused derision, particularly when he warns of punishments that will fall on those who have spurned his message. Derision quickly turns to fear, however, when inexplicable disasters begin to fall upon any who oppose him. A Councilor who has publicly ridiculed him is slain by lightning that crashes down from a cloudless sky. A star falls from the heavens and destroys the Temple of the Mariner in a blazing inferno. Plague sweeps through Beggars' Flow, and only those who flock to the Covenant's temple are cured.

As the power of this demagogue grows stronger and his near-fanatical followers increase in numbers, it is vital that *someone* uncover the truth. Is the Prophet somehow causing the disasters that befall his enemies, and if so, with what dark creatures has he allied himself to gain such power? Or are his predictions of the Masters' return all too accurate? And what does that mean for the Swordlands?



APPENDIX I: CREATURES AND CHARACTERS

New Monsters

LIVING GHOUL

When people live on the flesh of their own kind, either from desperation or from choice, they sometimes contract a disease known as *hunger rot*. This disease inflames the brain, destroying all rational thought and leaving only an enraged hunger behind. Those who succumb to the rot become living ghouls, prowling the graveyards and cemeteries of their homelands in search of human flesh to consume.

Living ghouls are carrion eaters, but they attack uninfected living humanoids if they encounter them. Often, those who survive such attacks contract the monsters' hateful disease and end up as one of the very beasts they thought they had escaped.

Living ghouls speak the languages they spoke in life (usually Common).

SAMPLE LIVING GHOUL

This foul, gray-skinned creature has long, jagged nails almost like claws. It is covered in grave dirt from the corpses it has consumed, and bits of rotted meat are stuck between its razor-sharp teeth. It glares at you with red-dened, hateful eyes.

This example uses a 2nd-level human commoner as the base creature.

Living Ghoul, 2nd-Level Human Commoner

Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice:	2d6+2 (9 hp)
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense:	14 (+1 base, +2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 11
Base Attack/Grapple:	+1/+2
Attack:	Bite +2 melee (1d4+1)
Full Attack:	Bite +2 melee (1d4+1) 2 claws –3 melee (1d3)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Hunger rot
Special Qualities:	Air of the grave, disordered mind, low-light vision
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 10
Skills:	Climb +5, Disguise +0 (+8 to appear undead), Hide +5, Move Silently +5
Feats:	Great Fortitude ^B , Iron Will ^B
Environment:	Any
Organization:	Solitary, gang (2–4), or pack (7–12)
Challenge Rating:	1
Treasure:	Half standard
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	—

COMBAT

Living ghouls try to attack from surprise whenever possible. The DC is 12 for the Fortitude save against this living ghoul's hunger rot.

CREATING A LIVING GHOUL

"Living ghoul" is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). The living ghoul uses all the statistics and abilities of the base creature, except as noted below.

Type: Same as the base creature.

Hit Dice: The creature gains 1 HD per level, even if it has NPC class levels and thus doesn't normally gain HD at every level. Thus, a 5th-level expert who becomes a living ghoul has 5d6 HD, rather than 2d6.

Speed: Same as the base creature.

Defense: The creature's natural armor bonus increases by +1.

Attacks: A living ghoul gains a bite attack and two claw attacks as natural weapons. These weapons deal damage based on the creature's size. The claw attacks of a living ghoul are secondary attacks.

Creatures that have natural weapons retain their old damage values or use the appropriate value from the chart below, whichever is better.

<i>Creature Size</i>	<i>Bite</i>	<i>Claw</i>
Small	1d3	1d2
Medium	1d4	1d3
Large	1d6	1d6
Huge	1d8	2d4

Special Attacks: A living ghoul retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains the following:

Hunger Rot (Ex): Disease—bite, Fortitude DC 10 + 1/2 HD + Con modifier, incubation 1 day, damage 1d3 Wis. The save DC is Constitution-based. A humanoid reduced to 0 Wisdom by hunger rot gains the living ghoul template. He retains none of the background or mental traits he possessed in life, nor does he retain any ranks in skills having Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma as key abilities. The living ghoul is free-willed, but it hungers for the flesh of the uninfected and behaves like a normal ghoul in all respects.

Special Qualities: A living ghoul retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains low-light vision, as well as the following:

Air of the Grave (Ex): Living ghouls stink of rotted meat and decay. Non-intelligent undead treat them as if they were zombies or ghouls. Intelligent undead may make a Spot check against the living ghoul's Disguise check to recognize the living ghoul's true nature.

Disordered Mind (Ex): The mind of a living ghoul has become rotten, corrupt and inhuman. Living ghouls gain a +4 racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells or effects and on saves or checks against Bluff or Intimidate, and they cannot be influenced by Diplomacy.

Abilities: Modify the base creature as follows: Strength +2, Dexterity +4, Intelligence –4, and Wisdom –2.

Skills: A living ghoul receives a +2 racial bonus on Climb checks and a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. Living ghouls receive a +8 racial bonus on Disguise checks made to pass for a zombie or an undead ghoul (including checks made to remain unmolested by true undead).

Feats: The living ghoul loses all mastery feats it had in its previous life (and cannot gain further mastery feats), but it gains Great Fortitude and Iron Will as bonus feats.

Challenge Rating: As an NPC-class warrior with the same HD.

Treasure: Half standard.

Advancement: By character class.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +1.

SKAG

Skag, 1st-Level Warrior

Small Humanoid (Aquatic)

Hit Dice:	1d8+1 (5 hp)
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares), swim 30 ft.
Defense:	13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12
Base Attack/Grapple:	+1/−3
Attack:	Spear +2 melee (1d6/x3) or dart +3 ranged (1d3) or net +3 ranged (entangle)
Full Attack:	Spear +2 melee (1d6/x3) or dart +3 ranged (1d3) or net +3 ranged (entangle)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	—
Special Qualities:	Amphibious, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +3, Will −1
Abilities:	Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 8
Skills:	Climb +4, Hide +5, Jump +4, Move Silently +5, Ride +5, Swim +12
Feats:	Lightning Reflexes
Environment:	Temperate aquatic (coastal)
Organization:	Gang (4–9), band (10–100 plus 100% noncombatants plus 1 3rd-level sergeant per 20 adults and 1 leader of 4th–6th level), warband (10–20 with skag-mounts), or tribe (40–400 plus 100% noncombatants plus 1 3rd-level sergeant per 20 adults, 1 or 2 lieutenants of 4th or 5th level, 1 leader of 6th–8th level, and 10–20 skag-mounts)
Challenge Rating:	1/2
Treasure:	Standard
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+0

This hunched creature stands 3-1/2 feet high and looks something like a seal crossed with a toad and then made to walk on two legs. It grips a crude spear in its hands as it regards you with milk-colored eyes, muttering grunts and wet barking noises that do not sound altogether friendly.

Skags stand with a hunched posture that makes them appear even squatter than their actual height. A typical adult weighs 60 to 70 pounds. They have heavy jowls and loose, leathery skin on their whiskery faces; there are often loose folds on skins on the creatures' arms, legs, and belly, as well. Skags have short, bristly hair on their backs and limbs, usually black or dark brown, while their skin is gray-brown. Skags have webbed feet and toes.

Skags speak their own language, which sounds to human ears like a dissonant mixture of gurgles and throaty barks.

Most skags encountered by humans are warriors; the information in the statistics block is for one of 1st level.

COMBAT

Skags aren't interested in a fair fight. As far as they are concerned, the "dry-landers" (as they call humans) constantly raid their territory, stealing their riches and killing their people. They use ambushes as often as possible, preferring to attack in large numbers and in locations where they can easily retreat to the water. They are also known to set primitive traps for unwary intruders.

Wherever possible, skags begin a fight by casting nets at their foes; they then swarm forward to stab those who are entangled and struggling. If they can, they delight in knocking dry-lander opponents into the water and dragging them down to drown.

Amphibious (Ex): Skags may function equally well in and out of water.

Skills: A skag gains a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

SKAGS AS CHARACTERS

Skag characters possess the following racial traits.

- −2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, Intelligence −2.
- Small size: +1 bonus to Defense, +1 bonus on attack rolls, +4 bonus on Hide checks, −4 penalty on grapple checks, lifting and carrying limits 3/4 those of Medium characters.
- A skag's base land speed is 20 feet. Its base swim speed is 30 feet.
- +1 natural armor bonus.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Amphibious: Skags may function equally well in and out of water.
- Weapon Familiarity: Skags may treat nets as martial weapons, rather than exotic weapons.
- Automatic Languages: Skag. Bonus Languages: Common, Draconic, First Speech, Sea Speech.

The skag warrior presented here had the following ability scores before racial adjustments: Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

SKAG-MOUNTS

Skag-mounts are aquatic creatures halfway between a toad and a lizard. Skag leaders and elite troops sometimes ride these creatures into battle. Skag-mounts grow to a length of about 6 feet, including tail, and have statistics identical to those of a monitor lizard (see Chapter 2 of the MM), except as follows:

- Skag-mounts have the aquatic subtype and the amphibious special quality (as skags').
- Skag-mounts do not gain a +4 racial bonus to Hide checks; however, they do receive a situational +8 bonus on Hide checks in aquatic or coastal terrain. They retain the racial bonus on Move Silently checks.
- Skag-mounts have a climb speed of 20 ft. and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. They can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.
- Skags use special saddles that bind the rider to their mount via straps across the legs, which allow mount and rider to race up walls or across ceilings to escape or attack. The mount cannot charge while climbing, but can double-move. Otherwise, these saddles have the same characteristics as a military saddle.

The limited intelligence of these creatures means that they are generally only taught the *attack*, *come*, and *down* tricks. (Refer to the Handle Animal skill for more details.)

Non-Player Characters

Entries are organized alphabetically by first name, for ease of reference. Where applicable, skill groups are listed under “Skills” in SMALL CAPITALS, followed by the number of ranks in that group. Each individual skill is listed thereafter, however, since the skills in each group may have different bonuses due to key ability modifiers and trait or feat selections.

Aletha Polle, female man-at-arms 2: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d4+12+2; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 14 (+2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 10; DR 1d3+1/magic; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +4 melee (1d8+1, trident) or +4 ranged (*entangle*, 10 ft., net); SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Traits: Bloodthirsty, Savage Appearance.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks, PERCEPTION 5 ranks, WILDERNESS LORE 5 ranks; Balance +6, Climb +5 (+7 involving rope), Diplomacy +4, Escape Artist +2 (+4 escaping bonds), Handle Animal +7, Heal +5, Intimidate +7, Jump +5, Listen +5, Ride +7, Search +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Survival +5 (+7 tracking), Swim +4, Use Rope +7.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Armor Mastery (1)^B, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Trident Mastery (1), Weapon Focus (trident) (1).

Possessions: Stone-studded leather armor, trident, net, whalebone jewelry (total 75 gp), conch horn, 4d6 gp.

Amarana Sart, Arena owner and Crimson Path priestess, female executioner 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d4+12; hp 19; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +3; Defense 17 (+3 Dex, +1 passive shield), touch 16, flat-footed 11; BAB +3; Grap +3; Atk +7 melee (1d4/19–20, masterwork dagger) or +6 ranged (1d4/19–20, 10 ft., dagger); Full Atk +5/+5 melee (1d4/19–20, masterwork dagger) or +4/+4 ranged (1d4/19–20, 10 ft., 2 daggers); SA armor-piercing strike, hindering cut, sneak attack +2d6; SQ execution pool, executioner's eye; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +5 (+7 vs. fear); Str 11, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Traits: Child of Faith (ordination), Dexterous.

Skills: ATHLETICS 6 ranks, PERCEPTION 6 ranks, STEALTH 6 ranks; Balance +5, Climb +6, Diplomacy +2, Escape Artist +9, Hide +9, Jump +8, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Search +6, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Survival +2 (+4 tracking), Swim +6, Tumble +11, Use Rope +3 (+5 binding creatures).

Languages: Common.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Razor Fiend (1), Weapon Finesse (1).

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, 6 daggers, masterwork buckler, 3d6+50 gp.

Chyra Delorri, Malador City Councilor, female aristocrat 4: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6–2; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 13 (+1 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 10; BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk +2 melee (1d4–1/19–20, masterwork dagger); SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 9, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Traits: Bewitching, High Born (well educated).

Skills: ACADEMIA 7 ranks, SOCIAL 7 ranks; Appraise +9, Bluff +9, Concentration +6, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +13 (+15 among nobility), Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Gather Information +11, Heal +9, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (architecture & engineering, geography, history, local, nobility & royalty, religion) +9, Listen +8, Perform (dance, oratory) +9, Profession (lawyer) +6, Ride +4, Search +2 (+4

finding secrets doors), Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +3.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, First Speech, Kolorean, Sea Speech, plus up to any 5 others.

Feats: Overwhelming Presence (1), Political Mastermind (1, 2^B).

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, noble's outfit, 100 pp. (Note that Delorri has access to a large amount of wealth and can acquire almost any item she needs given a little time.)

Covis Elassy, ship owner and smuggler, male expert 3: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 12 (+1 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +2 melee (1d6, club); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 13.

Traits: Charismatic, Sea Child (marine).

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Appraise +7, Balance +5, Bluff +5, Climb +5, Diplomacy +4, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Listen +0, Profession (sailor) +7, Sense Motive +5, Spot +3, Swim +5, Use Rope +5.

Languages: Common, Sea Speech.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Sense Motive, Profession [sailor]), Skill Focus (Appraise).

Possessions: Club, 2d6 gp.

Fayrsh, ghoulish chieftain, male living ghoulish expert 4: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d6+4; hp 18; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 15 (+2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 11; BAB +2; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d4+2, bite); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+2, bite) and +2/+2 melee (1d3, 2 claws); SA hunger rot; SQ air of the grave, disordered mind, low-light vision; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: STEALTH 7 ranks; Climb +8, Disguise +0 (+8 acting as undead), Hide +9, Move Silently +9.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Great Fortitude^B, Iron Will^B, Multiattack^B.

Possessions: Pearl earring (worth 20 gp), 42 sp.

Gurghan, skag chieftain, male skag hunter 2: CR 2; Small humanoid (aquatic); HD 2d4+8+2; hp 15; Init +5; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 12; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +2; Grap +0; Atk +6 melee (1d6+3/x3, masterwork spear) or +4 ranged touch (*entangle*, net) or +4 ranged (1d3+2, dart); SQ amphibious, darkvision 60 ft., hunter's eye, tactical pool, terrain advantage; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks, PERCEPTION 5 ranks, STEALTH 5 ranks, WILDERNESS LORE 5 ranks; Balance +3, Climb +7 (+9 involving rope), Diplomacy +2, Escape Artist +1 (+3 involving ropes), Handle Animal +5, Hide +10, Intimidate +5, Jump +9, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Ride +8, Search +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Survival +5 (+7 tracking), Swim +15, Tumble +8, Use Rope +6.

Languages: Skag.

Feats: Improved Initiative, War Leader (1, 2).

Possessions: Seashell armor (as leather), masterwork spear, net, 4 darts, 100 coral chips (worth 1 sp each), coral crown (25 gp).

Halgyn Polle, male man-at-arms 4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d4+24+4; hp 38; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +4; Defense 13 (-1 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 9; DR 1d3/magic; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +8 melee (1d8+4/x3, masterwork warhammer) or +6 melee (1d3+2 lethal or non-, unarmed); SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Traits: Master of Lore, Tough as Iron.

Skills: ATHLETICS 7 ranks, PERCEPTION 7 ranks, WILDERNESS LORE 7 ranks; Appraise +8 (+10 involving metal trinkets/tools), Climb +9 (+11 involving rope), Craft (metal trinkets/tools) +9, Diplomacy +2, Escape Artist -1 (+1 escaping bonds), Handle Animal +7, Jump +9, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (nature) +3, Knowledge (all others) +1, Listen +9, Profession (merchant) +9, Ride +8, Search +8, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Survival +9 (+11 tracking), Swim +9, Tumble +1, Use Rope +6.

Languages: Common, Ancient Speech.

Feats: Foe Hammer (1, 2^B), Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack (1)^B, Weapon Focus (warhammer) (1, 2).

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather, masterwork warhammer, gold ring (50 gp), 4d6 gp.

Hokar Bilthone, male dreaded sorcerer 7: CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 8d6+8; hp 28; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +5; Defense 17 (+1 Dex, +1 passive deflection), touch 17, flat-footed 11; BAB +5; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or +8 ranged touch (5d6, 300 ft., arcane bolt); SA arcane bolt, mesmerizing glance, spellcasting (conjunction); SQ mystic shield; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills: Concentration +11, Intimidate +13, Listen +12, Spellcraft +13, Use Magic Device +13.

Languages: Abyssal, Ancient Speech, Common, Infernal.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Arcane Bolt (Su): As a standard action, Bilthone can smite an enemy with a bolt of pure arcane energy. This is a ranged touch attack with a maximum range of 300 feet (no range increment); he gains a bonus to this attack equal to his Intelligence modifier (included above) and deals 5d6 points of damage on a successful hit (no save). Firing an arcane bolt, a ranged attack, provokes attacks of opportunity as usual.

Mesmerizing Glance—Obedience (Su): As a standard action, Bilthone can attempt to dominate an opponent in line of sight. If the target fails a DC 20 Will save, Bilthone controls that target, but he can take no other actions on a round during which he exercises this control over a target. At the start of the target's action, she gains another save to shake off Bilthone's control. If Bilthone suffers damage while using this ability, he must make a Concentration check or lose his hold over the current target of this ability.

If a target succeeds in a Will save against this ability, she cannot be affected by it again for 24 hours. Otherwise, Bilthone can use it on her again even if the effect ends (such as from his taking damage).

Spellcasting (Conjunction): Once per hour, Bilthone can call upon any monster with a CR of 4 or less. This ability requires a full-round action, and the creature appears wherever Bilthone wishes within 100 feet of his position. The conjunction manifests at the start of Bilthone's next action, at which time the summoned creature may take actions as normal. It obeys Bilthone's commands to the best of its ability.

Possessions: Dagger, servant's clothes, Crimson Path religious texts, clay pipe and pipeweed, 200 gp.

Iloya Harvle, female expert 1/thief 1: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6 plus 1d4+4; hp 7; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 12 (+1 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +0; Grap -1; Atk +2 melee (1d4+2/19-20 plus poison, dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ alias, skill expertise; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 9, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Traits: City Rat (burglar), Weapon Bond (dagger/Charisma).

Skills: AGILITY 3 ranks, ROBBERY 5 ranks, SOCIAL 6 ranks; Balance +4, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +6, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Escape Artist +4, Forgery +6, Gather Information +8, Hide +10, Intimidate +10, Listen +2, Open Lock +7, Move Silently +10, Sleight of Hand +9, Tumble +4.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Overwhelming Presence (1), Skill Affinity (Hide, Move Silently).

Possessions: Dagger (poison—Fort DC 14, 1d2 Str/1d2 Str), 2d6 gp.

Maxxen Juthe, Borati General and King's Envoy, male warrior 3/aristocrat 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 1d6+1+3; hp 19; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +3; Defense 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; DR - (1d4/magic in armor); BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19-20, masterwork longsword); SQ immune to fear; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Traits: Brave, World Traveler.

Skills: ATHLETICS 6 ranks, SOCIAL 6 ranks; Bluff +7, Climb +8, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +3, Diplomacy +13, Gather Information +7, Heal +2, Intimidate +9, Jump +8, Knowledge (nobility & royalty) +3, Listen +2, Ride +6, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +3, Spot +2, Swim +8, Tumble +2.

Languages: Common, Ferrish, Firstspeech, Sea Speech.

Feats: Endurance, Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot), Toughness.

Possessions: Masterwork longsword, courtier's outfit, masterwork chainmail (not normally worn in Malador), 50 gp.

Olloman Waywright, male commoner 3: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d3 non-lethal, unarmed); SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Traits: Intelligent (x2).

Skills: Appraise +8, Bluff +6, Diplomacy +12, Forgery +8, Intimidate +2, Profession (gambler) +10, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +2.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Diplomacy, Sense Motive), Skill Focus (Profession [gambler]).

Possessions: 8d6 gp.

Omar Gwent, male archer 1: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d4+4+3; hp 9; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 15 (Dex +4), touch 15, flat-footed 10; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +0/+1; Grap +0; Atk +5 ranged (1d6/x3, 70 ft., composite shortbow) or +0 melee (1d6, light mace); SA deadeye shot (accurate shot); SQ aim pool; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Traits: Dexterous (x2).

Skills: AGILITY 4 ranks, ATHLETICS 4 ranks, PERCEPTION 4 ranks; Balance +8, Climb +4, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Jump +4, Listen +4, Profession (sailor) +4, Search +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4, Swim +4, Tumble +8.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Precise Shot (2), Toughness.

Possessions: Leather armor, composite shortbow, 40 arrows, light mace, 2d6 gp.

Potul Nardren, male harrier 3/hunter 1: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 3d4+12+3 plus 1d4+4+1; hp 32; Init +7; Spd 40 ft.; BDB +4; Defense 17 (Dex +3), touch 17, flat-footed 10; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +4; Grap +4; Atk +8 melee (1d8+3, masterwork flail); SA mobile assault; SQ combat mobility, hunter's eye, tactical pool, terrain advantage; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Traits: Dexterous, Weapon Bond (flail/Dexterity).

Skills: AGILITY 7 ranks, ATHLETICS 6 ranks, PERCEPTION 5 ranks, STEALTH 5 ranks; Balance +12, Bluff +9, Climb +6 (+8 using ropes), Diplomacy +13, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Escape Artist +10 (+12 escaping bonds), Heal +6, Hide +8, Intimidate +11, Jump +8, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Perform (oratory) +11, Ride +5, Search +6, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +5, Survival +0 (+2 tracking), Swim +6, Tumble +15, Use Rope +8 (+10 tying bonds).

Languages: Common.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Combat Reflexes (1), Venom Mastery (1), War Leader (1).

Possessions: Leather armor, masterwork flail, 2d6+100 gp.

Quodan Zee, male thief 2: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d4+8; hp 15; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 15 (+3 Dex), touch 15, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +4 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d4, 50 ft., sling); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ alias, skill expertise; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Traits: Charismatic (x2).

Skills: AGILITY 7 ranks, ATHLETICS 7 ranks, ROBBERY 7 ranks, SOCIAL 7 ranks, STEALTH 7 ranks, THEATRICS 7 ranks; Appraise +3, Balance +12, Bluff +9 (+11 as Quodan), Climb +7, Decipher Script +3, Diplomacy +13, Disable Device +7, Disguise +9 (+11 acting, +13 acting as Quodan), Escape Artist +10, Forgery +7, Gather Information +11, Hide +10, Intimidate +11, Jump +9, Knowledge (local) +6, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +10, Perform (acting) +9, Sleight of Hand +12, Sense Motive +6, Swim +7, Tumble +12, Use Rope +3 (+5 tying bonds).

Languages: Common.

Feats: Devious Manipulator (1, 2), Dodge (1).

Possessions: Dagger, sling, 5 bullets, 3d6+20 gp.

Sandelt, female weapon master 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d4+18+3; hp 28; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; BDB +3; Defense 14 (Dex +1), touch 14, flat-footed 10; DR 1d4/magic; BAB +3; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4/x3, masterwork handaxe) or +5 ranged (1d6+4/x3, 10 ft., handaxe); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+4/x3, masterwork handaxe) and +4 melee (1d6+3/x3, handaxe), or +5 ranged (1d6+4/x3, 10 ft., handaxe); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft.); SA favored weapon (handaxe), weapon pool, weapon style (expert strike, steady aim); SV Fort +4,

Ref +4, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Traits: Resilient Toughness, Tall.

Skills: ATHLETICS 6 ranks; Climb +3, Craft (metal trinkets/tools) +6, Intimidate +6, Jump +3, Ride +7, Swim +2, Tumble +2.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (handaxe) (1, 2).

Possessions: Chainmail, masterwork handaxe, 3 handaxes, silver necklace and bracelet (25 gp each), 6d6+10 gp.

Serten "Adder" Arasp, male warrior 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+3; hp 12; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 13 (+2 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 10; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Traits: City Rat (bravo), Lithe Acrobat.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Climb +6, Hide +4, Jump +6, Listen +2, Profession (innkeeper) +3, Swim +6, Tumble +9.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Dagger, 3d6 sp.

Toban Wellaw, Malador City Councilor, male aristocrat 4: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6–2; hp 2; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d3–1 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 8, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Traits: High Born (well educated), Intelligent.

Skills: ACADEMIA 7 ranks, SOCIAL 7 ranks; Appraise +11, Bluff +7, Concentration +6, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +15 (+17 among nobility), Disguise +0 (+2 acting), Gather Information +9, Heal +8, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana, architecture & engineering, geography, history, local, nature, nobility & royalty, religion) +11, Listen +8, Perform (strings, oratory) +7, Profession (lawyer, scribe) +7, Search +4 (+6 finding secrets doors), Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +2.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, Ferrish, First Speech, Kolorean, Sea Speech, plus up to any 6 others.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Diplomacy, Sense Motive), Political Mastermind (1, 2^B).

Possessions: Noble's outfit, 80 pp. (Note that Wellaw has access to a large amount of wealth and can acquire almost any item he needs given a little time.)

Ulric Blayne, male arcanist 4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d4+8; hp 18; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +3; Defense 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; BAB +3; Grap +2; Atk +7 melee (1d4–1/19–20 plus poison, dagger); SA spellcasting; SQ aspect of power (daunting visage), mana pool (18); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Traits: Intelligent (x2).

Skills: ACADEMIA 7 ranks, MYSTICISM 7 ranks, SOCIAL 7 ranks, THEATRICS 7 ranks; Appraise +11, Bluff +8, Concentration +7, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +14, Disable Device +11, Disguise +8 (+10 acting), Forgery +11, Gather Information +8, Handle Animal +8,

Heal +8, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (all) +11, Listen +8, Perform (singing) +8, Ride +9, Search +11 (+13 finding secret doors), Sleight of Hand +9, Spellcraft +13 (+15 deciphering scrolls), Spot +6, Survival +3 (+5 tracking), Use Magic Device +8 (+12 using scrolls).

Languages: Abyssal, Ancient Speech, Common, Death Speech, Draconic, Ferrish, First Speech, Infernal, Kolorean, Sea Speech, plus any 3 others.

Feats: Tactics of the Mind (1, 2^B), Venom Mastery (1, 2, 3).

Spellcasting: Divination mastery 1, enchantment mastery 2, necromancy mastery 3.

Possessions: Dagger (poison—Fort DC 14, 1d2 Str/1d2 Str), 3d6 gp.

Varas Rohdell, Malador City Councilor, male aristocrat 4: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6; hp 9; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 12 (-1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Traits: High Born (title), Stout.

Skills: ACADEMIA 7 ranks, SOCIAL 7 ranks; Appraise +8, Bluff +7, Concentration +8, Decipher Script +8, Diplomacy +14 (+16 among nobility), Disguise +0 (+2 acting), Gather Information +9, Heal +7, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (history, local, nobility & royalty) +8, Listen +7, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +1, Spot +6.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, Draconic, Ferrish, Firstspeech, Kolorean, Sea Speech, plus any 2 others.

Feats: Overwhelming Presence (1, 2^B), Political Mastermind (1).

Possessions: Noble's outfit, snuffbox, box of exotic sweetmeats, 150 gp. (Note that Rohdell has access to a large amount of wealth and can acquire almost any item he needs given a little time.)

Vilian Troke, pirate captain, male berserker 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d4+24+9; hp 40; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 13 (Dex +1), touch 13, flat-footed 10; DR 1d4/magic; BAB +3; Grap +6; Atk +8 melee (1d6+4/18-20, scimitar [used 2-handed]); SQ berserker abilities (berserk mind, berserk strength, berserk toughness), fury pool; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 11.

Traits: Bloodthirsty, Sea Child (marine).

Skills: ATHLETICS 6 ranks; Balance +3, Climb +9, Intimidate +6, Jump +9, Profession (sailor) +2, Swim +9, Tumble +3, Use Rope +4.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Cleave (1), Power Attack (1), Weapon Focus (falchion) (1).

Possessions: Scimitar, 2d6 gp.

Voltorn Madic, male warrior 4: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+4+6+3; hp 31; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; BDB +3; Defense 15 (-1 Dex, +3 passive shield), touch 12, flat-footed 12; DR 1d4/magic; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (2d8+2/19-20, Large masterwork bastard sword); SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Traits: Mighty Build, Mountain Folk (tough as stone).

Skills: ATHLETICS 7 ranks; Climb +3, Intimidate +7, Jump +3, Swim -3.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Toughness.

Possessions: Scale mail, heavy wooden shield, Large masterwork bastard sword, 2d6+10 gp.

Other Combatant NPCs

Acrobat Spectacular, expert 1/warrior 1: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1 plus 1d8+1; hp 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 12 (+2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Traits: City Rat (bravo), Lithe Acrobat.

Skills: AGILITY 4 ranks; Appraise +4, Balance +11, Climb +5, Escape Artist +6, Jump +7, Perform (dance) +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +3, Tumble +13.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Balance, Tumble).

Possessions: Dagger, 1d6 sp.

Acrobat Spectacular (firebreather), expert 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 12 (+1 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +2 ranged touch (1d6 fire, 5 ft., firebreathing fluid); SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9.

Traits: Artisan (merchant's eye), Lithe Acrobat.

Skills: AGILITY 5 ranks; Appraise +7, Balance +10, Climb +5, Escape Artist +6, Jump +9, Perform (dance) +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +4, Tumble +10.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Balance, Jump).

Possessions: Dagger, 6 doses of flammable fluid, 2d6 sp.

Beggars' Flow gang leader, warrior 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+3; hp 12; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; DR 1/magic; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, club) or +3 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed); SA sneak attack +1d6; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Traits: City Rat (bravo), Faithful Friend.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Climb +6, Intimidate +5, Jump +6, Swim +6.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Padded armor, club, 3d6+20 cp.

Beggars' Flow thief, expert 1: CR 1/4; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 11 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +0; Grap -1; Atk -1 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger) or -1 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Traits: City Rat (burglar), Intelligent.

Skills: ROBBERY 4 ranks; Appraise +4, Balance +5, Climb +3, Disable Device +6, Escape Artist +7, Forgery +6, Hide +7, Jump +3, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +5, Search +6, Sleight of Hand +5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Appraise, Escape Artist).

Possessions: Dagger, 1d6 sp.

Beggars' Flow thug, warrior 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+3; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d6, club) or +1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed); SA sneak attack +1d6; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Traits: City Rat (bravo), Faithful Friend.

Skills: ATHLETICS 4 ranks; Climb +4, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Swim +4.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Club, 3d6 cp.

Clifftop Guard soldier, warrior 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 12 (+2 passive shield), touch 10, flat-footed 12; DR 1d4/magic; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1/x3, shortspear) or +2 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger) or +2 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Traits: Nomad (cavalry warrior)*, Perceptive.

Skills: ATHLETICS 4 ranks; Climb +0, Handle Animal +1, Jump +0, Listen +1, Ride +4, Spot +1, Swim –5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot).

Possessions: Scale mail, light wooden shield, shortspear, dagger, 2d6 gp.

* Clifftop Guards are not actually drawn from nomadic peoples, but all are strictly trained as cavalry. With respect to the benefits of this trait, they have trained with their horses for at least one week, but none have been in two battles with them.

Clifftop Guard squad leader, warrior 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 13 (+2 passive shield), touch 11, flat-footed 12; DR 1d4/magic; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1/x3, shortspear) or +3 melee (1d6+1, light mace) or +3 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger) or +3 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Traits: Nomad (cavalry warrior)*, Perceptive.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Climb +1, Handle Animal +1, Jump +1, Listen +1, Ride +5, Spot +1, Swim –4.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot).

Possessions: Scale mail, light wooden shield, shortspear, light mace, dagger, 2d6 gp.

* Clifftop Guards are not actually drawn from nomadic peoples, but all are strictly trained as cavalry. With respect to the benefits of this trait, they have trained with their horses for at least one week, but none have been in two battles with them.

Crimson Path cultist, warrior 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+3; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d8/x3, spear) or +1 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger); SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Traits: Bloodthirsty, Child of Faith (fanatic).

Skills: ATHLETICS 4 ranks; Climb +4, Hide +4, Jump +4, Swim +4.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Leather armor, spear, dagger, 3d6 sp.

Gladiator, warrior 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+4+3; hp 16; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 14 (+3 passive shield), touch 11, flat-footed 13; DR 1d3/magic; BAB +2; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (by weapon +2) or +4 melee (1d3+2 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will –2; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 7, Cha 8.

Traits: Strong (x2).

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Climb +6, Intimidate +4, Jump +6, Swim +5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, heavy wooden shield, weapon of choice (usually longsword or battleaxe), 4d6 gp.

Gladiator (elite), warrior 3: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+6+3; hp 22; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 16 (+1 Dex, +3 passive shield), touch 13, flat-footed 13; DR 1d3/magic; BAB +3; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (by weapon +3) or +6 melee (1d3+3 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Strong (x2).

Skills: ATHLETICS 6 ranks; Climb +9, Intimidate +5, Jump +9, Swim +9.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Toughness.

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather, heavy wooden shield, weapon of choice (usually longsword or battleaxe), 5d6+10 gp.

Malador Town Guard soldier, warrior 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d8+1/x3, spear) or +2 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger) or +1 ranged (1d8/19–20, 80 ft., light crossbow); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Faithful Friend, Perceptive.

Skills: ATHLETICS 4 ranks; Climb +5, Jump +5, Listen +2, Spot +2, Swim +5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot).

Possessions: Leather armor, spear, dagger, light crossbow, 20 bolts, 1d6 gp.

Malador Town Guard squad leader, warrior 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 11; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/x3, spear) or +3 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger) or +2 ranged (1d8/19–20, 80 ft., light crossbow); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Traits: Inspiring Presence, Perceptive.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Climb +6, Jump +6, Listen +1, Spot +2, Swim +6.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot).

Possessions: Leather armor, spear, dagger, light crossbow, 20 bolts, 2d6 gp.

Pirate, warrior 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 12 (+1 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 11; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, club) or +3 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger) or +3 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed) or +3 ranged (1d8/19–20, 80 ft., light crossbow); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will –1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9.

Traits: Sea Child (marine), Stout.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Balance +2, Climb +6, Intimidate +3, Jump +6, Profession (sailor) +3, Swim +6.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Focus (Profession [sailor]).

Possessions: Leather armor, club, dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, 4d6 gp.

Drowning Tower guard, warrior 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 11 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +2 melee (1d6/18–20, scimitar) or +2 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger) or +3 ranged (1d8/19–20, 80 ft., light crossbow); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Perceptive, Sea Child (marine).

Skills: ATHLETICS 4 ranks; Balance +3, Climb +4, Jump +4, Listen +2, Spot +2, Swim +4.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot).

Possessions: Leather armor, scimitar, dagger, light crossbow, 20 bolts, 1d6 gp.

Other Creatures

Air elemental, Small: CR 1; Medium elemental (air, extraplanar); HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +7; Spd fly 100 ft.; Defense 17 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 14; BAB +1; Grap –3; Atk +5 melee (1d4, slam); SA whirlwind; SQ air mastery, darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits; SV Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Listen +2, Spot +3.

Languages: Auran.

Feats: Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative^B, Weapon Finesse (1)^B.

Animated armor (Medium animated object): CR 2; Medium construct; HD 2d10+20; hp 31; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 14 (+4 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, slam); SQ construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., hardness 10, low-light vision; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will –5; Str 12, Dex 10, Con –, Int –, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Barghest (“Borxus”): CR 4; Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful, shapechanger); HD 6d8+6; hp 33; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 18 (+2 Dex, +6 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 16; DR 5/magic; BAB +6; Grap +9; Atk +9 melee (1d6+3, bite); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+3, bite) and +4/+4 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws); SA feed, spell-like abilities; SQ change shape, darkvision 60 ft., scent; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +9, Hide +10, Intimidate +11, Jump +12, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +11, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11, Survival +9 (+11 tracking).

Languages: Common, Infernal.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track.

Change Shape: Unlike other barghests, “Borxus” does not change shape into a goblin or a wolf; instead, he may change into either a Small human child or a Small or Tiny dog. Otherwise, this ability is identical to the standard barghest change shape ability.

Blood rook (as eagle): CR 1/2; Small animal; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average); Defense 14 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 12; BAB +0; Grap –4; Atk +3 melee (1d4, talons); SQ low-light vision; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +2, Spot +14.

Feats: Weapon Finesse (1).

Dretch: CR 2; Small outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar); HD 2d8+4; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; Defense 16 (+1 size, +5 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 16; DR 5/cold iron or good; BAB +2; Grap –1; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, claw); Full Atk +4/+4 melee (1d6+1, 2 claws) and +2 melee (1d4, bite); SA spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, telepathy 100 ft.; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Hide +9, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Search +2, Survival +0 (+2 following tracks).

Feats: Multiattack.

Summon Demon: The dretch encountered in **Dark Harbor** cannot summon other demons.

Gargoyle: CR 4; Medium monstrous humanoid (earth); HD 4d8+16+3; hp 37; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); Defense 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14; DR 10/magic; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d4+2, claw); Full Atk +6/+6 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) and +4 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +4 melee (1d6+1, gore); SQ darkvision 60 ft., freeze; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 7.

Skills: Hide +7 (+15 against stone background), Listen +4, Spot +4.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Multiattack, Toughness.

Ghoul (true): CR 1; Medium undead; HD 2d12; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1 plus paralysis, bite); Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1 plus paralysis, bite) and +0/+0 melee (1d3 plus paralysis, 2 claws); SA ghoulish fever, paralysis; SQ darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, +2 turn resistance; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 15, Con –, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Balance +6, Climb +5, Hide +6, Jump +5, Move Silently +6, Spot +7.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Multiattack.

Giant fire beetle: CR 1/3; Small vermin; HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 16 (+1 size, +5 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +0; Grap –4; Atk +1 melee (2d4, bite); SQ darkvision 60 ft., luminosity, vermin traits; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 11, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Guard dog: CR 1; Medium animal; HD 2d8+4; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14; BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+3, bite); SQ low-light vision, scent; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Jump +8, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +3, Survival +1 (+5 tracking).

Feats: Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot), Track^B.

Hydra, 5-headed: CR 4; Huge magical beast; HD 5d10+28; hp 55; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; Defense 15 (–2 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 14; BAB +5; Grap +16; Atk +6 [x5] melee (1d10+3, 5 bites); Full Atk +6 [x5] melee (1d10+3, 5 bites); SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 15, low-light vision, scent; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +11.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Toughness.

Living ghoul (typical), commoner 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6+2; hp 9; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 14 (+2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 11; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, bite); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, bite) and –3/–3 melee (1d3, 2 claws); SA hunger rot; SQ air of the grave, disordered mind, low-light vision; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +5, Disguise +0 (+8 to appear undead), Hide +5, Move Silently +5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Great Fortitude^B, Iron Will^B.

Shrieker fungus: CR 1; Medium plant; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init –5; Spd 0 ft.; Defense 8 (–5 Dex, +3 natural), touch 5, flat-footed 8; BAB +1; Grap –4; Atk none; SA shriek; SQ low-light vision, plant traits; SV Fort +4, Ref –, Will –4; Str –, Dex –, Con 13, Int –, Wis 2, Cha 1.

Skag-mount: CR 2; Medium animal (aquatic); HD 3d8+9; hp 22; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; Defense 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB +2; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d8+4,

bite); SQ amphibious, low-light vision; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +15, Hide +2 (+10 in aquatic or coastal setting), Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Spot +4, Swim +11.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot), Great Fortitude.

Skag warrior (typical), warrior 1: CR 1/2; Small humanoid (aquatic); HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12; BAB +1; Grap –3; Atk +2 melee (1d6/x3, spear) or +3 ranged (1d3, 50 ft., dart) or +3 ranged (entangle, net); SQ amphibious, darkvision 60 ft.; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will –1; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +4, Hide +5, Jump +4, Move Silently +5, Ride +5, Swim +12.

Languages: Skag.

Feats: Lightning Reflexes.

Possessions: Spear, net, 4 darts, 2d6 coral chips (worth 1 sp each).

Skag warrior (elite), warrior 2: CR 1; Small humanoid (aquatic); HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 14 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 12; BAB +2; Grap –2; Atk +3 melee (1d6/x3, spear) or +4 ranged (1d3, 50 ft., dart) or +4 ranged (entangle, net); SQ amphibious, darkvision 60 ft.; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will –1; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +4, Hide +5, Jump +4, Move Silently +5, Ride +6, Swim +12.

Languages: Skag.

Feats: Lightning Reflexes.

Possessions: Spear, net, 4 darts, 2d6 coral chips (worth 1 sp each).

Skeleton (human): CR 1/3; Medium undead; HD 1d12; hp 6; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 12; DR 5/bludgeoning; BAB +0; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d4+1, claw); Full Atk +1/+1 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws); SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, undead traits; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 13, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

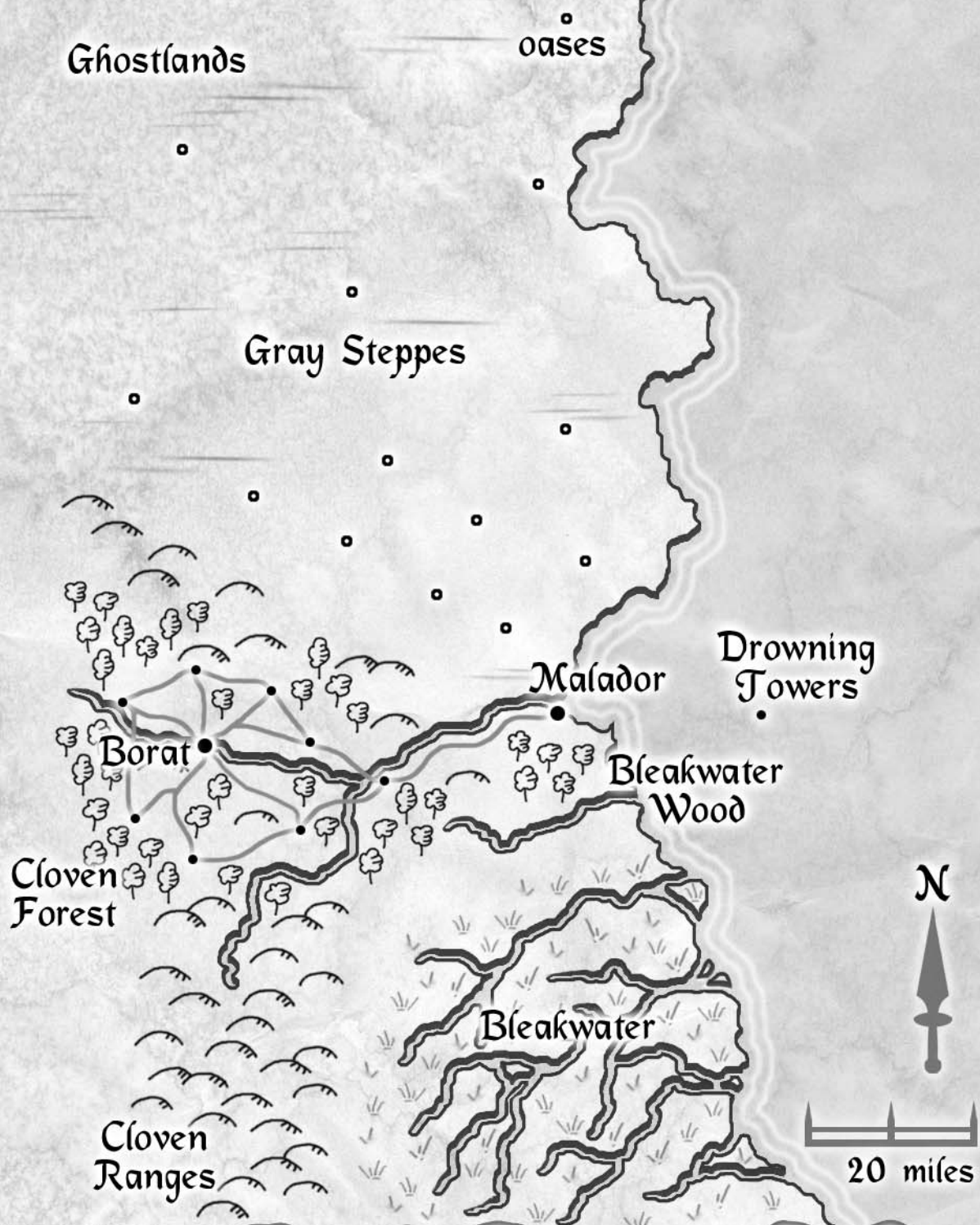
Feats: Improved Initiative.

Snake, Medium viper: CR 1; Medium animal; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; Defense 16 (+3 Dex, +3 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB +1; Grap +0; Atk +4 melee (1d4–1 plus poison, bite); SA poison (Fort DC 11, 1d6 Con/1d6 Con); SQ low-light vision, scent; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Balance +11, Climb +11, Hide +12, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +7.

Feats: Weapon Finesse (1).

The New Coast

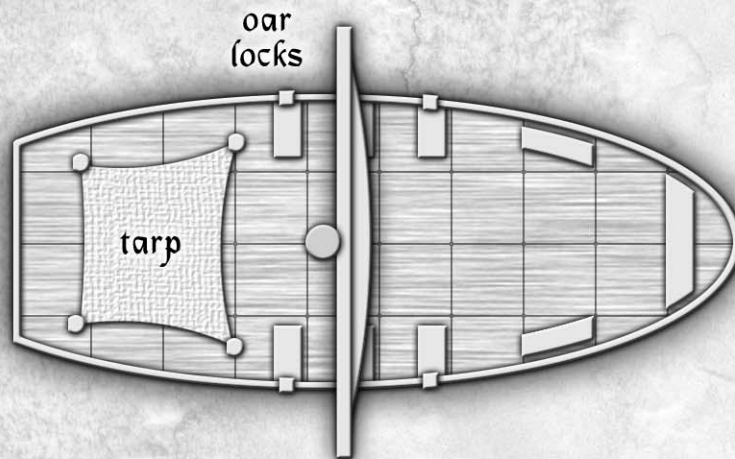




MALADOR PC MAP

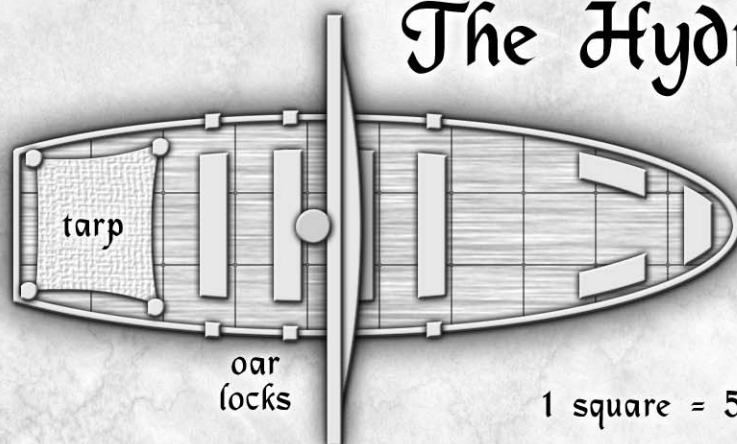


MALADOR GM MAP



Take a Chance and The Blue Lady

stern —————> bow

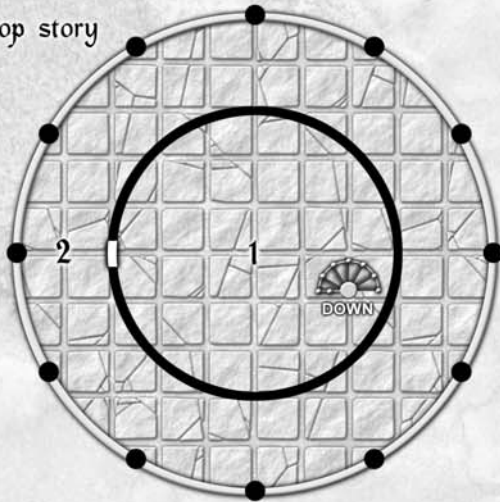
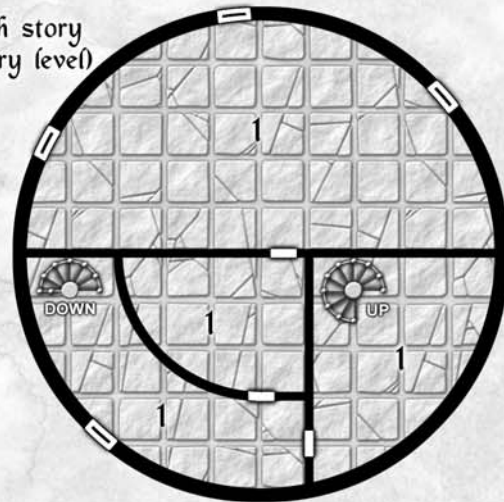


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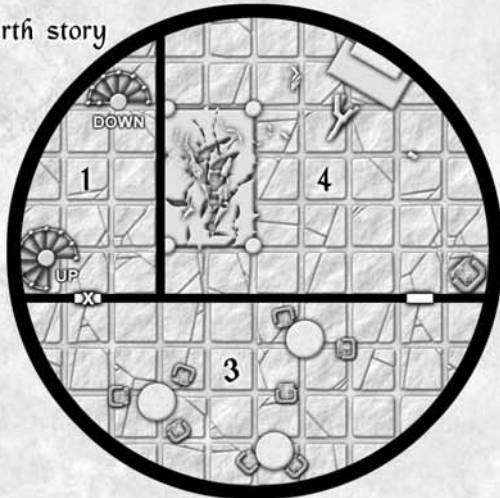
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The Drowning Tower

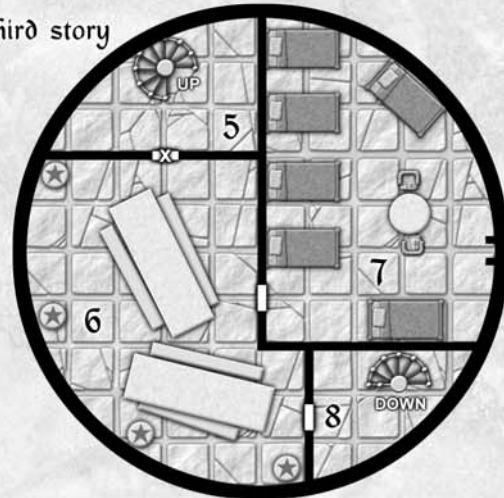
top story

fifth story
(entry level)

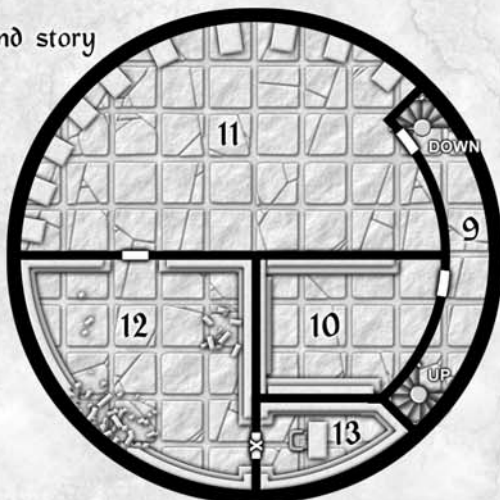
fourth story



third story



second story

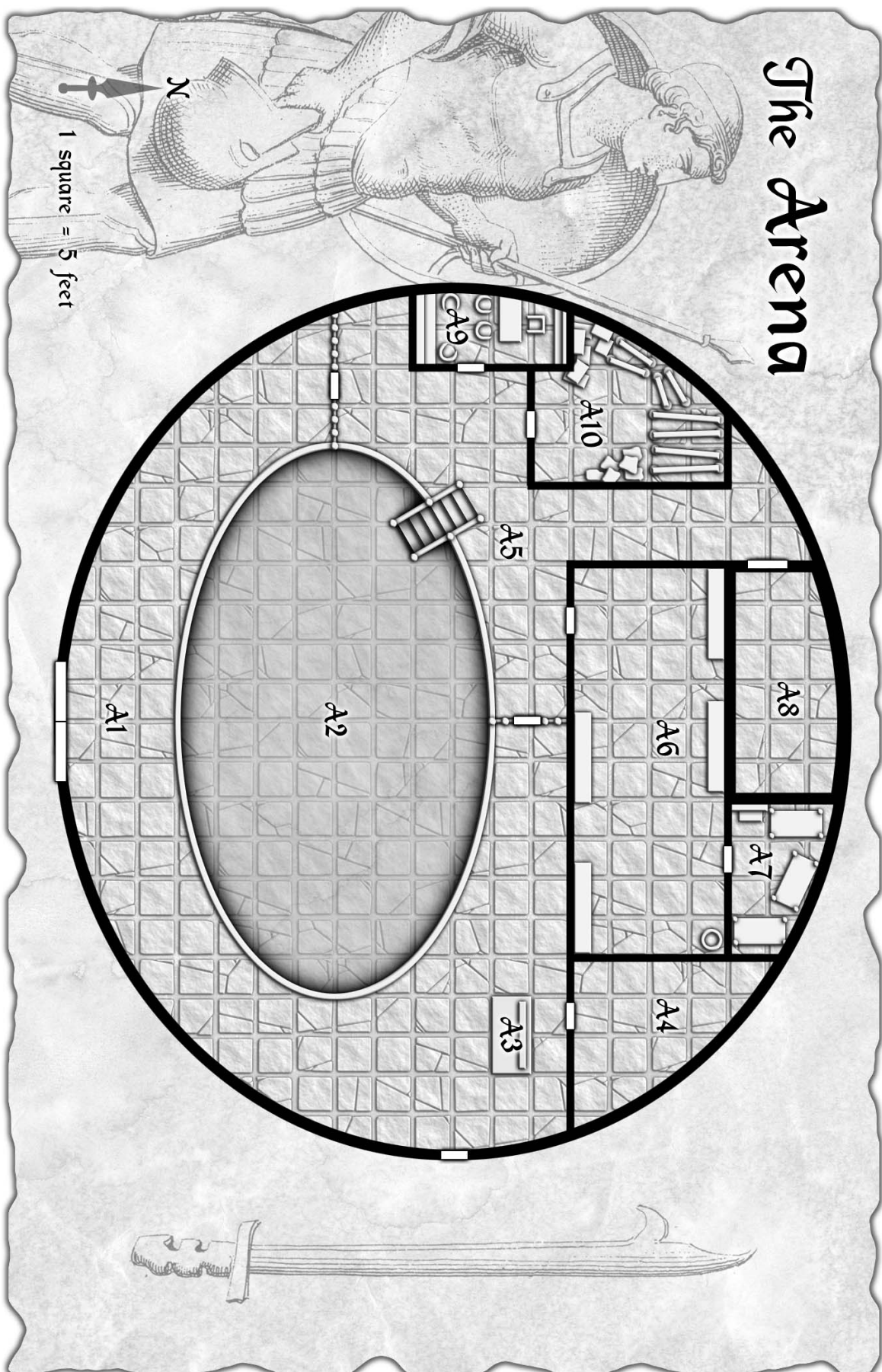


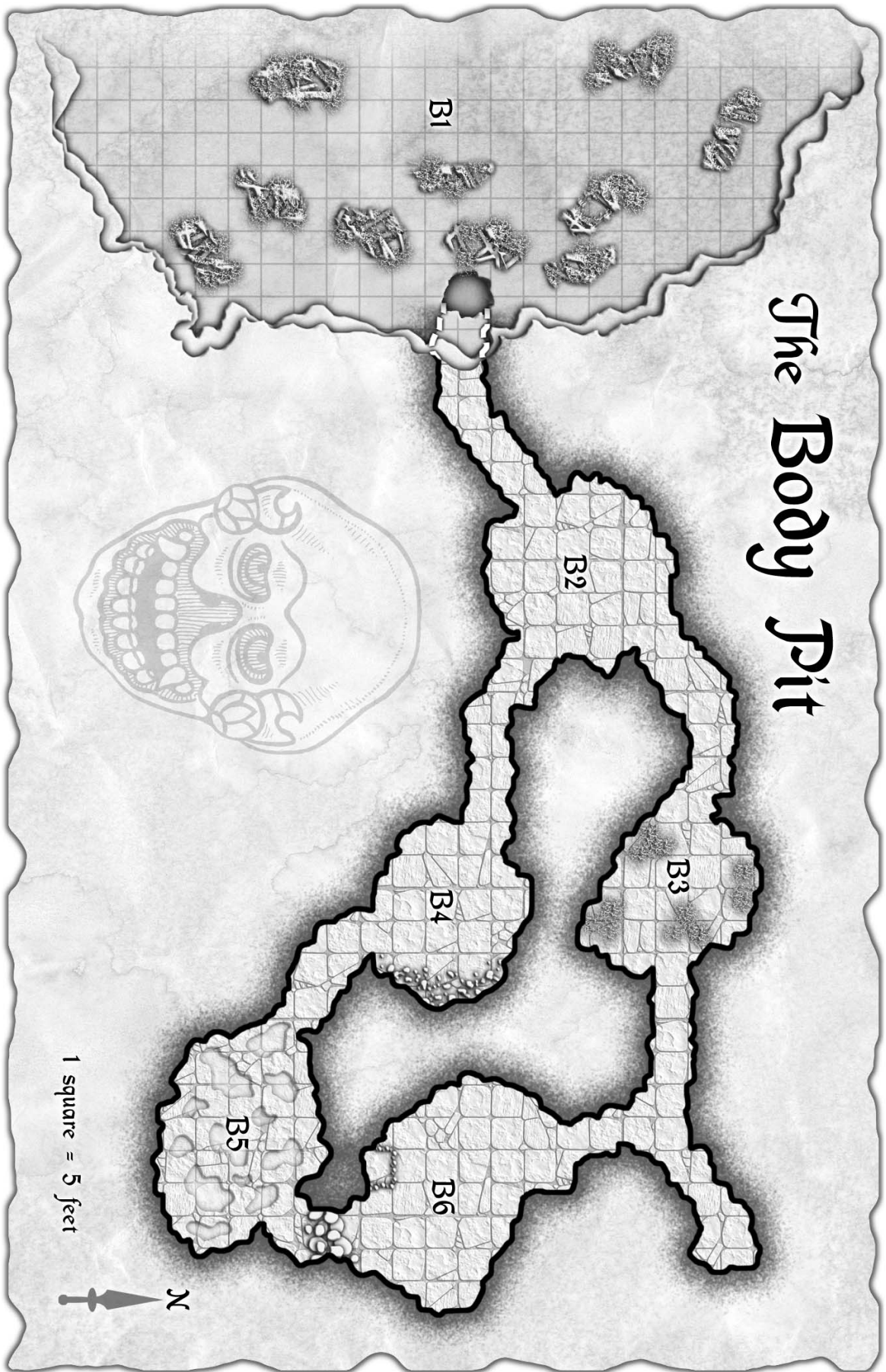
first story

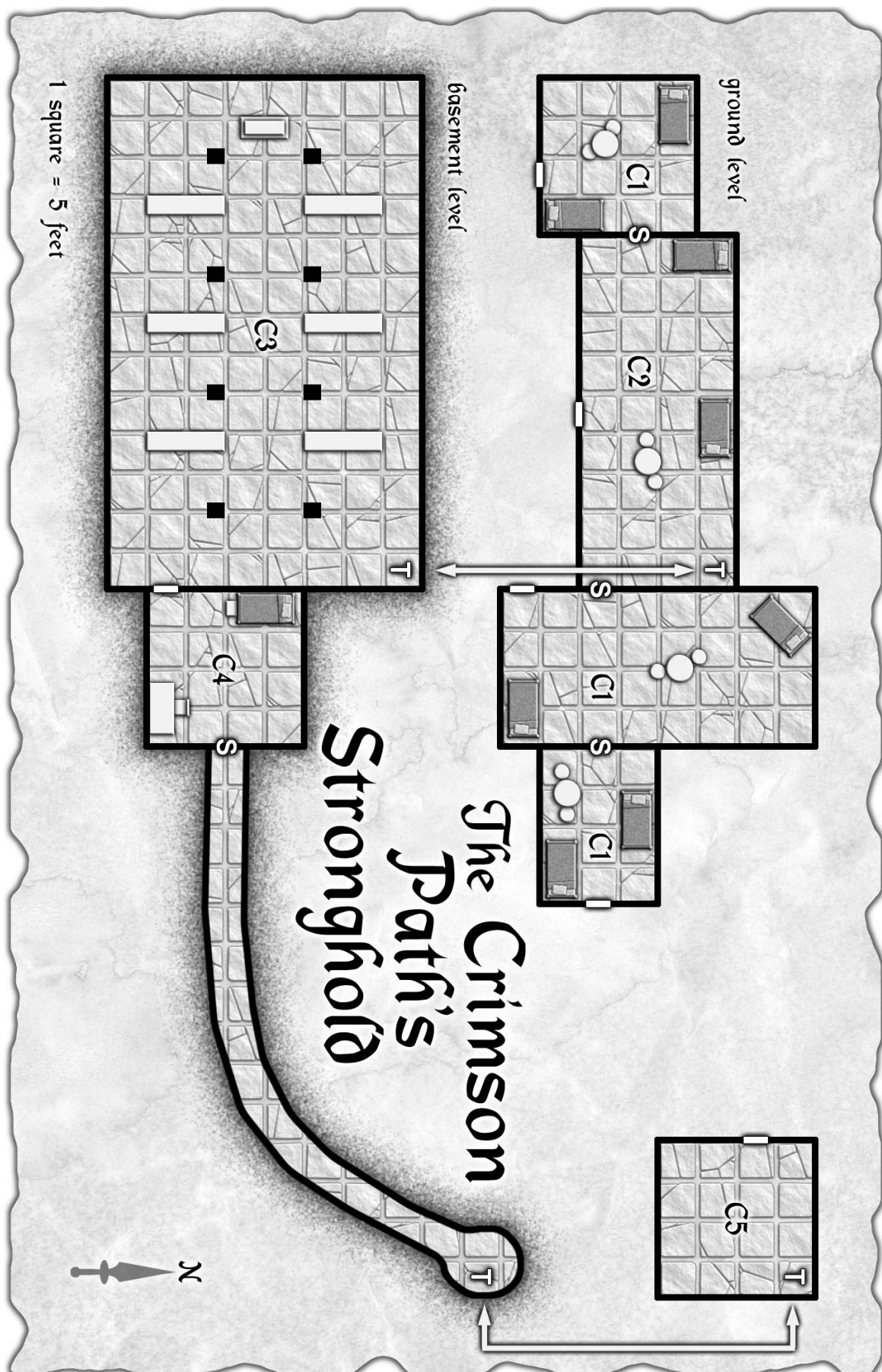


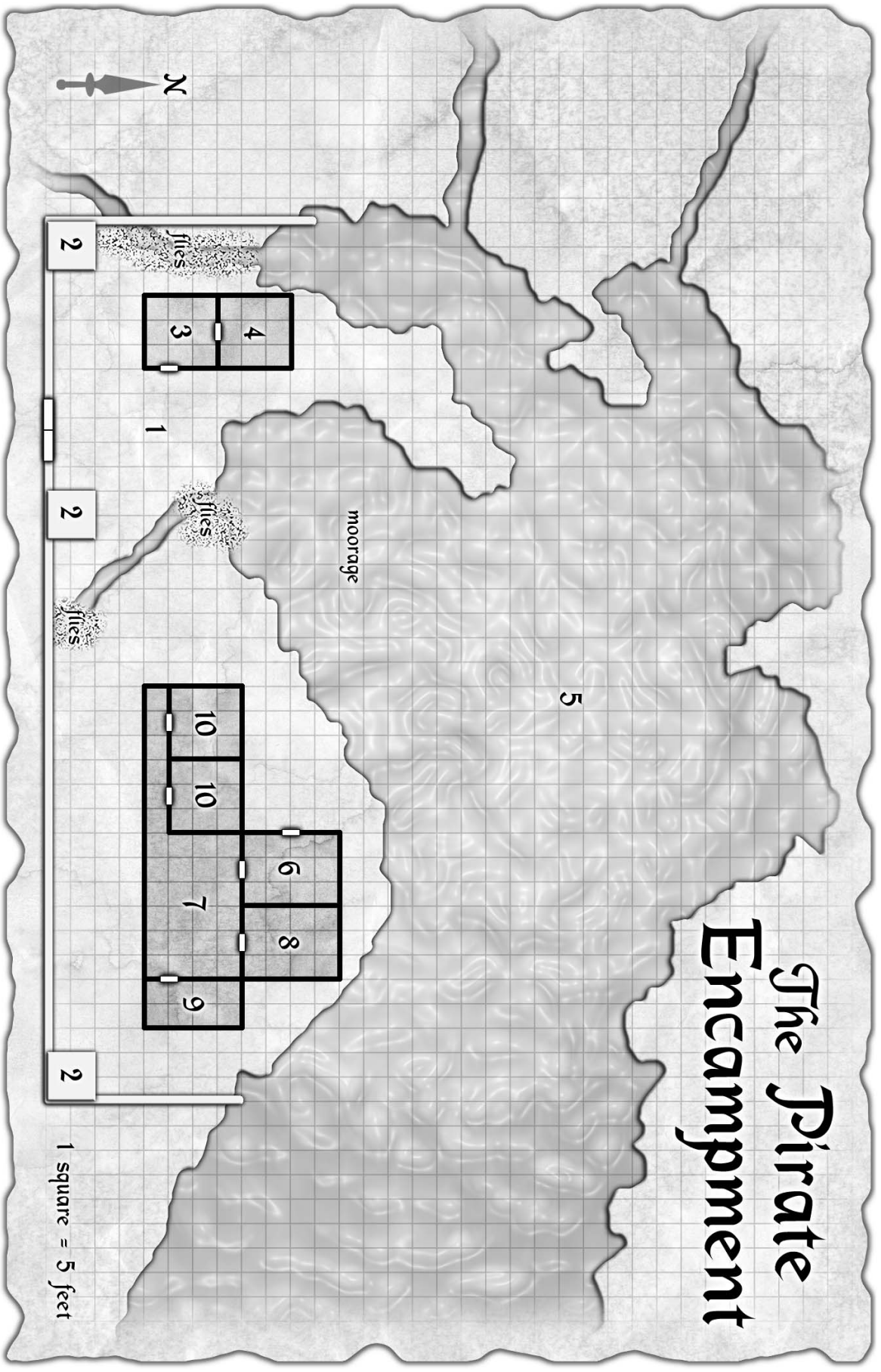
1 square = 5 feet

The Arena

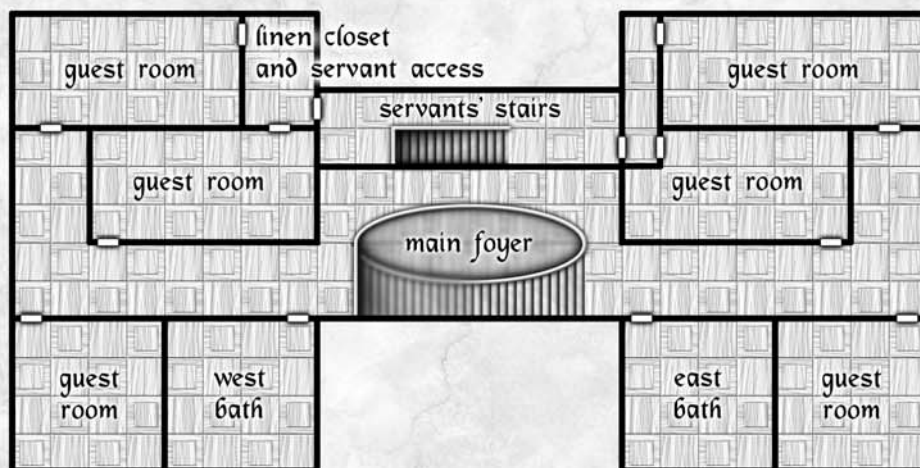
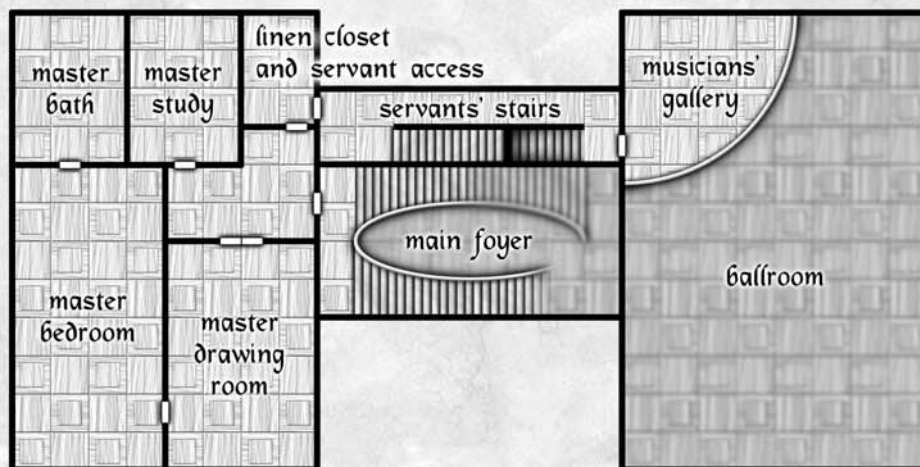
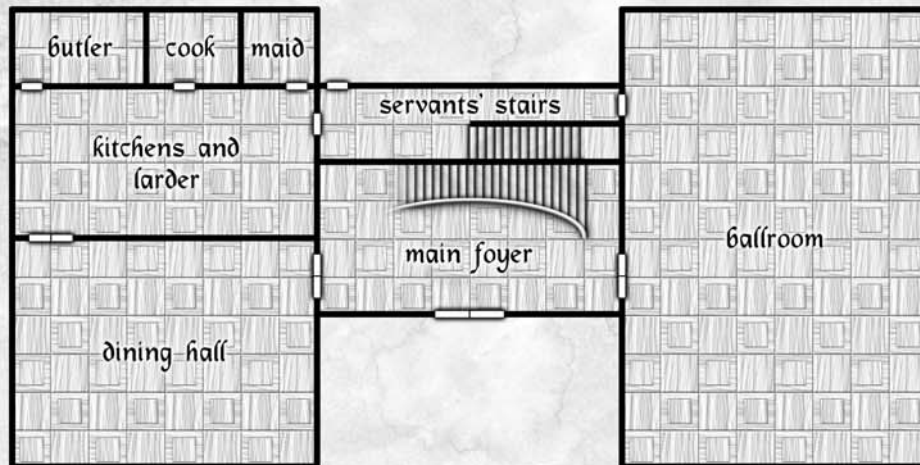








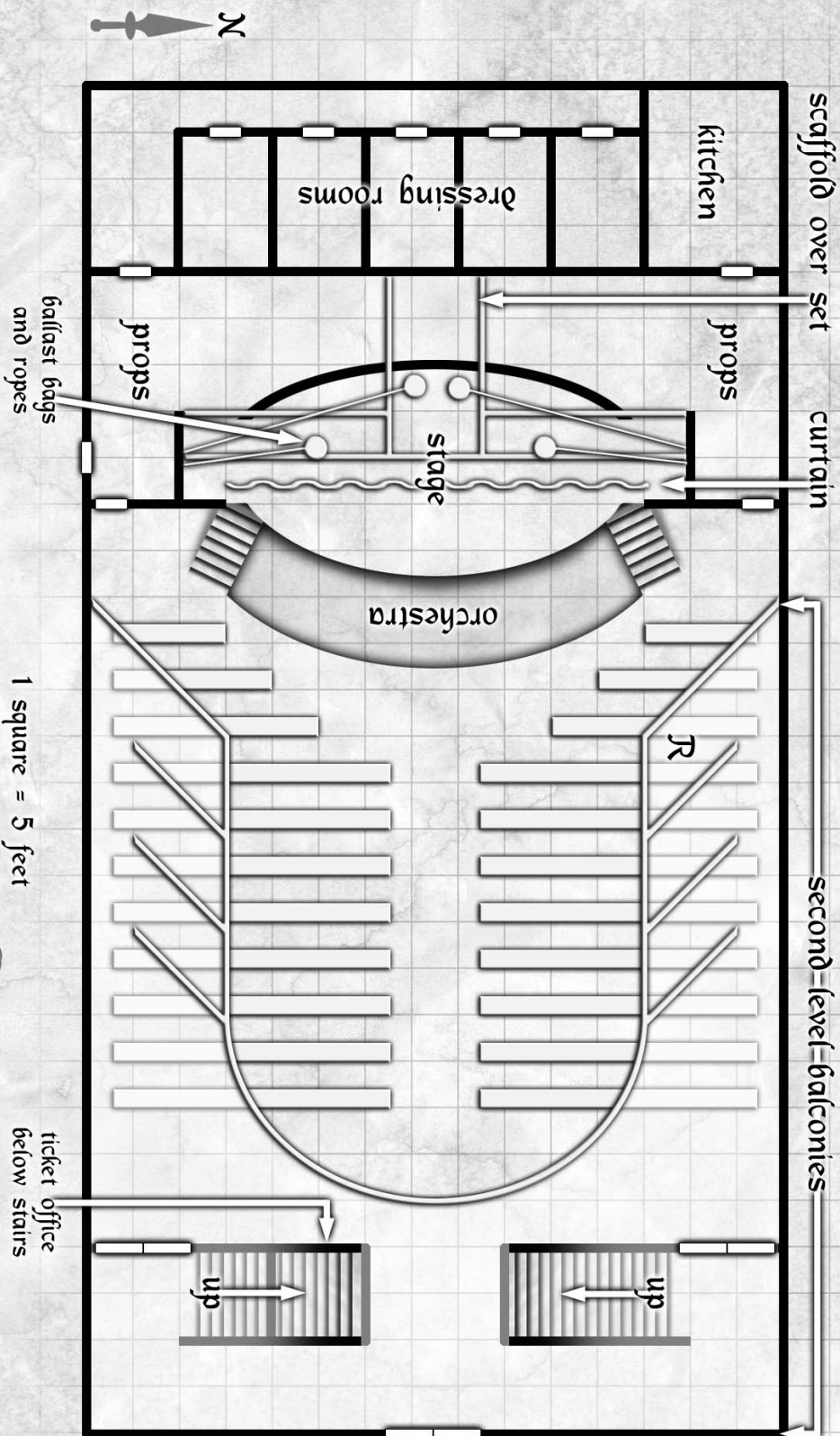
The Rhodell Estate



1 square = 5 feet

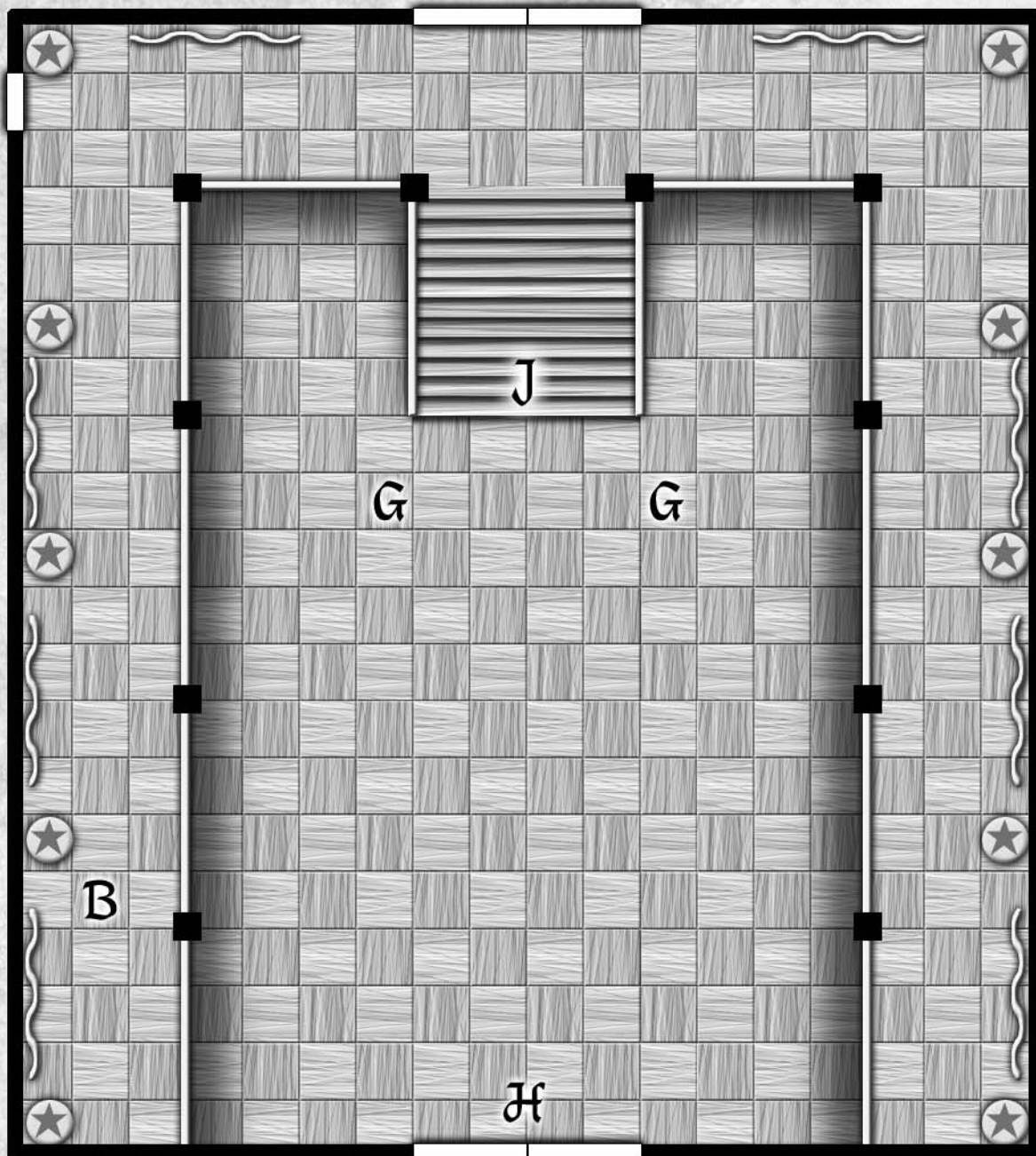
The Lost Angel Theater

R = Rohdell's balcony



Juthe's Hall

J = Juthe G = Guards B = Bilthone H = Heroes Entry



1 square = 5 feet

APPENDIX III: LEGAL

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