

# vault of dreams



ten scenarios for



an oneiric fantasy  
roleplaying game by  
denis gerfaud



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Cover detail by Florence Magnin. Oracle Bird and Bouncer illustrations by Rolland Barthélémy.

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## preface

Often Denis Gerfaud's scenarios for *Rêve* have a wry and skewed take on the classic fantasy roleplaying genre. Rather than postulate prodigious protagonists performing outrageous acts of heroism, they often involve Journeymen stumbling upon a small wrong in the Dreaming needing to be set right. Always, though, the solution is more about correctly interpreting the poetic analogies of the scenario, rather than, er, slaying a dragon so to speak. The three scenarios included herein and written by Gerfaud (*The Chrysobelle*, *Vale of Phosneratu*, and *Dread Ringers*) are classic examples of this sentiment.

Other scenarios, not written by Gerfaud, nevertheless attempt to capture some of the mood of this game that French players have been enjoying for over two decades now. They, like the author they are inspired by, are deliberately skewed, and take as their props everyday situations and objects absurdly or surreally distorted.

Thus in *A Unicorn Dream*, the story begins with an unfulfilled dream about the self-titled heraldic beast. In best *Rêve* fashion, the Journeymen have been forewarned to be on the lookout for a unicorn. Naturally the one they eventually find is not quite what they might be anticipating. This simple tale can potentially be played with almost no combat, or at the Dream Keeper's discretion the lethality of the scenario can be increased with a couple of included optional encounters. If the players do their job, they can walk away with a solved riddle and tangible gains for their characters.

In *A Nose of Hypnos* our Journeymen travel through a land where everywhere they look, from a nuisance disease to a war between two humanoid species, noses figure prominently. Ultimately they are induced to undertake a quest for a book, but here too, absurdly, the book and their patron are nose centered. Eventually they may find the tome—and fear not there are dangers and dungeons along the way—but upon their return the Journeymen may discover that the absurd can take a deadly turn.

*Tempest in a Teacup* begins by playing up the oft-time extreme taboos to which High Dreamers sometimes fall. On the road while avoiding a purportedly dangerous city,

the Journeymen encounter a peculiar group enjoying a picnic in the countryside. A magical mishap over tea will shake life up for the characters; finding themselves spirited away to a storm-tossed island, they must find their escape and avoid being destroyed by two bizarre warring factions. There's even a nod to Lewis Carroll and George Bernard Shaw. The scenario's denouement requires deft negotiation and able roleplaying.

*Navigator* is a haunted tale which provides an opportunity for the Journeymen to meet, and explore a dark forest. If they employ the usual adventurer's tactics of kicking open every door (or in this case unearthing every tomb) they may well get more than they bargained for. Needlessly aggressive characters will be rewarded with more nightmares than they can possibly shoulder.

In *The Dressmaker of Gothga*, our Journeymen encounter a particularly chilling *Rêve* archetype, the serial-killing necromancer. If this doesn't serve as a proper cautionary tale to any would-be Thanatos practitioners among the player characters, then they deserve the terrible fate which awaits them. The plot is further complicated by a tangential, and tangled, political maze.

*The Dark of the Well* is a classic dungeon crawl, albeit an urban one. Here the Journeymen are asked to investigate the source of the pollution of an important well, and the answer to that may cost one of them their life, albeit not in the usual sense.

Finally, two appendices provide background information on the City of Crossroads, Gothga, and a new creature by Pierre-Alexandre Sicart, the bouncer.

Of course, these kinds of scenarios might not be everyone's cup of tea. Even if you're looking for some good ol' hack and slash, though, you will find plenty of baddies here to cut your teeth on—just check out *Dark of the Well*, which if properly adjudicated is sure to rack up a respectable body count. And remember: combat in *Rêve* can be quite lethal, and death can come quickly. After all, as Alice can attest, the best dreams are menacing.





## a unicorn dream

This is an introductory scenario for *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* specifically designed for beginning players and Journeymen. There are few lethal encounters, and most of the combats are optional and at the Dream Keeper's discretion. It is therefore also suitable as a solo adventure.

### the forest dream

In the new moon of the Month of the Siren the Journeymen emerge from grey dream while traveling through sparsely populated prairie land. Their food and water supplies can be assumed to be adequate although not lavish; the region is the habitat for small game—ground rodents and such—and the region is crisscrossed by small rivulets and the occasional proper creek. Allow **Empathy/Outdoor Survival** rolls at -2 to find adequate water daily, and a similar roll to catch enough food to meet their minimum Sust requirements, as follows:

<b>Particular</b>	6 Sust of food
<b>Significant</b>	4 Sust of food
<b>Normal</b>	3 Sust
<b>Failure</b>	1 Sust
<b>Fumble</b>	0 Sust

Each character should roll once per day. The grasslands are also home to false murus (a +1 healing herb) which while not plentiful can be found with a **Sight/Outdoor Survival** roll at -3; each character gets one roll per day, and if successful will find a number of pinches equal to her **Luck** score, or half again as much on a particular. Furthermore, the poisonous peeple fruit of the peeple trees growing here and there can be avoided with a successful **Intellect** or **Empathy/Botany** roll at -4 (a failed daily Luck roll indicates the Journeymen encounter some at some point during the day and might be tempted to eat it).

That night, after bedding down in their camp, they will each have the same, compelling dream.

*The pine needles and wild herbs give off a heady forest scent as you walk through a darkly dappled twilight world under a dense forest canopy. Here and there slivers of sunlight catch the pale jade translucence of a leaf or the quivering colorful explosion of a spray of wildflowers. In this serene glimmering realm, your eye is suddenly drawn to a flash of brightness farther ahead—far enough ahead to be largely obscured by the many trees, but bright enough to be noticeable. Following the source, which glints and flashes as it passes behind distant trees, you go deeper and deeper into the forest, eventually emerging in a small clearing. In the center stands a unicorn, quietly pawing the*

*ground, mist rising off of its gleaming white coat. Stepping softly towards you, it bows its head. As its horn is about to rest on your shoulder, you awaken with a sudden start.*

The Journeymen will be abruptly awoken from this dream by the hair raising baying of hounds in the night—a pack of death dogs approaches! Have the Journeymen roll **Hearing/Legends** at -3 or **Sight/Outdoor Survival** at -2 to note that the grasses are undisturbed by the dogs' passage.

death dog			
<b>Size</b>	11	<b>Endurance</b>	24
<b>Dream</b>	13	<b>Speed</b>	14/38
<b>Level</b>	2	<b>Damage</b>	+ 1
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>
<b>Fangs</b>	12	2	8
<b>Dodging</b>	11	2	+ 2

The Dream Keeper should set the number of death dogs so as to allow the group of Journeymen reasonable chances of survival. A solitary Journeyman—depending on her combat skills—should probably only be faced with a single hound. The Keeper may even wish to decrease (or increase) the creature's score.

### the village of mott

Three days after their encounter with the death dogs, the Journeymen will eventually come upon the village of Mott. This hamlet is perhaps slightly more prosperous and larger than what is commonly found in the Dreaming. Founded on the banks of a small swift river of the same name, it boasts a dozen extended families and some hundred souls. Of these, roughly 25% of the Mites—as the inhabitants of Mott call themselves—are aged, 50% are children, and the remaining 25% are mature men and women. Almost everyone in the village works except for the sick and very infirm—life's essentials may be relatively secure, but life here is still far from easy.

The economy here is entirely one of subsistence. A few oxen are shared by the farmers who till their fields in rotation, and the village has a few donkeys. Small herds of goats and sheep are kept, as children can easily tend these, but there are few cows, and those almost exclusively for milking. Everyone has pigs and chickens.

A few stands of trees in the vicinity provide enough wood for limited construction, so houses and barns tend to be built of earth and wood, and it is not uncommon for the humans to inhabit the upper floor over a ground floor barn and stables (heat from the animals rises). On the banks of the Mott a stone mill operates near the center of the village. Jhoorman, the miller, also serves as the village baker, and his oven is often baking a chicken or two as it cools in the afternoon.

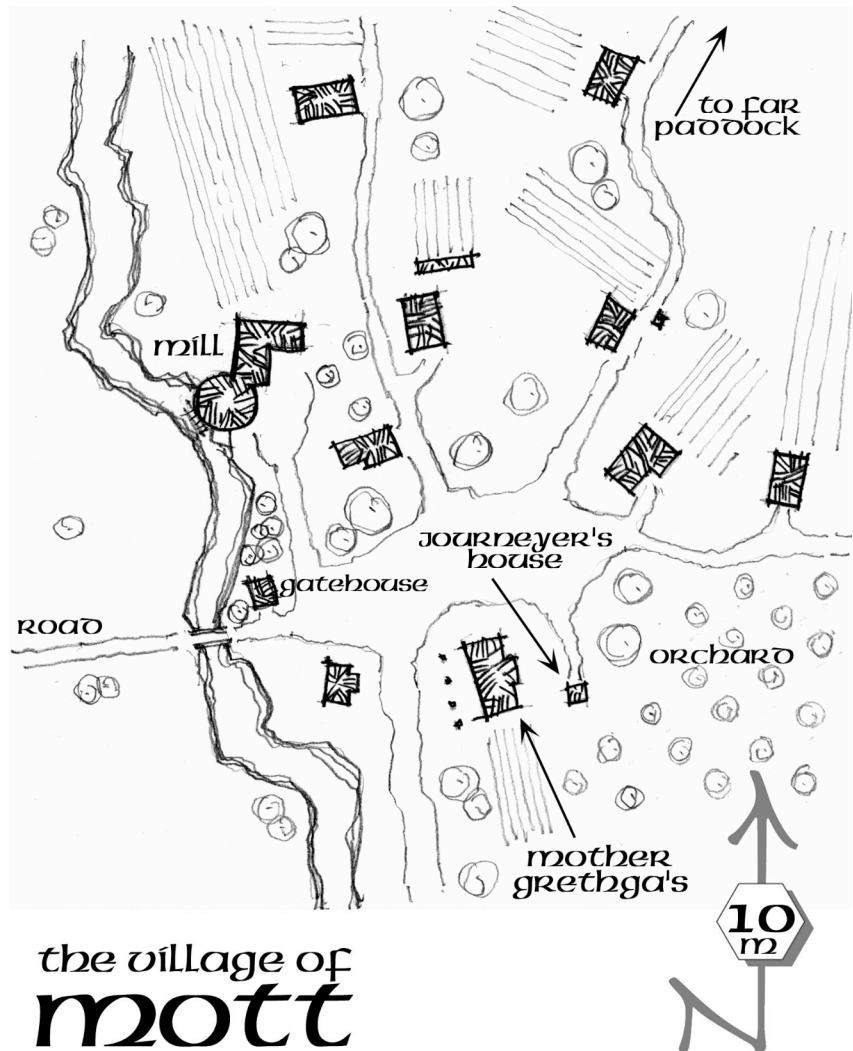
As the Journeymen approach the bridge over the Mott from the west, they will be watched from the gatehouse, where a few small children are always on the lookout. They will not be treated with hostility, but a few adults will come out to meet them (to make sure they have no evil intents) and then direct them to Mother Grethga's.

The weapon characteristics for the Mites are only given in the extremely unlikely event that the villagers would be involved in combat. Some would be armed with hammers (the smith for example), others with axes (used for farm work) put most with improvised farm implements (pitchforks). Not every villager will necessarily have all of the listed, but again those listed are there to give an idea of the range of available skills.

As is customary in many parts of the Dreaming, a small house is reserved for the occasional traveler passing through, and the first night's lodging in the Journeymen's House is free. In this case the Journeymen's House is a bit disused, and kept by Mother Grethga, a widow with several adult sons and head of one of the more prosperous households in the Mott. As the Journeymen sit down to their breakfast of bread and goat's milk, a small boy rushes in and exclaims to Grethga, "Grandmother, the unicorn has slipped out of the pen this morning and headed back to the far paddock!"

Grethga will mutter something about "that cranky old beast" and ask the Journeymen if they wouldn't mind fetching her bull and bringing him back to his pen, as all her sons are already in the fields, and the bull is liable to make trouble if left to roam. If asked, she will explain that he earned his nickname several summers ago. A Journeyman had come through Mott then, telling her then-adolescent

sons outlandish tales of distant islands where people fought bulls. Impressionable and wild lads that they were, they cornered the bull in his pen and tried vaulting on his horns.



One thing led to another, and the boys narrowly escaped with their lives, while the bull broke a horn on a sturdy post. Ever since then he's been nicknamed "the unicorn", and ever since he has preferred to keep to himself, grazing in the farthest paddock in the village. Left to his own he's just as likely to chase people as stay put.

If the Journeymen decline Mother Grethga's request and don't go after this "unicorn", especially given their recent dream, the Dream Keeper should probably get new players.

**adult mite**

<b>Size</b>	11	<b>Will</b>	10	<b>Life</b>	11
<b>Appearance</b>	9	<b>Intellect</b>	10	<b>Endurance</b>	23
<b>Constitution</b>	12	<b>Empathy</b>	11	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Dream</b>	11	<b>Damage</b>	+1
<b>Agility</b>	11	<b>Luck</b>	10	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	10	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	<b>Enc</b>	12
<b>Sight</b>	10	<b>Missile</b>	10	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	11	<b>Throw</b>	11	<b>Protection</b>	1
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	9	<b>Stealth</b>	10		

	Level	Init	Dmg		
Hand-to-hand	+ 0	6	(+ 1)		
One-handed mace	+ 1	7	+ 3		
Two-handed axe	+ 1	7	+ 4		
Polearm	+ 1	6	+ 4		
Dodging	+ 2				
Cooking	+ 1	Vigilance	+ 1	Leather	+ 1
Dance	+ 1	Carpentry	+ 0	Surgery	-4
Discretion	+ 1	Commerce	+ 1	Astrology	-4
Running	+ 1	Music	+ 1	Botany	+ 0
Singing	+ 0	Outdoor	+ 5	Legends	-2
Tinkering	+ 2				

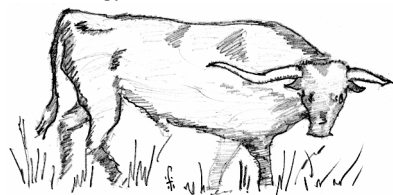
**mother grethga**

<b>Size</b>	9	<b>Will</b>	13	<b>Life</b>	10
<b>Appearance</b>	12	<b>Intellect</b>	12	<b>Endurance</b>	23
<b>Constitution</b>	11	<b>Empathy</b>	13	<b>CT</b>	3
<b>Strength</b>	8	<b>Dream</b>	12	<b>Damage</b>	+0
<b>Agility</b>	10	<b>Luck</b>	12	<b>Sust</b>	2
<b>Dexterity</b>	13	<b>Mêlée</b>	9	<b>Enc</b>	8
<b>Sight</b>	9	<b>Missile</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	10
<b>Hearing</b>	14	<b>Throw</b>	9	<b>Protection</b>	0
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	15	<b>Stealth</b>	11		

	Level	Init	Dmg		
Dagger	+ 0	4			
Dodging	+ 2				
Cooking	+ 9	Commerce	+ 5	Botany	+ 4
Dance	- 2	City Surv	+ 0	Legends	+ 1
Discretion	+ 2	Outdoor	+ 2	Medicine	+ 3
Tinkering	+ 0	Surgery	+ 2	Writing	- 2
Vigilance	+ 1	Leather	+ 0	Zoology	+ 0
Acting	+ 2	Astrology	+ 3		

**the unicorn**

As promised, the unicorn will be found grazing peacefully in a distant field (off the map, northeast of the village almost a kilometer away). So long as no one comes up to him loudly or aggressively, he may be safely approached and even haltered. Have an approaching Journeyer roll **Empathy/Zoology** at 0 to do so, or **Empathy** at -2 if he does not have *Zoology*.



At the farthest edge of the unicorn's paddock are a pile of old stones, arranged somewhat like a low curved wall. Whether haltered or not, the old bull will calmly lead the Journeyers there, and down the gentle slope on whose high side the stones lie. From the far side the stones are obviously not a loose pile of stones, but a veritable architectural ruin. A few gnarled trees grow alongside it, their low branches scraping against the stones in the breeze. A small archway leads into a deep recess on the low side, and the landing of a stone staircase leading down can be discerned with a **Sight/Masonry** roll at 0, or a **Sight** roll at -3 if a character does not have *Masonry*.

But in spite of whatever visions of exploring an old dungeon the Journeyers may have, it is clearly obvious that time and dirt have completely filled in this stair, so that all that remains today is a dark earth-smelling recess. The structure itself is a red herring—no amount of digging, magical or otherwise, will lead to a “dungeon”. However, even a cursory search (**Sight/Vigilance** at -1) in the loose, damp black earth will reveal a dully gleaming object: a large brass key, lightly tarnished by time.

After having stubbornly led the Journeyers to the key the unicorn will docilely allow himself to be led back to his pen. If the Journeyers mention the key to Mother Grethga or any of the villagers, they will be only mildly curious. They have no need for locks here, and keys are known to them only by reputation. In fact there are no locks in the entire village...

If the Journeyers take the trouble to canvas the village to verify this fact, they will find that in fact there is a single lock in Mott, but one to a door never used and largely ignored by the entire village. The mill is a more recent construction built atop an older foundation—where it now stands was once a tower of a fortification. **Sight/Masonry** at -2 or **Sight** at -5 can discern this fact after an examination of the mill. Within the old foundation wall, down nearly at water level and very near the wheel of the mill, is a small blackened recessed doorway, whose heavy ironbound door has remained sealed time out of mind. Only Jhoorman and Mother Grethga in the village will remember that there is a door at water level. The miller will reluctantly allow the Journeyers to investigate the door. Getting to it is tricky, and requires two **Mêlée/Climbing** rolls at -3 (due to the spray-wet stones of the mill's foundations); a particular failure indicates a spill into the river, while a fumble is an indication that the character has fallen into the nearby wheel, which grazes precariously close to the doorway. Falling into the mill wheel will cause 2d10+4 damage, and no more than 2 points of armor are counted. A critical wound in this case means a limb has been crushed and must be amputated or the character will die. Swimming in the Mott at this



location requires a **Mêlée/Swimming** roll at -2; remember that all carried items encumber the swimmer, not just those over his Enc threshold. In times past the young boys of the village would come here as a challenge, but none of the lads of today dare try.

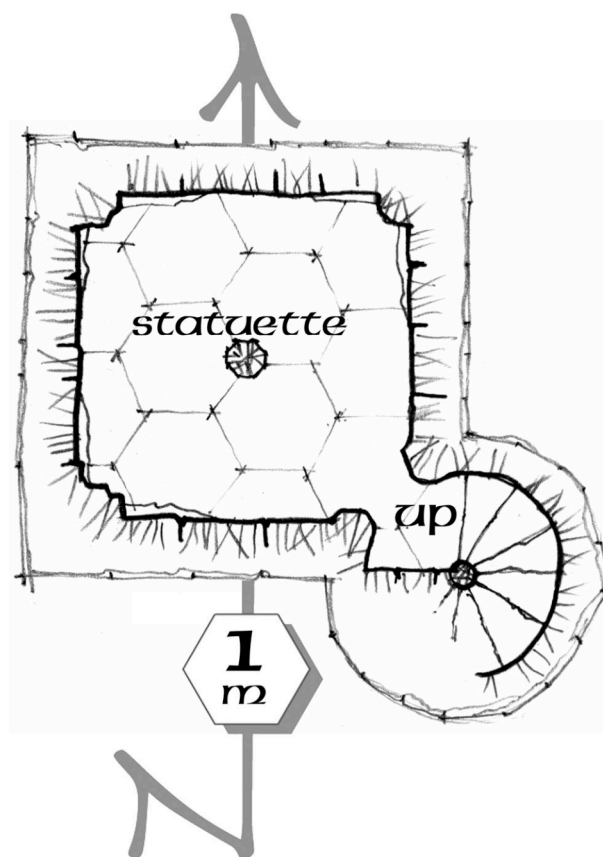
Once the door is reached, standing on its sill without falling will require an **Agility/Climbing** or **Acrobatics** roll at -1, with similar results as above. The door indeed does have a keyhole, and is locked. Could it be that the brass key fits the lock? Of course it does, and opening the door will reveal a low-ceilinged circular stone chamber some five meters in diameter, in the center of which is a narrow spiral stair leading down...

The stair descends into the claustrophobic darkness some 10 meters. At the bottom of the stair is another chamber, smaller than the first—only 3 meters square. The stair lands in a corner of the room. The walls here are 4 meters high, and the ceiling of the room extends another two meters high in an ogee groin vault. Engaged pilasters in the walls of the room support the ribs of the vaulting, and are carved to resemble trees, while the ceiling and its ribs are worked to resemble the crossed branches of a forest canopy. In the center of the chamber is a square stone pedestal over a meter tall on which rests a crudely carved yet evocative stone sculpture of a unicorn



Just seeing the unicorn will cause a great vivid rush of images from the Journeymen's original dream—so vivid that they will trigger a cascade of past-life memories associated with that particular dream. In game terms, each player character viewing the statue may get a massive amount of stress just from seeing the unicorn—30 experience points. In addition, the statue is also a persistent draconic sign, **only** read from the Nonesuch Forest Dreamland (M10), with a difficulty of -4 and worth 30 spell development

points. A High Dreamer must use *Read Aura* in a Forest Dreamland to determine the exact one, or find it by trial and error. Note that the statue is too heavy and large to safely transport up the narrow stairs, and furthermore is integral to its base.



At the Dream Keeper's option, the chamber may also be the haunt of one or more shadows, terrible nightmare entities which can easily strike with surprise in the dark, to devastating effect — each Journeyer must roll **Sight/Vigilance** at -2 (the shadows' level) to detect them. Here again, the object is not to massacre the Journeyers, but provide them with a suitable challenge. Adjust the size and number of shadows accordingly.

shadows				
Size	11	Endurance	25	
Dream	14	Speed	12/24	
Level	2	Damage	+ 2	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Claws	12	2	8	+ 2
Dodging	12	2		

Alternately, if dream entities and the requisite dream roll to hit them would be too challenging for the Journeyers, the Dream Keeper can substitute a *Noneshallpass* or even leave the chamber unoccupied.

**noneshallpass**

<b>Size</b>	13	<b>Perception</b>	10	Life	14
<b>Constitution</b>	15	<b>Will</b>	16	Endurance	30
<b>Strength</b>	15	<b>Dream</b>	10	Damage	+ 2
<b>Agility</b>	13	<b>Mêlée</b>	14	Protection	6
<b>Dexterity</b>	10	<b>Stealth</b>	10	Penalty	- 6
		Level	Init	Dmg	
Sord blade	14	+ 5	12	+ 5	
Dagger	14	+ 5	12	+ 3	
Hand-to-hand	14	+ 5	12	(+ 2)	
Shield	14	+ 5			
Dodging	10	+ 5	(-1 w/armor penalty)		
Vigilance	10	+ 5			

**conclusion**

The night following their discovery of the ancient statuette, each Journeyer will have a dream concluding the one which began this tale.

*Standing in the forest clearing, you find yourself once again confronted by the unicorn. It has stepped right up to you, its head bowed. When it finally rests its horn on your shoulder you are startled by the lightness yet firmness of the gesture. Your entire being is suffused with a feeling of peace, of oneness with the Dreaming.*

Just as a real unicorn grants a worthy person a magical gift, so too does following the unicorn of the dream (and then the symbolic “unicorn” bull) grant the Journeyers a gift. Should the Journeyers fulfill the archetypal dream of the unicorn and safely emerge from the mill foundations, they should each receive two Journey points, and a +1 Morale. At the Dream Keeper’s option, each Journeyer may also be granted a Dragon Gift (from *In The Dreamtime*), either rolled randomly or chosen by the Keeper.

The villagers will be astounded to learn that a secret chamber existed under their very noses. If the Journeyers breach the chamber but nightmare entities remain within it, the villagers will, after this episode, gladly once again keep it under lock and key.

—Text, artwork, layout and cartography  
by Hieronymous



# the chrysobelle

This *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* scenario is designed for a group of four or five beginning or lightly experienced Journeymen, with at least one High Dreamer.

## the subject

“Chrysobelle” is the name of a vessel which is doomed to be destroyed in a tempest; and, in another dream, also the name of a High Dreamer doomed to be executed by villagers. In “reality”, the Journeymen find themselves aboard the ship, and all will have the same dream. In it they will find themselves in the village bent on the High Dreamer’s destruction. If they understand the analogy and save Chrysobelle, they will at the same time have saved their ship. If they don’t understand or if they fail, they will all drown to a man.

## introduction

The Journeymen have embarked on a few days’ crossing on board the *Chrysobelle*, a small square-rigged vessel, like a caravel. Commanded by Captain Perroquay, the crew includes eight men. The passengers are berthed in a cabin situated below the aft castle. The scenario begins on the morning of the second day of the crossing. The Journeymen awaken with the memory of having had a very peculiar dream, not so much for the events in it as for the significant impression which it has left. Moreover, all the Journeymen have had the same dream.

## the dream

The dreamer is sitting at a table in what seems to be a large inn common room bathed in an amber light. In fact, the little panes of the windows are all of yellow glass. The room is clean and quiet. The polished wood tables gleam in the yellow half-light, the paved floor is covered with bundles of rushes. The dreamer can see the other Journeymen seated nearby. There are no other patrons, but two men stand before him. The first, small and round, wearing a grey canvas apron, is obviously the innkeeper. The other is a large fellow wearing dark leather, boot-shod, with a sword at his side. He doesn’t have a single hair on his head and the skin of his skull, like his face, is covered with numerous scars. The innkeeper begins an exaggerated bow then asks, “May we ask where your lordship is from?”, a question which stymies the dreamer. The bald man cries, “Well, answer!”. But the dreamer, feeling more and more ill at ease, can only manage, “Nowhere, I’m dreaming...” With that answer everything seems to freeze. The rest of the dream is vague, and the dreamer cannot remember more than the above sequence.

## the tempest

The ship is now well out to sea. Around midday the sky will cloud over, a violent wind will whip up tall waves, visibility will plummet: a tempest is coming. The Dream Keeper can play out the episode in more or less detail, but whatever the players try, they are doomed. Fleeing is impossible, so is swimming; even concentrating enough to trance and enter the Dreamlands given the unleashed elements is impossible. Abused one way or another, the Journeymen will one by one lose consciousness...

Only to find themselves in the inn bathed in yellow light, just as in their dream. Physically, they will be in exactly the same state as they were when they awoke at the beginning of the day, same Endurance and dream points. But everything which will have been achieved or done so far that day will be as if erased, including reserving spells. In fact, the tempest and its consequences, its “reality” now have been set aside for the time being. The Journeymen will follow their dream of the night before, and their actions here will determine their survival aboard the ship.

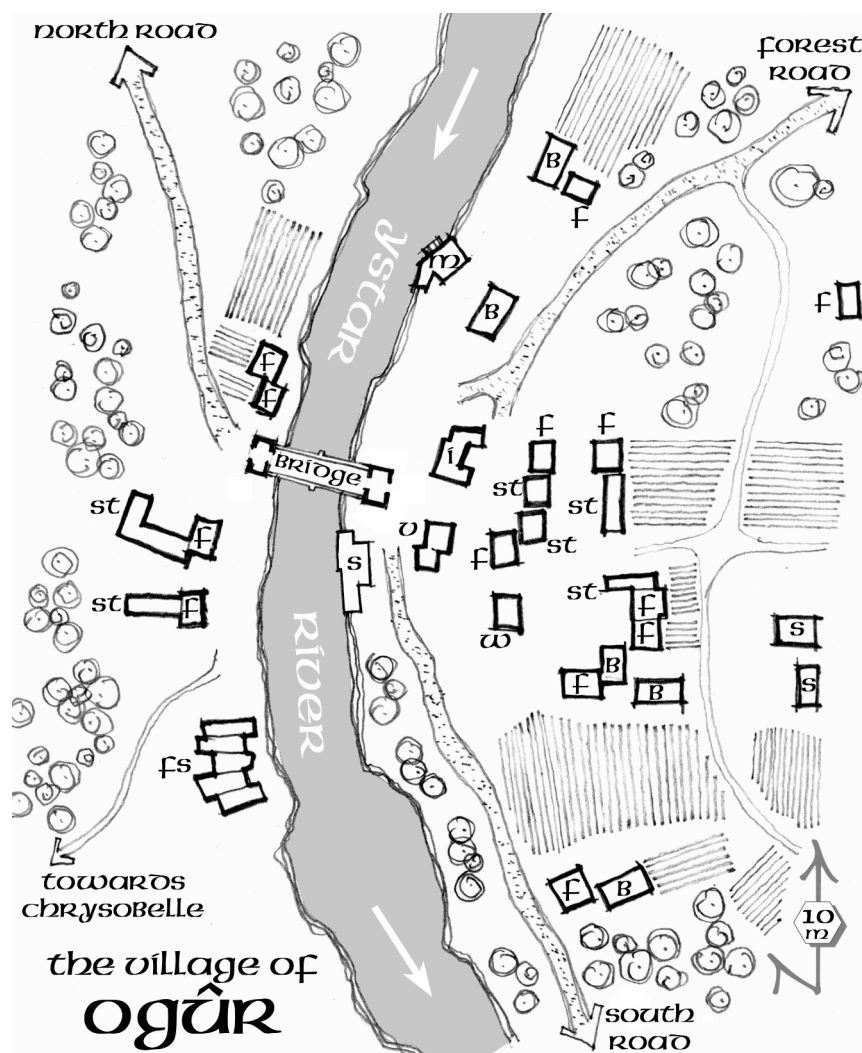
## ogûr

Ogûr is a little village at the intersection of merchant routes. It owes its existence to an old fortified bridge, the only local crossing of the river Ystar. The nearest communities, to the north, south, or beyond the forest, are two or three days’ walk away. Ogûr is thus a natural commercial center, which explains the presence of a large inn: the Ogûr Bridge Inn ([I] on the map). Other than that, the village is tiny and agricultural. The principle houses are those of the village chief, Vortex [V], the smith [S], miller [M], and wheelwright [W]. Other locales include farmers [F], barns [B], stables [ST] and fishermen [FS]. The bridge is guarded by six villagers under the command of Vortex, who are responsible for collecting tolls: 1d per wheel or leg. Thus a cart (2 wheels) pulled by a mule (4 legs) accompanied by three characters (6 legs) and a zemu (3 legs) would pay 15d (both coming and going). The guards, wearing leather armor and helmets, carry spears and crossbows. But in truth, there are never any incidents on the bridge.

Except that—and this is the engine for the current story—for the past several months no Journeymen or merchants have visited Ogûr. No one travels on the roads, no one uses the bridge. The exact reason for such a hiatus is left to the imagination of each Dream Keeper. The only important thing here, however, is the reaction of the villagers. In their growing anxiety, and lacking any explanation, they need a scapegoat. And since there is a High Dreamer who lives nearby, there’s a responsible party ready-made. No one doubts that she’s the one who “tears the dream, who repels travelers with her draconic manipulations...”



The villagers have no rational reason for their accusation. Like many sedentary peoples, they are wary of High Dreamers, and this distrust can quickly turn to hatred. The arrival of the Journeyers will trigger everything.



### the arrival

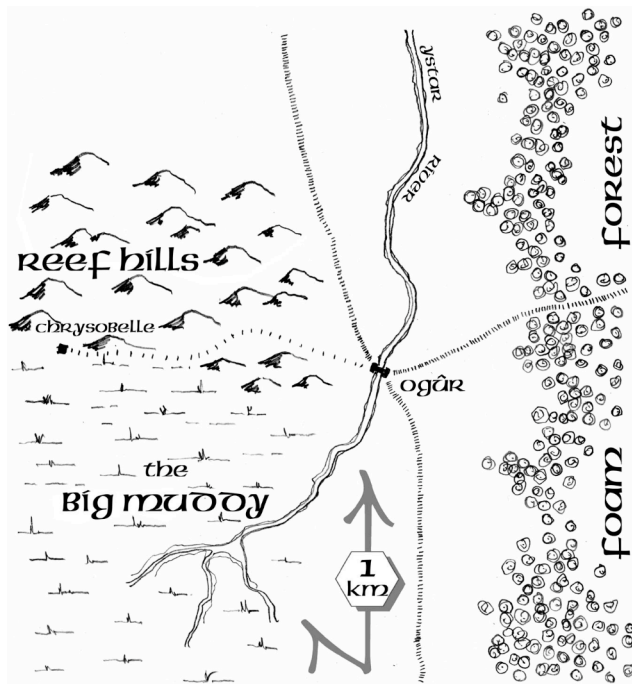
Just as in their dream, the innkeeper and bald man covered in scars will be before the Journeyers. The latter is named Vortex and he is the village chief. And as in their dream, the innkeeper will ask, "May we ask where your lordships are from?" And Vortex will insist that they answer. Apparently, no one saw them cross the bridge nor enter the village. Logically, the Journeyers should have the same trouble answering as in their dream, and whatever they say will set off Vortex' anger.

If the Journeyers say that they don't know and that they are dreaming, Vortex will say, "No doubt it's that Chrysobelle! Now she's besetting innocent travelers!" If they answer that they suppose they came through a rift in the dreaming (perhaps because of the yellow light here), Vortex' reaction will be the same. If they go further into the "truth" and mention their shipwreck, his reaction will be even more vehement when the name Chrysobelle is mentioned. For that name will come up sooner or later, whether by the Journeyers when

speaking of their ship, or by Vortex speaking of the High Dreamer. As far as the village chief is concerned, the High Dreamer's guilt will be more than established. For the Journeyers, this will be the moment to understand the analogy and the meaning of their dream. They might be helped by the way in which Vortex refers to the High Dreamer: he doesn't call her "Chrysobelle" but refers to her "the Chrysobelle".

The Journeyers will easily be able to find out where they are, as well as a synopsis of the local customs and events. With respect to Chrysobelle, they will need to ask many questions in order to discover anything about her other than invectives. They will ultimately be able to discover that she is about forty years old and lives apart from the village. She arrived some ten years ago from the north, and made no attempt to hide the fact that she was a High Dreamer. She claimed she was tired of the Journey, and said that if she were welcomed by the village she could prove herself useful, if only to heal the sick and wounded. The villagers told her to move into an abandoned house away from the village, situated at the edge of the swamp. Because you never know, even if they seem to have good intentions, it's best if High Dreamers aren't too close... In exchange for her healing, they helped her restore the house. Ever since, she lives there alone, never seeing anyone, except those villagers who go to see her to be healed.

"She pretends to be good," Vortex will conclude, "but there's no such thing as a good High Dreamer! They can't help but spread malice and play tricks on innocents with their draconic sorcery. And you are the proof, you, her latest victims. But rest assured, she went too far this time, the Chrysobelle! Before the sun sets, her malice will have ended, by my word..."



### Vortex

Born in the Hour of the Swords

41 years old. 1m95, 91 kilos. Bald. Beauty 9.

<b>Size</b>	15	<b>Will</b>	15	<b>Life</b>	15
<b>Appearance</b>	12	<b>Intellect</b>	7	<b>Endurance</b>	30
<b>Constitution</b>	15	<b>Empathy</b>	11	<b>CT</b>	5
<b>Strength</b>	16	<b>Dream</b>	10	<b>Damage</b>	+ 2
<b>Agility</b>	14	<b>Luck</b>	12	<b>Sust</b>	4
<b>Dexterity</b>	12	<b>Mêlée</b>	15	<b>Enc</b>	15
<b>Sight</b>	11	<b>Missile</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	10	<b>Throw</b>	13	<b>Protection</b>	2
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	9	<b>Stealth</b>	10		

	Level	Init	Dmg
One-handed sword	+ 5	12	+ 5
Dagger	+ 4	11	+ 3
Hand-to-hand	+ 4	11	(+ 2)
Medium shield	+ 5		
Dodging	+ 4		

Vortex always carries his sword blade and his dagger, but not his shield, which he will only take on the expedition. It's not so much Chrysobelle herself he fears as the monstrous creatures she is doubtless capable of invoking.

The Journeyers can then find out the fate that is planned for her, the same one that awaits all criminals in Ogûr (in reality very rare). She will be bound up in a sack, on the bridge, then after being severely beaten, thrown into the river to drown. Having said that, Vortex will leave to assemble the bravest villagers for the punitive expedition. Before leaving the inn, he will tell the Journeyers that they

are free to move about, but he strongly recommends that they not leave the village. The innkeeper will naturally be at the ready to lodge them: 10d for a medium meal and 12d per bed (the inn is comfortable and the fare, while simple, is good). If the Journeyers wish to cross the bridge, they will nevertheless have to pay the toll.

### the Brave villagers

Numbering 12

<b>Size</b>	11	<b>Will</b>	11	<b>Life</b>	12
<b>Appearance</b>	10	<b>Intellect</b>	9	<b>Endurance</b>	24
<b>Constitution</b>	13	<b>Empathy</b>	10	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Dream</b>	10	<b>Damage</b>	+ 2
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	10	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	12	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	<b>Enc</b>	12
<b>Sight</b>	11	<b>Missile</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	11	<b>Throw</b>	12	<b>Protection</b>	2
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	10	<b>Stealth</b>	11		

	Level	Init	Dmg
Lance	+ 2	8	+ 3
Dagger	+ 2	8	+ 2
Hand-to-hand	+ 2	8	(+ 1)
Crossbow	+ 3	8	+ 3
Medium shield	+ 2		
Dodging	+ 2		

Climbing	+ 3	Jumping	+ 3	Vigilance	+ 1
Discretion	+ 0	Running	+ 3	Outdoor	+ 4

Ogûr does not have a standing militia. All the villagers must guard the bridge by turns and, under Vortex' authority, are (in a very mediocre fashion) trained to bear arms. The above characteristics are for those villagers most apt to fight, those who Vortex will pick for his punitive expedition. The three villagers ordered to watch over the Journeyers will only be armed with spears, daggers, and crossbows; those in the expedition will have shields and the rest will have crossbows available. There are only a total of 6 crossbows in the village.

### a few thoughts

The players will doubtless ask themselves questions and will find this all very strange. In the first place, how did they get here? By a rift terminating at the inn? Or are the villagers right, by a spell of Chrysobelle's? The first hypothesis must be eliminated: if the tempest had caused them to change dreams, they should have arrived here soaked and exhausted. But they are fit as a fiddle. And then there's the dream. Everything unfolded at the beginning exactly like in their dream, that dream strangely pregnant with meaning. As if they were watching the same film over again from the beginning, as if that dream were being followed now. From which they may conclude that currently, they are dreaming... Which would explain their mysterious arrival. But if they are dreaming, does that mean that in "reality" they are still aboard the *Chrysobelle*, in the midst of a tempest? Yes and no — remember, the dream took place (is taking place) *before* the storm.

There is also the inverse hypothesis, that this is “reality” and the “dream” is the tempest. But as good *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* characters, they should know that dream and reality are the same thing: all dreams are real. One thing at least is certain: the *Chrysobelle* is in danger. The vessel is headed for shipwreck, and the High Dreamer may be beaten and drowned. And aren’t those two things the same thing? And if they don’t care about the fate of the High Dreamer, is the same true of the vessel? And since the two dreams are crisscrossed and are both true, wouldn’t it be ingenious to rescue the High Dreamer Chrysobelle, since they can’t at the moment do anything for the ship? By saving one, wouldn’t the other be saved? This may be the meaning of the dream. A completely irrational explanation, but entirely oneirical—and that’s what’s important.

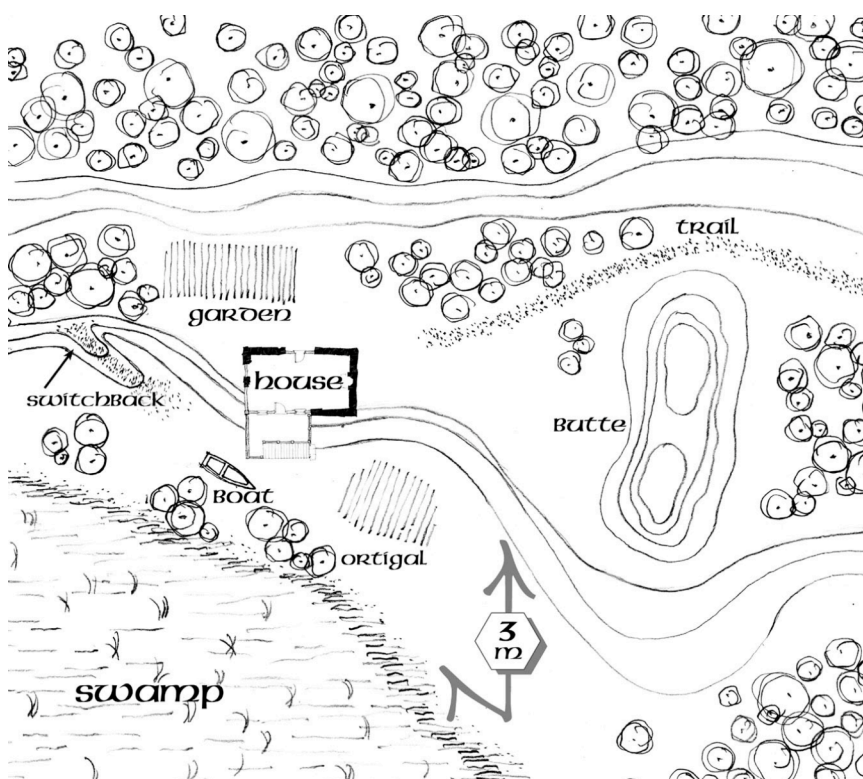
## action

The arrival of the Journeyers will take place around the hour of the Crown. By the time explanations are made, it’s at around the end of this hour (or the beginning of the Dragon) that Vortex will go gather his men. The punitive expedition will be ready to leave around the beginning of the hour of the Swords. The Journeyers have just one hour to make a decision and act.

If they question the villagers, they can easily find out how to get to Chrysobelle’s place: cross the bridge, go alongside the fishermen, take the little track to the southwest. The path begins to meander in the hills, then joins the banks of the swamp known as the Big Muddy, which it follows until it reaches the old house — 6 kilometers which can be covered in half a draconic hour (60 minutes) if they hurry.

While he will behave in a friendly fashion towards the Journeyers, Vortex doesn’t trust them. They may well be victims of the Chrysobelle’s, but they might also be creatures invoked by her to some mysterious but necessarily evil end.

This is why he urged them not to leave the village. Moreover, even before assembling his expedition, he will ask three inactive bridge guards to watch their every move, and if the characters take the road to Chrysobelle’s, stop them at all costs as soon as they leave the village. They have orders to avoid killing the Journeyers, but take them prisoner if possible. The three men will not be exceedingly discreet. The Journeyers should be able to detect their surveillance. It’s up to them to be sufficiently adroit to foil the guards. Otherwise, there could be combat (*Discretion* and *Perception* rolls are to be determined by the Dream Keeper according to the circumstances).

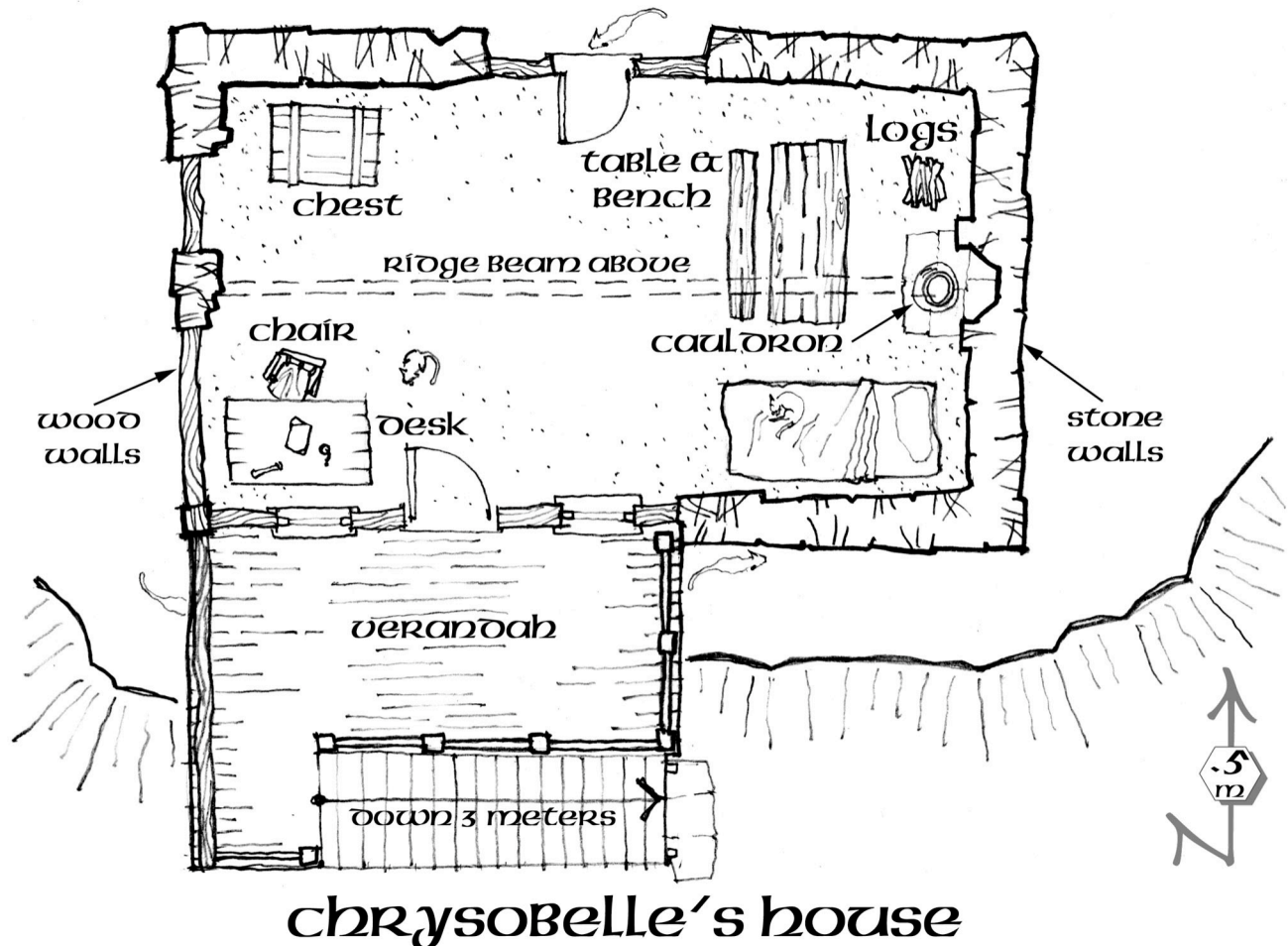


To reach the edge of the swamp, the best way is either from the stair coming off the verandah or the switchback a little further. The garden is essentially planted with vegetables. Near the swamp, Chrysobelle has attempted to cultivate a little square of ortigal. But in spite of all her efforts, the herb has only a +3 bonus (about 60 pinches’ worth are currently mature).

Behind the house, to the north, the side of the hill rises gradually, planted with trees: hazelnuts, birches, and rather dense bushes and thickets. The butte is a large granite rock covered in moss, some 4 meters tall (about the same height as the house).

Chrysobelle is not rich. Her home contains only very ordinary household objects. Her only valuables are contained in a chest (no lock): change of clothes, a pouch with 18 silver sols and 32 bronze coins worth 10d each, 3 vials of Liqueur of Bagdol, 1 vial of Oil of Selikanthe and 1 little pot of Turngrease.





## chrysobelle

The High Dreamer is a forty year old woman, with ash blonde hair and blue eyes, still rather beautiful, her muscles toned by years of Journeying. She lives alone in the house in the company of her 5 cats. Without being truly antisocial, she really prefers solitude. She will greet the Journeymen without any excessive demonstrativeness; one might even find her to be a bit cold. She will inquire as to their presence, and the reason for their being so many at once.

Her reaction will be a combination of indifference and incredulity. "I've been tending their wounded and sick for free for ten years now!" she will say. "Surely they don't now believe that I wish them any harm..." To convince her, a character must roll **Appearance** at -4. This roll may be reattempted without penalty by the same character so long as he rolls no worse than a normal failure. A particular failure or fumble indicates that he is incapable of convincing Chrysobelle. Another character may then try,

but with an additional penalty of -1. The same goes for him, and so on until every character has eventually tried.

If no one can convince Chrysobelle, she will say, "Let's wait for them to arrive and they can explain themselves..." Let the journeymen figure out how they can save her in spite of herself. If convinced, she will cry, "Quickly, to the pirogue! Help me put it in the water. They would never dare follow me into the swamp!" And becoming a bit more talkative, she may mention that Vortex has often, and vainly, attempted to seduce her—which may shed some new light on the behavior of the village chief.

If the characters object to going into the swamp due to the presence of Big Muddy, she will say, "That's a risk I'll have to take, I'm not asking you to come with me." she will then add, "But given where you are, you would be welcome to come with me. The boat is big enough for all of us." Nothing will dissuade her from her plan of escape.



## alternatives

The exact unfolding of events will depend on the choices and actions of the Journeymen, but really boil down to two major alternatives: either they save Chrysobelle, or they don't. The best solution would be to persuade Chrysobelle to flee, not into the Big Muddy, but west across the hills. The problem is that the High Dreamer will never accept this solution. For her own good, she must be convinced by force, magical or otherwise.

If the Journeymen do nothing at all and stay in the village the punitive expedition will return at the end of the day with Chrysobelle captive. She will be incarcerated in one of the bridge towers, the bridge being temporarily closed to traffic. The Journeymen will still have the option of attempting a rescue. But, goaded by Vortex' hateful diatribe, the entire village will be against her, and the Journeymen will have a long row to hoe. If they fail, she will be executed on the morrow at dawn, beaten and drowned.

### chrysobelle

Born in the Hour of the Dragon

40 years old. 1m70, 68 kilos.

Blonde hair, blue eyes. Beauty 12.

<b>Size</b>	10	<b>Will</b>	14	<b>Life</b>	12
<b>Appearance</b>	12	<b>Intellect</b>	14	<b>Endurance</b>	26
<b>Constitution</b>	14	<b>Empathy</b>	13	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	12	<b>Dream</b>	16	<b>Damage</b>	+0
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	13	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	13	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	<b>Enc</b>	11
<b>Sight</b>	12	<b>Missile</b>	12	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	11	<b>Throw</b>	12	<b>Protection</b>	0
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	10	<b>Stealth</b>	11		

	Level	Init	Dmg
Hand-to-hand	+0	6	(+0)
Dagger	+2	8	+1
Dodging	+3		

Climbing	+3	Outdoor	+6	Botany	+6
Discretion	+1	Forest	+3	Legends	+4
Jumping	+3	Swamp	+6	Medicine	+5
Running	+3	Jewelry	+0	Writing	+4
Vigilance	+1	Surgery	+8	Zoology	+0
Carpentry	+0	Swimming	+1	Oneiros	+3
Riding	+0	Alchemy	-3	Narcos	+7
City Surv	+3	Astrology	+4		

### known spells

<i>Heat</i>	City	D -4	d 1+	O
<i>Lantern</i>	Plains	D -3	d 2	O
<i>Mirrors</i>	Sanctuary	D -5	d 5	O
<i>Quiet</i>	Necropolis	D -3	d 4	O
<i>Enchantment</i>	City	D -4	d 1+	N
<i>Purification</i>	Necropolis	D -4	d 4	N
<i>Detect Aura</i>	Sanctuary	D -3	d 1	O/N
<i>Read Aura</i>	Sanctuary	D -3	d 3	O/N
<i>Countermagic</i>	Sanctuary	Variable		O/N

*Chrysobelle is wearing wool trousers and tunic, shod in sandals. While she rarely has need for it, she is armed with a dagger.*

**The cats.** *Chrysobelle's five cats are familiar animals but not particularly cooperative. In combat, they will try to hide. If Chrysobelle flees into the swamp, they will jump into the boat, believing that they are going fishing. If their flight leads them into the hills, they will stay at home. If necessary, use the average Felorn characteristics, minus the wings and power of speech.*

If, Chrysobelle not being convinced, the Journeymen stand in her defense at her home, they will have to engage in combat with Vortex and his expedition. If they lose, the survivors will be taken back to Ogûr, and we return to the above case, except that freeing Chrysobelle will become nigh impossible. If they are victorious in combat, Chrysobelle now being convinced, she will decide to flee into the swamp, fearing a second, vengeful expedition. Here again, she will respond to any objections to the swamp that Big Muddy is a risk worth taking, since at least no one will dare follow her.

### the big muddy

Logically (in the logic of dreams), the Journeymen should refuse to trust their fate "again" to a boat. And in fact, Big Muddy is there, in the swamp, to symbolize the extreme furor of the tempest. If they let Chrysobelle leave alone, in other words abandon her to her fate, they will see her boat disappear among the reeds; then, in the distance, barely perceptible in the mists, an enormous and monstrous form will surge forward, followed by a loud cry and then ... nothing. The Chrysobelle will have sunk and they will have failed.

If they go with her in the pirogue, Big Muddy will likewise appear. The difference is that the Journeymen will have a chance to save Chrysobelle (and themselves) by battling the monster. The entity will suddenly take form beneath the boat as the group is navigating shallow waters between sandy lagoons sprinkled with reeds. The boat will be lifted out of the swamp, where it will fall heavily with a spray of water. All the passengers must roll **Agility** at -2 or be thrown overboard, in water that fortunately is shallow (50 cm). It is not until the following round that the entity will stand up fully and begin to attack the characters directly, the boat being completely beached and immobilized.

### slatogehammer

<b>Size</b>	18	<b>Endurance</b>	36
<b>Dream</b>	18	<b>Speed</b>	8/16
<b>Level</b>	4	<b>Damage</b>	+4
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>
Attack/parry	18	+4	13
			<b>Dmg</b>
			(+6)

## end of the dream

If the Journeyers successfully lead Chrysobelle into the hills with at least 30 minutes' lead on their pursuers (whether Vortex and his band or a second expedition bent on vengeance), their flight will be successful and the Journeyers will have won. If they must resort to freeing the High Dreamer from her incarceration in Ogûr, they need likewise only gain a 30 minute lead over any pursuers to succeed, regardless of the road they take. If, having fled into the swamp, they vanquish Big Muddy, they will likewise have won.

In any case where the High Dreamer will have been saved, she will tell them, "I don't know how to thank you for what you've done for me..." Then she will look at them with a warm smile and her face will freeze, and everything around her will also stop moving, like a film being stopped. The Journeyers will then hear a bell, awakening them as they open their eyes. They will realize that they have just heard the ship's bell and that they are still on board the *Chrysobelle*, in their berths. It's morning and all this has been a dream, the same dream as before, except that this time, they dreamed it all the way through.

Physically, they will be in the same state as at the very beginning of the scenario, with no wounds, full Endurance, regardless of what they "spent" in their dream. On the other hand, nothing they acquired in the course of the dream will remain, except experience gained and stress points.

It's up to the Dream Keeper to now lend an air of *déjà vu* to the proceedings: the same comments from the sailors in the morning, the same gestures by the captain. Then, around noon, while the captain points to the horizon, saying, "I'm very worried we're going to catch a fierce wind...", the lookout will cry, "Shipwreck to port!"

There is in fact a small boat adrift, with a blonde woman of about forty on board with five cats terrified by the waves.

Coincidentally, the woman claims to be named Chrysobelle. When she sees the Journeyers, she will say, "I think we've met! I dreamed of you. I dreamed that your presence saved my life, and without that certainty I would surely already have died of despair, for I truly am at a loss as to what I am doing on the high seas. But I see that my dream was a premonition, I was right to believe in you, and I don't know how to thank you..." Thereupon, the captain will cry out, "The storm is moving away. The proverb is right that says it's always good luck to save a shipwreck survivor!" And in fact, the hurricane will recede beyond the horizon, leaving the *Chrysobelle* to peacefully finish its voyage.

If on the other hand the Journeyers fail, the ending will unfortunately be different. The moment the High Dreamer dies, whether killed in combat or executed by the villagers or crushed by Big Muddy, the Journeyers will likewise see things around them freeze like a stopped film, and will be awakened by the ship's bell. The difference is that the Dream Keeper will tell them, "That's it. We went back slightly so you could live your significant dream. Unfortunately, the dream proves it, the *Chrysobelle* could not be saved. When the tempest comes, there will be nothing to be done. All hands will be lost. It's pointless to continue since all this has already been played." *Note: If a character dies in the course of the adventure, his death will also not be real. From the perspective of his companions still in the Ogûr dream, he will seem to be dead, but he will in fact awaken on board ship upon hearing the morning bell. However, the Dream Keeper should wait to tell the player until everyone else has finished their dream, for good or ill, and wake up.*

—Original text and current edition revisions  
by Denis Gerfaud

—Translation, maps and layout by Hieronymous

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## a nose of hypnos

This is an adventure for four to five beginning or moderately experienced *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* characters. The party may include a High Dreamer, but no High Dreamer in the party should have *Hypnos* at greater than mastery, and it is critical in any event that none know the spell *Nose of Hypnos*. The Dream Keeper should adjust encounters accordingly if the party is larger or smaller.

### snits and snorks

The party are traveling in the month of the Spider through an area of human cities and villages, interspersed with small pockets of humanoid settlement. The free city of Cormorant is a week to tend days' travel away to the southeast; it does not figure directly in this adventure but may be referenced as the party's destination. The Journeymen are presumed to be following the road on the map, but it is an ancient and disused one, and much of it is through hill country, so treat the road as "overland" until it reaches the swamp. Beyond it the road is in better shape and through easier terrain, so treat it as "road". Should the Journeymen stray from the adventure into the Sylvan Forest or Snork Hills, those terrains are "tortuous". Unless otherwise noted, all other areas on the map are "overland".

Terrain	S1	S2	S3	S4	S6
Road	4	6	8	10	12
Overland	3	5	6	8	10
Difficult (hill, forest)	2	3	4	5	6
Tortuous (mountain, jungle, swamp)	—	1	1.5	2	2.5

The group is journeying through an area of gentle hills marked in places with small escarpments and drops. Base *Outdoor Survival* rolls here are at -4. Vegetation consists mainly of grasses, and here and there grow almondelles and the occasional grove of clopinettes and mellikass trees. Murus grows in places on the vertical faces of the sheer drops; Journeymen may spot some with **Sight/Outdoor Survival** rolls at -6, checking once per draconic hour. Each successful sighting will indicate the location of 2d7 pinches of the herb, but a **Mêlée/Climbing** roll at -3 is also required. Failure indicates the plant is inaccessible; a fumble results in a fall (roll on the table below for distance) onto loose stones and packed earth (+4 damage).

2d7 Roll	Height of Fall	Damage
2	7 m	+5
3-4	5-6 m	+2
5-7	4 m	+1
8-10	3 m	0
11-12	2.5 m	-1
13	2 m	-2
14	1.5 m	-3

After about three days in the region the travelers will note an increase in the frequency of small streams and springs, and a general greening of the local vegetation. By the afternoon of the third day, they will have reached a decided change in terrain, a broad lowland swamp which seems fairly passable, with small, meandering, muddy paths weaving in and among the boggy pools of the wetland. There seems no alternative but to enter the swamp if they are to continue on their way. *Swamp Survival* rolls here are at a base -5.

Even before entering the swamp, characters will notice that they are all prone to runny noses, itchy eyes, and sneezing. There is an allergen in the region which is causing these symptoms—treat as a disease with the following characteristics:

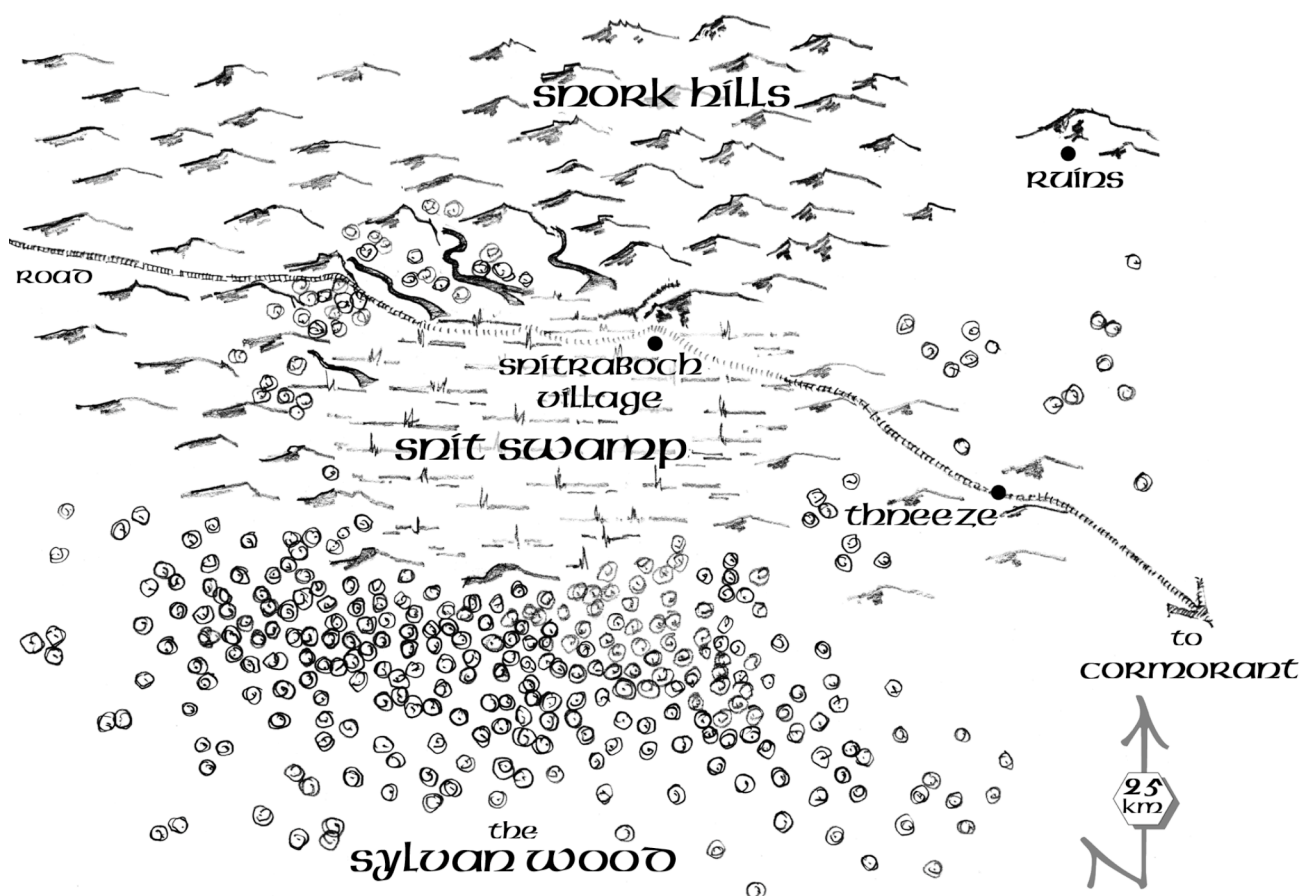
snit	
<b>Malignity</b>	5
<b>Period</b>	6 hours
<b>Damage</b>	-1 Sight & Smell-Taste up to a loss of 3 points -4 Fatigue
<b>Remedy</b>	-6 / Royal jelly +14, Moonmilk +8

Once out of the swamp the effects of the allergy will fade. Recovered characters automatically regain **Sight** and **Smell-Taste** at the rate of 1 point per 6 hours, and Fatigue can be recovered normally.

Ortigel also grows on the banks of the pools; roll **Sight/Swamp Survival** at -3 to spot up to 1d6 pinches of the herb; allow each character to roll once per 60 minutes. However, each character approaching the banks should make an **Empathy/Swamp Survival** check at -6; success indicates that she knows to approach with caution. She should then make a **Stealth/Swamp Survival** roll at a free difficulty.

Many of the pools are home to stranglevine, a semi-sentient creature which shares characteristics of both plants and animals. The Dream Keeper should determine whether the Journeymen encounter such a pool whilst searching for Ortigel (perhaps by secretly making a **Luck** roll for each member of the group; at least one failure and the pool is inhabited by a stranglevine—probably only one such encounter is enough). The stranglevine spends most of its time in wetland pools, firmly rooted to the mucky bottom. It has a single, prehensile tendril, however, which floats just below the surface of the water. When the plant creature detects movement, it whips its tendril out in an attempt to capture the interloper, and drag it into its pool where the stranglevine will drown it. It will then be left to decompose naturally, augmenting the nutrients of the stranglevine's pool. Unless a potential victim is very still (successful **Agility/Discretion** roll at -8), the stranglevine will automatically detect it as it approaches a bank.





The stranglevine will get a **Perception/Vigilance** roll to detect stealthy activity near it, at a base difficulty equal to the victim's successful **Stealth/Swamp Survival** base difficulty. Thus a character who successfully rolls **Stealth/Swamp Survival** at -4 will be detected only if the stranglevine rolls **Perception/Vigilance** at -4.

stranglevine				
Size	8	Life	12	
Constitution	15	Endurance	27	
Strength	14	Speed	3/0	
Perception	12	Damage	+1	
Will	3	Enc	11	
Dream	4	Protection	0	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Tendrils	16	5	13	(+2)
Vigilance	12	3		

The stranglevine's attacks use the non-lethal wounds table. If it attacks with surprise, it will attempt to violently jerk its victim into the pool, requiring the creature to make a successful **Strength** roll at a difficulty based on the victim's **Size** as follows:

Size	difficulty
6-8	-2
9-11	-3
12-14	-4
15	-5

If the creature is dragged into the pool, the stranglevine will be at +2 to its actions and the victim will be at -2. Once the creature scores at least a light wound, the vine will be tightly wrapped around the victim, and will score an automatic hit every round thereafter. Once a character is unconscious it will be dragged fully underwater and begin to take drowning damage. The tendrils can be attacked by any slashing or cutting weapon; missile attacks (arrows and bolts) are at a base -8. Even if the tendrils are cut, the creature will eventually grow a new one. All the creature's listed Life points are in its tendrils; severing the tendrils will stop any attacks, but it is virtually impossible to kill a stranglevine, short of draining or poisoning its habitat. The stranglevine cannot dodge or parry.

Relatively soon the characters will encounter a hunting party of mockturtles, members of the Snittraboch tribe. These mockturtles differ from most others in that their sense of sartorial propriety does not extend to covering the

head, but rather covering their muzzles. As a result, they wear small zobster-scale veils hooked over each ear and concealing the ends of their noses.

<b>snitraboch tribe mockturtle</b>					
<b>Size</b>	11	<b>Will</b>	14	<b>Life</b>	11
<b>Appearance</b>	10	<b>Intellect</b>	8	<b>Endurance</b>	25
<b>Constitution</b>	11	<b>Empathy</b>	10	<b>CT</b>	3
<b>Strength</b>	12	<b>Dream</b>	11	<b>Damage</b>	0
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	10	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	11	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	<b>Enc</b>	11
<b>Sight</b>	11	<b>Missile</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	10
<b>Hearing</b>	10	<b>Throw</b>	11	<b>Protection</b>	3
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	12	<b>Stealth</b>	11		
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>	
Lance		+ 3	9	+ 1	stone spear
Sling		+ 1	6	+ 1	sling
Shield		+ 2			
Dodging		+ 2			
Cooking (zobster)	+ 5	Underground		+ 3	
Vigilance	+ 3	Music, drum		+ 3	
Swamp Survival	+ 3	Swimming		+ 3	

The mockturtles carry drums which they beat every few minutes; they claim it is to attract zobsters, the creatures who are the chief ingredient of their national dish and which they are currently hunting. One of the mockturtles speaks a crude Journeyer, and after they get over the shock of seeing the party's nude noses, he will offer them veils with which to cover their shame. The veils smell faintly of zobster, but have the benefit of temporarily alleviating the effects of the snit (treat as a successful **Constitution** roll so long as a character is wearing his veil). Should the travelers agree to wear the veils, the mockturtles will enthusiastically invite them to join their hunt.

Furthermore, High Dreamers will note that the particular faded odor of the mockturtles' veils constitute a Draconic Sign (only one per High Dreamer, regardless of the number of veils smelled):

<b>Dreamland</b>	Swamp
<b>Difficulty</b>	-6
<b>Duration</b>	indefinite
<b>Value</b>	20 spell development points

Whether because of the snitraboch's drumming or mere luck, the combined hunting party will soon encounter a pool of zobsters. The creatures, possibly both agitated and repelled by the drumming, will attack the player characters first, and then the mockturtles. Thus there will be one zobster for every two Journeyers.

<b>ZOBSTER</b>			
<b>Size</b>	12	<b>Life</b>	13
<b>Constitution</b>	14	<b>Endurance</b>	27
<b>Strength</b>	16	<b>Speed</b>	12/24
<b>Perception</b>	9	<b>Damage</b>	+ 2
<b>Will</b>	3	<b>Enc</b>	14
<b>Dream</b>	3	<b>Protection</b>	4
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>
Pincers	13	2	8
Dodging	7	0	+ 5

Whatever zobsters are killed will be lashed one to a bundle of the mockturtles' long, bamboo-like spears, each to be carried by two snitrabochs. If the players themselves kill any of the giant crawfish, they will be held in high esteem by the mockturtles, who will extend their hospitality to vigorously invite them to a feast of zobster soup.

<b>snorks of north snit</b>					
<b>Size</b>	14	<b>Will</b>	11	<b>Life</b>	14
<b>Appearance</b>	9	<b>Intellect</b>	6	<b>Endurance</b>	28
<b>Constitution</b>	14	<b>Empathy</b>	7	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	14	<b>Dream</b>	10	<b>Damage</b>	+ 2
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	10	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	10	<b>Mêlée</b>	13	<b>Enc</b>	14
<b>Sight</b>	9	<b>Missile</b>	9	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	11	<b>Throw</b>	11	<b>Protection</b>	2
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	14	<b>Stealth</b>	9		
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>	
1-handed mace		+ 3	9	+ 5	snoot
Shield		+ 3			
Dodging		+ 3			
Jumping	+ 3			Outdoor Survival	+ 3
Running	+ 3			Swamp Survival	+ 5

Unfortunately, the snitraboch have a long-standing feud with a tribe of snorks who inhabit the dry lands beyond the cliffs which form the edge of the snit swamp. The snorks, apparently, take the mockturtles' wearing of nasal veils to be an insult to their porcine facial anatomy (which is not the case, actually). Occasionally the snorks send small war parties to skirmish with the mockturtles, more to harass and torment the creatures than for any real gain, territorial or otherwise. The porcine-faced humanoids especially delight in the sight of the mockturtles bawling in battle. When the snorks see the party accompanied by their new snitraboch friends, they will attack immediately.

In the mêlée, the first snork to fall or flee will be their herald. His symbolic accouterments—consisting of a stained and rent banner on a crooked pole and a long, narrow wooden box—will be left behind. The box contains seven velvet-lined compartments, and no less than five metal replicas of human noses—one copper, two bronze, one tin and one silver one. Each nose is hollow, beautifully

sculpted (4 quality points each) and apparently meant to be tied on the face with the accompanying ribbon. Two of the ribbons are black, two are purple, and one (with the silver nose) is red. The box itself is battered and dirty, and the velvet lining has been shabbily mistreated. A few of the noses are dented and one of the copper ones is bent. This puzzling and bizarre “treasure” is obviously a mere curiosity at most, and was doubtless held in high esteem by the snorks, who have at best a limited understanding of the value of objects. Nevertheless, these odd sculptures are possibly valuable to a collector, or their former owner. Melted down they might be worth 4 or 5 sols in raw material—and most of that value coming from the silver nose.

The snorks will be badly outnumbered by the combined might of the Journeys and their newfound mockturtle friends. They will nevertheless engage in a pitched *mêlée* for a few rounds, until one or two of the snorks (including their herald) succumb, then the remainder will flee. The Dream Keeper should assign enough snorks to pose a bit of a challenge to the party, but should not overwhelm them. The mockturtles will neither pursue fleeing snorks nor slay those who may have fallen unconscious, leaving them to their fate in the swamp.

After the battle, the surviving mockturtles will lead the Journeys to their village. A feast will be held, where the Journeys will be guests of honor. Zobster soup is indeed a dish worthy of these strange humanoids’ obsession; just eating a bowl of it will net each Journeyer 2 experience points in **Smell-Taste**, plus 3 Journey points if the optional Morale rules are used.

### *the village of thneeze*

Taking their leave of the snitaboch tribe and continuing on their road generally southeast, the Journeys will a few days later come across the human village of Thneeze. Exactly how long it takes them depends on their chosen rate of speed—treat travel through the swamp as “difficult” terrain (a bit easier than most swamps).

The hills by now have become a bit steeper, but rolling, and vegetation is more lush. Shepherds’ flocks of sheep and herds of goats dot the countryside, and the rare goatherd’s hut can be occasionally seen. Clearly they have entered more cultivated lands. It should come as no surprise, therefore, when they come across what appears to be a thriving human village.

Thneeze, as the Journeys will come to learn it is called, is in a shallow valley surrounded by a ring of the hills that are so prevalent in this region. The hillsides are home to more domesticated herds—mostly sheep and goats here again, but with the odd cow—as well as small orchards of

apple and apricot trees (the winters here are brisk enough that these fruit trees can thrive). Here and there small vineyards of hardy grape varieties, able to withstand the local winters, dot the landscape. In the distance, a sprawling castle ruin—doubtless a remnant of the many and bloody wars which marked the end of the Second Age—looms more picturesquely than menacingly over the village and its landscape. All appears to indicate an idyllic bucolic scene.

The first villager that the Journeys encounter—probably a shepherd or goatherd boy—will be wearing a small black veil covering his nose, secured by means of a string tied at the back of the head. While the material and style may vary from the mockturtles’ zobster-scale veils, the function is essentially the same. Players may at this point (if they haven’t already) ask themselves, “What’s with the noses?” Never fear, in due time all will be made as plain as the nose on your face. The Dream Keeper, in order to properly play up the comic (and absurdist) aspect of the nasal theme, should pinch his or her nose when speaking the part of one of the villagers.

If the goatherd is asked about the village, he will try to convey its name, and enthusiastically indicate that, “Dourneys are welcoved dair”—Journeys are welcomed there. They even have a Dourneys’ Houd—a Journeyer’s House. If asked about the black veil, he will nasally murmur that “we doldt dalk about id do drangers” and will change the subject.

Once in Thneeze (an especially comical name when pronounced with one’s nose pinched), the characters will notice that everyone—even infants—is wearing a mysterious nose veil. Only animals are immune to this bizarre custom. Other than this detail, the village seems perfectly normal. There is indeed a Journeys’ House, where the travelers will be cheerfully accommodated. The food is not bad, and all the villagers seem cheerful and friendly, although some are noticeably uncomfortable with their veils.

Eventually, one of the villagers—probably a young child, less subject to the strict code which make discussion of the matter forbidden—will intimate that the wearing of the veils is an uncommon and temporary custom. Sure enough, the next morning no one in the village will be wearing one, although some will have red marks on the nostrils where clothespins (placed under the veils) pinched them uncomfortably until yesterday. They will now also be willing to discuss their strange sartorial affect.

Several years ago—over thirty now—a Journeyer came to their village, an astrologer by the name of Ilador Vespertine. When he saw the village and the ruins of the

castle he decided to settle here, declaring the one remaining tower perfect for his astrological studies. Over time the villagers grew to know him and look upon him with some affection, even bestowing upon him the title of Magus, out of respect for his learnedness.

After almost a decade of living among them, another Journeyer passing through the village had an altercation with Magus Vespertine. No one knows the reason for their disagreement, but it was a heated altercation. It unfortunately ended in a duel, at sword points, one in which the Magus lost his nose. The Journeyer went on his way, and the astrologer retreated to his tower with his disfigurement. In the years since, the Magus has gotten over his maiming. The villagers have come to mark the sad occasion annually by pinning their noses and covering them in black veils annually, on the anniversary of the duel, so that they too can share the astrologer's loss.

Vespertine comes down to the village a few times a month, although lately he has taken to keeping to himself more than usual. The villagers have nothing but great affection for him, treating him with respect bordering on reverence.

The Journeyers will be encouraged by the villagers to visit the Magus Vespertine and pay him their respects. He makes his home in a small cottage built up against a standing outer wall of the old castle, a house constructed largely with the help of the villagers themselves. Cozy but modest, the cottage has a high pitched slate roof, small diamond-paned windows, and a little herb garden in front. The interior is modest as well: a single room serves both as sitting room and kitchen. The kitchen is almost entirely consumed by various small vats, jars of pungent alchemical substances, and large presses made from honed stones salvaged from the castle ruins: a paper-making press. What little the astrologer eats is brought up from the village.

A tiny bedroom on one side is mirrored on the other by an equally tiny study. The bed is almost always unmade, except once a week when someone from the village comes up to clean. A small wardrobe contains Vespertine's once urbane but now somewhat threadbare clothing—darned and maintained as best as possible by the villagers. He has several articles of clothing, shirts and trousers and such, made by the villagers in imitation of his old clothes, but of somewhat cruder make. A foot locker, nightstand, and a pile of manuscripts complete the bedroom's general untidiness.

The study is even more chaotic. Somewhere in that small room is a desk, although it would be difficult to find under the reams of notes and piles of astrological charts. Old empty bottles of ink, discarded quill nibs, and scraps of

homemade paper covered with a scrawl of notes and odd symbols. Over the room's only chair is draped a white linen shirt which has been likewise covered in notes—one night while making a series of observations Vespertine ran out of paper, and continued writing on his shirt. He has yet to transcribe these notes to one of his many blank books.

The back wall of the study (and kitchen and bedroom) is the old wall of the castle. A **Sight/Masonry** roll at -6 will detect a secret pivoting stone block in the wall, large enough for an adult human to pass through by stooping. Beyond lies a small chamber filled with volumes of neatly ordered books on a bookcase, all handwritten manuscripts: Vespertine's definitive life work. The great majority of these tomes are mostly filled with table upon table of observational data. While there is a vast amount of knowledge represented here, it is almost all represented in the form of raw data and direct observations; it has not been distilled down to easily-assimilated information:

### **magus iladore vespertine's astrological library**

*Difficulty -8, 40 task points, 80 experience points in Astrology, minimum level +0, maximum level +10. Note the period is 6 hours (not the usual one hour!)*

Vespertine will not willingly let anyone see, much less read, his life's work, as it is not yet complete. Transporting the library is almost out of the question, as it is composed of 53 books (to date), each with an Encumbrance of .5, for a total of 26.5 Enc. While the library is not clearly organized, the texts do follow an internal logic, and the volumes must be read and assimilated in sequence. Reading part of the work will be of no benefit; this is a single opus which happens to be bound in several tomes.

If the Journeyers wish to see Vespertine by day, the villagers will discourage them, as the old astrologer either sleeps or compiles notes through most of the daylight hours, and does not like to be disturbed. By night he will be up on his tower. The internal stair which once accessed that edifice's upper spires collapsed long ago; the structure is now hollow and open to the elements. A makeshift and rickety, though safe, wooden stair has been built along the old wall and up the tower, clinging to the ancient stonework like a vine climbing the shard of a boulder. Climbing the scaffolding might seem dangerous, but so long as the handrail is held and the climber pays heed to her footing, no harm will come. Have each character check Luck at 0; on a fumble the character should then roll **Agility/Climbing** at 0 to catch herself from falling. If the this second roll fails, then the character falls 2d10 meters onto stone (+5 damage plus the damage modifier due to the distance fallen).

The Journeyers will find the astrologer at his makeshift observatory atop the tower. The wooden planks which have replaced the original tower roof deck have been carefully inscribed with an astrological wheel, correctly aligned to the heavens, and subdivided into degree marks. Holes outside the perimeter of the circle allow the astrologer to move and set a variety of carved wooden gnomons, or markers, which vary in height and shape. A few are smooth, most are notched. By placing them in pairs along the perimeter Vespertine can sight along them to a given star; by carefully noting which notch and at what time he sighted a given star, the astrologer has been able to compile remarkably accurate star charts: the contents of the secret library in his house below. He hopes one day to draw a complete star map, but is only some seventy percent complete with his observations.

In addition, Vespertine has an astrologer's crystal mounted in a ring which can be mounted to the gnomons in a variety of configurations. The crystal is of Vespertine's own invention, a variation of the alchemical crystal, only it allows him to index the color of the stars, hence their relative brightness. On the tower roof he also has a massive hourglass (nearly a meter tall) and several smaller ones for measuring time in increments of hours and minutes. Finally, a podium holds his notebook and a hooded lantern with a red glass, for recording his notes without interfering with his observations.

The Magus' work is slow, meticulous, and time-consuming, but there are several stretches of time when he is waiting for a star to come into a particular alignment. He can therefore carry on a conversation with the Journeyers, between sightings and note-taking.

The old astrologer will be pleased to meet the travelers, and will be interested in their journeys and tales. He will even propose that he take the afternoon off on the following day, that they might become better acquainted. Of himself he will say little. However, even in the gloom of the observatory it should be obvious (**Sight** at -1) that he is wearing an artificial nose similar to the ones the party found in their encounter with the snorks—this one is bronze with a green ribbon.

If the group brings up the fact that they possess noses which appear very similar to his, Vespertine will seem surprised, and ask to hear the tale of their acquisition of them on the following day. He will apologize that his observations prevent a long discussion that evening, but will request that they come visit him in the hour of the Lyre on the morrow, that they might have a meal together.

The next day the villagers will provide the Journeyers with a picnic basket of cold meats, bread, cheeses, and wine to

take to Vespertine for their visit. The astrologer will be awaiting them, and will suggest that they eat on the green sward outside his cottage. Periodically in the course of their conversation he will glance up at the observatory anxiously, as if even in the light of day he cannot wait to return to his work.

### *ilador vespertine, astrologer*

Born in the Hour of the Spider. 65 years old. 1m55, 70 kilos. Right-handed. Grey hair, brown eyes, missing nose.

<b>Size</b>	10	<b>Will</b>	11	<b>Life</b>	12
<b>Appearance</b>	8	<b>Intellect</b>	17	<b>Endurance</b>	23
<b>Constitution</b>	13	<b>Empathy</b>	10	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	10	<b>Dream</b>	12	<b>Damage</b>	+ 0
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	9	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	14	<b>Mêlée</b>	11	<b>Enc</b>	10
<b>Sight</b>	16	<b>Missile</b>	15	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	9	<b>Throw</b>	12	<b>Protection</b>	0
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	7	<b>Stealth</b>	11		

	Level	Init	Dmg		
Hand-to-hand	+ 0	5			
Dagger	+ 1	6	+ 1		
Crossbow	+ 3	10	+ 3		
Dodging	+ 3				
Climbing	+ 0	Masonry	+ 2	Surgery	- 2
Dance	+ 1	Riding	+ 0	Swimming	- 4
Discretion	+ 3	City Surv	+ 3		
Drawing	+ 2	Outdoor	+ 1	Alchemy	+ 2
Jumping	- 3	Forest	+ 0	Astrology	+ 12
Running	- 1	Swamp	+ 3	Botany	+ 1
Seduction	- 3	Mountain	+ 2	Legends	+ 3
Tinkering	- 2	Undergrnd	- 4	Medicine	+ 0
Vigilance	+ 5			Writing	+ 3
		Jewelry	- 4	Zoology	- 4
Commerce	+ 0	Metalwork	- 2		
Disguise	- 2				

If the party return the noses to Vespertine, he will gratefully accept them. If they ask him to pay for them, he will offer 2 sols (he has little money) and will certainly be less friendly to them, although no less polite. In the course of their talk the astrologer will ask them again about their adventures, and then, as if sizing them up, will ask them if they would be willing to undertake a mission on his behalf.

Soon after his maiming, he will relate, he heard of a book called *The Nose of Hypnos* from passing Journeyers, which he has since hoped might contain a spell for restoring his missing olfactory appendage. Over the years he has had a recurring dream of finding the tome in some ruins, and has from time to time gone out to look for the tome among some ruins two days away. In recent years, however, the ruins have become more dangerous and his advancing age have made it more difficult for him to continue his search. In fact, he lost his metal noses while last in the ruins when he encountered a group of snorks and executed a hasty flight.

Vespertine, it should be emphasized, is not a High Dreamer and does not know much about magic. He is completely ignorant of the fact that there is an illusion of the same name as the alleged book, and does not even realize that if the book contains a magic spell as he describes, he could not use it. As a man of “science”, he assumes that his learning and intellect can carry him through and allow him to make use of whatever magic the book might contain. Given the proscription against advanced Hypnos High Dreamers in this scenario, the **characters** should also share the astrologer’s ignorance about the spell *Nose of Hypnos*, regardless of what the **players** may know of the rules.

The astrologer will repeat his request of the Journeyers that they go to the ruins and search for the tome in his stead. He will offer them his gold nose in payment—which he did not lose to the snorks and which he only wears for very special occasions—, worth some 5 gold pieces as a curiosity, or 25 sols melted down to pure gold. If the group agrees to the task, he will draw them a map to the ruins, and describe that he believes that if the book if there it would be in the area of one of the large underground cisterns that are near what he refers to as the “library”. Vespertine will also arrange for the villagers to assist the Journeyers in small but helpful ways: mend clothing and armor, repair weapons, send provisions with them, etc. Each character embarking on the search should be awarded 3 Journey points.

## the ruins

The ruins where Vespertine hopes to recover the book are located some 70 kilometers from Thneeze, or about two days travel at speed S3 (a reasonable pace). It is to the north of the village, west of the snork territory, and northwest of the snitraboch swamp. On the second day of the travel, the Journeyers should each make a **Luck** roll. Any failures indicate a snork patrol is encountered; the patrol will have two members for every failed **Luck** roll, and any natural 20 will double the number of the patrol. If any of the Journeyers roll a 1 then the number is halved. If, for example, a party failed two of their **Luck** rolls and also rolled a 20, then there would be eight snorks in the patrol. Use the snork stats presented above.

The ruins themselves are of some sort of Second Age fortified settlement, larger than the castle ruins inhabited by the astrologer, but too small to be a city—probably a garrison town of some kind. Of its name or the fate of its inhabitants there is not a clue.

Following Vespertine’s map will lead the Journeyers to a large stone cistern near the center of the ruins. Above it, tumbling down the slope at whose base it lies, are the

cyclopean stones of what must have been the chief fortification of the place. **Sight/Vigilance** rolls at -2 will allow the Journeyers to spy flying figures well before they swoop down from the skies and former battlements to molest the party: a group of harpies! Provide roughly one harpy for every Journeyer, adjusted for the group’s strength.

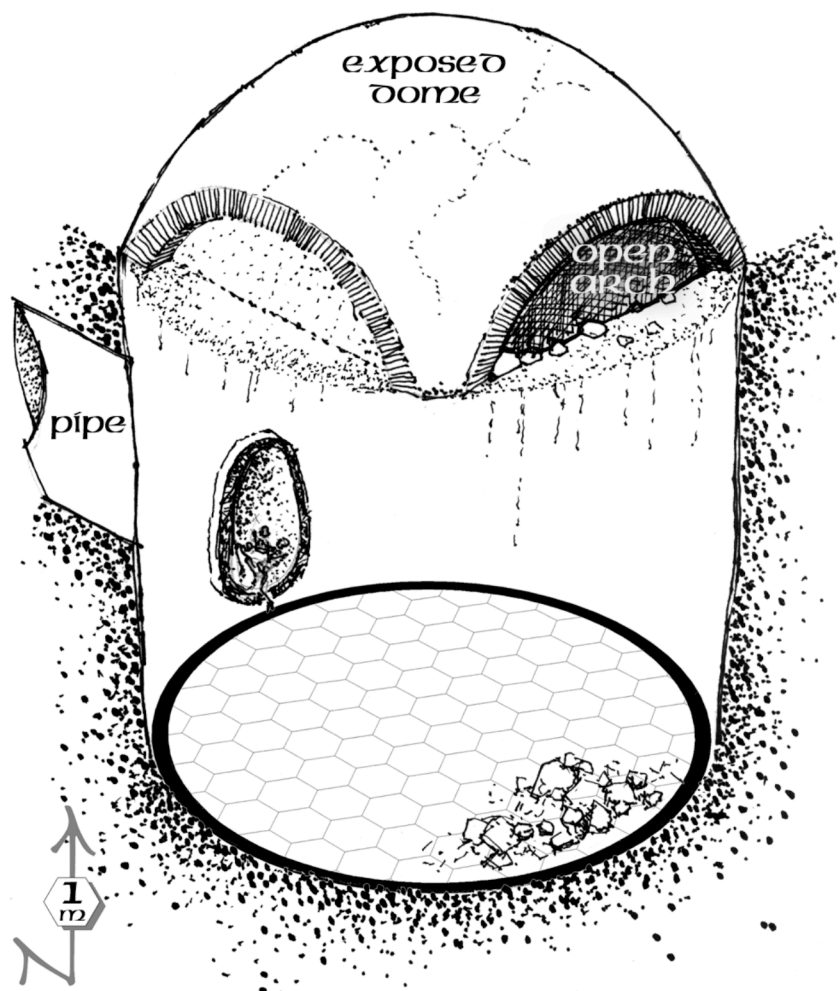
<b>harpy</b>			
<b>Size</b>	9	<b>Life</b>	10
<b>Constitution</b>	11	<b>Endurance</b>	21
<b>Strength</b>	12	<b>Speed</b>	12/36
<b>Perception</b>	11	<b>Damage</b>	0
<b>Will</b>	12	<b>Enc</b>	10.5
<b>Dream</b>	11	<b>Protection</b>	4
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>
Talons	12	4	10
Dodging	11	4	+ 2

The cistern itself is mostly excavated into the base of the hillside, with only its stone domed top evident. The dome is built on four equal arches resting on the subterranean walls of the structure, and each of these four arches was once filled in with more stonework. Time has been at work here, however, and some of the stonework under one of the arches has collapsed, revealing ready (if somewhat dizzying) access to the interior of the cistern.

What little daylight there is filtering into the cistern will reveal (with a **Sight** roll at -3) that the cavernous interior is entirely dry. A significant success on the above roll will also indicate that one can observe some irregular forms—a pile of stones?—across the chamber and far below, while a particular success will definitely make out humanoid forms in some sort of archway. The floor seems to be a mix of loose stones and packed earth (+4 on any falling damage, already figured into the damage values on table below). Climbing down the inside walls of the 10 m diameter cistern will require three **Mêlée/Climbing** rolls along the 15 m height, as follows:

<b>At ...</b>	<b>roll at</b>	<b>Damage</b>
15 meters	-3	+ 13
10 m	-5	+ 11
5 m	-3	+ 6

Remember to account for the climbers’ overall penalties, if any, as well as any Encumbrance or armor penalties.



Once down on the floor of the cistern (and presumably armed with a light source) the Journeymen will be able to discern that there is a very large underground terra cotta pipe which feeds into (or once drained) the cistern. In the mouth of the pipe are the remains of two humans, judging from their rotted garb and broken gear once perhaps Journeymen or adventurers themselves. The two are locked in an embrace, and one is still holding a rusted dagger in his bony grip. As the characters approach, a ghostly red form, its shifting features contorted in hatred—now wearing one face, now a second, now the first—will advance, rising up from the remains and advancing menacingly.

<i>hate</i>				
<i>Jealous City M1</i>				
<b>Dream</b>	16	<b>Speed</b>		6
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	
Possession	16	3	11	

Once the hate is dealt with, the Journeymen will be able to discern that between the entwined remains is a sword, striking for its pristine condition among the otherwise rotted gear. The sword, named Bicker, is detailed below, along with a new Thanatos ritual used in its manufacture.

### Bicker

This magical longspar bears *Grand Ritual of the Claw: Morbid Envy*, as well as two *Scales of Efficiency*. Due to the latter, the weapon is +2 to attack, parry and initiative rolls, and scores +4 damage, plus its wielder's personal damage modifier. Each hour of use costs the wielder 1d. See the ritual description below for the effects of *Morbid Envy*.

*Bicker* has an inertia of 28 (plus the inertia of its respective gems) and a magical resistance of 10.

**Gem I** (alchemically allied aquafane)  
(Size 3, Purity 6, Inertia 1, Enchantability 2)

Ritual	Dreamland	Cost
<i>Purification</i>	M2	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	M1	14d
<i>Alliance</i>	K5	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	M1	15d
<i>Permanence*</i>	L4	5d
<i>Mastery</i>	Lethe	7d
<i>Morbid Envy**</i>	Jealous City M1	10d

**Gem II** (encrusted dragon tear in pommel)

(Size 5, Purity 4, Inertia 3, Enchantability 2)

Ritual	Dreamland	Cost
<i>Purification</i>	M2	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	M1	11d
<i>Alliance</i>	K5	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	M1	10d
<i>Purification</i>	M2	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	M1	10d
<i>Permanence*</i>	L4	5d
<i>Mastery</i>	Lethe	7d
<i>Scale of Efficiency</i>	M3	7d
<i>Purification</i>	M2	4d
<i>Scale of Efficiency</i>	M3	7d

### *MORBID ENVY\*\**

(Jealous City M1) **D** -12 **d** 10

**Range** Touch

**Duration** Permanent

**RR** d -8

**Effect** Having enchanted an edged weapon by normal Narcos means, the Thanatos magician may lay the ritual of *Morbid Envy* on it.

Merely touching the weapon, even while wearing a glove or gauntlet, is enough to set off the magic of *Morbid*

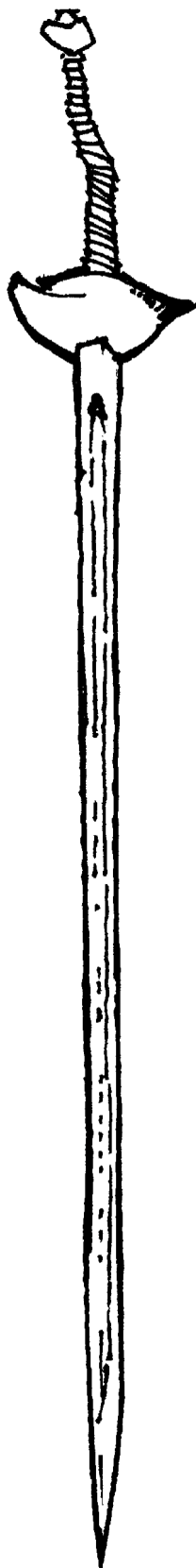


*Envy*. Doing so will cause the mastery of the *Grand Claw* to operate, costing the user 1 d, who must then make a resistance roll at d -8. If the check succeeds, the user is not affected and may use the blade normally. If it fails, *Morbid Envy* causes the sword's master to grow increasingly paranoid and obstreperous, gradually believing that others around him (whether strangers or longtime friends and associates) are out to steal the sword from him. Such paranoia will quickly escalate to the point where the sword's owner is willing to kill in order to protect his possession. In game terms, the character treats all neutral morale situations as negative and all positive morale situations as neutral. When the character's Morale reaches -3 (for whatever reason) he will attack with intent to kill at the slightest provocation (real or imagined).

Note that the user is liable to trigger the *Grand Claw* every time he or she touches the weapon. It may become necessary for the Dream Keeper to temporarily play the character if the player is not able or willing to properly roleplay the effect of this nefarious weapon. As a final note, anyone killed as the result of the weapon's influence will leave behind a Disembodied Nightmare Entity, such as a hate, with a power equal to the character's dream.

Beyond the two corpses the large pipe stretches away into the darkness. It is some two meters in diameter, just enough for two to walk abreast (but not fight with most two-handed weapons). Within the tunnel it is pitch dark, and the circular passage seems to go on forever. Roll **Empathy/Underground Survival** at -4 to determine that the pipe is sloping very gently down. After some 40 meters the Journeymen will encounter a group of four necrats. These rodents will have been alerted to the Journeymen's approach if the latter are carrying light sources or make noise.

Have the group make **Sight/Vigilance** rolls at -5 to spot the creatures; they will automatically fail without a light source. If the creatures are not spotted, they will attack with *semi-surprise*.



### necrat

<b>Size</b>	6	<b>Life</b>	9
<b>Constitution</b>	11	<b>Endurance</b>	20
<b>Strength</b>	10	<b>Speed</b>	12/30
<b>Perception</b>	10	<b>Damage</b>	0
<b>Will</b>	10	<b>Enc</b>	8
<b>Dream</b>	10	<b>Protection</b>	0
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b> <b>Dmg</b>
Bite	11	3	8 + 1*
Dodging	10	2	
Discretion	10	3	
Running	11	3	
Vigilance	10	3	

### necrophage

<b>Malignity</b>	7
<b>Period</b>	1 hour
<b>Damage</b>	-2 Life
<b>Remedy</b>	-4/Turngrease +16, Oil of Selikanthe +6

Flesh around the wound swells, blackens and putrefies, then spreads throughout the body. If the victim dies, a nightmare entity (50% - 50% chance of either a Hate or Despair) arises, with a Power equal to the victim's Dream.

A few meters beyond the necrat's nest lies a violet rift. As the rift itself does not shed light, but is only visible as a discoloration of the ambient light, it is entirely possible that in the (presumably) torch lit tunnel the Journeymen will fail to notice it altogether (secretly roll **Sight/Vigilance** at -8 for each character to note a slight violet discoloration of their torch light). It may even be possible that the change in the torch light's color could be attributed to some sort of gas trapped in the pipe (even if the **Sight** rolls are made, have each successful observer roll **Intellect/Legends** at -0 to properly identify the violet rift).

The rift itself is only a few meters in diameter; small enough that the whole group can quickly pass through it, but large enough that those at the front of the line and those at the rear are likely to travel it together. Just beyond it, the lead character should roll **Agility/Vigilance** at -5 not to trip and fall over a small hard object lying in the pipe. It is a small wooden chest, some 40 cm wide by 30 cm deep by 25 cm tall, bronze-bound and swollen with damp. Its lock can be picked with **Dexterity/Locksmithing** at -2, for 3 task points with a 5 minute period.

Add a further penalty of -3 if the lock is being picked in poor light (like sputtering torch light). The box could be broken open with **Strength** rolls at -4 for 3 task points (blunt heavy weapons can add their damage bonus to the Strength roll), 1 minute period, but cautious Journeymen might believe that using force could damage the contents of the chest.

In fact, the chest contains a rectangular object bound in oilcloth (hence mostly protected from moisture): a book. It is indeed Iladore Vespertine's sought-after *Nose of Hypnos*. This grimoire by Gortharus the Blind (who was said to be able to recognize his colleagues at the Collegium by their scent alone) is a treatise on Hypnomancy in general, and Hypnos non-visual illusions in particular. It can be read and understood by accumulating 30 task points from **Intellect/Writing** rolls at -5, made no more than once per hour. The reader will thus gain 20 experience points in Hypnos up to +3, and will also gain a +3 synthesis roll bonus and 13 spell development points towards each of the following spells: *Drum of Hypnos*, *Nose of Hypnos*, and *Tongue of Hypnos*. The book will, alas, in no way avail poor noseless Iladore.

Which, in any event, is irrelevant. If the Journeymen hold the above-mentioned grimoire in their hands, then they must have passed through a violet rift as noted above, and thus their chances of ever seeing that astrologer again are rather remote at best. But another Iladore, in a different Thneeze, awaits them...

As they continue along the pipe the Journeymen may now note that their feet are wet from standing water and mud, and another **Empathy/Underground Survival** roll at -4 will determine that the pipe is now sloping very gently *up*. In another 40 meters they will emerge in another cistern, very similar to the one which they have left, but not identical. There are no human remains here, and there is a bit of water in the bottom. Other than that, it is very much like the one which they shortly left. There is even some collapsed stonework up top to which they may climb (use the same difficulties and distances as before when climbing down).

The water and mud and collapsed stonework at the bottom of the cistern, combined with the chirping of some invisible cricket, form a draconic sign: difficulty -6, read from Lethe, Lake or Swamp, and worth 25 spell development points.

As they scale the cistern wall and emerge into the bright sunlight the Journeymen may note that they seem to have come out on the other side of the ruins. The scene is similar enough to give them a *frisson of déjà vue*, but also dissimilar enough not to raise too many suspicions they

have been "here" before. There are no harpies (nor their remains) here, no snork patrols, only the haunting silence of a Second Age ruin. Only if curious Journeymen seek to find their first cistern from the surface will they be unable to locate it. Similarly, if they go back up the pipe the way they came they will meet a collapsed, underwater dead-end some 100 meters back from the mouth of the pipe at the second cistern.

With an **Empathy/Outdoor Survival** roll at -2 the group can orient themselves and head back to Thneeze. They may even peruse enough of the *Nose of Hypnos* that any High Dreamers among them may get an inkling that this book will not help the old astrologer at all.

## conclusion

Upon returning to Thneeze, the party may notice that a few things are out of place (if the Draconic Sign at the second cistern and the absence of harpies did not tip them off); have each character roll **Empathy/Vigilance** at -4 to notice small details which might give away that they are in fact now in a different dream from the one they left: a pitcher that was broken at the Journeymen's House now restored, a family with twins who before only had one child, a blue-eyed villager who now has brown eyes. Such details will be trivial and nearly inconsequential.

The most significant local difference in this dream is Iladore Vespertine himself. Here, he is still referred to by the villagers with the honorific of "magus"—but whereas in the other Thneeze the term was one of respect, here Vespertine is regarded with fear. The other Vespertine was installed in the old castle tower as a matter of convenience and solitude for his astrological pursuits. This Vespertine has seated himself in the castle as a display of power, and in fact he rules the village with an iron hand, rather than being a kindly grandfatherly hermit.

This Vespertine is not even much of an astrologer, but unlike his counterpart from the first dream, he *is* a High Dreamer. Furthermore, his nose is intact, although it is unusually long—grotesquely so. He has a penchant for wearing a long scarf around his lower face to hide his protruding proboscis, such that the characters may not at first notice that they are dealing with a different person. This Vespertine is slightly taller and a bit younger than his counterpart, too—have the Journeymen roll **Sight** at -4 to note these differences at a glance.

Vespertine will not know the Journeymen, and he will take great offense should they present him with their found copy of *The Nose of Hypnos*, taking it as a highly unpleasant joke. He is so sensitive about his nose, in fact, that he is likely to attack the characters in a rage if they treat him with anything but the greatest tact.

**ilador vespertine, magician**

Born in the Hour of the Dragon

55 years old. 1m58, 68 kilos.

Right-handed. Grey hair, brown eyes, very long nose.

<b>Size</b>	10	<b>Will</b>	11	<b>Life</b>	12
<b>Appearance</b>	8	<b>Intellect</b>	17	<b>Endurance</b>	23
<b>Constitution</b>	13	<b>Empathy</b>	10	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	10	<b>Dream</b>	16	<b>Damage</b>	+ 0
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	9	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	14	<b>Mêlée</b>	11	<b>Enc</b>	10
<b>Sight</b>	12	<b>Missile</b>	13	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	9	<b>Throw</b>	11	<b>Protection</b>	0
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	7	<b>Stealth</b>	11		

	Level	Init	Dmg
Hand-to-hand	+ 0	5	(+ 0)
Dagger	+ 1	6	+ 1
Crossbow	+ 3	9	+ 3
Dodging	+ 3		

Climbing	+ 1	Riding	+ 3	Alchemy	+ 6
Cooking	+ 3	City Surv	+ 5	Astrology	+ 0
Discretion	+ 4	Outdoor	+ 0	Botany	+ 0
Drawing	+ 0	Forest	+ 3	Legends	+ 5
Jumping	+ 0	Swamp	+ 2	Medicine	+ 1
Running	+ 0	Mountain	+ 0	Writing	+ 4
Tinkering	+ 2	Undergrnd	+ 2	Zoology	+ 1
Vigilance	+ 4				

Acting	+ 0	Gaming	+ 3	Oneiros	+ 0
Commerce	+ 2	Jewelry	+ 5	Hypnos	+ 9
Disguise	+ 2	Metalwork	+ 4	Narcos	+ 8
		Surgery	+ 0	Thanatos	- 11

*Reserved Hypnos Spells*

<i>Confusion</i>	H13	<i>Stumble</i>	G13
<i>Fatigue</i>	F12	<i>Suggestion</i>	J14
<i>Fear</i>	K14	<i>Metamorphosis</i>	J13
<i>Lash</i>	I12	<i>Invisibility</i>	Lethe
<i>Sleep</i>	F10		

The Dream Keeper should play the return to Thneeze with a bit of finesse. There should be enough clues to alert the Journeyers that they should be on their guard, but at the same time these clues should be subtle and the players should not be bludgeoned with them. A casual, offhand tone when announcing them is perhaps best. Perhaps even call into doubt the players' memory of their former surroundings. "You mean you don't remember having broken that pitcher? Odd. I'm sure you must have" or "Surely you remember the young farmer's wife and her happy twins? No? Ah well..." The point is to lead the players up to Vespertine—they will surely march right up to him, since they know where he lives—and have an opportunity to either give him the book (which would be disastrous) or simply make up some excuse at the last minute for disturbing his grace, stammer an apology, and leave with the book safely tucked under an arm.

Naturally, a very suspicious group will want to know where the collapse down the pipe came from, and why can't they find the first cistern and the harpy bodies. They'll scout the village first before going up to see the magus, and note that the villagers only remember them vaguely, if at all. Here the Dream Keeper should gently pooh-pooh their suspiciousness, and point out how odd it would be to be so cautious returning to a familiar and friendly village. Perhaps if they have had an unpleasant time with *Bicker* the Keeper can hint that the sword (whether it is in their possession or not) is amplifying or preying upon their paranoia, and so on. The trick is to let them be suspicious, but not too much so. If all ends well, the Journeyers can continue on their way, richer by a *Nose*.

—Text, cartography, illustrations and  
layout by Hieronymous



# vale of phosneratu

This *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* scenario is designed for a group of four or five relatively experienced Journeymen (+5 or +6 in their best skills), including at least one High Dreamer knowing the Narcos ritual of *Enchantment*, an alchemist if possible.

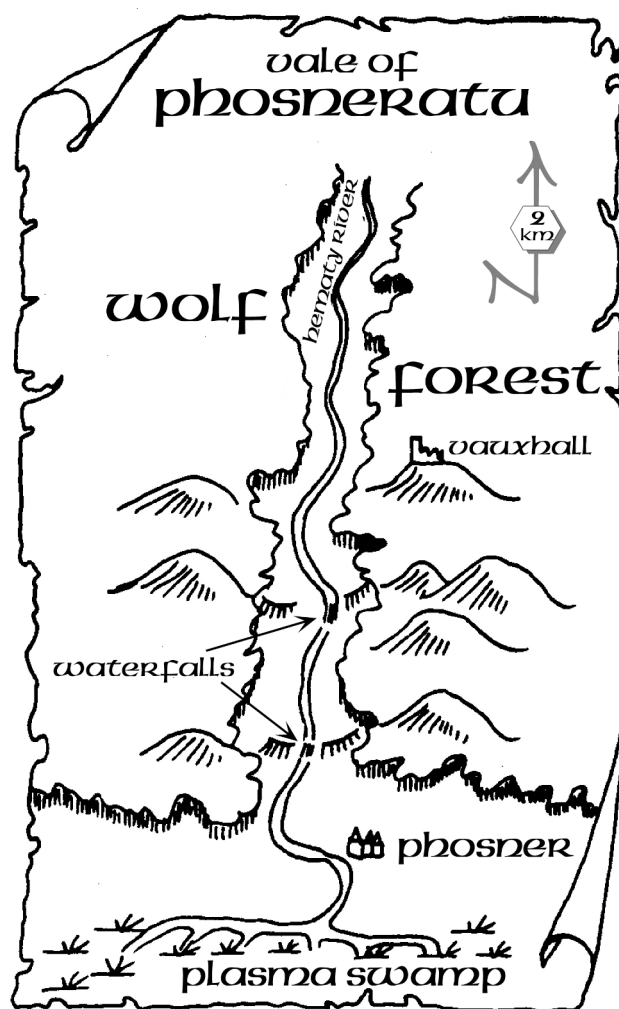
## introduction

It is dusk, the hour of the Lyre, in a wild country of wooded hills, dense undergrowth and sudden ravines revealing at times the naked rock. A storm is threatening and the howling of wolves are approaching. In spite of these unwelcoming conditions (or perhaps because of them), the Journeymen are still traveling. They hope to find the village of Phosner before night, escaping both storm and wolves. Some mountain men had mentioned the village to them that very morning, as being situated at the bottom of the valley, on the edge of a swamp. At the moment, the Journeymen are off any track, heading southwest and hoping to catch the Hematy, then following that river to the village. What they don't know is that Phosner is actually farther south than they think, and still a dozen kilometers away as the crow flies, or almost twice that given the conditions of the terrain. At the moment when our story begins, in the rather oppressive atmosphere of the groaning storm punctuated by wolf cries echoing in every direction, the Journeymen are 2 kilometers northeast of the ruins of Vauxhall.

## the old man

A long mauve lightning fork suddenly licks the dusking sky, followed a few seconds later by a deafening crash. Then, in the renewed silence, it seems as if even the wolves have fallen silent. It is then that the Journeymen can all hear cries for help coming from a stand of trees thirty meters ahead. Suddenly, the cries are drowned out by new howls coming from the same direction. Two enormous animals are attacking a lone traveler. The man is old and armed only with his voyager's walking stick. By the time the Journeymen rush to his aid, he is already collapsed on the ground, bleeding from multiple wounds. The Journeymen should be able to repel the wolves if they are adequately armed. they need only deal a serious wound to one of the wolves for it to take flight, leading the other away in turn. Alas! nothing can save the old man, who has received a critical wound and is already dying. Before he expires, he will murmur his last words, "Vauxhall ... lustral water ...". If the Journeymen take an inventory of the contents of his haversack, they will find no obvious wealth: 3 Sust of bread and cheese, a few rags and a flint

and steel, and, more unusual: a 20 cl glass vial containing a clear liquid like water and labeled *rainbow water*; a well-worn book titled *Legends of Ancient Deaths*; and a map of the vale of Phosneratu crudely drawn (the latter is provided with the scenario and may be copied and given to the players).



**Important.** If the Journeymen do not attempt to save the old man or do not search his belongings, the rest of the scenario may prove catastrophic for them. The old man was an alchemist and High Dreamer who, under compulsion of some obscure message of the dream of the Dragons, had undertaken a terrible quest: to destroy the vampiric spirits which haunt the region and the ruins of Vauxhall. To this end he needed to concoct *lustral water*, the only means to truly end the vampires. But the lustral water is not even complete; rainbow water is but one ingredient. The old man did not think himself so close to the ruins nor that his quest would prematurely end so absurdly. One way or another, whether they like it or not, the Journeymen are fated to take up his quest.

<b>wolves</b>				
<b>Size</b>	11	Life		13
<b>Constitution</b>	14	Endurance		27
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Speed</b>		12/38
<b>Perception</b>	13	Damage		0
<b>Will</b>	10	Enc		12
<b>Dream</b>	10	Protection		1
		Level	Init	Dmg
Bite	13	4	10	+ 2
Dodging	11	3		
Jumping	12	5		
Running	12	5		

## the ancient tome

The Journeyers will discover everything there is to know about vampires as well as the means to combat them by reading the old book, *Legends of Ancient Deaths*. The problem is that the work does not deal exclusively with vampires. Generally it relates legends of mysterious deaths, strange resurrections, the power of necromancers to animate skeletons and zombies. Neither does the book refer to Vauxhall in particular. In order to have read the chapter on vampirism, the reader must start the book from the beginning. He will not reach the chapter in question until after 5 task points, period 60 minutes, **Intellect/Writing** at -2. A complete reading of the book requires 8 task points and will give the reader 15 experience points in *Legends*, to a maximum level of +8. The book has an Encumbrance of 1.

Given the urgent conditions (night, the storm and the wolves), it is logical that the Journeyers will put off reading the book until later.

## vampires

Vampires are **stalkers** (embodied nightmare entities) resulting from a particularly morbid curse of the Way of Thanatos. The formula for this curse was fortunately lost at the end of the Second Age, but there are nevertheless still active vampires today. Masterless, these are “feral” vampires. They follow the same rules as other stalkers (cf. *Embodied Nightmare Entities*, Book 3), but with the following particularities:

- † Initially, the vampire is invoked from a human corpse, and the thanatary spirit will always keep this form.
- † When the vampire dematerializes (at zero Endurance) and retreats to Limbo, it does not regain **Size** points like other stalkers, but Endurance points, at the rate of 1d8-1 per hour. As with dream point recovery, roll again on a 7, and continue to do so on any roll of a 7. In order to rematerialize, the vampire must fully recover its Endurance.

† Vampires are bound to their former bodies or the place where these are buried. They may never stray far from this place. They always rematerialize near one or the other.

† Vampires fear the light of day and automatically dematerialize at the end of the hour of the Sleeping Castle. They may stay dematerialized an indefinite number of days, but when they rematerialize it is always at the earliest in the hour of the Serpent. Unless reduced to zero Endurance, a vampire may not voluntarily dematerialize until the Sleeping Castle.

† Any Endurance loss due to damage inflicted by the vampire cannot be regained *by any means whatsoever* so long as the vampire has not been completely destroyed. The same is true for Life points. Wounds may heal and scar over, magically or otherwise, but nothing can cause the recovery of lost Endurance or Life points. What’s more, if a vampire does so much as one Life point of damage, the victim will lose one Life at the beginning of every subsequent hour of the Serpent. There is no remedy to prevent this gradual weakening of the victim, other than *totally* destroying the vampire who caused the wound. When Life point loss leads to the death of the character, a new nightmare entity forms in his image, twelve hours later. A new vampire has thus been created. The vampire has the same **Size** characteristic as the victim, and its **Dream** characteristic is equal to the victim’s +1. As for the parent vampire, its **Dream** increases by 1 characteristic point.

† All vampires may at will cast the equivalent of the *Hypnos Transfiguration* spell, but only applicable to objects. This illusion costs them no dream and they do not enter the Dreamlands to cast it.

† In order to permanently destroy a vampire, its mortal remains must be sprinkled with a few drops of enchanted lustral water. This will force the vampire to immediately materialize, even if its Endurance is not at maximum, near its former body, and meld into it. This fusion in effect creates a zombie (or a skeleton, depending on the condition of the remains) conforming in all respects to a normal zombie (or skeleton). The number of dream points which animates the zombie are equal to the vampire’s **Dream** score. Once in this form, it may be permanently destroyed.

Note that even if the remains of the vampire are burned, the ashes will stay fused together. If the vampire is summoned back to its body, it will form an “ash zombie” which is just as material as a normal zombie.

Physically vampires resemble their former selves at the time of death. They therefore tend to be pale with blueish lips, but this can be altered with makeup. Vampires may wear clothing, use objects, speak, drink (never eat), all like apparently normal humans. Their nails are however incredibly hard and their canines exceedingly long, but they try hard to hide these signs until the desired moment. Due to this fact, and especially in dim lighting, it is not obvious that one is dealing with a dream entity and not a true human being.

All the above information can be found in the old book, even the recipe for lustral water.

### lustral water

To make a vial of lustral water, take one measure (20 cl) of pure water recovered from the foot of a rainbow, add 7 tears of a post-pubescent human female virgin, and distill the whole according to the procedure for *Algath the Old's Reliquification*, but using satum exclusively (cf. *Principles of Alchemy*, Book 3, p 27). In order to confer the power to destroy vampires on the lustral water, it must be enchanted with at least 7 dream points (use the Narcosis ritual of *Enchantment* normally).

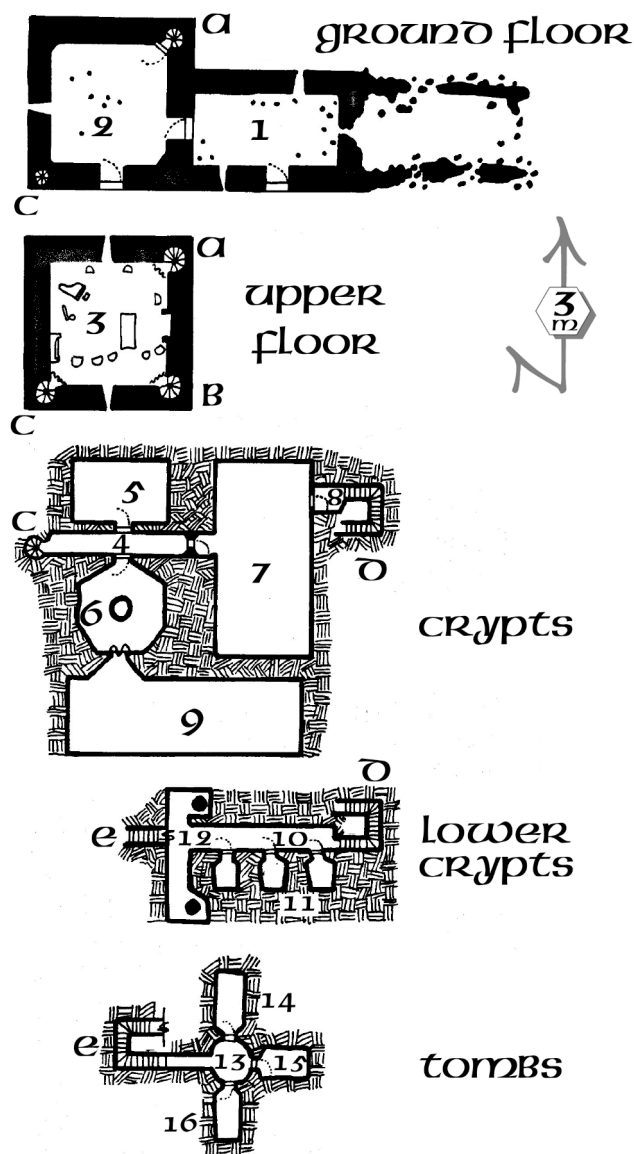
If the recipe for lustral water is in the old book, Algath the Old's is not. It is normally known to any alchemist with at least level zero. Otherwise, roll **Intellect/Alchemy** at zero to know it.

### the ruins of vauxhall

But let's return to our Journeymen next to the old man's body. What will they do? Probably resume their trek without delay. In fact, the storm's release is imminent, and from all sides can be heard the redoubled howlings of the wolves. It is now night, the beginning of the hour of the Serpent. Some fifteen minutes later, the Journeymen should be able to see a light between the black tree trunks: the murderhole of the second floor of the tower of Vauxhall. Logically, they should seek refuge at this sign of "safety". If they hesitate, the Dream Keeper is invited to have a wave of innumerable wolves surge forward and pour down a terrifying storm (broken branches, uprooted and lightning-blasted trunks ...) until the Journeymen come to their senses and resign themselves to the "wise" course of action.

At the top of a rocky prominence are the ruins of an ancient manor. Most of the walls have collapsed and are barely guessed among the brambles and thistles. A tower still stands as high as its second floor. The rest are but fragments of stones gnawed by moss and lichens. It is from the narrow window of this tower that the light spills

forth; with a **Hearing** roll at -2 one can hear, even above the crash of the storm, the wail of a plaintive and out-of-tune music.



1. This vaulted chamber is still more or less intact. It is entered from a wooden worm-eaten door which can be pushed open without difficulty. The interior is uninhabited. Wild grasses grow among the rubble and fallen stones. The west door (leading to 2) is still locked; -5 difficulty due to the rust. But this door too is so worm-eaten as to be easily forced open.

2. The tower door can be pushed open as in the preceding chamber. The ceiling is vaulted stone. In the northeast corner of the room is a small ogee door (like a pointed gothic arch), unlocked, conceals the entrance to a rising spiral staircase.



A successful **Hearing** roll at +1 here on the ground floor will identify the strains of the music wafting from the upper floor. But if the Journeys call out, none will respond.

3. The upper floor seems to be appointed rather richly: rugs on the floor, tapestries on the walls. Access to the three staircases are concealed by tapestries. There are armchairs, sofas, a long table laden with lit candelabras as well as flagons and cups. No fire burns in the hearth. And in this somewhat chilly room five characters are apparently engaged in diversions. A young woman is seated at a sort of harpsichord, while another accompanies her on a harp. Near them stands a young man. Farther away, an older man extends a goblet to a woman, likewise older. All are dressed in shimmering silks and velvets. They are elaborately coifed, and even seem to be wearing a bit of makeup ... The Journeys are greeted solemnly and without the least curiosity. They will be bidden enter, to “join our company” and take a goblet of wine. Conversation will at first consist of small talk and idle chit chat.

“What appalling weather, isn’t it?”

“And those dreadful wolves! Will they never cease their howling? One can barely hear oneself play!”

The two musicians will obviously interest themselves in the male Journeys with the highest Beauty. The harpsichordist, a brunette, is named Johanna; the harpist, a blonde, is called Henrietta. If there is a female among the Journeys, the young man, brown haired, will murmur some pleasantries. His name is Hektor. The older couple will introduce themselves in turn: Vladimir and Roxanne.

Soon, and especially if the Journeys ask questions, Vladimir will tell their story. They were all part of the retinue

of a lord named Vauxhall (pronounced “voxall”, rhymes with “foxhole”). It was a long time ago. In those days the castle was in excellent condition. Then one day, he, Vladimir, discovered a terrible secret: Vauxhall was a High Dreamer practitioner of the dark Way of Thanatos! He tried to thwart his master and Vauxhall avenged himself terribly. He cursed them all, himself, his wife, and his three children, making them what they are today.

All of this is recounted with the greatest calm and composure, amiably, in a confidential tone of voice. As Vladimir relates his story, the three youngest figures, especially the young women, will sit near the Journeys. If one of these asks Vladimir what curse was laid on him and his family, he will bare his abominable fangs and will growl huskily, “He made us into *vampires*! Vauxhall has been dead for centuries, but we are still here!” And with these words the five vampires will charge the Journeys. If the players have voiced no suspicions, have each character roll an **Empathy/Vigilance** check at zero. If the roll fails, the character will be semi-surprised during the vampires’ first attack.

**Important.** The Dream Keeper must apply herself to play this scene perfectly. She must show the strange side of the hosts, but not let slip the least hint that they are about to attack the Journeys. Especially since none of the vampires are armed. Vladimir’s sudden revelation must be played very theatrically.

And yet, certain details might have seemed disquieting to the Journeys. The wine served, while a beautiful ruby red color, had a horrible taste of mold. The harpsichord and harp seem new and yet play atrociously off-key. The tapestries are gleaming, and yet to the touch they are lumpy and rotten ... In fact, all the objects in the room, as well as the occupants’ attire, are in

a state of advanced dilapidation and seem beautiful only by virtue of the vampires’ powers of illusion.

In the course of combat, the vampires will prevent the characters from fleeing if possible. Stair B ends after 8 steps, as the rest of the tower no longer exists. Stair C does not exit on the ground floor but goes down directly to the subterranean crypts. If the Journeys succeed in fleeing to the outside, via stair A, the vampires will not pursue them outside. It is in fact impossible for the vampires to leave the ruins. On the other hand, if the Journeys flee to the underground areas via C, the vampires will chase them.

vladimir				
Size	13	Endurance	31	
Dream	18	Speed	14/26	
Level	4	Damage	+ 2	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Claw and fang	15	4	11	+ 3
Dodging	13	4		

(All vampires have the same characteristics in both vampire and skeleton/zombie form).

roxanne				
Size	10	Endurance	26	
Dream	16	Speed	12/24	
Level	3	Damage	+ 1	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Claw and fang	13	3	9	+ 2
Dodging	13	3		

hektor				
Size	11	Endurance	26	
Dream	15	Speed	14/26	
Level	3	Damage	+ 1	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Claw and fang	13	3	9	+ 2
Dodging	12	3		

henrietta & johanna				
Size	9	Endurance	25	
Dream	16	Speed	12/24	
Level	3	Damage	+ 1	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Claw and fang	12	3	9	+ 2
Dodging	14	3		

If the Journeers manage to dematerialize all five vampires, all the illusions will be canceled at once revealing the room's decor as more than a little sordid. Now that they know that they are dealing with vampires, the Journeers may attempt an **Intellect/Legends** roll at -6. If they succeed, they know everything there is to know about vampires, which will save them some time in not having to read the old book. In any event, even if they know that lustral water is indispensable for the permanent destruction of the entities, they will need to make an **Intellect/Alchemy** roll at -3 to know its composition.

4. Three doors give on this narrow vaulted corridor at the foot of the spiral stair. None of them are locked.

5. Old wine cellar. There are still a hundred or so flagons containing the same moldy wine as was served upstairs.

6. The floor of this hexagonal basement chamber is sloped towards the center of the room, where there is the ledge of a circular well. This was once the potable water source for the castle. Water is still at the bottom, some six meters down, but it is muddy and stagnant. Sight/Masonry at -3 will detect that a set of stones in the middle of the south wall can pivot, revealing a secret passage.

7. In spite of the decay, one can still guess that the instruments and furnishings of this long room belonged to a torture chamber.

8. The northeast door of the torture chamber is locked, difficulty -3. Beyond, a narrow stair leads farther down.

9. This was Vauxhall's alchemical laboratory. Once quite complex, there is still enough intact material here to effect the altogether simple concoction of the lustral water.

10. This level contains prison cells and oubliettes. None of the three cell doors are locked. At the end of the cul-de-sacs on the left and right are the wells of the oubliettes. Twelve meters below a few bones can still be made out.

11. The macabre remains of the infamous Vauxhall's experiments, the three cells each contain two animated skeletons. They will only attack if one of the cell doors is opened.

<b>skeleton</b>				
<b>Size</b>	11	<b>Endurance</b>	25	
<b>Dream</b>	14	<b>Speed</b>	12/24	
<b>Level</b>	2	<b>Damage</b>	+ 1	
		<b>Level Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>	
<b>Claws</b>	12	2	8	+ 2
<b>Dodging</b>	12	2		

12. The secret passageway at the end of the corridor is similar to the one in room 6. Roll **Sight/Masonry** at -3 to detect and open it.

13. Three doors open on this small circular chamber, 3 meters in diameter. Each one is locked, difficulty -3.

14. This low-ceilinged, narrow crypt is occupied by a sarcophagus containing the mummified remains of the real Vladimir. If a few drops of enchanted lustral water are sprinkled on the remains, the vampiric entity will appear and meld into them, forming an ordinary zombie.

15. Similar to 14, this chamber contains two sarcophagi housing the remains of Roxanne and her son Hektor. Each will form a zombie.

16. This chamber contains the sarcophagi of the two girls, Johanna and Henrietta who, less well preserved, will form skeletons.

## phosner

If the Journeers manage to thwart the vampires, either by forcing them to dematerialize or by fleeing, they will

notice that alas! their troubles are hardly over. Endurance and Life points lost will not be recovered. Whether by their personal knowledge or from reading the old book, they will come to the conclusion that they need lustral water. If they searched the old man, they already have one of the more difficult ingredients: water from the foot of a rainbow. Enchantment is a commonplace operation for a High Dreamer. Which leaves the reliquification and the virgin's tears. If none of the Journeers are alchemists, then the situation is desperate, unless after a few days the Dragons providentially dream that an itinerant alchemist is passing through the region. On the other hand if one of them is an alchemist, then the only problem remaining is finding the tears of a virginal young girl (pubescent at that). Satum, a reliquification ingredient, is not a very rare herb, readily found in the neighboring woods.

Phosner is a tiny village of about fifty inhabitants (including oldsters, adults, and children), subsisting on a bit of agriculture, goat herding, and fishing from the swamp. The Phosnerites are rather crude, austere, but friendly enough if not condescended to. They avoid the northern hills which they claim are haunted not just by wolves, but by "dark things of nightmare". They avoid speaking about them as much as possible. As far as it goes, the Journeers will find in Phosner a quiet hospitality.

Three young girls might fit the players' criteria. Others in the village are either too young (prepubescent) or married. The three candidates are **Chanette**, 14 years old; **Marella**, 17; and **Liraine**, 20. Getting one of them to cry and collecting her tears shouldn't be too hard, depending on how the Journeers go about it. This chapter of pure *roleplaying* is necessarily left to the improvisation of each Dream Keeper. But the tears will be useless if the girl is not a virgin, and discovering that fact might be a more delicate matter.

But here again, it's up to the Journeymen to decide how they will make their inquiry, either by direct inspection (which might be a way to make someone cry), by inquiring in the village, or by magic. A *Voice of Hypnos* to detect a lie could be very useful. In any event, the facts are as follows:

Chanette is not a virgin in spite of her tender years. She's a little brunette, skinny, with calves no bigger than sticks, always whining and sniveling (an interesting point). It is public knowledge that her father, an inveterate drunk, beats her incessantly. What is also whispered, but not proven even though it is *true*, is that her worthless father commits incest with his progeny.

<b>chanette</b>			
Born in the hour of Swords, 14 years old, 1.48m, 31 kg			
Brunette, hazel eyes			
<b>Size</b>	6	<b>Will</b>	8
<b>Appearance</b>	9	<b>Empathy</b>	9
<b>Constitution</b>	8	<b>Dream</b>	10
<b>Agility</b>	10	<b>Beauty</b>	9
		Level	
11 Dodging		-2	
(Only those characteristics used in the sceario are given)			

Marella is a chubby and buxom girl, blonde, with rosy skin. She's always laughing (troublesome) and roughhousing with the village boys. And to tell the truth, her hymen is but a distant memory.

<b>marella</b>			
Born in the hour of Dragon, 17 years old, 1.62m, 60 kg			
Blonde, blue eyes			
<b>Size</b>	9	<b>Will</b>	9
<b>Appearance</b>	12	<b>Empathy</b>	10
<b>Constitution</b>	12	<b>Dream</b>	11
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Beauty</b>	12
		Level	
12 Dodging		0	

Liraine is a tall melancholic brunette. She speaks little, almost never laughs (significant). She is a goatherd and pastures her animals a few hundred meters from the village, at the beginning of the foothills. In the village,

people say that she fell in love with a Journeyer, two years ago. He only stayed for a week, then left. Since then, Liraine awaits his return ... The only interesting point of this pitiful story is that nothing happened between her and the Journeyer. The young woman is as pure as the day of her birth. It won't take much to push her to the point of bursting into tears.

<b>Liraine</b>			
Born in the hour of Vessel, 20 years old, 1.71m, 62 kg			
Brunette, green eyes			
<b>Size</b>	9	<b>Will</b>	15
<b>Appearance</b>	10	<b>Empathy</b>	13
<b>Constitution</b>	11	<b>Dream</b>	14
<b>Agility</b>	11	<b>Beauty</b>	11
		Level	
11 Dodging		+3	

## conclusion

If the Journeymen put the wrong tears in the vial of rainbow water, not only will they not get any results, but they will ruin the water. They will then have to start the quest all over again. And finding the foot of a rainbow from which to draw water could be the subject of an entire campaign. Each Dream Keeper can imagine whether it should take place.

But if all goes well and the Journeymen finally manage to destroy the vampires after the latter become mere zombies and skeletons, they will each receive 50 stress, for all the tension they've had to endure. This is in addition to whatever stress the Dream Keeper may have awarded for individual encounters.

—Original text, current edition revisions, and maps by  
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# tempest in a teacup

This scenario for *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* is designed for beginning to seasoned Journeymen. While it is possible to succeed with a minimum of combat, there are ample opportunities for fighting here—which is not to say the wise player will seize those opportunities. Those who rush into combat without exploring other options will find themselves quickly overmatched.

The player characters may be beginning level or modestly experienced, with best skills ranging from +5 to +6. A few elective encounters have been added to give the Dream Keeper the option of playing this scenario with more experienced Journeymen or a larger group than the four or so this adventure is designed for. At any level at least one of them should be a High Dreamer. In addition, competence in *Swimming*, *Forest Survival* and *Botany* is desirable.

On the road while avoiding a purportedly dangerous city, the Journeymen encounter a peculiar group enjoying a picnic in the countryside. A magical mishap over tea will shake life up for the characters; finding themselves spirited away to a storm-tossed island, they must find their escape and avoid being destroyed by two bizarre warring factions.

## the mad duchy

It is well into the month of the Dragon, and the summer heat shows no sign of waning. The Journeymen are traveling on foot through the hinterlands of the sizable Duchy of Faryon. The capital, Netheryv, is a couple of days and villages away. However, everyone to a man they have met on the road in the last few days has indicated that the capital city is a veritable asylum. A typical encounter on the road might go something like this:

*“Hail and well met Journeymen! Good morning! By the looks of it, you have been on the road for many days. I hope you don’t have too many more on your Journey. May a peaceful rest be yours at the end of your Road!”*

*“What’s that? You’re looking for a city? There aren’t many cities in these parts—none ’cept Netheryv. Oh no, good my Journeymen, you’ll not be wantin’ to take the road that way. Why not? ’Cuz they’re all loons there, mad to a man, starting with that one, old Duke Faryon. Oh yes, clean off his rocker that one. When he’s not naked as a jay bird he’s juggling invisible knives, or raving at the moon, or climbing in and out of*

*windows. But the rest of the town’s nearly as bad as him. They often wear strange attire, masks and odd hats—oh the hats! I could tell you such tales of their hats. Monstrous affairs they are, entire circuses of monkeys living in ’em, or propped up by guy wires and struts, or boiling over with steam. Mad for hats they are in the capital, indeed they are. We all carry something to put on our heads, you know, in case the Duke’s men come along.”*

With that, their fellow traveler will remove a ridiculously small black felt hat from a back pocket, mop his brow with it, then fold it carefully and replace it. “Never good to be in the Duchy wi’out a hat”.

Experienced *Rêve* players may suspect that Netheryv is dominated by High Dreamers—certainly the kind of behavior the country folk they have met ascribe to the Netherytes would be consistent with Dragon Tails and Breaths. Judging by the descriptions, these city-dwellers must practice *a lot* of High Dream.

Forewarned by these dire intimations, the Journeymen will probably wisely avoid the capital city. In a day or so they should be beyond the Duchy’s boundaries and hopefully escape whatever dangers that city represents. But as they near the Duchy’s borders, they encounter a most peculiar group of holidaymakers.

## hats for all my friends!

On the road the Journeymen will encounter two guards standing at ease next to their horses, near a carriage pulled over off the side of the road. The carriage is large, drawn by four more horses, and seems finely made. Next to it is a dray cart, and three servants are hastily unloading various items from it, or busying themselves with the preparation and serving of food. In the distance, some 30 meters away, four personages are gaily and loudly enjoying themselves, oblivious to the quiet bustle of servants around them. All five of these figures wear hats: helms for the guards, chef’s toques for the cooks. The group of revelers and their picnic cut such an unusual figure that they merit some description.

They are seated in large overstuffed chairs, set on a large ornate, multicolored tapestry laid on the grass as if they were seated in a dining salon. The chairs are lavishly carved, padded and covered in rich silks of wildly colorful floral patterns—each chair different from the next. Each player should roll **Sight/Vigilance** or *Drawing* at 0 to note that although stylistically wildly different from each other, each piece of furniture or furnishing bears a motif involving fish and spiders; this motif runs throughout the upholstery, for example, and is included in some aspect or

other of the plates, sideboards, carvings, goblets, teacups, etc.—often subtly displayed as a secondary theme. Arrayed around them are small tables on which are set out a bewildering assortment of foods and drinks: hard, soft, and dried cheeses; cold hams, both dried and boiled; fish, from chilled sardines in oil to poached river sturgeon with lemons; and all manner of dainty rolled canapés; wines, red and white, chilled and mulled; nuts, including almondelles, filberts and nuthazels; mounds of fruit, from figs and calamines to treasurines, from strawberries and blackberries to blueberries; and teas, green, black, and smoked.

tea-party guards					
Size	11	Will	10	Life	12
Appearance	10	Intellect	9	Endurance	23
Constitution	12	Empathy	10	CT	4
Strength	14	Dream	9	Damage	+ 1
Agility	12	Luck	10	Sust	3
Dexterity	10	Mêlée	13	Enc	12
Sight	12	Missile	11	Speed	12
Hearing	10	Throw	12	Protection	2
Smell-Taste	10	Stealth	11		
		Level	Init	Dmg	
Sordid blade		+ 4	10	+ 4	
Hand-to-hand		+ 3	9	(+ 1)	
Shield		+ 5			
Dodging		+ 5			
Running	+ 4	Vigilance	+ 3	Riding	+ 4

The four are equally lavish and outlandish in their attire and behavior. **Urthéa** is a woman *d'un certain age*, who tries to cover her aging face rather unconvincingly with far too much makeup. She wears long flowing robes and puffs from time to time on a very long, slender pipe, as long as her arm, and as thick as her pinky at its thickest; the bowl of the ornate, sinuous pipe is the size of a large thimble, and from it comes the heady scent of smoldering Moonflower—readily identifiable with a **Smell-Taste/Botany** roll at -3. On her head—like all her comrades—she wears an unusual hat. Her particular headgear is an impossibly tall midnight purple silk turban with a single zemu feather vertically affixed to the gaudy (and obviously fake) fist-sized, aquamarine gem in the turban's center.

**Maxinium** is a young man, obviously devoted to Urthéa, waiting on her almost as much as the servants and attentive to her every word. His face is long and sad, his eyes deep wells of empathy, his voice sonorous yet timid. He wears a superb dark green embroidered robe, cinched at the waist with a frayed hemp rope, and the robe's cut only accentuates his tall, lanky frame. His feet are bare, though covered in a grey powder (ash). Like his cohorts, he too wears a hat. In sharp contrast to his mournful demeanor, his is a rather absurd affair: an old

campaigner's helm has been badly painted gold, as if it were a salvaged prop from the theatre—perhaps convincing from a distance at night on a stage illuminated by chandeliers, but a flimflam in broad daylight. Even more absurdly, a bead or a glass marble or a bell sphere is lodged somewhere in Maxinium's helmet, so that the young man's every move is accompanied by a faint, musical tinkling sound, in marked juxtaposition to his melancholy visage.

**Jhiora** is pretty though not beautiful, more remarkable for her smooth almost luminous skin than her shapely figure. She has an easy manner and ready smile, and when she talks her words are accompanied by the constant birdlike fluttering of her gesturing, expressive hands. Her attire is modest, and she would seem the least absurd of the four figures were it not for the fact that the entire time the Journeymen see her she is either standing on her head, or sitting on it in one of the chairs. It is a testament to her agility that she can manage this while constantly gesturing with her hands. In spite of standing on her head, she too wears a hat, although hers is balanced the whole time on her feet. The chapeau is an extremely large affair, with a wide rolled brim, scalloped crown, and a mighty fiery orange feather (if asked about it, she will claim that this is a phoenix feather. No *Zoology* roll can confirm or deny this claim).

Finally, **Furzéd** completes the quadrinity. At first he appears to be a wizened child. Barely waist-tall, he is dressed in leather house slippers and a comfortable old quilted robe. An oversized eggplant-colored beret, bloused and askew, sits on his razor-shaved pate. A white scarf is dapperly wrapped around his neck and tucked into the robe at the breast; a small copper pan hangs from a fob at his waist, as if it were a gold pocket watch (occasionally Furzéd consults the face of the diminutive pan, shakes it gently, puts it to his ear, then mutters).

It should be obvious to any experienced *Rêve* player that these four are High Dreamers suffering from a multitude of Dragon Tails; hopefully the Journeymen will accordingly be on their best behavior given the volatility of their hosts. Statistics for the guards are given, in the unlikely event that the Journeymen decide to make a bellicose entry.

The Journeymen will immediately be welcomed by the four revelers, who will graciously invite them to join their feast al fresco with murmurs of, "Delightful afternoon for a picnic. You simply must join us. These are the best chefs of Netheryv, and they have simply outdone themselves in the quality and quantity of the food." The guards will discretely provide any bareheaded Journeymen with simple leather berets, while the servants will quickly and efficiently unload a few extra chairs and ottomans for the

player characters to sit on. These too, it can be noted again with **Sight/Vigilance** or *Drawing* at 0, bear motifs of fish and spiders in their upholstery and/or wood carving, in spite of their radically variation in style, material, and make.

That done, the four figures will continue their conversation, neither attempting to include the Journeymen, nor particularly excluding them should they wish to join in. At issue seems to be whether the speckled trout (the very one on the menu) is silvery with dark blue-green spots, or dark blue-green with silvery patches. Furzéd will cite Paranos the Least *ad nauseum*, but never in reference to trout, or any other fish, silvery or speckled or otherwise colored. Jhiora will politely take issue with Furzéd's sources, all the while drawing comparisons between such ontological conundrums and her childhood under the cruel tutelage of her stepmother. Urthéa will meanwhile criticize every detail of Maxinium's being, from the color of his hat to the stoop in his shoulders to the length of his fingers ("They're like stalks of corn, dear boy; can't you do *anything* about them?") while he will seemingly bask unhappily in her exasperation. To himself, Max will recite a long and dubious poem about the pruning of the Furies' trees.

Eventually Furzéd will grow impatient with the whole affair, and declare that he will settle this argument once and for all. Sitting down in his chair in a huff, and entering a trance, he will point his finger at the plate of trout. Tragically, just then, Jhiora will lose her balance and topple, nearly crashing into Maxinium, who in turn will jostle the gnome (if indeed gnome he is), ruining his aim. Instead of casting whatever intended ritual on the trout, Furzéd will instead cast it on Urthéa's teacup. This will result, alas, in *wild magic*.

**Note:** Characteristics, skills, and spells have not been provided for the four NPCs simply because it is unnecessary. Should the four be attacked, the Dream Keeper should see to it that their first action is the casting of *wild magic* on the teacup. The result will be the same.

## the tempest

The teacup will quickly expand and gyrate wildly, its contents swirling and spilling, the whole becoming enormous in a trice, filling the surrounds with a torrent of swirling brown liquid. Within the blink of an eye the Journeymen will find themselves dunked into a veritable tempest of tea, swimming for their very lives in what seems to them to be a storm of hurricane proportions. Soon the tea will begin to taste of salt water, and the liquid will turn from brown to a dark sea-grey. Furzéd's wild magic will have created a violet rift, transporting the Journeymen and most of the furnishings to another dream.

Of the four High Dreamers and their servants there will be no sign (perhaps transported to another part of this dream, or simply drowned). Only a few ottomans and chairs bob here and there in the waters, serving as makeshift life rafts. A huge loose sail billows past, surreally, transformed from the napkin it once was.

In order to survive this storm, the Journeymen must each make a **Mêlée/Swimming** roll at -4 with the following results:

<b>Particular</b>	No wound; -2d6 Fatigue only
<b>Significant</b>	Contusion
<b>Normal</b>	Light Wound
<b>Failure or Part. Failure</b>	Serious wound
<b>Fumble</b>	Critical wound

In addition, each character will lose 3 Fatigue (instead of the usual 1) for every Endurance lost. Remember that whatever gear they carry will impose a penalty to their swimming roll, not just whatever is in excess of their Encumbrance threshold; they may therefore wish to unload anything nonessential.

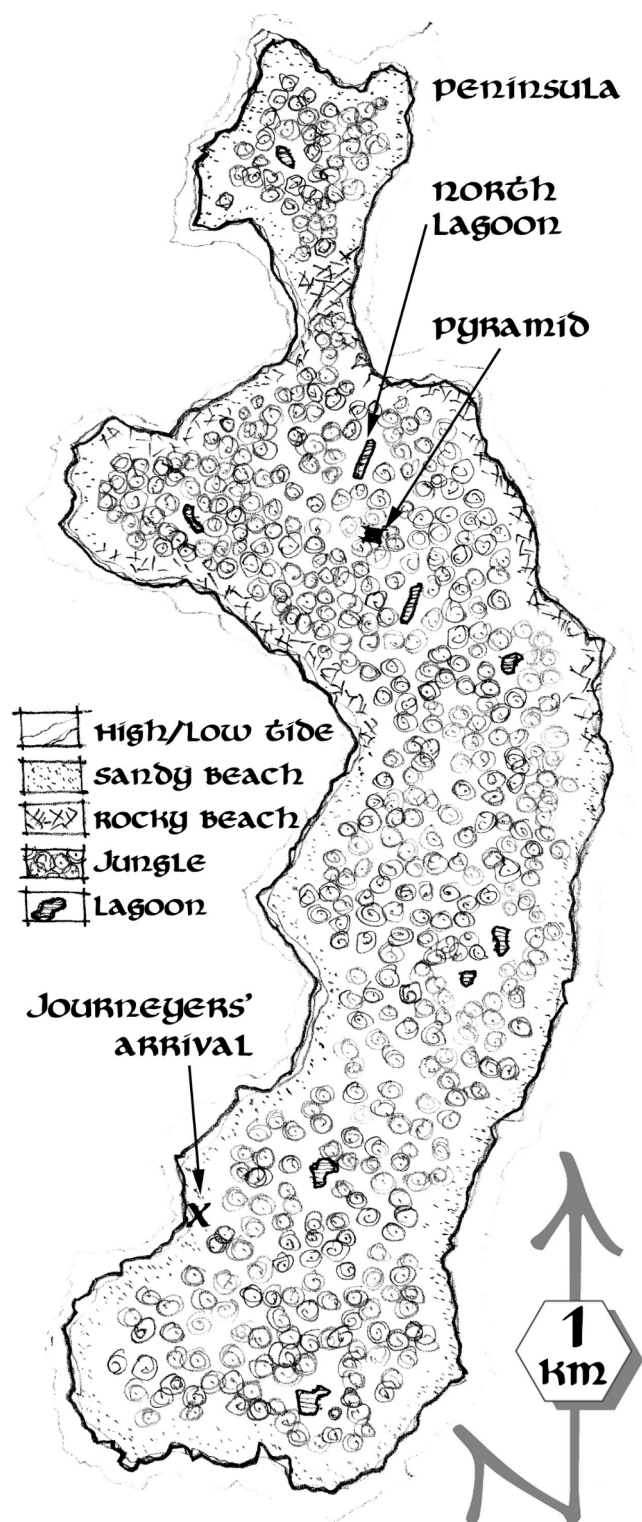
## war of the orchids

As the characters are lashed and thrown by the storm around them, hanging on for dear life to the flotsam and jetsam of the picnic and tea party, exhaustion will eventually set in and they will drift off to sleep. And when sleep comes, dreams often follow:

*The long procession wends its way up the zigzagging slopes of the mountain, switching back and forth as it winds up. The path is rocky, difficult, and treacherous. Finally it approaches the summit where a sanctuary rises, gleaming and white, its polished stones reflecting a delicate tracery of faintly visible colors in the sunlight.*

*You and your fellow pilgrims have come to bear the traditional annual gifts and add them to the mounds of petals which carpet the sanctuary floor. In your hands each of you holds a huge bloom, white and gleaming and yet multicolored like the sanctuary itself. As you approach the edifice, panic in the crowd spreads like a roiling wave. Looking past the portico and into the sanctuary, you are disturbed to see not the strewn flowers left by other peregrinating visitors, but instead a roiling, pitching flood. Impossibly, the waters of the central fountain seem to have overflowed, gush forth in a violent and violet deluge, sweeping the dreamers away.*





The Journeyers will awaken in the morning on the shores of a small tropical island, some 12 kilometers long by five wide, where the storm will have washed the them up. For the purposes of Fatigue recovery, assume that they will have slept for two hours. The island is seemingly an unremarkable tropical spit of land; in fact, though, some plants of interest can be found here, as well as a few bizarre creatures and a mysterious ruin. Base *Forest* and *Swamp Survival* rolls here are at -4. The following revised table for movement indicates kilometers per (draconic) hour traveled, cross-referenced with terrain type to determine Fatigue spent per (draconic) hour:

Terrain	4	6	8	10	12
Easy (road)	1	2	3	4	6
Hard (overland)	2	3	4	6	—
Difficult (hill, forest)	3	4	6	—	—
Tortuous (mountain, jungle, swamp)	4	6	—	—	—

Movement over the sandy beaches which rim much of the island is Hard (sand is easy to walk on, being smooth, but a difficult surface to trot or run on), while travel over the rocky beaches and through the jungle is considered Tortuous.

**Flora.** Glaucous ortigal, a natural mosquito repellant, grows plentifully in the small lagoons that dot the isle—and brown fever is a very real danger here. Each character *not* smeared with glaucous ortigal must make a **Luck** roll at +2 each day on the island or contract the disease. Anyone with *Botany* at 0 or higher can spot the ortigal automatically; otherwise roll **Sight/Forest** or **Swamp Survival** at 0 to do so. Velvines also grow on the island, and the place is home to coconut trees (of course) and date palms. Honeybark (a +9 healing herb!) also grows here albeit in small quantities, and can be spotted with **Sight/Forest Survival** rolls at -5.

Of particular interest to the native fauna is a species of colorful, variegated orchid, *calicorchid*. The blooms of these plants grow to huge sizes, most as large as 50 cm long. Their flowers seem white except in direct sunlight, where the petals can be seen to have a delicate tracery of multicolored veins. Their stamens and pistils are very brightly colored and range from red to saffron to greens and blues—all in the same flower. This is, in fact, the very flower of the Journeyers' storm-tossed dream. They are common everywhere in the jungle, and can readily be spotted with a **Sight/Forest** or **Swamp Survival** roll at 0.

Otherwise, the expected mundane complement of vines and undergrowth populate the island.

**Fauna.** The island is dominated by two species of creatures. Note that neither of these are humanoids, although one species walks upright and is vaguely anthropomorphic, while the other possesses the power of speech (and Journeyer at that).

One, the Ghoti (pronounced “fish”), are a species of near-humanoid amphibians. They have trout-like heads, with large bulbous eyes. Their legs are long and thin, in sharp contrast to their potbellied upper bodies. In spite of having no real language—they communicate in nearly silent mouthings, looking like so many fish in a fish bowl—they have a very developed sartorial sense, dressing in elaborate waistcoats and cutaway tailed jackets, a colorful swirl of deep reds, saffrons, blues, and greens. They are typically armed with very long (4+ meters) polearms with very flexible, bamboo-like shafts, with which they fight very effectively in spite of their short arms and barely prehensile fingerlings (a Ghoti takes quite a while to get dressed in the morning, with all those shiny coral and mother-of-pearl buttons to fasten).

ghoti				
<b>Size</b>	11	<b>Life</b>	12	
<b>Constitution</b>	13	<b>Endurance</b>	24	
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Speed</b>	10/20	
<b>Perception</b>	13	<b>Damage</b>	+ 1	
<b>Will</b>	9	<b>Enc</b>	12	
<b>Dream</b>	8	<b>Protection</b>	2	
		<b>Level</b>	<b>I.F.</b>	<b>Dmg</b>
Polearm	13	4	10	+ 5
Buckler	13	3		
Dodging	12	3		
Swimming	17	6		
Vigilance	10	0		

The Ghoti are armed because they are perpetually at war with the Fzzlggs (pronounced almost like “fuzz legs”), a species of large, intelligent, talking spiders who populate the island interior. While the Ghoti keep to the beaches and reefs around the island for the most part, the Fzzlggs (whose speech sounds like so much clicking

and popping punctuated by the occasional buzzing sound) inhabit the towering palms which are plentiful here, where they make their nests high in the tree tops. The Fzzlggs bite when attacking in mêlée, but prefer to lob unripened coconuts from a distance, sometimes dropping scores of them on opponents below.

For time out of mind the two species have been waging war, albeit with an uneasy balance of power. The Ghoti cannot venture long or far from the beaches and their watery home, yet they crave the rare dyes which can only be extracted from the colorful calicorchids which grow only in Fzzlgg territory. These they use in the manufacture of their superb clothing, which they weave from what silk they can gather from the Fzzlgg webs. The spider-beings, for their part, rely on the orchids indirectly for food: they feed primarily on razorfly larvae, and the adult razorflies in turn pollenate and feed on the calicorchids.

fzzlgg				
<b>Size</b>	6	<b>Life</b>	9	
<b>Constitution</b>	12	<b>Endurance</b>	19	
<b>Strength</b>	12	<b>Speed</b>	14/36	
<b>Perception</b>	15	<b>Damage</b>	0	
<b>Will</b>	10	<b>Enc</b>	9	
<b>Dream</b>	13	<b>Protection</b>	-1	
		<b>Level</b>	<b>I.F.</b>	<b>Dmg</b>
Bite	13	2	8	+1*
Coconut	15	4	11	+ 2
Dodging	14	4		
Climbing	16	6		
Discretion	14	4		
Running	14	4		
Vigilance	15	6		
Paralytic Venom				
Malignity	6			
Period	1 round			
Damage	-1d6 Endurance			
Antidotes	-3/Liquor of Bagdol +12 Moonmilk +6			
Each Endurance loss costs a like loss of Fatigue. At 0 Endurance the victim is paralyzed.				

## negotiations

The difficulty for the Journeyers is that they need the help and cooperation of both the Ghoti and the

Fzzlggs to leave this place. Short of building a vessel and sailing away, the only way off the island is via a *violet rift* (as they may intimate from their dream).

For their part the Ghoti will initially be hostile to the player characters; the only way to avoid an eventual blood bath with the fish-men is for the Journeyers to demonstrate that they have no hostile intentions or befriend the creatures in some way. Even if the initial encounter with the fish-men involves just a couple of them, bear in mind that the Journeyers will be vastly outnumbered by the Ghoti.

Among the wreckage of the tea party are several soggy but serviceable pieces of ornate furniture, not to mention a few crates of food (mostly ruined) and colorful crockery (mostly broken). Anything colorfully patterned will interest the Ghoti, and if offerings are made the fish-men will be mollified. Communication with them is difficult at best; Journeyers may use **Agility/Acting** at -3 to pantomime their intentions (or **Dexterity/Drawing** at -3 if they are drawing in the sand); the Ghoti will only correctly understand an intended communication if they make a **Perception** roll at -3. The Dream Keeper should consider that misunderstandings can potentially lead to more dangerous encounters than no communication at all.

Unfortunately, each situation will be different and it is impossible to predict for the Keeper how a pantomimed encounter with the Ghoti will go. However, keep in mind that the creatures while initially somewhat hostile they are not necessarily belligerent, and that they have the potential to be communicated with, convinced, and swayed. Finally, no die rolls should usurp good roleplaying; if a *player* makes a convincing or eloquent pantomime (or drawing), the Dream Keeper should not let a failed roll necessarily foil the

communication. Again, every troupe will play this differently, and this is an opportunity for pure roleplaying. The Keeper should use her discretion accordingly.

For their part, the Ghoti will attempt to communicate about the Fzzlgg and their orchids, by successfully rolling **Will** at -3; Journeymen should roll **Empathy** at -3 to understand the strange beings.

Eventually the Journeymen will feel the pangs of hunger (only a few Sust will be recoverable from the flotsam of the tea-party, enough for a damp and meager breakfast). They will therefore need to forage for food; as mentioned above the island grows velvines and coconuts. Such activity will likely as not lead to an encounter with the Fzzlgg. Since the Journeymen have arrived by sea and walk upright like the Ghoti, the Fzzlggs will not initially trust or communicate with them, nor let them enter their territory unmolested, as they will associate them with the Ghoti.

If the Journeymen don't attack the spider-beings outright, it may be possible for them to discover that the arachnids are intelligent and even speak a rudimentary Journeyer. (An Age ago, the Fzzlggs were the guards of the sanctuary whose ruins lie here). Surprisingly, it will be much easier for the player characters to communicate with the Fzzlggs than with the Ghoti. From the former they may learn the reasons for their war.

There are several possibilities for the Journeymen to successfully navigate between the two warring species. One is for them to explore the island while avoiding contact or confrontation with either group altogether. The Ghoti move rather slowly, so outrunning them may not be too difficult. The Fzzlgg, on the other hand, move very quickly and know their jungle very well. Each Journeyer should roll **Luck/Forest Survival** at -4 to avoid

them in any given hour; on any particular failure the group will encounter a group of Fzzlggs whose numbers approximately equal the Journeymen; if any such roll is fumbled the Fzzlggs outnumber the Journeymen approximately two to one.

Alternately, should the Journeymen investigate, they will discover a portion of the island near its northern end nearly detached from the main mass of the place, accessible only by a rocky spit of land. This small uninhabited peninsula is thereby isolated from the Fzzlgg territory, but displays similar characteristics to it. It currently supports no calicorchids, but they could be transplanted there and would thrive. The peninsula would thereby present an opportunity for the Ghoti to collect orchids without intruding on Fzzlgg territory. Unfortunately, while the Ghoti can easily get to the peninsula, but do not have sufficient (if any) knowledge of botany. Hence only the Journeymen could effect the transplant, presumably.

As for the fish-men's need for Fzzlgg silk, once the two species cease to compete for the same resource (the calicorchids), and once the Ghoti stop pillaging the Fzzlgg calicorchids, the latter would be far more amenable to having their webs harvested from time to time. Once again, the Journeymen will have to serve as intermediaries, as the Ghoti cannot understand Fzzlgg speech, and the latter are incapable of pantomime, much less drawing pictographs. If the Ghoti are willing to harvest the razorfly larvae from the calicorchids grown on the peninsula, the Fzzlgg would gladly trade them for sufficient quantities of their silken webs to satisfy the sartorial needs of the Ghoti.

While brokering such negotiations might involve lengthy (and difficult given the communication problems with the Ghoti) shuttle diplomacy on the part of the Journeymen, this might be an approach favored by certain

types of players. Certainly it is one that if successful may lead to the least loss of life or limb.

Finally, if the Journeymen are unable to negotiate a peaceful solution, or cannot avoid the creatures or become hopelessly lost in the jungle, the Dream Keeper may offer them help in the form of a cryptic message.

Oracle Bird			
Size	2	Life	3
Constitution	4	Endurance	20
Strength	1	Speed	—/40
Perception	15	Damage	—
Will	17	Enc	1.5
Dream	18	Protection	-8
Level			
Dodging	15	5	
Flying	15	5	

At the Keeper's discretion, the Journeymen might come across an oracle bird who will deliver this riddle if asked virtually any question pertaining to escape:

*Seek the hollow mountain  
Among the hollow stones*

An ancient pyramid (the "hollow mountain" of the riddle and the white sanctuary of their dream) lies at the heart of the Fzzlgg territory, whose weapons are "hollow rocks".

Razorfly			
Size	3	Life	4
Constitution	4	Endurance	7
Strength	7	Speed	—/40
Perception	11	Damage	0
Will	2	Enc	5
Dream	2	Protection	-6
Level Init Dmg			
Wingblade	14	6	13 + 10
Dodging	12	4	
Flying	14	6	
Vigilance	11	3	

And there are always the occasional razorflies to worry about; the Dream Keeper should only deploy them if it seems appropriate given how well (or poorly) the Journeymen are doing.

## the pyramid

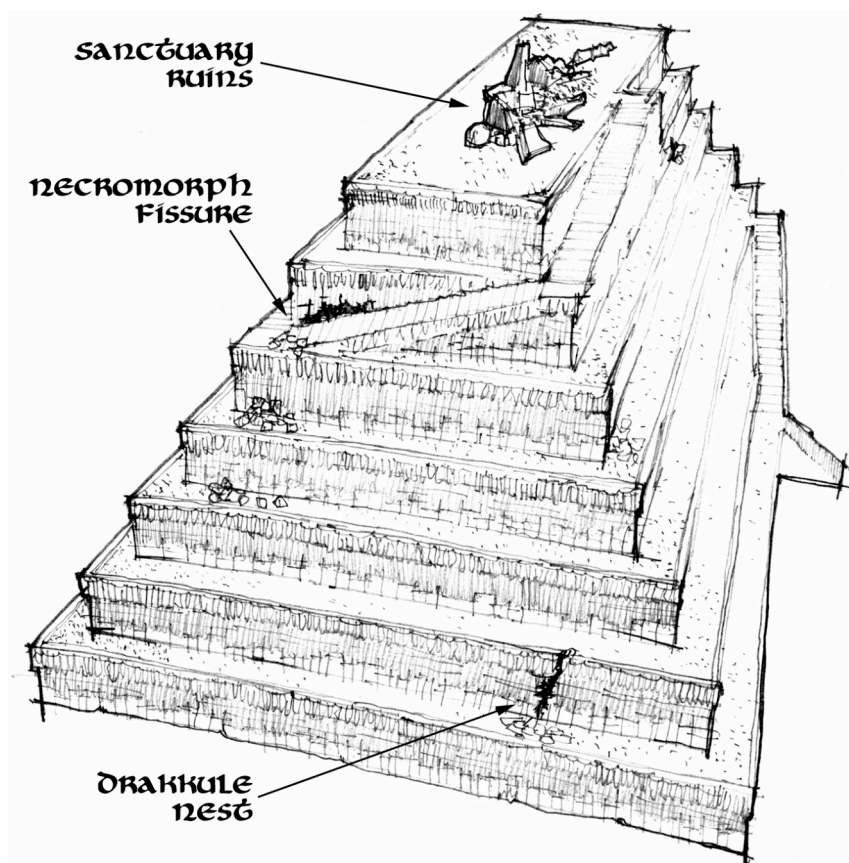
The one (literally) outstanding geographical feature of the island lies at its very center, and can only be found by deep exploration of the Fzzlgg territory—difficult without the spider-beings' acquiescence, given the number of them. Finding the structure requires 4 task points using a -3 **Luck/Forest Survival** with a period of one draconic hour.

In spite of being a large structure, the pyramid is almost completely overgrown (the drawing shows it without its overgrowth for clarity). The ancient plazas and courts which surrounded it have long ago succumbed to the jungle, and the rain forest growth has extended well up the sides of the structure, so that from a distance it appears to be an overgrown hilltop or small mountain, albeit a fairly symmetrical one.

The pyramid is stone edifice, some hundred meters on its two short sides, and nearly twice that along the two long ones, rising up in a stepped fashion in seven plateaus. Each concentric plateau is some ten meters tall, so that the whole rises about 70 meters above the jungle. At the midpoint of the southern base begins a grand staircase, about 6 meters wide and of varying steepness; the staircase winds around the pyramid in a clockwise fashion, spiraling inward and upward to the summit. The stairs are not difficult (**Mêlée/Climbing** at +3 due to the steepness, overgrowth, and state of disrepair of the staircases), but cost 1 Fatigue per plateau to climb. Any fumble to the climbing roll will result in an injury; roll on the non-lethal damage table at +1. Every step of the way the Journeys will have to clear undergrowth and avoid treacherous stones. If they care to examine what little stonework is revealed by their efforts, a **Sight** roll at +1 will allow them to note that every surface of the structure has been elaborately if very stylistically carved, showing all manner of fantastical

beasts—among which are the familiar fish and spider motif of the tea-party upholstery, but represented in a very different artistic vein.

Between the fifth and sixth plateaus a large collapse in the masonry of the pyramid's south face has left a fissure into the vaulting of the structure (much of the pyramid is hollow, to reduce the amount of stone required in its construction, and relieve some of the internal structural pressures that the weight of the edifice creates). Through this fissure a pack of necromorphs, who long ago feasted on the Second Age dynasty originally buried in the structure, have emerged and claimed the areas as their own.



As they approach the collapsed portion of the steps (well concealed in the opportunistic overgrowth which seems to spring forth from every crevice and crack in the ancient stonework), have each Journeys roll **Empathy/Forest Survival** at -2; any character who fails will be subject to an attack with *partial surprise*; fumbling characters will be attacked with *complete surprise*.

The false ghûls are of no interest to the Fzzlggs (the necromorphs do not attack or eat the spider-creatures), so even if the later have formed a friendship with the Journeys, there is no particular reason for them to volunteer information about these nightmare creatures unless explicitly asked about other creatures in the area. Allow five necromorphs in the pack, again adjusting the numbers upward or downward as the Journeys' strength requires.

<b>necromorph</b>				
<b>Size</b>	11	Life		12
<b>Constitution</b>	13	Endurance		24
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Speed</b>	12/24	
<b>Perception</b>	11	Damage		+1
<b>Will</b>	6	Enc		12
<b>Dream</b>	10	Protection		2
		Level	Init	Dmg
Claw/bite	13	3	9	+2
Dodging	11	3		
Jumping	12	3		
Running	12	3		
Vigilance	11	3		

Should the Journeys attempt a nighttime ascent of the pyramid, the above **Empathy** rolls to avoid being surprised by the false ghûls will be at -5. In addition, they will be greeted by the drakkules that nest in another, smaller fissure—at most two bats per Journeyer.

<b>Drakkule</b>				
<b>Size</b>	4	Life		7
<b>Constitution</b>	10	Endurance		14
<b>Strength</b>	8	<b>Speed</b>	12/38	
<b>Perception</b>	12	Damage		-1
<b>Will</b>	7	Enc		6
<b>Dream</b>	7	Protection		-3
		Level	Init	Dmg
Bite	10	2	7	-1
Counter	10	2		
Dodging,				
in flight	10	3		
Flying	10	3		

## the lagoon

The lagoons immediately north and south of the pyramid are remnants of structures that were part of the compound originally built around the

central structure, hence their more regular arrangement (on the map they are evidently long rectangles, and in person have obviously straight if overgrown edges).

Should the Dream Keeper decide that the Journeys have too easily avoided or negotiated with the Ghoti and Fzzlgg (whether through a run of exceptionally good luck or because the player characters are stronger than the recommendations at the beginning of this scenario), she may wish to devise an encounter at the north lagoon if the Journeys come this way. On the other hand, like the razorflies, this encounter could be deleted if the group of Journeys were weak (either because they are less experienced characters or through attrition). Of course, the encounter could justifiably occur at the southern lagoon too, if that is more convenient or logical.

An Age ago these two lagoons were part of the sanctuary compound's street and canal system (which was quite extensive). Today one of them has become inhabited by an aquatic drowner. Rather than be composed of the usual marine detritus, this entity is made from loose stones at the bottom of the lagoon, muck, silt, and the remains of drowned Fzzlggs. If the spider-creatures fail to see the necromorphs as a threat, this thing they surely recognize as such, and now stay well away from its lagoon.

<b>Drowner</b>				
<b>Size</b>	16	Endurance		30
<b>Dream</b>	14	<b>Speed</b>	10/24	
<b>Level</b>	2	Damage		+1
		Level	Init	Dmg
Rock-arm	15	2	9	+2
Dodging	9	2		

## conclusion

At the top of the pyramid lie the ruins of the sanctuary of the Journeys' dream. Amid its tumbled white stones is an area imbued with a slight purplish tinge—a violet rift (there is no fountain here, nor evidence of one). This is, in fact, the only reasonable way off the island.

Stepping into the rift, the Journeys will emerge from a yellow one at its terminus. They will find themselves standing among the ruins of the picnic; what few furnishings and foodstuffs not swept away in the tea tempest strewn about the meadow as if by a tornado. In the distance, they may spy the cooks and guards fleeing or chasing down panicked horses. Of the four High Dreamers—Urthéa, Maxinium, Jhoria, and Furzéd—there is no sign. Only their hats, scattered about the wreckage, remain.

—Text, cartography, illustrations and layout by Hieronymous



# the sacrificial oracle

This scenario for *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* is presented in something of a sketch format. More fully developed than a scenario outline, yet not as fully realized as a detailed “portrait”, it nevertheless contains all the essential ingredients for an adventure, and a potentially harrowing one at that. An experienced Dream Keeper could easily fill out any missing details—such as particulars of geography, the layout of the ruins of Crackbone Tower, *et cetera*.

*Oracle* is best played by a group of experienced Journeymen. The group could have one or two High Dreamers, but at least one of their number should have *Commerce* beyond level zero. Most characters should have a few skills at +4 or +5, and each character should have a few skills in the +5 to +6 range. As usual, the Dream Keeper should adjust encounters accordingly if the party is larger or smaller; weaker or stronger. If the players attempt a frontal assault on the stalker which will eventually plague them, they are sure to find this a difficult trial. If on the other hand they are cautious and thoughtful, they may be able to get through it all with a minimum of bloodshed.

## avarice

In the course of their travels, the Journeymen stop to camp for the night in a rather desolate looking area, among some ruins of what must have at one time been a large house or small manor, with various now moldering outbuildings and fallow fields. As they bed down for the night, a ghastly green specter weighted down in a bulky coat approaches their camp, and with **Sight/Vigilance** at -3 can be spotted as it attempts to steal from their bags. This is an Avarice, a disembodied nightmare entity which is the residue after someone has died of greed, in this case the manor’s last owner.

avarice			
Dream	12	Speed	6
		Level	Init
Possession	12	1	7

Once the victim is possessed, he or she will become avaricious, even to the point of stealing, even from friends. Once the encounter is over (whether the entity possesses a victim or is dispelled), it will leave behind the heavy bulging overcoat it wore, stuffed with the symbols of its greed. The coat’s pockets will be stuffed with coins, chains made of precious metals, semiprecious stones, etc.—all told 10 sols’ worth times the party’s cumulative **Luck**.

## abeille

The Journeymen will next arrive in the town of Abeille (pronounced *uh-bay*), whose heraldic symbol is *or a fess between three bees sable* (a black horizontal bar across a field of gold with three black bees arrayed on the field). This medium-sized walled city is a hive of commerce and commercial activity. In fact, in Abeille commerce is not an activity that is limited to merchants. The city is mad for commerce, and its citizens try to deal on everything at every turn.

Most visitors to the city are merchants from nearby towns who come to the city regularly to trade, and are familiar with its mores. Once local custom of note is that at any time one must have money on one’s person. The town guard may stop and search anyone at anytime, and if they are found to be literally penniless they are immediately arrested and placed in the town gaol. Prospects there for the incarcerated are not good, as (naturally) the only way out is to pay a substantial fine. Eventually debtors are executed by being slowly buried alive under a pile of boulders.

In Abeille characters may find them self haggling over the price of an ale, being offered an exchange of rooms by the innkeeper, or offered a variety of bargains on various sundries which the Journeymen neither need nor want. In general, have them make **Intellect** or **Empathy** or **Luck/Commerce** rolls at a base of -4.

guards of abeille					
Size	12	Will	12	Life	13
Appearance	10	Intellect	11	Endurance	25
Constitution	13	Empathy	11	CT	4
Strength	14	Dream	9	Damage	+ 1
Agility	12	Luck	10	Sust	3
Dexterity	10	Mêlée	13	Enc	13
Sight	10	Missile	10	Speed	12
Hearing	10	Throw	12	Protection	4
Smell-Taste	10	Stealth	10		
		Level	Init	Dmg	
Sord blade		+ 5	11	+ 4	
Hand-to-hand		+ 3	9	(+ 1)	
Shield		+ 5			
Dodging		+ 5	(-2 armor penalty)		
Running	+ 3	Vigilance	+ 4	Commerce	+ 5
City Surv	+ 5				

Soon after arriving in the city, the Journeymen will hear of an unusual auction being held for a variety of curious objects—among them is an oracle bird in a cage. The lot is part of the estate of a recently deceased local eccentric, a retired Journeyer himself. It should be suggested that the



auction should be of particular interest to Journeymen. At worst, the DK should feign a **Luck/Commerce** roll to have the Journeymen happen across the auction.

## Items for Bid

All the following items will require a certain number of task points in order for a bidder to win the item. The cost will be 10 sols per task point rolled by the winning bidder (even if the minimum is exceeded). Task point rolls are made using **Missile** (because it is an average of **Sight** and **Dexterity**)/**Commerce** at the difficulty indicated, with all rolls having a 1 round period. Journeymen may pool their efforts (and their money). If a particular failure or fumble is rolled, the 2 or 4 points are not subtracted as is normally the case, but instead the character making the roll must sit out on the bidding for 2 or 4 rounds, as appropriate.

**Library.** A collection of books (one of which is *Recipes and Sleights of Hand* by Praliner the Tasty, cooking. Difficulty -3, 12 task points, 36 experience in *Cooking*, maximum level +8. Who hasn't heard of Praliner the Tasty's duck's feet doughnuts, or his famous goat's bone *au gratin*? But only the most ambitious cooks ever dare attempt his recipe for "Oracle Bird à la Sacrilege"). The other books are unremarkable but globally can improve the characters literary abilities: difficulty -2, 15 task points, 20 experience in *Writing*.

Bidding: -4 difficulty, 8 task points

**Armor.** An old suit of armor (poor chain mail with 20 points of deterioration, so that it offers 1d4 protection only). Some of the damage is not obvious, so the armor is in worse shape than it looks (**Sight/Metalwork** at -3 to detect its true condition).

-2 difficulty, 4 task points.

**Retorts.** An alchemical set complete with an alchemists crystal, alembics, burners, retorts, flasks, and vials. Such a set is far too bulky and delicate for traveling, but would give its user a +2 bonus to all rolls when performing alchemical operations. Note: in one of the unmarked vials is a measure of lustral water, unbeknownst to anyone. The set's new owner would be able to identify it as such with a **Smell-Taste/Alchemy** roll at -6, if she bothered to check.

Bidding: -3 difficulty, 8 task points.

**Shield.** This apparently ornamental heraldic shield is actually magical, with three *Scales of Efficiency* laid on the gem concealed beneath the lower point's metal banding.

Bidding: -4 difficulty, 6 task points.

**Missing dagger.** A locked copper case with a tin mesh for a lid contains space for two dueling daggers but only one is present. The case is valuable in and of itself, being of very fine workmanship (6 quality points), and seems like it

could easily be broken. In fact, the case is magical and highly resistant to breakage with a magical resistance of 12. Picking the lock is a **Dexterity/Locksmithing** roll at -6 with 8 task points and a period of five minutes; any particular failure or fumble indicates the lock cannot be opened by that person. The lone dagger is of course a *Murderblade*, hellbent to kill the owner of its twin.

Bidding: -5 difficulty, 5 task points

**Furnishings.** Various antique and baroque furnishings are being auctioned in three lots. The first lot includes a huge dining table, carved chairs, serving dishes, flambeaux, serving carts, sideboards, and credenzas. The second lot is all silverware and a crystal service. The last lot includes a four-poster bed, three armoires, chests, small tables, cases, a reading chair, ottoman, etc.

Bidding (each lot): -4 difficulty, 18 task points.

**Bird in a cage.** An oracle bird in a gilt cage is also being auctioned. The bird is in fact a Thanatos magician being hunted by a stalker (see below).

Bidding: -4 difficulty, 10 task points.

There will be 2-5 (d4+1) bidders per item, except for the bird, for which only one other bidder will present himself. Maistre Gordjoie is his name, and judging from his be-aproned assistants and soft white hat (toque), he is a *chef de cuisine*. Each bidder will have an average **Missile** score of 12, and *Commerce* of +2.

## an oracle in need

Should the Journeymen successfully bid for the bird, the creature will only be too happy. If the *chef de cuisine* wins, the bird will implore the Journeymen to rescue her. If such a rescue is blundering and direct, the group may have to deal with the town guard before making their escape—which should not be easy. In any event, Maistre Gordjoie (for so the chef is called) will not offer any physical resistance, but neither will he part with the bird for less than 20 sols.

Oracle Bird			
Size	2	Life	3
Constitution	4	Endurance	7
Strength	1	Speed	—/40
Perception	15	Damage	—
Will	14	Enc	1.5
Dream	16	Protection	-8
Level			
Dodging	15	5	
Flying	15	5	

The oracle bird is in fact a necromancer, Madriagh Mogh. She is trying to get back to Crackbone Tower, a ruined keep on the rocky shores of the Immensian Ocean to the

south. This is where she first encountered a stalker and unwittingly unleashed it. She assumed the form of an oracle bird in an attempt to evade the nightmare entity, but to no avail. She ended up in Abeille where she brought about the destruction of Thuringar Thenn, the owner of the items for bid. The stalker will watch the bidding in the guise of a large, rotund man with a soft white hat (a toque)—in imitation of Maistre Gordjoie. This will also be his appearance when he first attacks the group outside of town.



Meanwhile, Mogh will attempt to influence the party to take her to Crackbone Tower and protect her from the stalker. If her powers of persuasion fail her, her Thanatos abilities should serve her well. She will begin by *Spirit Possessing* the best warrior among the Journeymen. Note that Mogh is bound to remain in beastform due to a Dragon Breath currently influencing her, and is likewise required to answer questions truthfully (if cryptically). In effect, she must mimic an oracle bird to the best of her ability. Alas, her condition does **not** permit her to fly off after answering *just one* question. An astute Journeyer might therefore get her to spill the beans on herself by pursuing the right line of questioning...

### maioria mogh

Born in the Hour of the Serpent. 53 years old. 1m59, 68 kilos. Left-handed. Black hair, brown eyes.

<b>Size</b>	9	<b>Will</b>	14	Life	12
<b>Appearance</b>	8	<b>Intellect</b>	15	Endurance	25
<b>Constitution</b>	14	<b>Empathy</b>	11	CT	4
<b>Strength</b>	11	<b>Dream</b>	16	Damage	+ 0
<b>Agility</b>	13	<b>Luck</b>	10	Sust	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	15	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	Enc	10.0
<b>Sight</b>	11	<b>Missile</b>	13	Speed	12
<b>Hearing</b>	12	<b>Throw</b>	12	Protection	1
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	14	<b>Stealth</b>	12		

	Level	Init	Dmg	
Hand-to-hand	+ 0	6	(+ 0)	
Dagger	+ 3	9	+ 1	
Dodging	+ 5			
Bow	+ 3	9	+ 2	
Climbing	+ 0	Disguise	+ 1	Alchemy + 0
Discretion	+ 5	Riding	+ 0	Astrology + 6
Running	-1	City Surv	+ 5	Botany + 1
Tinkering	+ 3	Outdoor	+ 0	Legends + 6
Vigilance	+ 4	Forest	+ 3	Medicine + 2
		Locksmith	+ 4	Writing + 3
Acting	+ 3	Surgery	+ 4	Zoology + 5
Commerce	+ 3	Swimming	+ 0	
				Hypnos + 5
				Thanatos + 9

### reserved spells

Amnesia—Lethe    Dreamlessness—A3    Suggestion—A2  
 Confusion—G1    Sleep—C2  
 Fist of Thanatos (12d)—A5    Fist of Thanatos (12d)—B3  
 Putrescence (5d)—C5    Thanteye (8d)—C1  
 Thanteye (8d)—A6

### known spells

All Hypnos spells and rituals up to and including -8  
 All Thanatos spells and rituals up to and including -12

## the chase

The stalker will take on several forms as it pursues the oracle bird and her entourage. At first, it will appear as a bullish man with a great knife and a soft white hat, inspired by Maistre Gordjoie:

### maistre de cuisine

<b>Size</b>	13	Endurance	32
<b>Dream</b>	19	<b>Speed</b>	14/26
<b>Level</b>	5	Damage	+ 3
		Level	Init
Cleaver	16	5	13
Paring knife	16	5	
Dodging	13	5	

It will next appear as a great wolf in the wilderness:

<b>great wolf</b>				
<b>Size</b>	13	Endurance	32	
<b>Dream</b>	19	Speed	14/26	
<b>Level</b>	5	Damage	+3	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Bite	16	5	13	+5
Dodging	13	5		

Then as a peasant girl in a field with a scythe:

<b>girl with scythe</b>				
<b>Size</b>	10	Endurance	29	
<b>Dream</b>	19	Speed	14/26	
<b>Level</b>	5	Damage	+3	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Scythe	14	5	12	+6
Dodging	15	5		

Then as a vampire attacking them at night on the road:

<b>vampire</b>				
<b>Size</b>	12	Endurance	31	
<b>Dream</b>	19	Speed	14/26	
<b>Level</b>	5	Damage	+3	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Claw and fang	15	5	12	+4
Dodging	14	5		

And so on.

## crackBone tower

Contrary to the oracle bird/Mogh's hopes, leading the stalker back to its original home of Crackbone Tower will not cause it to give up the chase. The ruins of this tower are, however, haunted by an omen bird and fliders—as if the Journeymen didn't already have enough problems.

<b>omen bird</b>				
<b>Size</b>	6	Endurance	18	
<b>Dream</b>	12	Speed	10/20	
<b>Level</b>	1	Damage	0	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Beak	9	1	5	+1
Dodging	13	1		

Remember that other than the damage it inflicts (+1 damage), each time it scores damage, even a mere contusion or bruise, the omen bird's victim must successfully roll **current dream points/negative level of the entity**, or lose 1 Luck point.

<b>flider</b>				
<b>Size</b>	3	Life	8	
<b>Constitution</b>	12	Endurance	20	
<b>Strength</b>	7	Speed	14/36	
<b>Perception</b>	15	Damage	-2	
<b>Will</b>	10	Enc	5	
<b>Dream</b>	7	Protection	-3	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Bite	12	3	9	0*
Dodging	14	4		
Discretion	14	4		
Running	14	4		
Vigilance	15	6		
Flider Paralytic Venom				
Malignity	6			
Period	1 round			
Damage	-1d6 Endurance			
Antidotes	-3/Liquor of Bagdol +12 Moonmilk +6			
Each Endurance loss costs a like loss of Fatigue. At 0 Endurance the victim is paralyzed.				

In the subterranean vault of the keep (where the oracle bird found the stalker) is a magic sword, *Revenant*, which the necromancer originally sought but abandoned upon unleashing the stalker.

## Revenant

*Revenant* is a legendary magic dragon sword bearing the *Grand Ritual of the Claw* of the same name, as well as three *Scales of Efficiency*. Due to the latter, the weapon is +3 to attack, parry and initiative rolls, and scores +6 damage, plus its wielder's personal damage modifier. Note that the weapon's efficiency does effect its user's chance of scoring a particular success on an unerring strike.

The *Revenant Grand Ritual* allows the weapon to attack and automatically hit once. The attacker must declare such an unerring strike before making the attack roll, but still

rolls (at an imposed -5 difficulty) in order to determine whether the attack is a particular success. Any result other than a particular success is treated as a normal success, and in either case the defender may not dodge or parry. Any particular success on an unerring strike must be taken as a force particular.

If the defender is a dream entity, the attacker is considered to automatically make her dream roll only for the declared unerring strike (if the dream roll had not been made previously, it must be made again for any subsequent, normal attacks to hit the dream entity).

The unerring strike effect costs the wielder 3d, but another unerring strike may not be invoked until the weapon has killed a living creature. Note that the weapon need not be the only one used to kill its victim, but it must strike the killing blow in order to "recharge" and be able to strike unerringly again.

As befits its Thanatos origins, the sword has an unholy appearance, giving off a dull red, smokey sheen and displaying the ghastly countenance of its last victim reflected in its blade.

Each hour of use costs the wielder 1d, in addition to the 3d for calling an unerring strike.

*Revenant* has an inertia of 28 and a magical resistance of 10.

**Gem I** (alchemically allied muska)  
(Size 5, Purity 5, Inertia 2,  
Enchantability 3)

Ritual	Dreamland	Cost
<i>Purification</i>	F12	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	B11	6d
<i>Alliance</i>	C11	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	B11	14d
<i>Purification</i>	F12	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	B11	10d
<i>Permanence*</i>	A10	5d
<i>Mastery</i>	Lethe	7d
<i>Revenant**</i>	F12	7d

**Gem II** (encrusted scarlatine in pommel)

(Size 3, Purity 7, Inertia 0, Enchantability 3)

Ritual	Dreamland	Cost
<i>Purification</i>	F12	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	B11	7d
<i>Alliance</i>	C11	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	B11	12d
<i>Purification</i>	F12	4d
<i>Enchantment</i>	B11	13d
<i>Permanence*</i>	A10	5d
<i>Mastery</i>	Lethe	7d
<i>Scale of Efficier</i>	E12	7d
<i>Purification</i>	F12	4d
<i>Scale of Efficier</i>	E12	7d
<i>Purification</i>	F12	4d
<i>Scale of Efficier</i>	E12	7d

Note that if none of the Journeyers attack the stalker, it will ignore them. Once they do engage it, however, it will hunt them down implacably even if Mogh is killed.

—Hieronymous

*Oracle bird by Rolland Barthélémy*

*Thanks to Olivier Hascoet for  
inspiration, and David Givens for  
Revenant!*



# DREAD RINGERS

This nightmare is designed for four or five beginning or moderately seasoned Journeymen, with at least one High Dreamer among them.

## *the good woman*

Once upon a time there was a poor woman who lived deep in the woods, alone in a cottage little better than a hut. She knew the forest well, as well as plants and remedies, and since she was not stingy with her counsel and her physics, the nearby villagers called her the Good Woman.

She was some forty years old, tall and thin, with a bony face. True, she was not beautiful; but her measured gestures, the dark sparkle of her eyes, her even voice, had the effect of inspiring confidence. Had she wished to, she could have lived in the village itself, Greyfields, but the villagers understood, or thought they did, that she had lived through tragedy and only wanted to live out a quiet retirement. She had lived in the cottage for ten years. It was soon after the "Great Snork Rush", a tumultuous time when many of the villagers had perished or fled, when others had arrived, refugees from neighboring regions even worse off. The cottage had thus come to know its new occupant.

Her privacy was respected, and she was never disturbed except when consulted to identify an uncertain mushroom, or when a remedy was sought for a cough or cold, or a difficult labor. Sometimes, the young village girls would go to confide their heartaches in her. In their basket, they would be sure to include a few cookies and a small pot of butter.

Then tragedy struck.

One day, blonde Aenys, the cooper's daughter, found the door wide open and the room ransacked, broken crockery between the smashed furniture. In the room, the Good Woman lay in a pool of blood, her clothing torn, her face lacerated. She was dead!

Aenys returned screaming to the village. At first, no one believed her, then three peasants decided to go investigate. In spite of the warnings of her father, Aenys went with them. She had loved the Good Woman; and towards the creature, man or beast, who had done such a crime, she was now pale with rage and anger.

The group approached the cottage prudently. Here and there, they could see boot marks in the ground. And tragedy struck again. Five bandits appeared from behind the house, arms at the ready. They approached

unhurriedly, with no expression on their faces other than a grim determination. Two of the peasants were rooted in shock, the third and youngest, Jorgi, had the presence of mind to flee into the underbrush. As for Aenys, she yelled out her hatred and charged the bandits. A blow to the head dropped her to the ground where she lay motionless. The other two hesitated between flight and coming to her aid, a fatal indecision which cost them their lives.

Thus was Jorgi's testimony when he returned to the village, alone. "I'll never forget their faces," he trembled, "but why did they do that? The Good Woman was poor." It was not until the morrow that a second group, more numerous and better-armed, returned to the cottage. Along the way they encountered a returning and staggering Aenys. She had only been knocked unconscious and the bandits had ignored her. The other two, unfortunately, were dead. A new examination of the hut revealed nothing new. The trap door to the cellar was open, with traces of blood on the wooden stair. Below the same chaos reigned as above. The peasants did not tarry as the place filled them with superstitious dread. On the other hand, they found evidence of fresh tracks disappearing into the underbrush. The bodies were brought back to the village to be buried there. Then, all activity having ceased, a dozen of the bravest peasants formed a patrol to search the region. And there our story rests.

## *in truth ...*

In reality, the Good Woman was not so good, and truth be told, she was actually quite evil. She was a High Dreamer devoted to Thanatos. At first a wandering Journeyer, she had ultimately chosen Greyfields and its environs. Like many of her ilk, she dreamed of absolute domination, but she was prudent. Rather than ruin everything in a hasty curse, she patiently wove her web from her forest retreat. Under cover of being a good healer, it was easy for her to collect relics from each villager. One after the other, she possessed them in body or spirit. Once they were all possessed, she would begin her curses, and when the whole village was thus under her boot, she would use it to conquer the next village, and so forth until she ruled the world!

One day, a lost Journeyer came upon her cottage and asked for her hospitality. She welcomed him without any preconceived notions, but since he admitted that he came from the south, and he knew nothing of the proximity of Greyfields, she decided that his disappearance would go unnoticed. And since she greatly desired a bodyguard, she caused him to fall asleep (by Hypnos), killed him properly, then immediately animated his corpse as a zombie. Over the years, these events played themselves out three more times. Her zombies resided in her cellar, and the villagers obviously had no idea of their existence.

Then came a fifth Journeyer and the same scenario was played out. Alas! while animating the cadaver the High Dreamer fumbled her casting and, its being a ritual, could not reserve it. The zombie immediately became feral and turned on its creator. Seriously wounded, the High Dreamer managed to escape and run up the stair. But hardly had she opened the trap door that the zombie caught her, threw her into the room above, and fell upon her until her last breath. As she died, she gave rise to what had always been the essence of her being: she gave birth to a nightmare entity, a Hate. Moreover, her death freed the four other zombies who in turn became feral. After having overturned all the furniture, the five eventually found the door and went into the woods. You can guess the rest.

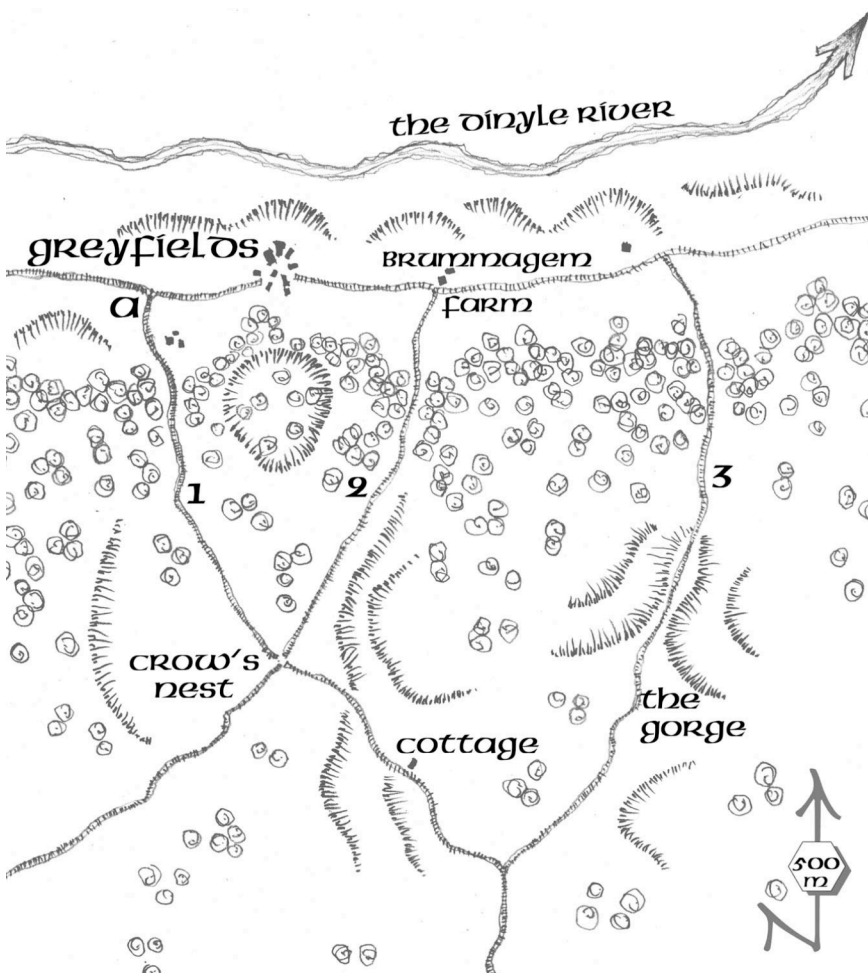
One of the effects of the ritual of *Animate Zombie* is that it permanently interrupts the natural decomposition of the corpse. If death was very recent, the zombie seems no different from a living person other than having pale skin, bloodless lips and a fixed stare. It can easily be mistaken for the living, which in fact is the very mistake the villagers made.

Feral zombies only seek to destroy, and since they have no guiding will, have a tendency to go round in circles, periodically returning to their place of animation. Thus the intermittent return of the bandits. As for the nightmare entity, it entered Aenys as she was leaning over the body, and the young girl is now possessed by hatred.

## Reincarnation

But death is never permanent in the dream of the Dragons. Hardly had they been killed by the High Dreamer that the Journeyers awoke in a different dream, inheriting from the previous one just a vague nightmarish memory, which itself

over time faded. In any event, one never remembers the exact moment of one's death; and furthermore, the Journeyers were asleep in their last moments. In short, the newly-dreamed characters eventually became Journeyers again. Here in the dream of the Dragons chance works things out well (or poorly—you be the judge). These Journeyers who had individually been victims of the High Dreamer, ended up forming a group and traveling together in their new life. And they are in fact the player characters.



But furthermore, having countless times changed dreams in the course of their Journeying, the random paths of their odyssey has led them to the dream of Greyfields. And to thicken the plot, time for the Dragons having no bearing on the passage of time for humans, they have arrived in sight of the village on the morrow after the Good Woman's death. At the same time, five zombies bent on carnage roam the area, five bandits who resemble them like so many dead ringers.

**Note.** Five zombies are mentioned because a group of players often number five. But in reality, there are as many zombies as there are PCs, and they are the same apparent age and appearance. Only their clothing and gear will differ slightly. If the group includes females, there will be female counterparts as well.



## greyfields

Aside from the nightmare which takes place there, Greyfields would hold no interest. It is a peaceful agricultural village, situated at the top of a hill planted with crops and vineyards. Below, in the valley, a river meanders quietly: the Dinyle. The community comprises fifty-odd buildings, outbuildings included. In the center, facing the fountain square, a communal barn serves as meeting hall, and, occasionally, as the Journeymen House. Other than its farmers, the village includes a few artisans: carpenter, wheelwright, cooper, smith, cobbler, etc. Finally, there are a few isolated farms, like that of the Brummagem family, located a kilometer east of the village. These farms and the neighboring fields are served by a network of paths; only the most significant ones are indicated on the map.

South of the village is the Great Forest. Its far edges (off the map) are over 20 km away. It is a dark place, with rugged terrain, primarily constituted of oaks and beeches, with a dense undergrowth of thistles, ferns, and climbing vines. Game-filled (rabbits, deer, boar), the forest is also home to wolves. The villagers who venture there seeking herbs or mushrooms avoid wandering off the trails, as it's very easy to get lost. Outside the trails indicated on the map, survival in the Great Forest is at a difficulty of -4.

*The Crows' Nest.* This is the name of a great clearing, the intersection of four trails. In the center is a great oak some 40 meters tall, home of over five hundred crows. The place resonates with their incessant croaking.

*The Gorge.* This ravine is nearly a kilometer long, cut deeply between rocky slopes to which cling thorn bushes. Between the rocks at the bottom of the gorge are numerous caves. The place is sinister to a fault, an ideal locale for the finale confrontation with the zombies.

## the accusation

For the Journeymen, everything will begin late in the afternoon, as they come into sight of Greyfields. At the same time, the patrol is returning, empty-handed, along trail 1. The two groups will meet at intersection A.

The peasants number a dozen, armed with bows, axes, and pikes. They advance at a resolute pace, but at the sight of the Journeymen stop, undecided, their hands clenching their weapons. Then the youngest (Jorgi) cries out, "That's them! I recognize them!"

The next moments may well be tumultuous. The archers will train their bows on the Journeymen, while the leader of the band, not really reassured, will ask them to surrender their weapons and allow themselves to be taken away without resisting. As it is likely the Journeymen will not

comply immediately and will ask what they are accused of, they will be told, "As if you didn't know, bunch of ruffians! You've killed the Good Woman and slaughtered two villagers!" Their denials will fall on deaf ears, even if they point out that logically if they had committed such a heinous crime, it would make no sense for them to return. Jorgi will constantly repeat, "That's them! I'll never forget their faces!"

### greyfields patrol

<b>Size</b>	11	<b>Will</b>	10	<b>Life</b>	12
<b>Appearance</b>	10	<b>Intellect</b>	10	<b>Endurance</b>	23
<b>Constitution</b>	12	<b>Empathy</b>	10	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Dream</b>	11	<b>Damage</b>	+ 1
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	10	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	11	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	<b>Enc</b>	12.0
<b>Sight</b>	11	<b>Missile</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	10	<b>Throw</b>	12	<b>Protection</b>	0
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	10	<b>Stealth</b>	11		

	Level	Init	Dmg
Hand-to-hand	+ 2	8	(+ 1)
Dagger	+ 0	6	+ 2
Two-handed axe	+ 2	8	+ 4
Polearm	+ 2	8	+ 5
Bow	+ 3	8	+ 2
Dodging	+ 2		

*Note. There are 12 members of the patrol: 4 are armed with bows, 4 with axes, and 4 with pikes.*

Two alternatives are possible: either the Journeymen surrender, or they refuse to submit. If they accept this judicial error and allow themselves to be disarmed, they will be led under heavy guard to the communal barn. If they attempt to flee or fight, their situation will become more difficult. This latter alternative is dealt with below.

## exculpation

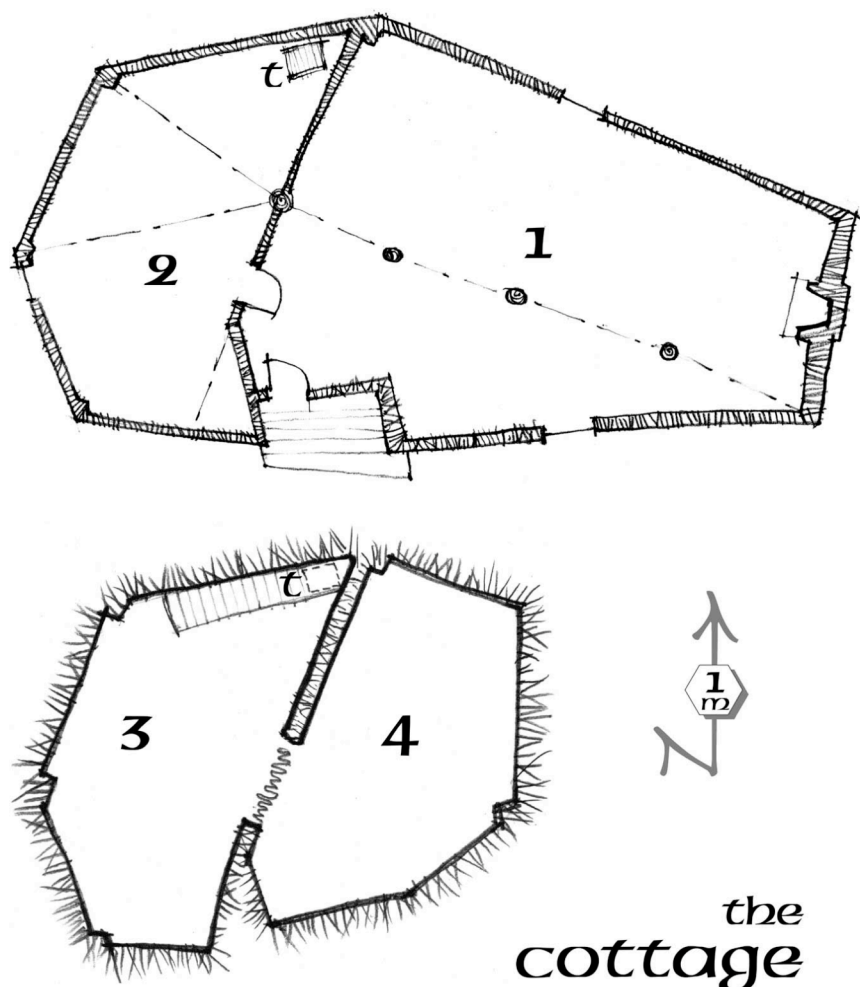
At the barn, the Journeymen will not be bound, but will be held at bay by the archers and pikeman, while being subjected to the boos of the throng of villagers. Their fate will not be immediately decided, and they will eventually realize that the crowd is awaiting a second capital witness, who will soon appear.

Aenys is a girl of eighteen years, blonde, rather pretty in spite of her drawn face. As soon as she sees the Journeymen, she will begin to stammer, staring at them, "I recognize those monsters!" And with the quickness and ferocity of a cat with all its claws drawn, she will jump on the nearest one. The villagers will only succeed in subduing her with great difficulty.

At this moment events will take a dramatic turn. The Brummagem son, entering with a head wound, will cry out, "The bandits have just attacked us! They killed my father!" Then he will see the Journeymen and will cry out, unnerved, "Them! But how is that possible?!"

The scene may degenerate into total confusion, but with the result that the Journeymen will be exonerated. For how could they have been at the intersection at the same time as they were at the Brummagem farm, a good kilometer away? Then Jorgi will admit that the bandits were not dressed exactly the same way. The Brummagem boy will say, "And yet, except for a dead look that you don't have, they resemble you like brothers." He will be unable to explain what he means by "a dead look".

Finally, the villagers, embarrassed, will apologize to the Journeymen. Naturally their weapons will be returned to them, and every hospitality will be extended. And they will be told the story of the Good Woman and her tragic end, so that they may judge for themselves the villagers' perplexity. Only Aenys will continue to glare at the Journeymen balefully.



## at the Brummagem farmhouse

The Journeymen will probably want to clear up this mystery of brothers who look like them and go to the Brummagem farm as well as the cottage. A terrible sight awaits them at the farm: the father is dead as well as the servant, the mother and the youngest son are gravely wounded, even the animals have been massacred. Strangely, most of the wounds were caused by bladed weapons, but others are due to clawing attacks. On the other hand, nothing has been stolen. The violence visited here seems purely gratuitous. A careful examination of the edge of the woods (successful **Sight/Forest Survival** roll at -3, 3 task points, 5 minute period) will discover footprints leading from and to trail number 2. Presumably, the bandits must have come from the forest and returned there.

## the cottage

This is a low slung house, with rubble stone walls and a blackened thatched roof. Behind it, a square of cleared ground serves as a vegetable garden with a few fruit trees; a tiny track leads to away from it to a small spring a few dozen meters north.

The house is partly dug into the ground and a few steps lead down to the front door. The main room (1) is divided by a row of posts supporting the ridge beams (shown dashed on the plan); the ceiling is 3 meters tall at the high point. The floor is paved with flagstones, and on the east wall is a fireplace.

Nothing has been disturbed since the death of the Good Woman, and the same disorderly jumble of broken furniture reigns is evident. Here the High Dreamer would receive visitors, and there are no significant clues to be found here. Likewise in her bedroom (2), where a puddle of dried blood stains the floor near the central column. Along the back wall, a wooden trap door leads to the cellar stair.

This chamber is bisected by a stone archway. A curtain once separated the two parts, but it has been torn down and rent; its tatters scattered on the floor. If the first part (3) contains only a jumbled of mundane objects, the back half (4), on the other hand, holds some revealing clues. A locked chest (difficulty -4, but the key can be found somewhere in the disorder of the bedroom with a **Luck/Vigilance** roll at -2) contains a few items of interest:

two daggers with nicely worked pommels (worth 4 sols each), a necklace of silver beads (6 sols), a pouch of fine leather encrusted with mother-of-pearl (3 sols) containing 18 denarii, and a traveling inkwell with a silver stopper (worth 5 sols). There are other more ordinary items (empty vials, sealing wax, quills, blank parchments) as well as parchments with writing. Farther, piled under the dust are several haversacks and backpacks, ropes, and other gear, as if five Journeymen had dropped off their traveling gear. Finally, at the very back of the room, semicircular shelving contains about fifty vials and small pots, each with a parchment label with a number. Each one contains almost nothing: an unidentifiable grease stain, a few hairs, a bit of nail. But it should be enough for the Journeymen to begin to guess the secrets of the story.

### *the parchments*

The parchment manuscript contains some fifteen sheets. The first four have been written in Journeyer, and include an exhaustive list of the inhabitants of Greyfields—men, women, and children. The youngest, especially those born in the last ten years or so, have their birth hours indicated next to their names. Fifty or so are also annotated with a number, as well as mention of “Body” or “Spirit”, or even both, followed by a new series of dates. There are exactly the same number of numbered villagers as there are vials on the shelves. Draw whatever conclusions you will.

The other eleven sheets are notes written in a variety of ancient languages, accompanied by strange diagrams and scrawled marginalia in Journeyer. They constitute a loosely organized grimoire of sorts, although the abbreviated nature of the texts and their lack of organization makes this a difficult text to read. A High Dreamer must have at least level 0 in *Hypnos* and or *Thanatos* to assimilate the knowledge alluded to here. Successfully reading the text will grant the hypnomancer a +2 synthesis roll bonus and 15 spell development points towards *Sleep* and *Sleep of Hypnos*. A necromancer would gain a +4 synthesis roll and 40 spell development points in any *Thanatos Possession* or *Curse*. In order to do so, however, the reader must accumulate 15 task points, rolling **Intellect/Writing** at -4 no more than once per hour. Unfortunately, the *Hypnos* and *Thanatos* knowledge are intertwined as it were; one cannot selectively pick and choose which parts to study. Any High Dreamer reading through the entire text, even with no knowledge of *Thanatos*, will be visited by a Necromantic Shadow in lieu of her next Dragon Tail.

### *a dream memory*

The abandoned gear obviously belongs to the High Dreamer’s victims, as do the valuables in the chest. If the

Journeymen discover and examine them, they will recover lost memories by means of a dream they will have the following night.

In this dream (which will vary in its details from one Journeyer to the next), each will see himself or herself—alone and not in a group—arriving in sight of the cottage, meeting the Good Woman, and, having no particular reason to be suspicious, accepting her hospitality. Then the dream will end abruptly with a terrible feeling of anguish. Significantly, each will remember that one or more of the items in the chest belonged to him (or her). (The Dream Keeper should distribute these items as best as possible among the Journeymen, even inventing more relevant ones than the items listed here if necessary). On the other hand, the dream will leave them with a profound impression of being a past life. After that, there shouldn’t be much doubt as to the identities of their nightmarish dead ringers.

### *aenys*

If the young girl has such a violent reaction to the Journeymen, it’s above all because she has been possessed by the Hate. Directed primarily against the murderers of the Good Woman, as time passes she will quickly grow to hate everyone without exception. When the Journeymen decide to visit the cottage, she will offer to lead them there. The Journeymen may find her behavior strange, but may decide that it is her loss alone which drives her passions. In reality, Aenys believes that the Journeymen have tricked the villagers by some ruse and she need look no farther than they to find the guilty party. She now carries a dagger, and at the first opportunity will attempt to stab the Journeymen one after another, by stealth is possible. If things go badly for her, as they probably will, the Hate will force her to continue fighting to the death. Upon her death, the nightmare entity will be loosed, and naturally will attempt to possess the nearest Journeyer. The Hate will have all its previous dream points, eighteen, plus gaining a nineteenth one upon the death of Aenys.

In this sordid nightmare, Aenys is an NPC doomed to be sacrificed. It’s up to the Dream Keeper to see how this ticking time bomb can be put to best use. Since the death of the High Dreamer will have broken all possessions, it’s unlikely that Aenys would still be subject to her magic. If a Journeyer nevertheless attempted to perform the ritual of *Read Aura* on her, the result would be positive, indicating a dream aura originating from the Salt Waste G9. From that specific Dreamland, yet another *Read Aura* would indicate a Hate with a power of 19 points. *Counterspell* would have to then be cast from G9, with an expenditure of 19 dream, per the exorcism rules, *Worlds*, page 63. If all this were successfully done and Aenys were freed of her

possession, the young girl would become the Journeymen's ally instead of enemy, and the conclusion of the scenario would be far less lugubrious. But is that really likely?

<b>aenys</b>					
Born in the Hour of the Serpent					
18 years old. 1m60, 53 kilos. Blonde hair, blue eyes.					
<b>Size</b>	8	<b>Will</b>	14	<b>Life</b>	11
<b>Appearance</b>	13	<b>Intellect</b>	9	<b>Endurance</b>	25
<b>Constitution</b>	13	<b>Empathy</b>	12	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	8	<b>Dream</b>	10/18	<b>Damage</b>	+0
<b>Agility</b>	14	<b>Luck</b>	6	<b>Sust</b>	2
<b>Dexterity</b>	12	<b>Mêlée</b>	11	<b>Enc</b>	8
<b>Sight</b>	11	<b>Missile</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	12	<b>Throw</b>	9	<b>Protection</b>	0
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	9	<b>Stealth</b>	13		
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>	
Hand-to-hand		-1	4	(+0)	
Dagger		-1	4	+1	
Dodging		+1			
Discretion	+2	Running	+0	Outdoor	+3
Jumping	+0	Vigilance	+1	Forest	+5

*Note. Her 18 Dream is in fact due to the Hate possessing her.*

<b>hate</b>			
<b>Dream</b>	19	<b>Speed</b>	6
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>
Possession	19	5	14

## Dead Ringers

All the zombies were animated at a time when the High Dreamer had plenty of dream points. As a result, each will have a **Dream** score equal to its **Size** (the maximum for an animated zombie). Furthermore, all zombies retain the same combat skills in unlife as they had in life, except that they fight like automata. As a result, each has a level in its combat skill(s) either equal to its overall level, or the character's respective combat skill level while living, whichever is lower. In the case of these zombies, compare the undead's overall level to the respective Journeymen's Archetypical weapon skill levels, since their actual level in their previous incarnation is unknown. One of the zombies (chosen by the Dream Keeper) lost its weapon(s) at some point, and therefore fights only with claws. The other four (or whatever their number may be) have the same weapons and weapon skills as their living counterparts. Likewise, each zombie's actual **Size** (and thus **Dream**) should be adjusted to correspond to the respective PC's **Size**.

The zombies wander here and there in the forest, ready to strike the village again. They periodically return to the cottage. Like water which always flows along the path of least resistance, these mindless entities naturally follow the

forest trails. According to the Journeymen's movements and their own strategy, the Dream Keeper should devise the hour and place of the final confrontation. The Gorge might make the perfect sinister locale.

Try as they might to prepare themselves, the Journeymen will be in for quite a shock when they first see their own cadavers, a sight which could send them over the edge. Each should roll **Will** at -2; in case of failure make a RR of d%. If the second roll likewise fails, the mental perturbation will translate as a Dragon Tail which takes place immediately.

<b>zombie</b>			
<b>Size*</b>	11	<b>Endurance</b>	22
<b>Dream*</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	12/24
<b>Level</b>	1	<b>Damage</b>	+0
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>
Claws	11	1	6
Weapon*	11	1	6
Dodging	10	1	1

*Note. The **Size** of each zombie will be that of its corresponding Journeyman, while the weapon each wields will likewise be similar to its living counterpart's. Use either its overall level or the corresponding Journeyman's Archetypical weapon skill level, whichever is lower. Assume that each zombie has a **Dream** equal to its **Size**.*

## Other alternatives

If from the beginning the Journeymen engage in combat with the patrol or take flight, the situation will thereby be more complicated. If they are bested, the wounded and survivors will be taken to the barn as planned at the beginning. There, their exoneration will take place as above, except the villagers will harbor a certain resentment towards them and Aenys' hatred will be more overt. On the other hand, if the Journeymen get the upper hand, the villagers will attempt to flee once half their number are incapacitated or killed. Once in the village, they will regroup, ready to wage all-out war. Exoneration will be impossible, and even if the timing is off, they will be blamed for the attack of the Brummagem farm. Same thing if they flee the encounter with the patrol.

At this point, if the characters attempt to investigate and find the cottage, they will be able to have their memory dream, and if they ultimately destroy the zombies, they may be able to prove their innocence.

If they decide to flee this village of madmen, the Dream Keeper can have them encounter a single zombie, a straggler springing forth at a turn in the trail. Such an encounter ought to cause them to think and react differently. But in exchange for one less zombie at the

final confrontation, they will in the meantime have all the peasants against them.

### **conclusion**

Once the zombies are destroyed, the Journeymen will receive 20 stress points, which may be immediately converted to experience without any die rolls. This stress will be in addition to any acquired along the way in playing out the scenario. As for the villagers, very few of them are literate, but most can spell their own names. And finding themselves on the Good Woman's list, with a corresponding suspicious little numbered vial, will be more than enough to put a damper on their mood. "To think we called her the Good Woman!" they'll murmur as

they lower their weapons, disillusioned and grim. They will continue to extend their hospitality to the Journeymen, but the latter will realize from the discomfort and tension in the village that the villagers would rather see them gone. On top of which, even though they might not be reproached for it, the Journeymen may well have blonde Aenys' fresh blood on their hands.

—Original text by Denis Gerfaud  
Translation, current edition revisions, maps  
and layout by Hieronymous

First appeared as "Faux-Frères" in Casus Belli  
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## navigator

This is a scenario for four or five *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* characters of beginning to intermediate experience. The party may have one or two High Dreamers, but at least two members should have *Forest Survival* to mastery, and the scenario works best if at least one player character has the skill to +2 or +3. The Dream Keeper should adjust encounters accordingly if the party is larger or smaller. If the Journeyers are particularly curious or reckless, they may need a few strong arms and skilled combatants.

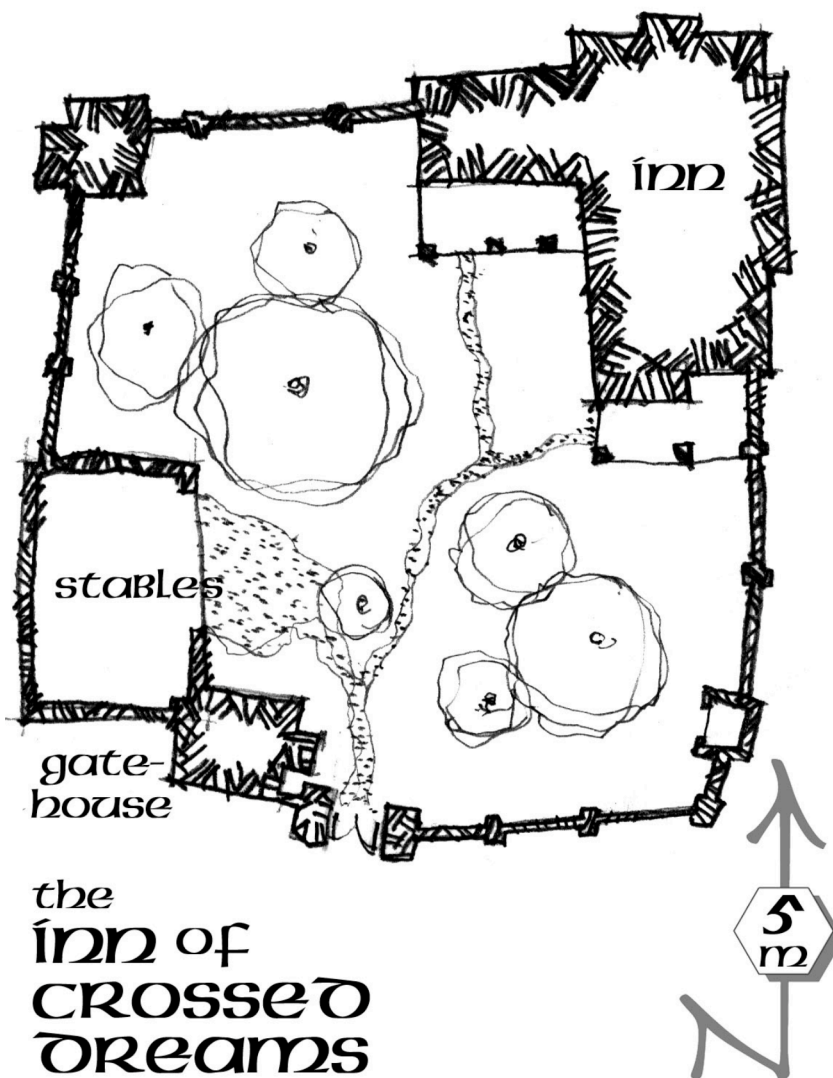
This scenario is specifically designed to incorporate as many aspects of the rule system as possible within its short length, in order to familiarize players and Dream Keepers alike with the rules and spirit of *Rêve*.

Play begins at an unusual country inn where the party gathers for the first time. After an entertaining tale told by the innkeeper, the group is led by a determined young woman on a quest to recover a family heirloom from the ruined forest home of a local figure. As the party travels deeper into the wood, events take a sinister cast...

### the inn of crossed dreams

Each member of the party will find him or herself late one afternoon at the *Inn of Crossed Dreams*, a large country public house located along the Tangle Road, on the southern edges of the Tanglethorn Forest. The area is quite rural, with no real villages for days around. The Tangle Road is a grassy, tended path (not a paved road by any means) that leads roughly east-west through these lands. Quite broad for the most part, it narrows in places to a wide track. Vehicle traffic is quite light, the road used mostly by the woodsmen and their mules who inhabit this sparsely-

populated region. In addition to the foresters living on the fringes of the Tanglethorn and other client woods, the area is home to shepherds (in its prairie vales) and the occasional subsistence farming community. Trade in the region is uncommon and sporadic.



The *Inn of Crossed Dreams* is something of an anomaly therefore. Built incrementally over the generations by the Wort family, the Inn was possibly once an outbuilding of a forgotten fortification or small defensible outpost. It is organized around a walled courtyard anchored at one corner by the ancient stone stable (once perhaps a granary or barn) and small gatekeeper's stone house, and at the other by the inn itself. The building's foundations and part of the ground floor are stone, the upper reaches half-timber construction with walls infilled with mud and straw plaster, or in some places, herring-bone pattern clay tiles. Each floor cantilevers precariously out from the floor below it, and this coupled with the building's extreme age, dispersed structure, haphazard layout, and ad hoc building styles lend it an air of precipitous decline. It seems likely to fall over at any moment. In spite of this, the inn is quite cozy and comfortable, and sturdy as well. If here and there a heavy timber post has been added in the middle of a room to support a sagging floor above, well, that's just part of the charm.



How a large inn manages to survive in such a rural area is a bit of a mystery, although there are seasonal high periods when caravans or mercenary companies to or from distant Gothga pass by and tend to stay for a day or two. In addition, the Wort family and their servants keep small livestock and tend extensive vegetable gardens. The cellars are stocked with what small beers and ciders they manage to produce locally, as well as wines from a village three or four days distant.

None of the player characters know each other, and none are native to this region. Each has arrived at different times on the same day from different directions. Some may have come from the east, others the west, and one or two may even be traveling overland from the south. As the sun begins to set on the Inn on this particular early autumn day, preparations begin to close up for the night: the courtyard gate is closed and barred, night watchmen take their dinners in the common room before taking to their posts, the gatekeeper's house is manned, windows are shuttered and barred from within, and so forth. It will be obvious from these goings-on that some threat is feared, although there is nothing panicked or hurried in the manners of the publican, Gandigger Wort, or his people. This seems to be fairly routine. If Ostler Wort is asked by any of the travelers what reason he has for these defensive preparations, he will pause in his duties just long enough to cryptically remark that it is a new moon, then be off. If his guests pester him with further questions, he will promise to return after his obligations in order to give them a full account.

<i>watchmen of the inn</i>					
<b>Size</b>	11	<b>Will</b>	10	Life	11.5
<b>Appearance</b>	10	<b>Intellect</b>	10	Endurance	23
<b>Constitution</b>	12	<b>Empathy</b>	11	CT	4
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Dream</b>	10	Damage	+ 1
<b>Agility</b>	11	<b>Luck</b>	10	Sust	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	10	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	Enc	12
<b>Sight</b>	11	<b>Missile</b>	10	Speed	12
<b>Hearing</b>	12	<b>Throw</b>	11	Protection	3
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	9	<b>Stealth</b>	10		
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>	
Hand-to-hand	+ 0		6		
Dagger	+ 0		6	+ 1	
One-handed mace	+ 3		9	+ 4	
Shield	+ 1				
Crossbow	+ 0		5	+ 3	
Dodging	+ 3				
Climbing	- 1	Running	- 1	Forest	+ 3
Discretion	+ 2	Vigilance	+ 3	Gaming	+ 1
Jumping	- 2	Outdoor	+ 3	Swimming	- 4

Tonight the the player-characters are the only guests in this great inn, which could accommodate scores of people. After the inn is completely locked up, Wort will join the

travelers in the great room for dinner and mulled wine, and tell the tale of the curse that lays upon the Tangle. The fire will be crackling in the great hearth, most of the lamps dimmed except for the one at their table, the whole great room illuminated in an eerie, red dancing glow. Wort is a good storyteller, and knows his tale well.

### *gandigger wort*

Born in the Hour of the Dragon

53 years old. 1m53, 79 kilos.

Right-handed. Salt-and-pepper hair, brown eyes.

<b>Size</b>	12	<b>Will</b>	11	Life	13
<b>Appearance</b>	9	<b>Intellect</b>	11	Endurance	26
<b>Constitution</b>	14	<b>Empathy</b>	13	CT	4
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Dream</b>	11	Damage	+ 1
<b>Agility</b>	11	<b>Luck</b>	11	Sust	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	12	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	Enc	12
<b>Sight</b>	11	<b>Missile</b>	11	Speed	12
<b>Hearing</b>	13	<b>Throw</b>	12	Protection	2
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	11	<b>Stealth</b>	10		

		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>	
Hand-to-hand	+ 3		9		
Dagger	+ 1		7	+ 1	
One-handed sword	+ 3		9	+ 3	
Crossbow	+ 0		5	+ 3	
Dodging	+ 3				
Climbing	- 1	Carpentry	- 2	Locksmith	+ 0
Cooking	+ 5	Commerce	+ 4	Surgery	+ 0
Dance	+ 1	Music	+ 0	Swimming	- 4
Discretion	+ 2	Riding	+ 0	Astrology	+ 1
Jumping	- 2	City Surv	+ 0	Botany	+ 1
Running	- 1	Outdoor	+ 3	Legends	+ 1
Seduction	- 3	Forest	+ 3	Medicine	- 4
Singing	+ 0	Swamp	+ 0	Writing	+ 0
Tinkering	+ 2	Mountain	- 4	Zoology	+ 0
Vigilance	+ 3	Gaming	+ 1		
Acting	+ 2	Leather	+ 0		

When Wort was a boy, the Tangle became home to a reclusive and mysterious stranger, old Master Vendren. A strange and intimidating figure, Vendren had come to the area and moved into an abandoned house in the forest. Over the years, as strange occurrences grew more and more frequent, Vendren grew to be disliked by the forest folk, and eventually feared. Misbehaving children would be threatened with "Vendren will get you". One new moon night when Wort was a young man, travelers came to his father's inn, wounded as with sharp talons and wild with fear. They claimed that they were the survivors of a group of travelers that had been attacked by the very dead coming up out of the ground, near Vendren's house. As it happened, a company of soldiers was staying at the inn, and soon a force was led to Vendren's home.

In all the years that the old man had lived in the Tangle, none had ever seen his house but from afar. Wort will recount in vivid detail how he and his father and the

soldiers were shocked to find an ancient cemetery of crumbling mausoleums among the trees of the Tangle. It was clear that the graveyard predated the forest—ancient indeed. The soldiers found Vendren and hung him from a tree. His house was burned to the ground. The mausoleums were left untouched, as none dared get near them.

Ever since that night, every new moon night finds the dead wandering this part of the Tangle. Wort believes that Vendren had conjured them up from the ground, and once a month they reemerge to find their master and take his orders.

Just as Wort's tale ends, a pounding will be heard at the door. Over the empty cups and plates, Wort will say, "Don't answer that," then will get up to clear the dishes. If the players investigate, which they should in spite of Wort's warning, they will see a young woman through the grilled peep window in the door, clothed for travel. She is obviously not a zombie or skeleton, and Wort will eventually permit her to enter.

<b>anissa</b>					
Born in the Hour of the Spider					
17 years old. 1m51, 61 kilos.					
Left-handed. Auburn hair, green eyes.					
<b>Size</b>	9	<b>Will</b>	12	<b>Life</b>	10.5
<b>Appearance</b>	13	<b>Intellect</b>	13	<b>Endurance</b>	22.5
<b>Constitution</b>	12	<b>Empathy</b>	12	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	11	<b>Dream</b>	13/14	<b>Damage</b>	+0
<b>Agility</b>	15	<b>Luck</b>	10	<b>Sust</b>	2
<b>Dexterity</b>	13	<b>Mêlée</b>	13	<b>Enc</b>	10
<b>Sight</b>	13	<b>Missile</b>	13	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	11	<b>Throw</b>	12	<b>Protection</b>	1
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	12	<b>Stealth</b>	13		
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>	
Hand-to-hand	+0		6		
Dagger	+3		9	+1	
One-handed sword	+0		6	+2	
Crossbow	+2		8	+3	
Dodging	+3				
Climbing	+2	Music	+2	Surgery	+0
Cooking	+3	Riding	+0	Swimming	-4
Dance	+0	City Surv	+2	Alchemy	+4
Discretion	+3	Outdoor	+0	Astrology	+3
Drawing	+0	Forest	+3	Botany	+2
Jumping	+1	Swamp	+2	Legends	+2
Running	+0	Mountain	+0	Medicine	+2
Tinkering	+1	Jewelry	+2	Writing	+1
Vigilance	+3	Leather	-4	Zoology	+2
Acting	+3	Locksmith	+2	Hypnos	+0
Commerce	-4	Metalwork	+2	Narcos	+3

The young woman is Anissa, and she claims she was traveling with her armed escort when they were set upon by animated corpses. Her snork mercenary bodyguard were both slain, but she managed to escape. Luckily, she

saw the watchmen's fires at the inn and sought shelter. She will eventually go on to say that she has come to the area to recover a valuable object stolen from her late father. She will ask circumspect questions that will eventually lead to her asking about Vendren. As Wort recounts his tale for the second time in the evening, she will seem to grow resolved. As he concludes his tale, she will say that she intends to visit the ruins of Vendren's house, and would be willing to pay well for anyone to accompany her. She is prepared to leave at dawn, and will refuse to postpone her endeavor.

## portents

After the party retires for the night following such a dramatic evening, each may be visited by a significant dream. Each player should roll **Dream** at 0; success indicates the character has the following dream (at least one character should have this dream):

*The old man lays under his blankets, his eyes gleaming in their fever light. An oil lamp flickers at his bedside on a small, intricately carved table. Servants flutter about the dim room, their shadows flickering dancers in the deeper shadows of the recesses of the room. An open window's curtains billow gently in the jasmine breeze, and the chirping insects call to the starry silent skies outside.*

*The man's broad forehead is pale with illness, shining with the beads of sweat which his nurses periodically mop away. He whispers in a raspy murmur to himself, his incomprehensible words ignored by the attendants. The smell of camphor and herbs is pungent and nearly overpowers the heady floral garden smells wafting in from the window.*

*A slight form is curled, asleep near the foot of the bed, swathed in shadows and wrapped in slumber's blanket. The sleeping child does not notice as another figure emerges from the room's shadows, ignored by the nurses, and stands by the dying man's bedside. The patient's eyes burn a little brighter as if in recognition of this stranger, who with a sure hand removes the sick man's arm from under the coverlet, and pulls a gold ring from one of his fingers. The child awakes with a cry, but the interloper is gone. The old man's trembling other hand grasps the bedclothes, fumbling for the child's touch. She approaches him, leans her ear to his quivering lips, and he utters a gasp. Her eyes grow cold and hard with his utterance, which you cannot hear. She straightens and walks to the window as the servants rush to the patrician's bedside, too late to see him die.*

## in the tangle

Anissa's tale is mostly true, but not entirely. In fact she has been possessed by a nightmare entity (hence her second Dream score). She is a native of another dream, where her father, Orighor, was a High Dreamer and the author of a magical item, the Navigator. Vendren was at the time a colleague of Orighor; he stole the Navigator when it became clear to him that his Thanatos pursuits would inevitably be discovered. Upon Orighor's death, his spirit remained as a *Pursuit*, a nightmare entity bent on the single-minded completion of some unfinished life work. His Pursuit possessed his then-13 year old daughter. Anissa has been searching the multidream for Vendren and the Navigator the last four years (subjectively); since time does not always flow concurrently from one dream to another, four years for Anissa was forty years in this dream.

Anissa (or rather, Orighor's spirit) believes that the Navigator is in the ruins of Vendren's former home. She will go there, alone if need be, at the earliest possible opportunity. Her Pursuit forces her to single-mindedly seek her objective, but it does not make her necessarily suicidal. She will therefore be very keen to lead the party into the Tangle from the *Inn of Crossed Dreams*. The girl will naturally not reveal the fact of her possession—it is not even clear that she is fully aware of it herself—, nor even the nature of the object she seeks. She will, however, pay well for her escort's services.

While Wort is personally opposed to any expedition to Vendren's ruin, he will reluctantly provide the party with directions to get there. Vendren's home is 5 kilometers from the *Inn of Crossed Dreams*; the group must accumulate 3 task points, each rolling **Empathy/Forest Survival** once for the entire journey at -3, to successfully follow Wort's directions. Characters with poor *Forest Survival*

skill may elect not to roll, but must abide by the group roll. Each task point short of the three needed lengthens their journey by one kilometer, but they will eventually find Vendren's place (even if only by stumbling upon it). The Tangle, is, as the name implies, a dense and overgrown place; travel is slow and arduous—count as tortuous terrain. The Journeymen may therefore move at up to 6 km/hour at a cost of 1 Fatigue per km/hour.

Some parts of the forest are so dark as to seem twilight (**Sight** rolls are at from a -1 to -3 penalty, also applied to missile or thrown attacks). Base *Forest Survival* rolls are at -5. The depths of the forest are also home to plentiful amounts of Suppree; roll **Empathy/Forest Survival** at -4 to locate the vicinity of the herb, **Sight/Botany** at -2 to spot it, checking the results of the **Sight** roll:

<b>Particular</b>	4d6 pinches
<b>Significant</b>	3d6 pinches
<b>Normal</b>	2d6 pinches
<b>Failure</b>	none spotted

Note that 10 pinches are required for a single effective application. The party may search (roll) once per hour to locate healing herb; more frequent searches will delay the journey (and may incur more encounter rolls accordingly).

Every 120 minutes (draconic hour) that the group is in the Tangle, each member should roll 21-**Luck** (so a 13 **Luck** would roll against 8, and a 7 would roll against 14 on the Resolution Table) at +2. If the group rolls a combined 3 or more task points, they encounter either drakkules (should the group be so foolish as to travel at night), ghûls or skeletons. The Dream Keeper should choose the encounter and numbers based on the party's size and strength.

### skeleton

<b>Size</b>	11	Endurance	26
<b>Dream</b>	15	<b>Speed</b>	12/24
<b>Level</b>	3	<b>Damage</b>	+1
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b> <b>Dmg</b>
Claw	13	+3	9 +2
Dodging	12	+3	

Any humanoid seeing a skeleton must check **Will** at -3 or be shocked (semi-surprised) in terror for 1 round.

### ghûl

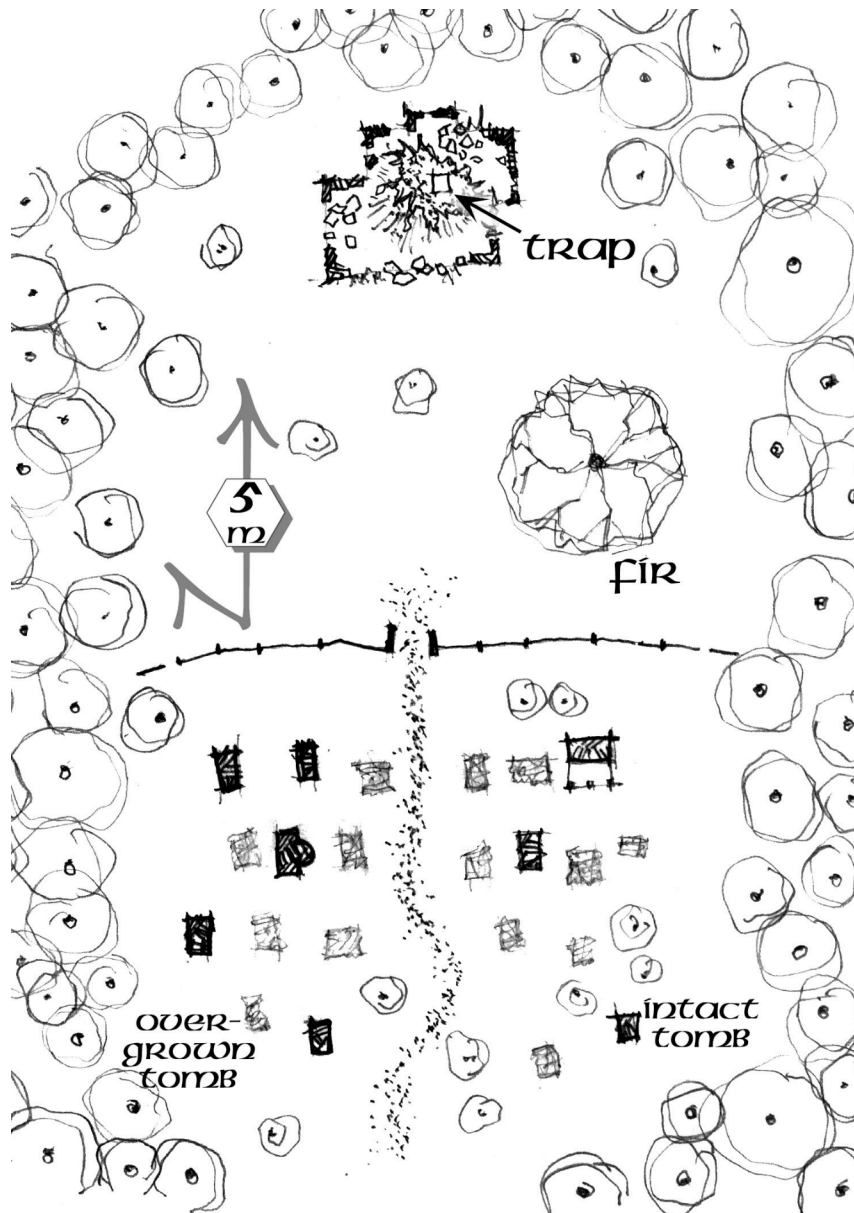
<b>Size</b>	11	Life	13
<b>Constitution</b>	14	Endurance	27
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Speed</b>	12/24
<b>Perception</b>	10	<b>Damage</b>	+1
<b>Will</b>	7	Enc	12
<b>Dream</b>	10	Protection	0
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b> <b>Dmg</b>
Claw	13	4	10 +2*
Bite	13	4	10 +2*
Dodging	10	3	
Discretion	10	3	
Running	10	3	
Vigilance	10	3	
Paralytic venom			
Malignity	6		
Period	1 round		
Damage	1 line of Fatigue		
	Paralysis sets in when all 6 lines of Fatigue are full and lasts 6 hours.		
Antidotes	-4/Floommilk +16		
Floommilk is derived from mixing a half-measure each of floom jelly and human milk. Heat to a blue-blood color (-2 alchemical procedure).			

### Drakkule

<b>Size</b>	4	Life	7
<b>Constitution</b>	10	Endurance	17
<b>Strength</b>	8	<b>Speed</b>	12/38
<b>Perception</b>	12	<b>Damage</b>	-1
<b>Will</b>	7	Enc	6
<b>Dream</b>	7	Protection	-3
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b> <b>Dmg</b>
Bite	10	2	7 -1
Counter	10	2	
Dodging,			
in flight	10	3	
Flying	10	3	

## sepulcher

It was no accident that Vendren chose this particular site for his home nearly four decades ago. Unbeknownst to the locals (though they whisper vague, dark legends about the place), this place was a necropolis in the Second Age, protected by ancient magics only now beginning to fade.



There will be no mistaking the site of Vendren's former home. The trees here grow in particularly twisted forms, and between them are the ancient ruins of the mausoleums and tombs that predate even the old forest. Some of the vaults are so crumbled and overgrown as to appear to be mounds of vegetation and earth. Others, due to lingering magic which to this day protects them, have better withstood the ravages of time, and are easily identifiable as the ornate sepulchers that they are.

Roll **Sight/Masonry** or **Botany** at 0 to determine the approximate age of the sepulchers (and that they predate the forest); the tombs date from the Second Age. It was the inherent thanatary nature of this place, a nexus of the dark undercurrents of nightmare, which drew Vendren to this site in the first place.

None of the tombs may be easily entered. If the characters insist (5 task points with **Strength** rolls at -4 with a 20-minute time factor and cost of 3 Fatigue per roll) they might well be able to violate one or more, only to have their persistence rewarded by a warm greeting from the ghûls and necrats that abide therein. Some of the tombs have ancient coins in them; check **Luck** at -2 for each person excavating a tomb. Success indicates a number of gold coins equal to the searcher's **Luck** are found (or some similar amount). One mausoleum contains an ancient magic dragon sword named *Carnifex* (check **Luck** at -5 to find it).

### necrat

<b>Size</b>	6	<b>Life</b>	9
<b>Constitution</b>	11	<b>Endurance</b>	20
<b>Strength</b>	10	<b>Speed</b>	12/30
<b>Perception</b>	10	<b>Damage</b>	0
<b>Will</b>	10	<b>Enc</b>	8
<b>Dream</b>	10	<b>Protection</b>	0

		Level	Init	Dmg
Bite	11	3	8	+1*
Dodging	10	2		
Discretion	10	3		
Running	11	3		
Vigilance	10	3		

### Necrophage

<b>Malignity</b>	7
<b>Period</b>	1 hour
<b>Damage</b>	-2 Life
<b>Remedies</b>	-4/Turngrease +16 Oil of Selikanthe +6

Flesh around the wound swells, blackens, and putrefies; this spreads to the rest of the body. If the victim dies, a nightmare entity (50%/50% either a Hate or Despair) arises, with a Power equal to the victim's Dream.

<b>carnifex</b> magic dragon sword			
<b>Gem</b>			
Size	5	Inertia	2
Purity	5	Enchantability	3
<b>Item</b>			
Inertia	28	Total inertia	30
<b>Rituals</b>			
Enchantment	City	J3	15d
Purification	Necropolis	I6	4d
Enchantment	City	J3	15d
Alliance	Bridge	K4	4d
Permanence	Sanctuary	L4	5d
Mastery	Lethe	—	7d
Efficiency	Mountain	I3	7d
Purification	Necropolis	I6	4d
Efficiency	Mountain	I3	7d

Use of Carnifex costs the user 1 d per use or hour of use. Due to its two *Scales of Efficiency*, the sword gives its wielder +2 on rolls to hit and scores an additional +2 damage (for a total of +5 plus the user's personal damage modifier). Note that Carnifex' gem has a high enough Enchantability that another *Scale of Efficiency* could be laid upon it (after the requisite *Purification* of course).

Within the confines of the necropolis itself, the party will be relatively safe (assuming they don't disturb the tombs themselves), as any fell creatures inhabiting the place will be nested in their lairs. Loud noises (certain spectacular spells, or the sounds of combat or shouting) may well attract the attention of the ghûls and such that now reside here.

Beyond the graveyard lie the ruins of what must be Vendren's former home itself. Between the graveyard and the little clearing where the ruins lie stands a dark fir, a frayed rope suspended from one of its branches. The rope is a draconic sign:

**Dreamland** Necropolis, Desolation, Swamp.  
**Difficulty** -6  
**Duration** Indefinite  
**Value** 25 spell points

Of Vendren's bones there is no sign.

Vendren's former home was perhaps once the cemetery caretaker's house. The charred remains of the place, burned down some thirty years before, now lie in a moldering heap. Unfortunately for the group, that heap is home to a sludgehammer:

<b>sludgehammer</b>			
Size	18	Endurance	36
Dream	18	Speed	8/16
Level	4	Damage	+4
		Level	Init Dmg
Attack/parry	18	+4	13 (+6)

The sludgehammer attacks using the non-lethal damage table. Once the victim is unconscious, the nightmare entity will engulf and digest it. All gear and equipment is digested in one round, whereas the victim loses 1 Life per round. The sludgehammer may only make one tentacle attack per round, but may parry as many attacks as required.

If defeated, the sludgehammer will dissipate in an oozing puddle of thin mud, draining away to reveal a rusted iron trap door in a corner of the house foundations. Opening the trap requires a **Strength** roll at -4. The trap leads to a narrow steep stair into the house basement.

The basement is itself rather small, some 3 by 4 meters. An alcove at one end has a desk pushed up against it, covered in moldering books and papers hopelessly ruined by time. At the desk, sitting in a chair and wearing moldering robes is the body of Vendren, still wearing the frayed hangman's noose about his neck. As the party approaches, Vendren will turn in his chair and attack.

<b>vendren (zombie)</b>			
Size	12	Endurance	24
Dream	12	Speed	12/24
Level	1	Damage	+1
		Level	Init Dmg
Claw	12	+1	7 +2
Dodging	10	+1	

Once the zombie is destroyed, it will release Vendren's spirit in the form of a Hate (15 **Dream**), which will attack the nearest creature. Note that if the Hate attacks Anissa and defeats her, it will displace Orighor, a 14 **Dream** Pursuit, which in turn will attack the nearest character.

Vendren wears the Navigator on his left hand, a magic ring able to create a Violet Rift to another dream. The Rift will lead to a dream of the wearer's choosing, but only general parameters may be defined (a forest, river, city, etc.). Much as with a laughing reaver, a specific world may not be chosen, only a type of place.

<b>the navigator</b>			
<b>Gem</b>			
Size	3	Inertia	0
Purity	7	Enchantability	3
<b>Item</b>			
Inertia	7	Total inertia	7
<b>Rituals</b>			
Enchantment	City	F5	7d
Alliance	Bridge	G5	4d
Permanence	Sanctuary	G4	5d
Mastery	Lethe	—	7d
<i>Grand Scale of Narcos: Navigator</i>			
(Swaying Bridge G5) D -18			
			14d

As soon as Anissa puts the Navigator on her hand, her Pursuit will dissipate forever. She will revert to herself as she was mentally before being possessed, having only vague memories of the last four years.

—Text, cartography, illustrations and layout by Hieronymous

# the Dressmaker of gothga

This is an urban scenario for four or five *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* characters of experienced levels. The party should have one or two High Dreamers, but at least two members should have *City Survival* beyond level zero. Most characters should have a few skills at +4 or +5, and each character should have one or two skills in the +5 to +6 range. The Dream Keeper should adjust encounters accordingly if the party is larger or smaller; weaker or stronger.

This adventure is designed to incorporate as many aspects of the rules as possible, in order to extend the players' and Dream Keeper's knowledge of the mechanics and spirit of *Rêve*. Gothga, a unique urban environment, is sketched out, with maps, a general overview of the city, a description of its Songmaker's Quarter, and non-player character descriptions. After the scenario has been played out, players and DK alike may wish to linger awhile in the baroque streets of Gothga.

This is a tale of mistaken identities, intrigue, and gruesome events in the fabled city of Gothga, an ancient metropolis largely cut off from the outside world. Its varied and eccentric inhabitants are given to peculiarities, some harmless; others less so. Several seemingly disparate plot threads are woven against the backdrop of this sprawling and exotic city.

## overture: the gnawing perils of the blue forest

Each of the player characters has recently arrived in the reality encompassing Gothga. It is possible that they have traveled here from the Inn of Crossed Dreams (see *Navigator*). Or perhaps they are itinerant travelers who have happened upon the place in their journeys on the Black Road, or maybe they have entered Gothga from the edges of the Ocean Abysses. Another possibility is that they have arrived here after a peculiar dream. In this case, each recollects having gone to bed hungry, regardless of their separate circumstances. Perhaps one was a pauper with an empty larder, the other an inhabitant of a famine-stricken land, and yet another a drunken reveler who was too much in his cups to remember to eat.

In any event, each remembers sleeping fitfully, hounded by gnawing pangs of hunger and a growing sense of unease, but not fully awakening either. As the night proceeds, it is punctuated by the grumbings of an empty stomach, which grow louder and more insistent, and seem to take on an almost palpable presence. Eventually the

fitful and hungered sleeper's vague dreams become a fever nightmare of barks, howls and snapping jaws, as if the dreamer's hunger itself had become personified in sleep as voracious hounds.

As the players wake, groggy, disoriented (and hungry), each finds himself at the edge of a forest. The trees have a decidedly blue-green cast to their foliage, as certain spruce trees do. Scattered scores of meters apart, each player character can see the others, also waking from their slumber and also disoriented. Each is equipped not as they were the night before, but as adventurers and Journeymen. Indeed, the life each led before going to sleep is quickly receding in his or her memory, as if it too was a dream, vivid upon first awakening, but quickly evanescent.

Only their hunger remains — their hunger, and the baying, barking and snapping of their dreams. Emerging from the forest is a monstrous creature of nightmare: a turntooth.

turntooth				
Size	28	Life	26	
Constitution	23	Endurance	49	
Strength	23	Speed	14/30	
Perception	14	Damage	+ 7	
Will	12	Enc	25.5	
Dream	12	Protection	8	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Maw	18	6	15	+ 9
Parry	18	6	15	+ 9
Dodging	12	3		
Running	12	3		
Vigilance	14	3		

The turntooth may cast a variant of *Non-aggressiveness* via one of its yellow eyes once per round. Victims must make a successful resistance roll at -8 or be forced to make a **Will** roll at -3 to attempt any aggressive action (check each round). Once a character has successfully resisted the turntooth's magical attack, she is no longer susceptible to that particular creature's *Non-aggressiveness*.

The characters will obviously have to cooperate in order to deal with this nightmarish creature. The creature has a peculiar blue-green cast to it; a **Sight/Botany** roll at -1 will indicate that this is due to a thick mossy coat of verdigleam growing on the creature. This moss is typically found in dark, moist places (such as root hollows and in rotted out logs) of certain coniferous forests. Verdigleam is a specialized healing herb, with a bonus of +4, but only useable in the healing of wounds, not the recovery of Life points. Enough of the moss can be gathered from the beast's pelt for six applications, with a **Dexterity/Leatherworking** or **Dexterity/Alchemy** at 0. If enchanted, a potion made from the herb functions per the normal rules for enchanted healing potions.

**Sight/Forest Survival** at 0 will spot another, smaller growth of verdigleam on the bark of nearby trees. Investigating, the Journeyers will locate a large hollow dug in between the roots of two particularly large spruces — the turntooth's nest. There, in a matted pile of old gnawed bones and rent bits of cloth and leather, is a silver ring set with a gleaming ice-blue astarite: Size 5, Purity 6, worth 30 sols (a small fortune)! Of course, unless the Journeyers are specifically searching through the turntooth's wretched pile, they will only spot the ring with a **Luck/Vigilance** roll at -3; otherwise they will automatically detect it.

Once the turntooth has been dealt with, the sprawling city of Gothga, visible in the distance even from the eaves of the Blue Forest, is an obvious destination.

### *a chance invitation*

Since their initial encounter and meeting, the player characters are assumed to have taken up residence in Gothga for a short while. They may be intending to stay for a longer time, or may be seeking passage out of the city. In any event, play resumes with the assumption that the player characters know each other casually.

On the night when our story begins, one of the player characters has just won a fairly large sum of money (large by adventurers' standards) in a game of chance and is buying rounds for his or her new friends — that is, the other members of the party. Have each character roll **Luck** at -4; the first who makes a particular success is the lucky winner. In case of more than one player's rolling a particular, have those roll again until a single player is determined to have won. The amount is irrelevant, but it should be enough to afford the group a fairly lavish evening of carousing.

Late in the hour of the Reed, it becomes obvious that old Merriman Fot, the owner of the *Urgent Need*, is ready to close and go home. The group are his only patrons, and he'd rather find his bed. Someone in the party (presumably after making a *City Survival* roll) suggests that all migrate to the *Whistling Fish*, just a few streets away. Assume that at this point the players have been enjoying their cups, and each has had to make three Life rolls at -2 (they have been drinking from Fot's wine cellar); each failed roll indicates a greater degree of inebriation (see Book One, *Journeyers*, Chapter 9: Morale). Characters may therefore be as far gone as second degree inebriation ('lit') and may have suffered Endurance loss appropriately.

As the group bids a grumbling Fot good night and makes its way down the Street of Maidens (so called for its ancient reputation as a red light district) through the Songmakers' Quarter over to the Rambleway and towards

the promised *Whistling Fish*, they cross Water Street and pass the ancient, dry fountain known locally as Cataract Square. The streets this night are quiet, and the group only crosses a few passersby.

A slight chill is in the early autumn air, and the old cobbles gleam with the damp of the low, clinging fog which has risen as if expressly to caress them. The group's attention is drawn to the clear sounds of horse-hooves striking cobbles and the creak of carriage wheels (**Hearing** at 0). As they stand next to the fountain, discussing amongst themselves how best to proceed to the *Fish* (remember that they are newcomers to Gothga), the carriage itself comes into view.

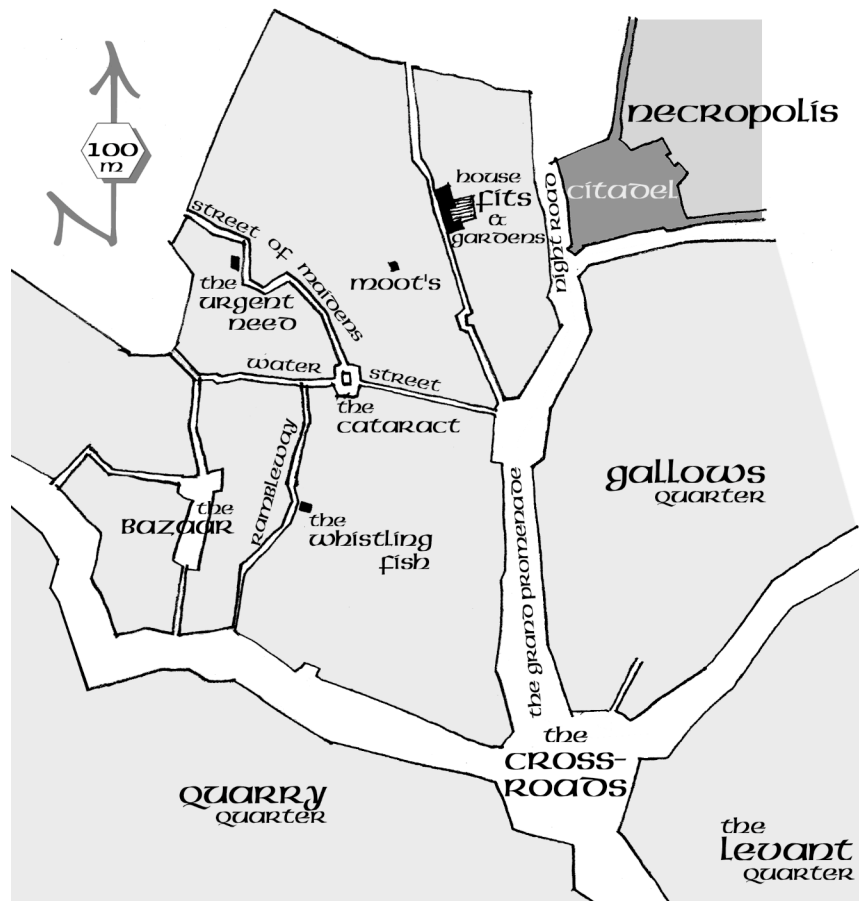
It is a black hansom, drawn by two magnificent black steeds. Its coachman wears a plain black livery with no visible crests or insignias; neither is the coach itself marked in any way. A halberdier is visible, standing on the rear of the carriage. **Sight** rolls at -3 will be necessary to distinguish any details about the passenger within as the carriage slows slightly in passing the group. She appears to be wearing a deep red, long-sleeved gown, and a mask as if for a ball. She will extend a long, black-gloved hand holding out what appears to be a white card

The passenger will drop the card if none are quick enough to retrieve it; **Dexterity** check at -3 (using any positive levels in *Juggling* as a modifier) for any group member to catch it (low roll wins any ties). As the carriage speeds away, the decisive thack! of the window being shut can be heard. Caught as it were almost flat-footed, there will be little for the group to do except to examine the card. The carriage simply moves too quickly to be caught on foot.

For reasons which will become clearer later, neither the coachmen nor the passenger expect any sort of confrontation whatsoever, so if the group do attempt to physically restrain their escape in some way, they may well surprise the interlopers. Almost certainly, however, the carriage will escape.

By the light of their torches the player characters will be able to discern that the object left behind so quickly and mysteriously is not, in fact, a card, but a heavy linen envelope. It is blank (although perhaps a bit damp and dirty if it has been dropped on the ground) on the front and marked with a large, elaborate, black wax seal on the back.





## gothga's songmakers quarter and environs

### coachmen

Size	11	Will	10	Life	12
Appearance	10	Intellect	11	Endurance	23
Constitution	12	Empathy	11	CT	4
Strength	13	Dream	10	Damage	+1
Agility	11	Luck	10	Sust	3
Dexterity	10	Mêlée	12	Enc	12.0
Sight	12	Missile	11	Speed	12
Hearing	11	Throw	12	Protection	2
Smell-Taste	9	Stealth	10		
	Level	Init	Dmg		
Hand-to-hand	+1	7			
Dagger	+3	9	+2		
Polearm	+4	10	+5		
Crossbow	+1	6	+3		
Dodging	+3				
Climbing	0	Running	0	Riding	+3
Discretion	+2	Tinkering	+1	City Surv	+5
Jumping	-2	Vigilance	+3	Legends	-2

**Sight/City Survival** or **Legends** at -8 would indicate that the seal is that of the House Fits (the seal of House Fits is actually fairly well known to a native of Gothga; the difficulty of the above roll represents the characters' status as relative strangers). Should the group open the envelope, they will find that it contains a single very large sheet, also of prohibitively expensive linen, folded in quarto, and penned in a beautiful hand, elaborate almost to the point of being illegible except with great care and in good light.

So peculiar is the script that it will require a **Sight/Writing** roll at -2; the dim flickering light of the torches will add a further penalty of -3. The missive is, in fact, an invitation (and is necessary to allow entry) to the Duke of Fits' dress ball, to be held in three days, on the 15th of the Lyre.

Receiving such an invitation (to a ball obviously beyond their station as strangers in this strange city) in such a unusual way ought to pique the curiosity of any player worthy of the name.

### rumors and haberdashers

Should the group begin asking around about the Duke of Fits or making inquiries about the ball itself, they should make **Luck/City Survival** rolls at -4 and consult the following rumors table (the roll should be made secretly by the Dream Keeper, so that the player may not use the result of the die roll to interpret the rumor's veracity):

**Particular** The Duke's eldest daughter has a reputation for mingling below her station. Just last week she was seen with a young escort at a party at the *Garrulous Rat*, and he was certainly **not** her chaperone, nor a member of the nobility, judging by his behavior and manners.

**Significant** The Duke once quickly fell into political disfavor nearly twenty years ago. But, as these things go, he was just as quickly reinstated to his position at court within a year or two. Some say he got back into the Padishah's good graces by seeing to the assassination of a political rival.

**Normal** The Duke has always been well-known for his patronage of the great fencing masters of the city. Even in his advancing middle years he is said to be an excellent swordsman. That coupled with his famous temper has led to more than a few duels. Needless to say, the Duke has always been victorious.

**Failure** Time out of mind House Fits has always thrown lavish parties. It's a tradition of theirs. Every once in a while I hear they even have a feast for the commoners.

**Part. Fail.** People from the Duke's household are always patronizing the apothecary in my neighborhood, which is far from the Duke's palace on the edge of the Gallows Quarter. My nephew's friend is an apprentice at that particular herbalist's, and he says that the Duke is very ill, but his servants come so far to his master's shop so no one at court will find out.

**Fumble** The talk is that the Padishah is looking for a replacement for the head of House Fits. New blood, and all that. Maybe the Duke's going back into exile.

attempt to ingratiate themselves with members of the population likely to have dealings with the Duke's House, and that they will attempt to not be obvious in their investigations. Such things take time. In the interest of game play, allow each character one rumors roll per day (and events will conspire to give them little more than a day of investigation). This assumes that the character in question pursues an avenue of investigation which seems reasonable to the DK; the judge may feel free to fiat that the player's approach is fruitless. Do not repeat rumors; make up new ones if necessary. Alternately, failed rolls may result in simply no rumor at all.

In any event, the player characters will need to acquire suitable clothing if they plan on attending the ball. Most of the large Houses of Gothga have their own servants who make the various elaborate costumes frequently worn at these sorts of affairs. Indeed, Gothgans wear incredibly elaborate costumes; recently the fashion has been the incorporation of mechanical devices of no particular usefulness (clocks, music-boxes, kinetic sculptures, marionettes) into jackets, coats, headdresses, and masks.

Tailors capable of satisfying the Gothgan fashion are rare; those not exclusively in the jealous employ of one House or another are rarer still. Pharrish Moot is one such rare tailor, a dressmaker by preference, although not exclusively so. His shop is fairly well-known (owing to his reputation and free agency); **Empathy/City Survival** at -4 will allow a player character to find it in the Songmakers' Quarter, a few streets short of the Grande Promenade which divides that Quarter from the Gallows, the very center of Gothga. His shop is, in fact, very near the palace of House Fits.

Moot is a middle-aged man who leads a quiet life and keeps largely to himself. He is well-known in his neighborhood, but seems to have few friends, if any. Of course, his work is so completely consuming, his costumes and dresses so elaborate, his services in such demand by the petty nobility and wealthy merchants who seek to impress their social betters, that it is a wonder that he ever sees the light of day at all.

But there is another side to Pharrish Moot, one not so obvious to the players but which will sooner or later catch up to them. Moot is a secret practitioner of Thanatos, and an accomplished one at that. He has other talents as well, but his necromancy is his obsession. He has just recently, in fact, fallen victim to a Necromantic Shadow, and is about to embark on a series of grisly murders.

### **Lady Eriada of House Blunt**

Born in the Hour of the Sleeping Castle

28 years old. 1m53, 60 kilos.

Right-handed. Black hair, brown eyes.

<b>Size</b>	9	<b>Will</b>	15	Life	10
<b>Appearance</b>	15	<b>Intellect</b>	14	Endurance	25
<b>Constitution</b>	11	<b>Empathy</b>	13	CT	3
<b>Strength</b>	10	<b>Dream</b>	11	Damage	+0
<b>Agility</b>	14	<b>Luck</b>	12	Sust	2
<b>Dexterity</b>	15	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	Enc	9.0
<b>Sight</b>	12	<b>Missile</b>	13	Speed	12
<b>Hearing</b>	14	<b>Throw</b>	11	Protection	1
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	11	<b>Stealth</b>	13		

	Level	Init	Dmg		
Hand-to-hand	+ 0	6			
Dagger	+ 5	11	+ 1		
Dodging	+ 4				
Climbing	+ 2	Acting	+ 7	Locksmith	+ 4
Dance	+ 6	Commerce	+ 2	Surgery	+ 2
Discretion	+ 5	Disguise	+ 4	Swimming	+ 0
Drawing	+ 2	Music	+ 6	Alchemy	+ 4
Jumping	+ 1	Pickpocket	+ 3	Astrology	+ 1
Running	+ 0	Riding	+ 4	Botany	+ 3
Seduction	+ 5	City Surv	+ 6	Legends	+ 4
Singing	+ 7	Outdoor	+ 0	Medicine	+ 3
Tinkering	- 1	Undergrnd	+ 1	Writing	+ 2
Vigilance	+ 4	Gaming	+ 2	Zoology	+ 2
		Jewelry	+ 4		

Obviously arriving at these rumors will entail much more than just asking the local fruit vendor in the market what she knows about House Fits. It is assumed that players will

When Moot feels the need to kill a victim, he will seemingly carelessly prick a likely customer with a pin. He will then use the drop of blood so gathered to possess the

person, whom he will send to bring him his next victim. He currently has a fascination with mannequins, and hopes to collect several (headless) zombies made from the bodies of young women, to be displayed in his private quarters wearing some of his couture creations. Any heads left behind at the scene of the crime, naturally, will implicate (via *Speak with Skull*, a not-unknown ritual in Gothga) the person controlled, not Moot himself. So innocuous will Moot's pinprick be (hopefully of a player character, to add spice and interest to the game), that the DK should only mention it after the fact, not as it is happening. If Moot feels that a potential agent is suspicious, he might even surreptitiously daub her with a bit of black camphor, to render the skin in the area of the needle-prick numb, before actually drawing blood.

### pharrish moot

Born in the Hour of the Lyre. 45 years old. 1m59, 68 kilos. Right-handed. Thin greying hair, brown eyes.

<b>Size</b>	10	<b>Will</b>	14	<b>Life</b>	12
<b>Appearance</b>	9	<b>Intellect</b>	15	<b>Endurance</b>	25
<b>Constitution</b>	13	<b>Empathy</b>	12	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	12	<b>Dream</b>	17	<b>Damage</b>	+0
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	11	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	16	<b>Mêlée</b>	12	<b>Enc</b>	11.0
<b>Sight</b>	13	<b>Missile</b>	14	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	10	<b>Throw</b>	13	<b>Protection</b>	1
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	9	<b>Stealth</b>	11		

	<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>
Hand-to-hand	+0	6	
Dagger	+3	9	+1
Dodging	+4		

Climbing	-1	Riding	-4	Alchemy	+5
Discretion	+5	City Surv	+5	Astrology	+2
Drawing	+4	Outdoor	+0	Botany	+0
Running	-3	Forest	+3	Legends	+2
Tinkering	+5	Undergrnd	-2	Medicine	+1
Vigilance	+5	Jewelry	+6	Writing	+1
Acting	+3	Leather	+8	Zoology	+1
Carpentry	+3	Locksmith	+2		
Commerce	+3	Metalwork	+3	Hypnos	+5
Disguise	+7	Surgery	+0	Narcos	+6
Pickpocket	+3	Swimming	-4	Thanatos	+11

### reserved spells

*Amnesia—Lethe*    *Dreamlessness—A3*    *Suggestion—A2*  
*Confusion—G1*    *Sleep—C2*

### known spells

All Hypnos spells and rituals up to and including -8  
 All Narcos rituals up to and including -9  
 All Thanatos spells and rituals

By the time the players discover the truth about Moot and are in a position to confront him, he may well have collected quite a few zombies in his back room.

### mannequin zombies

<b>Size</b>	10	<b>Endurance</b>	20
<b>Dream</b>	10	<b>Speed</b>	12/24
<b>Level</b>	1	<b>Damage</b>	+1
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b> <b>Dmg</b>
Claw	12	+1	7   +2
Dodging	10	+1	

### thieves in the night

In a thread — if the pun can be excused — almost completely unrelated to the murderous Pharrish Moot, members of House Blunt are involved in some political intrigue of great interest to them and their political and social rivals, but of little import to the player characters — for now. Blunt have (the singular is used, but is plural in constraint) in the past few months engaged the services of a notorious rogue, assassin, and spy, one Thurnius Tohl. Tohl is quite a colorful character: duelist, seducer, thief and a bit of a pirate. It is in this last capacity that he has been working for Blunt, gathering (and where it is lacking, manufacturing) evidence that their rival House Drum has been engaging in piracy against Ducal interests. Blunt hopes thereby to sway the Duke towards favoring their dubious claims to some ancestral lands of Drum's currently in question owing to some rather entangled and incomprehensible inheritance laws.

By the morning, House Blunt will have realized their regrettable error. Tohl is a master of disguises, and it is understandable how Eriada Blunt could have mistaken the Journeyers for Tohl in the company of a few of his bravos, especially as the PCs were coincidentally at the appointed place more or less at the appointed hour, if slightly early. And as the characters will have presumably made inquiries throughout the entire subsequent day regarding the Duke's ball, House Blunt will have been alerted to their presence and possible connection to the misplaced invitation.

So the night following their receipt of the letter, the group will have their inn room burglarized by agents of Blunt, bent on recovering it. Naturally it would be desirable for the player characters to thwart the efforts of the thieves. Other than possibly revealing (under duress, presumably) the object of their mission, and that they come from House Blunt, the thieves will give up little other intelligence.

Naturally even lowly burglars know better than to barge into someone's room while they are there. Around the hour of the Lyre, therefore, the group will encounter as if by happenstance a few young ladies of obviously corruptible morals: Phisbe, Outhia, Magris, Enna and Anthiope (there should be one young lady for each party member). These will express interest in the male members of the party (and tactfully even female members should it

seem appropriate), marveling at their exoticism and ‘obvious’ charm. The Dream Keeper may wish to feign making ‘secret’ **Luck** rolls for the players, in order to give the impression that this is indeed a favorable random encounter. The exchange could well lead to an evening of carousing, beginning with drinks and dinner at a local eatery (but not the *Outside Inn* where the party is staying: “The food there is unacceptable, the service boorish!”).

### thieves of house Blunt

<b>Size</b>	10	<b>Will</b>	10	Life	11
<b>Appearance</b>	10	<b>Intellect</b>	11	Endurance	22
<b>Constitution</b>	12	<b>Empathy</b>	11	CT	4
<b>Strength</b>	14	<b>Dream</b>	10	Damage	+ 1
<b>Agility</b>	14	<b>Luck</b>	10	Sust	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	13	<b>Mêlée</b>	14	Enc	12.0
<b>Sight</b>	13	<b>Missile</b>	13	Speed	12
<b>Hearing</b>	11	<b>Throw</b>	13	Protection	2
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	9	<b>Stealth</b>	12		
		Level	Init	Dmg	
Hand-to-hand	+ 0		7		
Dagger	+ 3		10	+ 1	
One-handed sword	+ 5		12	+ 4	
Dodging	+ 4				
Climbing	+ 3	Commerce	+ 0	Juggling	+ 2
Discretion	+ 4	Disguise	+ 0	Locksmith	+ 4
Jumping	+ 2	Pickpocket	+ 3	Surgery	- 2
Running	+ 1	City Surv	+ 5	Swimming	- 4
Tinkering	+ 2	Outdoor	+ 0	Legends	+ 0
Vigilance	+ 3	Undergrnd	- 2	Writing	- 4
Acting	+ 1	Acrobatics	+ 0		

Their new friends will lead the group to the *Fountain Court*, a rather mediocre place that they consider upscale. They will be perfectly happy to be fêted by the players; even if they are being paid by House Blunt for their services. After all, a few extra coins and drinks won’t hurt. Their instructions are to keep the party occupied through the night, and they will have no compunction about using all their wiles and charms to do so.

Should the group have the presence of mind to avoid dallying with these young ladies and return to the inn, they will in all likelihood encounter the burglars in the hour of the Reed. On the other hand, if they stay with their companions through the night and have the invitation on one of their persons, they may well get it stolen by one or more of “the girls”. After all, these young ladies are not above rolling their escorts. The Dream Keeper should make liberal use of **Appearance/Seduction** and **Appearance/Discretion** rolls for the young ladies, while the player characters will need to exercise **Empathy/Vigilance** (and maybe even **Will** rolls to stay awake at a critical moment).

### filles de joie

Beauty	14				
<b>Size</b>	10	<b>Will</b>	11	Life	11
<b>Appearance</b>	13	<b>Intellect</b>	10	Endurance	21
<b>Constitution</b>	11	<b>Empathy</b>	11	CT	3
<b>Strength</b>	10	<b>Dream</b>	10	Damage	+ 0
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	9	Sust	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	13	<b>Mêlée</b>	11	Enc	10.0
<b>Sight</b>	11	<b>Missile</b>	12	Speed	12
<b>Hearing</b>	11	<b>Throw</b>	11	Protection	0
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	10	<b>Stealth</b>	11		
		Level	Init	Dmg	
Hand-to-hand	+ 0		5		
Dagger	+ 1		6	+ 1	
Dodging	+ 1				
Climbing	- 3	Vigilance	+ 0	Gaming	- 2
Cooking	- 2	Acting	+ 4	Jewelry	- 4
Dance	+ 1	Commerce	+ 0	Locksmith	+ 1
Discretion	+ 3	Disguise	- 2	Surgery	- 5
Jumping	- 3	Music	+ 0	Astrology	- 2
Running	- 1	Pickpocket	+ 3	Botany	- 6
Seduction	+ 5	City Surv	+ 5	Legends	- 2
Singing	+ 0	Outdoor	+ 0		

### Blood in the street

On the second day after their accidental receipt of the invitation, events will take yet another dramatic turn. The entire Songmaker’s Quarter will be roused by the news that a young society girl has gone missing. Maïella Pale, youngest daughter of Joragendt Pale, scion of House Pale, is missing. Her bodyguards were found drunk and asleep in an alley off of High Street. By noon her warders will have been publicly hanged, still claiming their innocence, their heads taken to the Necropolis for dark purposes. It is only then that the girl’s own severed head will be found, carelessly tossed over the wall of the city’s great cemetery near one of its main gates. (Subsequent magical interrogation of the bodyguards will yield no useful information, other than the regrettable fact of their innocence). Interrogation of the girl’s skull will only yield vague information indicating that she was killed by a stranger of uncertain description. In the macabre game of telephone that will ensue from her posthumous testimony, a description will be circulated which could possibly fit at least one of the characters — as well as Thurnius Tohl. Of the rest of her body no trace will be found.

For the rest of the second day after receiving the invitation the entire district will be abuzz with the shocking murder, and tensions will be high. Unbeknownst to the general population, this is in fact the third murder in as many days; the other two victims were servant girls and have either gone unnoticed or undiscovered.

By now the Dream Keeper should already have steered the

party towards Pharrish Moot. The tailor will at first be unwilling to outfit the group given the deadline, but will suddenly change his mind. The Dream Keeper might act as if it was the Journeyers' persuasion which led the tailor to change in mind; in fact he will have done so with the purpose of using one of the player characters to further his killing spree. While it would be impossible for him to create something specific for the group on such short notice, he may have something which a client never picked up which could fit the bill (it's a good thing that the old necromancer also knows the ritual of *Gremlin*). He will ask the group (or individual) to return the next morning for a fitting. Moot has found his next agent.

Needless to say, one of the prostitutes sent by House Blunt to distract the party away from the invitation may well turn out to be one of the party member's victim. Moot will first *Spirit Possess* his pinpricked victim, then *Task* him to communicate to no one about any subsequent magical contact with the necromancer. Moot will follow this *Task* with two others: to murder a beautiful girl, then one to bring the headless body to Moot in secret. Once in his shop, the agent will be subject to an *Amnesia* spell. It could well be that by the time of the ball, the authorities might be investigating one of the player characters for one or all the murders (doubtless the assumption will be that the same *modus operandus* for all the crimes necessarily points to the same perpetrator). It almost need not be mentioned that anyone reasonably suspected of killing a noble cannot possibly hope for a fair trial.

## the Dress Ball

The House Fits ball will officially last from the hour of the Lyre until the Spider, but in fact will go on until dawn. The night of the ball the entire area in the vicinity of House Fits will be abuzz. Some will be there out of macabre interest due to the recent murder among the nobility, but the populace at large traditionally gathers near a great House when a ball is held, in order to see the magnificent costumes and carriages of the invitees as they proceed into the great courtyard of the House, beyond the prying eyes of the great unwashed (a similar scene in Paul Féval's *Le Bossu* (*The Hunchback*) comes to mind).

Beyond the carriage-gates of the perimeter wall of the house lies the outer courtyard of the Fits compound. There the magnificent carriages and hansom of the more illustrious and wealthier guests turn about after depositing their passengers at the head of the walk into the gardens. Meanwhile, those whose carriages have deposited them outside enter through a gate adjacent to the carriage gate, no less ornamental and grandiose. Liveried footmen (halberdiers; use the same characteristics as for Eriada's coachmen) man the gates. As the party enters the grounds,

they might spot the same black hansom (or a suspiciously similar one) which delivered the invitation with a **Sight** roll at -3. A **Sight/Legends** or *City Survival* roll at -8 (again owing to the players' relative newness to Gothga) might identify the crest now visible on the carriage as belonging to House Blunt. If that opportunity is missed, the bestaffed chamberlain announcing arrivals will call out Eriada of Blunt's name as she exits her carriage; players might hear him above the din of arriving and departing carriages, horse hooves on cobbles, and the general hubbub of excitement with a **Hearing/City Survival** roll at -3. Failing that, they might simply recognize her as the woman from the carriage with a **Sight/Disguise** roll at -6.

**Timetable.** It is important for the Dream Keeper to keep track of time throughout the evening, even loosely. Eriada will arrive at about the same time as the Journeyers, presumably in the hour of the Lyre. Thurnius Tohl (see below) will arrive in the hour of the Spider, and will plant his evidence at the end of that hour. The House Drum assassin will lie in wait for Eriada until the hour of the Reed, at which time it will seek her out (see the hedge-maze description below). At about that time, Tohl will also seek her out in order to confirm that his mission has been accomplished. There is potential here therefore for Eriada, Tohl, the Journeyers, the House Drum entity, and even NPC bravos and duelists to collide sometime in that hour, probably in or around the hedge-maze.

**Dances.** At the dress ball the players will be involved in a series of dances. Naturally, one is not obligated to dance, but to do so will leave one open to conversations with the Gothgans attending. That might lead to the exposure of whatever identities the players might have fabricated to justify their presence at the ball.

If the players want to approach Eriada Blunt they may do so most easily by dancing. Naturally, one might need to dance with several partners before reaching her. Check **Luck/Dancing** at -3, period 30 minutes, 8 task points. If at any time a character has a negative task-point total, then assume that the player character has committed some unforgivable social *faux pas* in Eriada's presence (such as attempting a poor rendition of a Sarabande instead of the Pas de Deux required); speaking with her hereafter will be virtually impossible.

Naturally a player character could simply stride across the room, jostling dancers and disturbing the festivities, and confront Eriada. Boorish behavior, however, will absolutely not be tolerated and one engaged in such activities might well find himself called out to a duel in the gardens with one of the many bravos in attendance.

Bravos of the Ball					
Size	12	Will	11	Life	13
Appearance	12	Intellect	10	Endurance	25
Constitution	13	Empathy	9	CT	4
Strength	13	Dream	10	Damage	+ 1
Agility	15	Luck	11	Sust	3
Dexterity	12	Mêlée	14	Enc	12.5
Sight	10	Missile	11	Speed	12
Hearing	10	Throw	12	Protection	2
Smell-Taste	11	Stealth	12		
		Level	Init	Dmg	
Hand-to-hand		+ 0	7	(+ 1)	
Dagger		+ 5	12	+ 2	
Dodging		+ 5			
One-handed sword		+ 6	13	+ 4	
Climbing	+ 1	Acting	+ 1	Gaming	+ 3
Dance	+ 3	Commerce	+ 0	Locksmith	+ 1
Discretion	+ 2	Pickpocket	+ 0	Surgery	- 3
Jumping	+ 1	Riding	+ 3	Legends	- 2
Running	+ 1	City Surv	+ 6	Writing	+ 0
Seduction	+ 2	Outdoor	+ 0		
Vigilance	+ 2	Acrobatics	+ 0		

**Draconic Sign.** Sight/Drawing at 0 will allow a High Dreamer to notice that there is a scene woven in a portion of one of the House Fits tapestries (hanging in a secondary passage near one of the ballrooms) which is indeed a draconic sign. The image depicts a school of fish being tossed by the waves at the foot of a precipice, and a ship being dashed against the rocks in an attempt to net them.

**Dreamland** Lake  
**Difficulty** -8  
**Duration** Indefinite  
**Value** 30 spell development points

### eriada

Once Eriada is reached, she will be elusive and vague, until eventually realizing that her interlocutor must be the person accidentally given the invitation. Her reaction will partly depend on the players' handling of her.

If threatened or if the players are antagonistic, she will attempt to evade them, but will lead them outside the ballroom and to the adjacent gardens and hedge-maze. There she will signal a group of her bodyguards to assist her in dealing with the player characters. On the other hand, even if the players admit to simply following up on the invitation out of a sense of innocent curiosity, a lifetime of Gothgan intrigues will have taught Eriada suspicion. Unless they are very convincing (in the DK's estimation), she will feign sympathy and will suggest they talk in private, again leading them to her bodyguards. At best, the player characters can expect that she will realize that they have nothing to do with her affair, and will ask (or bribe) them to leave. In all likelihood, however, Eriada will assume that they are lying and wish her harm.

### tharnias tohl

Unbeknownst to Eriada or the party, Tohl has already gotten into the ball — he is, after all, a master spy, and is not about to allow the lack of an invitation to prevent his getting into the ball. He will have forged an invitation, or fabricated a story, to get himself in, and will be attempting to work his way to Eriada. He has with him a stolen ship's log book filled with evidence damning to House Drum, and after showing it to his client plans on leaving it at the ball for the Duke of Fits to find. Tohl will get to Eriada late in the hour of the Serpent. In the meantime, the pirate will spy the party, and may assume they are agents of House Drum bent on harming or thwarting him or Eriada. He will also attempt to lure the players outside, where they can be ambushed by his assassins (use the same stats as for the bravos of the ball).

### in the hedge-maze

To the east of the grand ballroom is a wide garden of lawns and *parterres*, low geometrical garden beds and paths. Beyond lies the Duke of Fits' hedge-maze, a complex and grand affair. The gardens between the hedge-maze and house are the gathering place for various bodyguards and bravos, and care should be given to avoid giving offense and starting a duel. Most duels can be settled on a first-blood basis (first light wound) but if one or both of the antagonists are drunk or greatly offended such social niceties may be tossed to the four winds.

If Eriada feels threatened by the PCs, she will flee into the maze. She knows it fairly well, having been to many Fits parties, and will hope to lose any pursuers there.

**Note on dueling.** In Gothga duels between gentlemen are frowned upon but generally have no serious legal ramifications. The winner has much more to worry about if the duel starts a blood feud between two Houses, as these feuds can have far more dire consequences than a mere prison sentence (or even straightforward execution). Of course, if a death results then matters are more serious. A weregild will almost certainly be paid to the deceased's family (in essence a fine extracted from the killer), but here again the worst consequence is inter-House warfare.

Naturally this is all predicated on the assumption that the duelists are gentle-born — which the Journeymen will presumably be assumed to be at first. But if it is revealed that they are common adventurers and vagabonds, one can assume that they would receive a much harsher and less civilized punishment in the dungeons of the city.



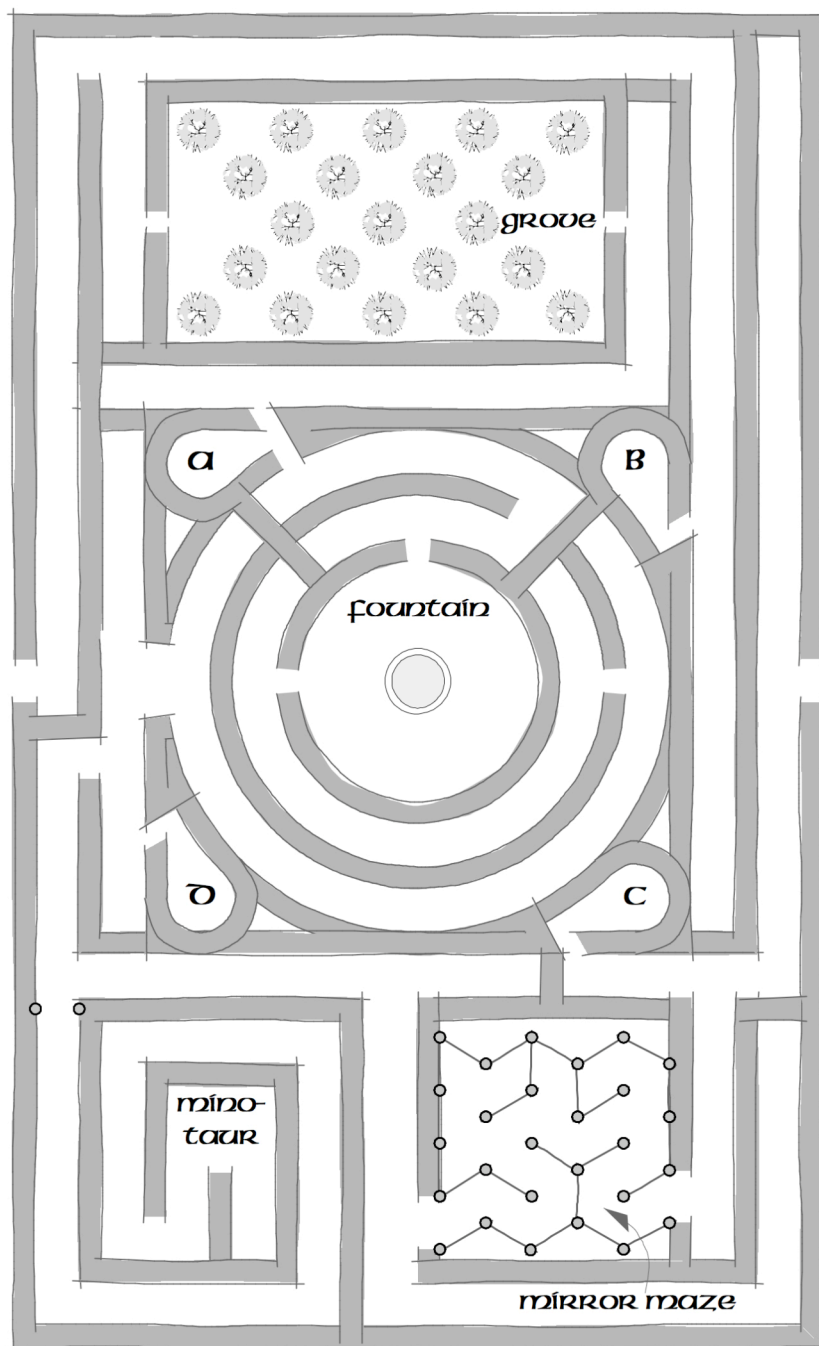
The cedar hedges of the maze are thick and well-trimmed, some two and a half meters tall, and about a meter thick. Thorny vines grow throughout as well as various flowering vines — jasmine, passionflowers and honeysuckle, predominantly. Going through the hedge is virtually impossible, so thick and robust is the cedar hedge itself — would it surprise the Dream Keeper to learn that the hedge was encouraged by many castings of *Plant Growth*?

Of course, the hedge can be hacked through with a sword or axe, but doing so is bound to attract unwanted attention, and in any event requires **Strength** rolls at -4, 10 task points, with a three minute period. Don't forget to count Fatigue (about 3 points ought to do) and give the despoilers a **Luck** roll to avoid detection. Even if they take the precaution of magically silencing their vandalism, they might be seen.

The paths of the maze are two meters wide and well-tended grass turf, leading to various areas meant to amuse and delight the guests of House Fits. During the party there will be so many paper lanterns hung everywhere that ambient light levels will suffice to provide adequate visibility, and the ball is held on the night of a full moon as well. The following areas may serve to delay or potentially endanger the Journeymen.

**Mirror Maze.** This small area within the maze has partitions made of polished mirrors, set at 60° from each other and supported at their juncture by columns. The visual effect is of a hall of columns, each reflected and re-reflected such that the space seems about six times bigger than it really is. Each column supports the corner of a shallow domed pergola or arbor, which are overgrown with a vigorous wisteria vine whose heady violet blooms drip from overhead.

Characters will find the mirror maze quite confusing and disorienting. Getting through it will take **Empathy** rolls at -4; those with a positive ranking in *Underground Survival* may use that skill as well. Each **Empathy** roll has a period of 5 minutes, and each character must roll a total of 6 task points to get through the maze. If through particular failures or fumbled rolls a character loses all accumulated task points, then she finds herself back at the starting point of the mirror maze.



**The Minotaur.** This portion of the maze is entered through a pair of columns similar to the ones in the mirror maze. Those in the know avoid this area unless, as the Duke sometimes does when overcome by insomnia, they wish to take a little restful nap.

In the central chamber of the maze is a thick, soft bed of grass under a bower overgrown with a flowering vine; **Sight/Botany** at -5 will identify it as somnifora, a natural (and powerful) narcoleptic plant. Over the bower is a plaque which bears this inscription:

Bull-headed that thou art  
Rest here the knot of thine thought

Anyone breathing in the heady scents of the somnifora plant or laying down or sitting in the bower will be exposed to its effects, which are a bit milder than the distilled sleep potion made from it.

somniafora			
<b>Malignity</b>	2		
<b>Period</b>	15 minutes		
<b>Damage</b>	Irresistible sleep		
<b>Remedy</b>	-7/Sandpowder +12, Turngrease +10.		

Those succumbing to the plant will sleep for a full draconic hour (instead of the eight hours or so of sleep a potion of the stuff would produce).

**The Grove.** This large open area has been planted in a quincunx so as to resemble an orchard. Almost all the trees here are velvines, and one of them is about to bear a bouncer (for a full description see Appendix II). The central tree is a treasurine which has been carefully cultivated, pruned, and grafted to have a more treelike appearance rather than its natural thorny bramble-like form. The treasurine trees are in fruit, and from 2-5 (d4+1) fruits are ripe and ready to be picked.

BOUNCER			
<b>Size</b>	1	<b>Life</b>	8
<b>Constitution</b>	14	<b>Endurance</b>	22
<b>Strength</b>	2	<b>Speed</b>	30/50
<b>Perception</b>	15	<b>Damage</b>	-5
<b>Will</b>	3	<b>Enc</b>	—
<b>Dream</b>	16	<b>Protection</b>	4
		<b>Level</b>	
Cuteness	16	+ 5	
Dodging	14	+ 3	
Jumping	13	+ 6	
Vigilance	15	+ 4	

**The Fountain.** At the center of the maze is a bubbling fountain, carved stone basin filled with fresh and pure water. The mechanism of the fountain is magical, of

course, a pair of small transmutation zones, *Air to Water* and *Water to Air*. The former is 20 cm in diameter and centered on the surface of the basin; the later is on an identical diameter and serves as a “drain”, set at the bottom of the basin. As water is turned into air it bubbles up and produces enough motion to create an irregular bubbling in the former zone. Within the fountain itself are a few coins which luck-seekers have tossed in, 4d8 bronze pieces (each worth 10d). A **Sight** roll at 0 will spy them.

Miko, a felorn, has recently taken up residence near the fountain in the hopes of finding fish there. If the Journeymen splash around to retrieve the coins, the sound will awaken the hungry creature, who will naturally be hoping for a meal.

miko, felorn			
<b>Size</b>	2	<b>Life</b>	5
<b>Constitution</b>	8	<b>Endurance</b>	13
<b>Strength</b>	3	<b>Speed</b>	10/30
<b>Perception</b>	13	<b>Damage</b>	-4
<b>Will</b>	10	<b>Enc</b>	2.5
<b>Dream</b>	11	<b>Protection</b>	-6
		<b>Level</b>	
Flying	11	+ 3	
Vigilance	13	+ 0	

**“Secret” Chambers.** Arrayed about the circular central portion of the maze are four small hedge-chambers, whose entrances are small angled openings in the maze. Normally these are empty or occasionally used as guard-posts. Tonight, however ...

A. House Drum has suspected that Eriada was involved in the theft of politically damaging evidence, and believe that she has in her possession the very log book which Thurnius Tohl is planting in the Duke’s palace this very night. Unfortunately, an enterprising Thanatos High Dreamer of House Drum has summoned and planted a nightmare entity to assassinate Eriada, and it will remain here until either it is distrubed or until the hour of the Reed.

shadow			
<b>Size</b>	12	<b>Endurance</b>	28
<b>Dream</b>	16	<b>Speed</b>	12/24
<b>Level</b>	3	<b>Damage</b>	+ 2
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b> <b>Dmg</b>
Claws	14	3	10 + 2
Dodging	12	3	

Remember that in the first round of encountering them, all characters must roll **Sight/Vigilance** at a negative value of the shadow’s level. In case of failure, the character is subject to an attack by the shadow with *complete surprise*.

- B. One of Thurnius Tohl's men is on the lookout for Eriada. If the group is chasing her for whatever reason and passes by, he will leap to her defense (probably with surprise, as he is discreetly concealed at -5). Use the same stats as for the bravos of the ball.
- C. Empty, but could be populated by a surprise of the Dream Keeper's own devising.
- D. An amorous couple have retreated to this alcove off a dead-end passage in the hopes of consummating their desire uninterrupted. Needles to say if that expectation is dashed, they might not be very friendly. A quick excuse and retreat is the appropriate response; anything more might result in a passionate duel.

Of course, should the party stray into the maze they will not necessarily be alone. If they have come here, it is in all likelihood that they are following Eriada, and of course other partygoers will be enjoying the Duke's maze. It is, after all, the perfect place for secret trysts and dark dealings. The Dream Keeper should populate the maze as necessary.

### thurnius tohl

Born in the Hour of the Crown. 35 years old. 1m78, 72 kilos.  
Left-handed. Long thinning brown hair, hazel eyes.

<b>Size</b>	11	<b>Will</b>	12	<b>Life</b>	13
<b>Appearance</b>	13	<b>Intellect</b>	11	<b>Endurance</b>	25
<b>Constitution</b>	14	<b>Empathy</b>	12	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	13	<b>Dream</b>	11	<b>Damage</b>	+1
<b>Agility</b>	17	<b>Luck</b>	13	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	13	<b>Mêlée</b>	15	<b>Enc</b>	12.0
<b>Sight</b>	13	<b>Missile</b>	13	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	9	<b>Throw</b>	13	<b>Protection</b>	2
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	12	<b>Stealth</b>	13		

	<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>
Hand-to-hand	+4	11	(+1)
Dagger	+6	13	+2
Dodging	+6		
One-handed sword	+9	16	+4

Climbing	+3	Commerce	+3	Jewelry	+1
Cooking	-3	Disguise	+5	Leatherwork	+3
Dance	+4	Pickpocket	+0	Locksmith	+9
Discretion	+6	Riding	+2	Navigation	-2
Drawing	-2	City Surv	+8	Swimming	+3
Jumping	+3	Outdoor	+3	Alchemy	+4
Running	+2	Desert	-1	Astrology	+0
Seduction	+7	Forest	+3	Botany	+1
Tinkering	+1	Swamp	+2	Legends	-2
Vigilance	+4	Mountain	+0	Medicine	+0
Acting	+6	Undergrnd	-3	Writing	-1
Carpentry	+0	Gaming	+7	Zoology	-4

## conclusion

The design of *The Dressmaker of Gothga* is intentionally somewhat open-ended. Naturally the Journeyers may not take the bait of the intriguing invitation, and they might simply go to the ball, enjoy themselves, and not get involved in the machinations of Eriada, Thurnius Tohl,

and House Drum. Or they may crash the party, behave badly, start fights (roleplaying gamers are known to do that) and get themselves killed. It is up to the Dream Keeper to walk the delicate line between allowing players freedom of choice (and therefore having their characters suffer the consequences, good or tragic, of their actions) on the one hand, and advancing the story on the other.

Ideally, the Journeyers should have to deal with Pharrish Moot, the murders, and go to the ball, where they should have to socialize, dance, and get drawn into the maze. There are several ways to achieve the last: Eriada could flee there, Thurnius Tohl could entice them there, or a partygoer could take a fancy to one of the Journeyers and propose a tryst in the maze.

Finally, don't forget that this is *Rêve*: there are ample opportunities for the Dream Keeper to allow the characters to have portentous dreams leading up to the ball. In fact such dreams could provide clues about Pharrish Moot. Remember that Thanatos is the stuff of nightmare, antithetical to the Dreaming, and represents an imbalance. The Great Dreamers are quite likely to react to that imbalance by using the Journeyers (unconsciously of course, it must be stressed) as their "agents" to right this "wrong". The Dragons are not moral nor do they particularly care for concepts like "good" or "evil". Thanatos is not anathema because it is "evil" per se, but because it is the Way of Awakening, a denial of the Dreaming. In that sense, it cannot be a coincidence that the Journeyers meet Moot and (hopefully) put a stop to him.

The politics of Houses Drum, Blunt, and Fits may not be to every troupe's liking. Here the Dream Keeper must know her players and follow her own tendencies. The behind the scenes machinations can be just a pretext for tension and conflict, and an excuse to explore the maze. Or, if the players want to take a short break from flitting from Dream to Dream, the Dream Keeper can allow them to become entangled in Gothgan society. Does Eriada grow to trust them (if for example they protect her from House Drum's supernatural assailant)? Do they make an enemy of her? Does Tohl recognize them as kindred adventurers and invite them to join him for a while? What will be the reaction of the Duke if he finds out that outlanders are meddling in his affairs and aiding in his being manipulated? Will House Drum discover the Journeyers and attempt to punish them for helping thwart them? All of these questions can be answered or neglected, the later especially if the Journeyers manage to leave the ball and continue on their Road...

—Text, cartography, illustrations  
and layout by Hieronymous



# the dark of the well

This is an urban underground scenario for five or six moderately seasoned *Rêve: the Dream Ouroboros* characters. The party may be natives of Gothga, the City of Crossroads, or just passing through. The entire scenario takes place in the Tidedown neighborhood of the Pontus District of that city. For more information on Gothga and Pontus, refer to Appendix I of “The Dressmaker of Gothga”, published online by Malcontent Games.

There is an encounter in this scenario in which one of the characters will be called upon to sacrifice him or herself (although not in a typical fashion). If one of the players in the group has expressed a desire to play a new character, this might be an opportunity to retire the existing character. Alternately, the Dream Keeper can simply leave it up to the players to decide amongst themselves who will be the offering, or they may decide not to fulfill the requirements of the sacrifice. On the other hand, if the DK so wishes she may add an NPC destined to be the sacrifice.

Finally, the DK should carefully track time in the scenario, as one encounter in particular may vary depending on the time of day in which it occurs.

## Background

In the borough of Tidedown, the characters are approached by Kéa Finghiss, a factor of Magistrate Gorthen Fedras. They have, apparently, a bit of a reputation growing, and the magistrate has sought them out to help his district.

A districtwide water shortage has been particularly hard on Tidedown, a poor borough west of Eastgate which has traditionally been poorly served by the aqueduct. As a result, Tidedowners have depended on rooftop water-catchment cisterns and ancient wells drilled in the very piers of the ancient bridge supporting Pontus. Now one of those wells has gone bad, and a group of civil engineers sent by the magistrate into the bowels of the pier disappeared to a man save one, who is hopelessly insane. Fedras suspects that something supernatural inhabits the foundations of the pier. Since the disappearance of the first party none of the locals can be convinced to investigate; Fedras hopes that less superstitious outsiders (and the promise of monetary reward) can find out what’s wrong with the well. To that end, he will quietly offer a reward of 50 sols apiece if the Journeymen will agree to investigate the pier and its well.

As an aside, Fedras is a political idealist who since his election five years ago has worked tirelessly to overcome the poverty and disadvantages of his borough. He has encouraged families to grow small gardens to supplement their meager incomes, and so recently Tidedown has bloomed with vegetable patches growing on every conceivable rooftop and in every corner of every courtyard. He has also increased reliance on these pier-wells, and secretly has engaged alchemists and High Dreamers of the Sanctum Draconis to research ways to desalinate and purify the bay water over which Pontus sits, but so far to no avail.

The pier itself is ancient, of course. From the lower bridge level is a narrow passage which leads to a chamber located within the outer edge of the buttress, and in which is a public well. The well itself is at the center of an abandoned spiral staircase which descends into the stony gloom...

## map locations

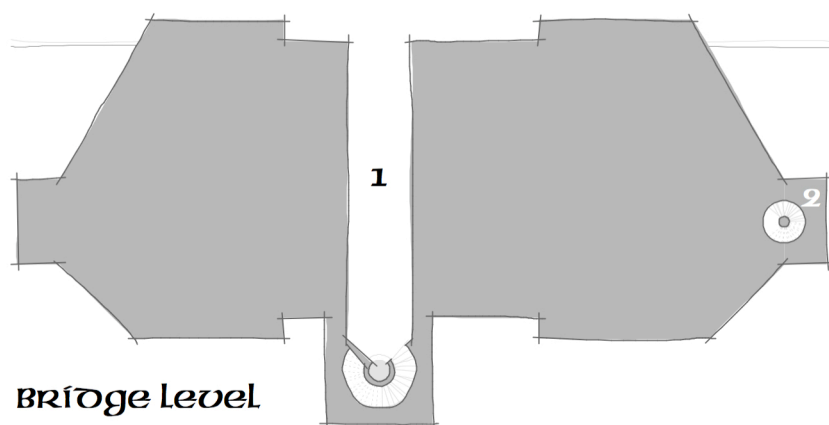
### BRIDGE level

1. The entrance gallery to the well and winding stair down is accessed from the lower bridge level on the north side of the Tidedown district. The gallery is usually attended by a city official, although access to the well is open to one and all. Since the well has become fouled, a pungent odor lingers here and the gallery entrance is guarded by two armed member of the Watch.

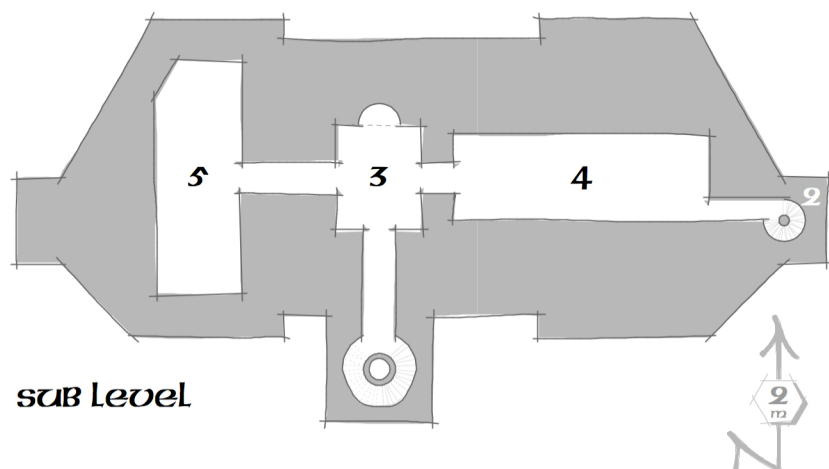
The well is accessed through a stone arch interrupting its solid outer wall. To the left of the arch is another one which leads to the first few steps of a long circular winding stair down. Normally the door to this stair is locked and guarded, but today it stands open for the characters to enter.

### the pontus watch

<b>Size</b>	13	<b>Will</b>	11	<b>Life</b>	13
<b>Appearance</b>	9	<b>Intellect</b>	10	<b>Endurance</b>	26
<b>Constitution</b>	13	<b>Empathy</b>	10	<b>CT</b>	4
<b>Strength</b>	14	<b>Dream</b>	9	<b>Damage</b>	+ 1
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Luck</b>	10	<b>Sust</b>	3
<b>Dexterity</b>	10	<b>Mêlée</b>	13	<b>Enc</b>	13
<b>Sight</b>	12	<b>Missile</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	9	<b>Throw</b>	12	<b>Protection</b>	4
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	10	<b>Stealth</b>	10		
	<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>		
Sword blade	+ 5	11	+ 4		
Hand-to-hand	+ 3	9	(+ 1)		
Crossbow	+ 5	10	+ 3		
Shield	+ 5				
Dodging	+ 5	(-2 armor penalty)			
Running	+ 3	<b>Vigilance</b>	+ 4	<b>City Surv</b>	+ 5



BRIDGE Level



SUB Level

### SUB Level

**3.** The well stair terminates in a short corridor leading to a small central chamber. As with all the construction within the pier, the stone ceilings are vaulted in order to relieve the massive pressure of the pier mass above. On the south wall of this chamber a small apse concealed by a permanent zone of *Mirrors* contains a series of levers and wheels. They are obviously no longer functional. (These controls were once used to open and close the pipe ways and underwater gate which operate the well, but they are now defunct. The well is blocked in the open position). **Intellect/ Tinkering** at 0 will reveal that this is a hydraulic mechanism of some sort, and that it is no longer functioning.

**2.** The second spiral stair on this level is only accessible from the upper levels (Terrace, Tower, and Rooftop) and two of the lower ones (Sub and Deep levels); it is not accessible from the Bridge level.

The apse is also the lair of a semi-dormant flider, which will only attack those entering the alcove. Note that a **Sight** roll at -5 is required to detect imperfections in the *Mirrors* illusion.

flider			
Size	3	Life	8
Constitution	12	Endurance	20
Strength	7	Speed	14/36
Perception	15	Damage	-2
Will	10	Enc	5
Dream	7	Protection	-3
		Level	Init Dmg
Bite	12	3	9 0*
Dodging	14	4	
Discretion	14	4	
Running	14	4	
Vigilance	15	6	
Flider Paralytic Venom			
Malignity	6		
Period	1 round		
Damage	-1d6 Endurance		
Antidotes	-3/Liquor of Bagdol +12 Moonmilk +6		

Each Endurance loss costs a like loss of Fatigue. At 0 Endurance the victim is paralyzed.

The two doors to the east and west in this chamber are both in excellent condition and have locks on them. The door to the east is still closed and locked (**Dexterity/Locksmithing** at -5 and 6 task points to open it) and leads to location 5. The door to the west is unlocked and leads to location 4.

**4.** This long gallery contains a series of stone sarcophagi (although they may not readily be obviously so). It is here that the score of gnome engineers who designed this pier and its waterworks in the Second Age were laid to rest. The lids to the caskets are very heavy (**Strength** at -4 and 6 task points *in a single round* to move one); removing one or more will reveal the fine dust and few bones contained therein. Only the 13th sarcophagus of twenty has an intact enough skull to perform a Speak with Skull ritual. The 7th sarcophagus is partly ajar (only 3 task points to move the lid, again in a single round) contains a huge, ornate bronze key. It is magical, although a reading only yields a result of Lethe, as is so often the case with Second Age artifacts.

Beyond the burial chamber is access to a spiral staircase leading both up and down (location 2 on the map).

5. This chamber is locked, and was originally a supply warehouse. All of the organic materials (barrels of foodstuffs, rope, cloth goods, etc.) have long since decayed. The chamber does contain a colony of a dozen grindlings, however, whose noise will alert the flider in location 3.

### grindling

Any successful attack on a grindling will kill it.

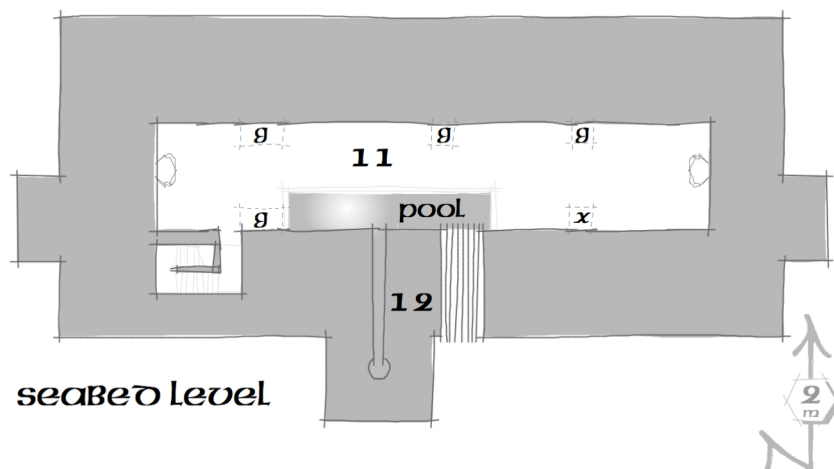
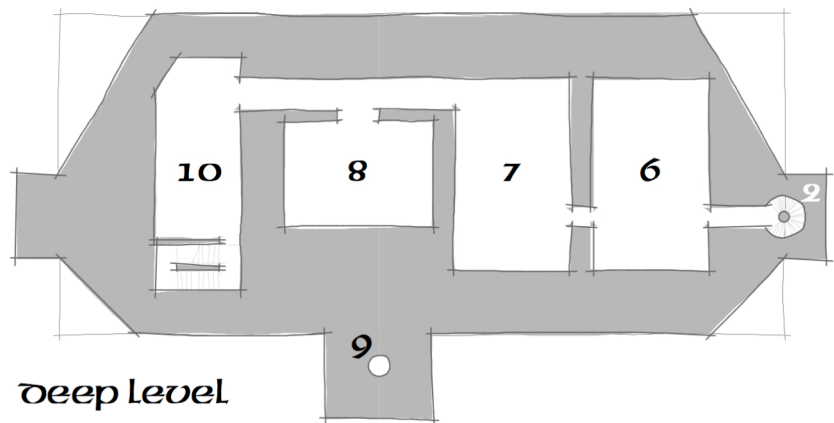
		Level
Discretion	15	5

### Deep Level

6. The east spiral stair (location 2) leads to a large cavernous chamber whose ceiling extends upward into the gloom. In fact much of this pier is hollow, as is the case with most piers supporting the great bridge of Pontus. The chambers on this level are the result of this hollow construction. The walls between them are actually internal arched buttresses that have been mostly infilled, but left just open enough to allow passage from chamber to chamber.

### chrasms

<b>Size</b>	7	Life	8
<b>Constitution</b>	9	Endurance	17
<b>Strength</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	12/28
<b>Perception</b>	10	Damage	0
<b>Will</b>	3	Enc	9
<b>Dream</b>	2	Protection	4
		Level	Init Dmg
Mandibles	11	3	8 +2*
Dodging	10	3	
Running	11	3	
Vigilance	10	3	
Venom			
Malignity	3		
Period	1 minute		
Damage	-1 Life		
	Muscular spasms		
Antidotes	-2/Liquor of Bagdol +16		
	Tincture of Erozone +10		



This particular chamber and the one beyond have become the home of a group of chrasms, which will become highly agitated and aggressive at the sight of any light the player characters may bring with them.

7. Similar to 6, this room is part of the chrasms' territory. Between the two rooms, there are a total of three chrasms per player character, although not all will attack at once.

There is also a body here (located with **Sight/Vigilance** at -4), the mostly chrasms-eaten remains of one of the city engineers sent in a few days before. There is no head among the remains, much to any Thanatos High Dreamer's chagrin.

8. This chamber is skirted by the passageway connecting this series of rooms, and can be bypassed altogether by proceeding to location 11. The fissures in the south wall that have developed over time are a perfect habitat for the enormous drakkule that has taken up residence here.



<b>Drakkule</b>				
<b>Size</b>	8	Life	10	
<b>Constitution</b>	12	Endurance	22	
<b>Strength</b>	10	Speed	12/38	
<b>Perception</b>	13	Damage	0	
<b>Will</b>	8	Enc	9	
<b>Dream</b>	8	Protection	-1	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Bite	13	4	10	0
Counter	12	3		
Dodging,				
in flight	10	3		
Flying	12	3		

9. The well continues through the stonework here.

<b>noneshallpass</b>				
<b>Size</b>	13	Life	14	
<b>Constitution</b>	15	Endurance	30	
<b>Strength</b>	15	Damage	+2	
<b>Agility</b>	13	Enc	14	
<b>Dexterity</b>	10	Protection	6	
<b>Perception</b>	10	Penalty	-6	
<b>Will</b>	16			
<b>Dream</b>	10			
<b>Mêlée</b>	14			
<b>Stealth</b>	10			
		Level	Init	Dmg
Sword blade	14	+5	12	+5
Dagger	14	+5	12	+3
Hand-to-hand	14	+5	12	(+2)
Shield	14	+5		
Dodging	10	+5	(-1 w/armor)	
Vigilance	10	+5		

10. The easternmost in the series of structural relief chambers contains a series of straight stairs leading down into the very foundations of the pier. Guarding the top of the stair is a *Noneshallpass*.

### seabeð level

11. This extremely long gallery runs nearly the entire length of the pier. It is accessible from the southwest by the stair down from location 10. The chamber's north and south walls are punctuated by buttresses corresponding to the divisions between the chambers of the Deep level above.

Each of the five buttresses has near its base a stone squinch or half arch, from which the buttress springs.

Under four of the five is a giant (*g* on the plan), in a pose suggesting that it is supporting the buttress, and also apparently in a deep sleep. Each in fact is under the influence of a variant of *Grand Sleep of Hypnos*. The fifth buttress's occupant has recently been killed and partially eaten by the ghûls which have recently infested this chamber (the dead giant is *x* on the plan). They have paralyzed the other four (not that it matters) and will get to them by and by. In the meantime, the magic of the trough (which has been heretofore supported by the dreams of the sleeping giants, who thereby provide a surrogate *Autonomy* for the magic of the pool) has thereby become corrupted.

Along the south wall is a long trough, whose stone walls are about a meter high. The trough is filled with bay water (polluted and salty) filtering in from a series of sluice slots in the wall above; the trough in turn provisions the well. The magic of the trough would normally purify the water, but the *Grand Scale* has gone awry, due to the ghûls' killing the giant.

At opposite narrow ends of the chamber are two slightly colored clouds, one yellowish and the other pale mauve. They are indeed rifts. The violet rift is at the east end (*u* on the plan), and anyone stepping through it will (from his point of view) seem to exit through the yellow rift at the west end (*y*). The only thing different about the second room is that other Journeymen are absent, although a number of ghûls roughly equal to those in the first chamber are present. If the character then crosses the length of the second chamber (somehow getting past all the ghûls) and enters the violet rift at its east end, he will reemerge in the first chamber.

But from the point of view of anyone remaining in the room, when a character first steps through the violet rift he will disappear and immediately

afterwards a *ghûl* will emerge from the yellow rift! Needless to say, combat is highly likely and furthermore may quickly become quite confusing, especially since ghûls may begin to emerge from the yellow rift as player characters flee through the violet rift.

<b>ghûl</b>				
<b>Size</b>	11	Life	13	
<b>Constitution</b>	14	Endurance	27	
<b>Strength</b>	13	Speed	12/24	
<b>Perception</b>	10	Damage	+1	
<b>Will</b>	7	Enc	12	
<b>Dream</b>	10	Protection	0	
		Level	Init	Dmg
Claw	13	4	10	+2*
Bite	13	4	10	+2*
Dodging	10	3		
Discretion	10	3		
Running	10	3		
Vigilance	10	3		
<b>Ghûl Paralytic Venom</b>				
Malignity	6			
Period	1 round			
Damage	1 line of Fatigue			
	Paralysis sets in when			
	all 6 lines of Fatigue are			
	full and lasts 6 hours.			
Antidotes	-4/Floommilk +16			
Floommilk is derived from mixing a half-measure each of floom jelly and human milk. Heat to a blue-blood color (-2 alchemical procedure).				

The Dream Keeper should not tip her hand and not hint that there are two chambers, but should allow (and even encourage) the players' confusion, all the while keeping careful track of which Journeymen are in which chamber, and the distribution of ghûls as well.

There are a total of two ghûls for every Journeyman, although they are spread out between the two parallel chambers and therefore cannot all attack simultaneously (at least initially). The Dream Keeper should feel free to adjust their numbers based on the size and strength of the party.

The only way to reinstate the magic of the well is for a humanoid to take the place of the dead giant. Doing so merely requires that the character stand under the squinch of the buttress and reach up and grab it.

This will cause the character to fall into a magical slumber, and his or her dreams will be added to the giants', thus restoring the magic of the trough. Note that the occupant must be a humanoid, so a ghûl for example cannot serve as a substitute.

If one of the Journeyers takes the place of the slain giant, the well will soon be pure again and their mission will have been accomplished, at the loss of one of their number. Of course, in the confusion of the battle with the ghûls spanning two dreams the Journeyers might lose track of *which* dream they're in. While this might cause them some anguish, it doesn't in fact matter. Both dreams are so similar as to be virtually indistinguishable; whichever one they choose is the "right" one. Of course, they could sacrifice two of their members and restore the well in both versions of Tidedown, or they may choose to restore neither. Then again, if the DK has included an NPC in the group just for such purposes, then the sacrifice will be at hand.

**12.** Water works. While not accessible, the sluices and pipes which provision the well are located next to chamber **11**. This level of the pier is underwater, and deliberate vertical cracks in the masonry allow a steady amount of water to seep through one portion of the south foundation; enough to keep that portion of the wall slick with water at all times, but never more than a trickle. This constant supply of water is collected in the pool in chamber **11**, where under normal conditions it is purified and then piped to the well.

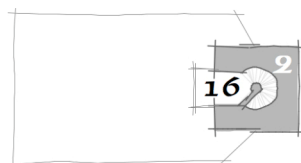
### terrace level

**13.** Antechamber. The east pylon of the pier soars several stories above the main mass of the structure (which is itself slightly taller than the uppermost aqueduct level of the Pontus bridge. This chamber, long abandoned, has a very tall vaulted stone ceiling like most of the rooms within the pier.

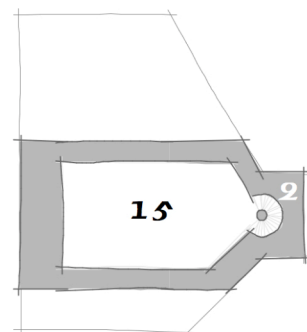
To the west is a passage to the rooftop terrace (location **14**) which is blocked by a pivoting stone slab (a pin in the floor and lintel allow it to rotate about its vertical centerline). The left and right edges of the block is very precisely cut and slightly beveled to allow a snug fit in their jambs, but the door will rotate if pressure is applied in the right place—**Sight/Masonry** at -3 to detect the door's operation. Otherwise, it seems as if the passage simply ends.

**14.** Court of miracles. This rooftop terrace is completely open-air. Located as it above the aqueduct level of the bridge, it is not visible from anywhere else in the city, other nearby piers which are shorter than this one. It is therefore one of the few clandestine pieces of real estate in Pontus, a piece of real estate which is nevertheless inhabited.

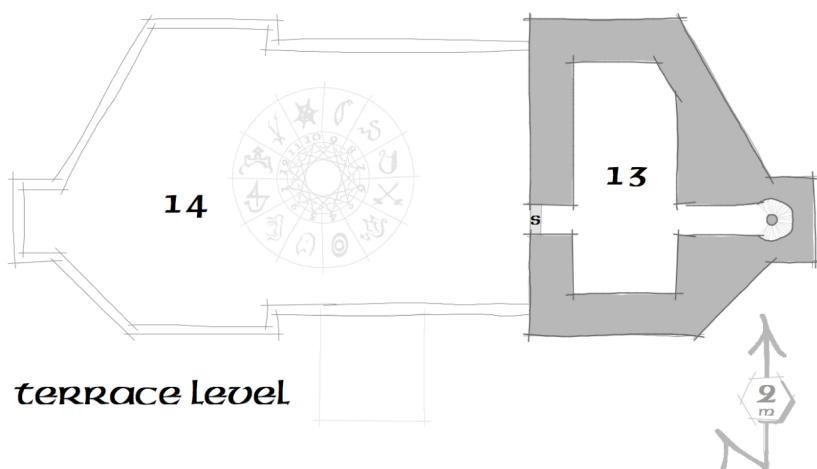
Like Victor Hugo's *Court of Miracles*, this terrace is a retreat for the organized beggars and thieves of Pontus, a place where they can gather, recuperate from brawls with the law and the populace or overindulgences, or plan their activities. This roof is their home and sanctuary. They access it in secret, at night, with makeshift ladders they are careful to conceal or disguise. They will be rather surprised and none too pleased if they are interrupted by interlopers emerging from the wall of the pier. The secret door is, naturally, secret—even to the beggars living here. Age and weathering, plus the fact that it was designed to be concealed from the exterior, make detecting it from the terrace side a -6 **Sight/Masonry** roll.



rooftop level



tower level



terrace level

Beggars of the court of miracles					
Size	10	Will	10	Life	12
Appearance	7	Intellect	11	Endurance	24
Constitution	14	Empathy	11	CT	4
Strength	11	Dream	12	Damage	+ 1
Agility	11	Luck	8	Sust	3
Dexterity	13	Mêlée	11	Enc	10
Sight	12	Missile	12	Speed	12
Hearing	11	Throw	11	Protection	4
Smell-Taste	8	Stealth	11		
		Level	Init	Dmg	
Dagger	+ 5		10	+ 4	
Hand-to-hand	+ 3		8	(+ 1)	
Club	+ 5		11	+ 3	
Dodging	+ 5		(-2 armor penalty)		
Discretion	+ 5	Vigilance	+ 5	City Surv	+ 7
Disguise	+ 1	Pickpocket	+ 5		

While a good many of these beggars have maimings which they rely upon for their livelihood, many also are not above malingering in order to illicit greater sympathy from their marks. Here those who pretend to be blind can see and the lame can walk (hence the nickname its denizens give the place). Naturally, the characteristics given here are for the more or less able-bodied among the beggars; if one truly is blind for example than his **Hearing** would be a little better (+2 perhaps) and **Sight** would be 0.

If the Journeymen emerge here and are aggressive towards the beggars, they will be swarmed by inferior fighters perhaps but in staggering numbers—at least twenty beggars will join the fray if it is night, and no less than ten by day. If on the other hand the Journeymen are conciliatory (and offer a bribe) they may sway the beggars and convince them to let them pass in peace. While the beggars know how to get up and down from here other than through the secret door, they will absolutely not share that knowledge.

Another detail of interest is the ancient pattern scribed into the stone pavers of this terrace. Covered in dirt, grime and the filth of habitation, it is barely discernible (**Sight** at -2) and certainly of no interest to the beggars. It is an astrological wheel, similar to the one found in *Journeymen*, Chapter 8, Destiny. This one is, however, magical. By standing in the middle at night and thinking about astrology, the user will become aware of the astral number for a number of days to come. The exact number is based on the quality of the result of a **Dream** roll at 0:

<b>Particular</b>	The astral numbers for the next 21 days are known
<b>Significant</b>	The astral numbers for the next 14 days are known
<b>Normal</b>	The astral numbers for the next 7 days are known

<b>Failure</b>	The astral numbers for the next day is known
<b>Part. Failure</b>	The astral numbers for the next 7 days are known, but the are wrong
<b>Fumble</b>	The astral numbers for the next 14 days are known, but the are wrong

Note that the DK should make this roll in secret, so the player doesn't know that potentially disastrous rolls are leading her astray.

The DK should prepare for the fact that it might occur to a particularly devious group of Journeymen to kidnap (or trick) a beggar to serve as the "fifth giant" in location **11**.

Finally, if the beggars are befriended by the PCs, they may mention the "watcher in the tower," a haunting figure they sometimes see in the gloom of the pinnacle of the west spire, overlooking the courtyard. They believe it is an omen of death...

### tower and rooftop levels

**15.** Tower chamber. This room was once the conjuring room of a High Dreamer who took up residence here late in the Second Age. Only a shadow of his work remains.

shadow				
<b>Size</b>	12	Endurance		28
<b>Dream</b>	16	<b>Speed</b>		12/24
<b>Level</b>	3	Damage		+ 2
		<b>Level</b>	<b>Init</b>	<b>Dmg</b>
Claws	14	3	10	+ 2
Dodging	12	3		

Remember that in the first round of encountering them, all characters must roll **Sight/Vigilance** at -3. In case of failure, the character is subject to an attack by the shadow with *complete surprise*.

**16.** The watcher. As the characters go up the final run of the spiral stair which runs the entire height of the pier, they will see a man at the top of the stair, gesturing them silently put imploringly to go back. As they approach, he will disappear—the result of a permanent *Humanoid Illusions* zone. If they ignore this warning and continue, they will find a tiny landing at the top of the stair, which opens on to an outdoor balcony overlooking the city. There is no door, and the winds blow freely here. Standing in the exposed doorway is a particularly powerful Despair. Note that the fact that the entity may well overcome its victim so near to an open balcony overlooking a sheer fall of scores of meters is potentially very dangerous.

watcher in the tower Despair			
Dream	21	Speed	6
		Level	Init
Possession	21	6	16

The possessed victim of the Despair will sob uncontrollably, beating his chest and tearing his hair; Morale drops to -3 immediately and cannot be raised so long as the victim is possessed. The victim must first roll **Will** at -3 before undertaking any die rolls. Furthermore, if faced with the balcony and precipitous height, the victim must make a **Will** roll at -3 to *not* to throw herself off the pier to a certain death. If the Despair manages to possess and kill a victim, it will reappear the following night at its usual place in the tower balcony. If an attempt is made to

exorcise it, a ritual of *Read Aura* will eventually yield a Dreamland location of I13, the *Withering Mountain*.

## conclusion

Should the Journeymen reinstate the magic of the well, upon their return they will find themselves acclaimed by the Tidedown Magistrate, Fedras, and each survivor will receive a reward of 50 sols. In addition to any other Stress awarded by the Dream Keeper for individual encounters, a bonus of 30 points should be awarded to each Journeyer.

—Text, cartography, illustrations  
and layout by Hieronymous



## appendix i:

## further adventures in gothga

It is quite possible, given the urban nature of the previous two scenarios, that the Journeyers may elect to stay longer in Gothga, or they may stray from the plot of the scenarios, or the Dream Keeper may wish to run further adventures in the City of Crossroads. With that in mind, a brief outline of the city, its districts and quarters are presented.

## society

Gothgans tend to knuckle under to authorities above them, and in turn exercise their authority over those beneath them. They are a clever and innovative people, but they tend to use their wits to devise cruel things, or invent convoluted schemes. They have a love of mechanical things, but the machines they create tend to be singular apparatus which serve no real useful purposes, rather than truly beneficial machines designed to improve life. As a result, technology here is paradoxically both clever and stagnant, brilliant and futile.

Mores in the city are corrupt, as is often the case when living under an absolute regime, which the Gothgans have for centuries. Cut off as they are from the rest of the Dreaming, they have little contact with foreigners except for slight sea commerce with the Pythians. There is therefore little incentive or opportunity for new ideas and fresh perspectives. Your typical Gothgan is selfish, sometimes melodramatically sentimental, somewhat cruel, intelligent and fatalistic.

## the padishah

Gothga is an oligarchy ruled in principle by an elected Padishah drawn from the ranks of the nobility. In practice, the Padishah is a nearly absolute prince who rules the city-state through the coercion and manipulation of his fellow nobles.

The current Padishah, Supervius Mal the Twelfth, is a gargantuan fellow with a penchant for wrestling and grappling. His prodigious gluttony is exceeded only by his notorious cruelty. As is customary it seems, his court is rife with intrigue and byzantine machinations, poisonings, seductions, torture and necromancy.

## quarters &amp; districts

**Blue Forest.** The Blue Forest extends, it is said, forever; no one in recent history in Gothga has ever found its far border. The place is reputed to be inhabited by strange and fantastic creatures, and tales abound of fauns, sylvans, centaurs, sprites and malicious atomies. Some claim that in the Blue Forest can be found a multitude of entrances to blurdream, others that Limbo itself lies beyond. Along its outskirts from time to time small communities of Gothgan exiles will establish themselves, surviving by hunting or

harvesting verdigleam or the unique blue spruces that give the forest its name. But inevitably within a few generations these communities die out, victims of a harsh winter or wolf infestations or simply vanishing. Base *Forest Survival* rolls here are at -6, although deep within the woods such rolls might well get far more difficult.

his emminence the padishah,  
supervious mal the twelfth

Born in the Hour of the Spider. 49 years old. 2m10, 130 k  
Right-handed. Black hair, dark brown eyes.

<b>Size</b>	17	<b>Will</b>	13	<b>Life</b>	16
<b>Appearance</b>	12	<b>Intellect</b>	12	<b>Endurance</b>	32
<b>Constitution</b>	15	<b>Empathy</b>	11	<b>CT</b>	5
<b>Strength</b>	18	<b>Dream</b>	15	<b>Damage</b>	+3
<b>Agility</b>	14	<b>Luck</b>	10	<b>Sust</b>	5
<b>Dexterity</b>	11	<b>Mêlée</b>	16	<b>Enc</b>	17.0
<b>Sight</b>	12	<b>Missile</b>	11	<b>Speed</b>	12
<b>Hearing</b>	11	<b>Throw</b>	14	<b>Protection</b>	2 (5)
<b>Smell-Taste</b>	12	<b>Stealth</b>	9		

	Level	Init	Dmg	
Hand-to-hand	+12	20	(+3)	
Dagger	+5	13	+4	
One-handed mace	+5	13	+6	
Two-handed mace	+7	15	+7	
Shield	+8			
Dodging	+8			
Climbing	-1	Commerce +3	Botany +3	
Cooking	+7	Riding +5	Legends +3	
Running	+1	City Surviv +7	Medicine +2	
Jumping	+3	Gaming +3	Writing +0	
Tinkering	+7	Locksmith +8	Zoology +8	
Vigilance	+4	Alchemy +5		
Acting	+5	Astrology +5	Thanatos +16	

## reserved spells

<i>Beastform Self—C14</i>	<i>Fist of Thanatos (14d)—G15</i>
<i>Beastform Self—E15</i>	<i>Fist of Thanatos (12d)—H14</i>
<i>Beastform Self—F13</i>	<i>Putrescence (8d)—C10</i>
<i>Fist of Thanatos (12d)—C15</i>	<i>Putrescence (8d)—C12</i>
<i>Fist of Thanatos (22d)—E13</i>	<i>Putrescence (8d)—F10</i>
<i>Fist of Thanatos (13d)—F14</i>	<i>Thanateye (10d)—B14</i>
<i>Fist of Thanatos (12d)—G12</i>	<i>Thanateye (12d)—F12</i>
<i>Fist of Thanatos (13d)—G13</i>	<i>Thanateye (11d)—K14</i>

## known spells

All Thanatos spells and rituals

**The Outer Gloom.** This poverty-stricken district is so called because it is closest to the setting sun, and is the last place that the rising sun touches in Gothga. Base *City Survival* rolls here are at -7, and the place is home to the dispossessed of the city, unskilled laborers, paupers, beggars, prostitutes, criminals, the desperate and the maimed.

Filth and disease run rampant here, and anyone not from here who drinks the water or eats the food (or stays long enough to be bitten by the vicious gloom fly, a painful horsefly) is quite likely to catch some dire disease. Fevers, agues and plagues are not unknown to the Outer Gloom's natives, for that matter. It is difficult to estimate the population here, but it must be well over twenty thousand.

**Gloomwall.** This narrow district is considered part of Gothga proper, and is thus technically a Quarter, unlike the Outer Gloom which is really not much more than a shantytown. Gloomwall was established before the end of the Second Age as a bulwark against encroachment by the shack city of the Outer Gloom, and hence its name. Base *City Survival* rolls in Gloomwall are at -4. While it is not a wealthy area by any means, Gloomwall is home to many of the city's artisans and skilled workers and their families. Smiths, carpenters, potters, tanners, coopers, weavers, glazers and wainwrights can be found here. A private militia keeps a semblance of law and order, but mostly serves to keep out Duskers, as inhabitants of the Outer Gloom are known.

**Songmakers.** This area is far more prosperous, close as it is to the administrative center of the city, the Gallows. Highly skilled artisans, merchants, and noble families equally live here, as well as their servants and workers. *City Survival* rolls start at -2, and the area is very well patrolled. Lawlessness and violence, especially against the upper castes, are dealt with swiftly and harshly.

**Gallows.** The heart of the day to day administration and government of Gothga is the Gallows district, so named for the public executions which are an almost daily occurrence even to this day. The various ministries — the Exchequer, Carnifax, civil and criminal Courts — all are located here, as are the homes and offices of various ministers, magistrates, administrators and ministerial factors. *City Survival* rolls are at 0, and needless to say the quarter is very well patrolled.

**Necropolis.** The origins of Gothga are lost in the mists of the dawn of the Second Age. Some scholars claim that the city was one of the first, if not the first, founded by humans — a claim which the ruling classes assert to legitimize their power. Propaganda and legends aside, there is no doubt that the city is very ancient indeed, and few dispute that the oldest part of the city is the area now known as the Necropolis.

This quarter is immense, and extends in a widening swath beyond the northern reaches of the map. While many of the middle and upper classes of Gothga are even today buried there, the Necropolis has been abandoned except at its edges. The district is walled, and Gothgans joke (rather

ruefully) that its ramparts are designed to keep the dead in. In the wilder parts of the quarter, which long ago reverted to a natural state of overgrown decay, dangerous creatures (and worse) abound. Harpies are not unknown, drakkules are common, and many a tomb and ancient tomb complex is haunted by lugubrious nightmare entities: coqmares, omen birds, shadows, skeletons and even vampires. Of all of these, the most notorious and powerful is the Hangman.

Legends say that the Hangman, often called the Hanged Man, was an early prince of the city who met the gallows head-on and has haunted Gothga ever since. Others claim that he is the embodiment of all that is morose and corrupt in the city. Mention of him goes all the way back to the earliest Second Age texts and legends about Gothga. To the nobility, he is a patron saint, the Lord of the Crossroads, the titular head of the city. To the common citizen, he is a symbol of terror.

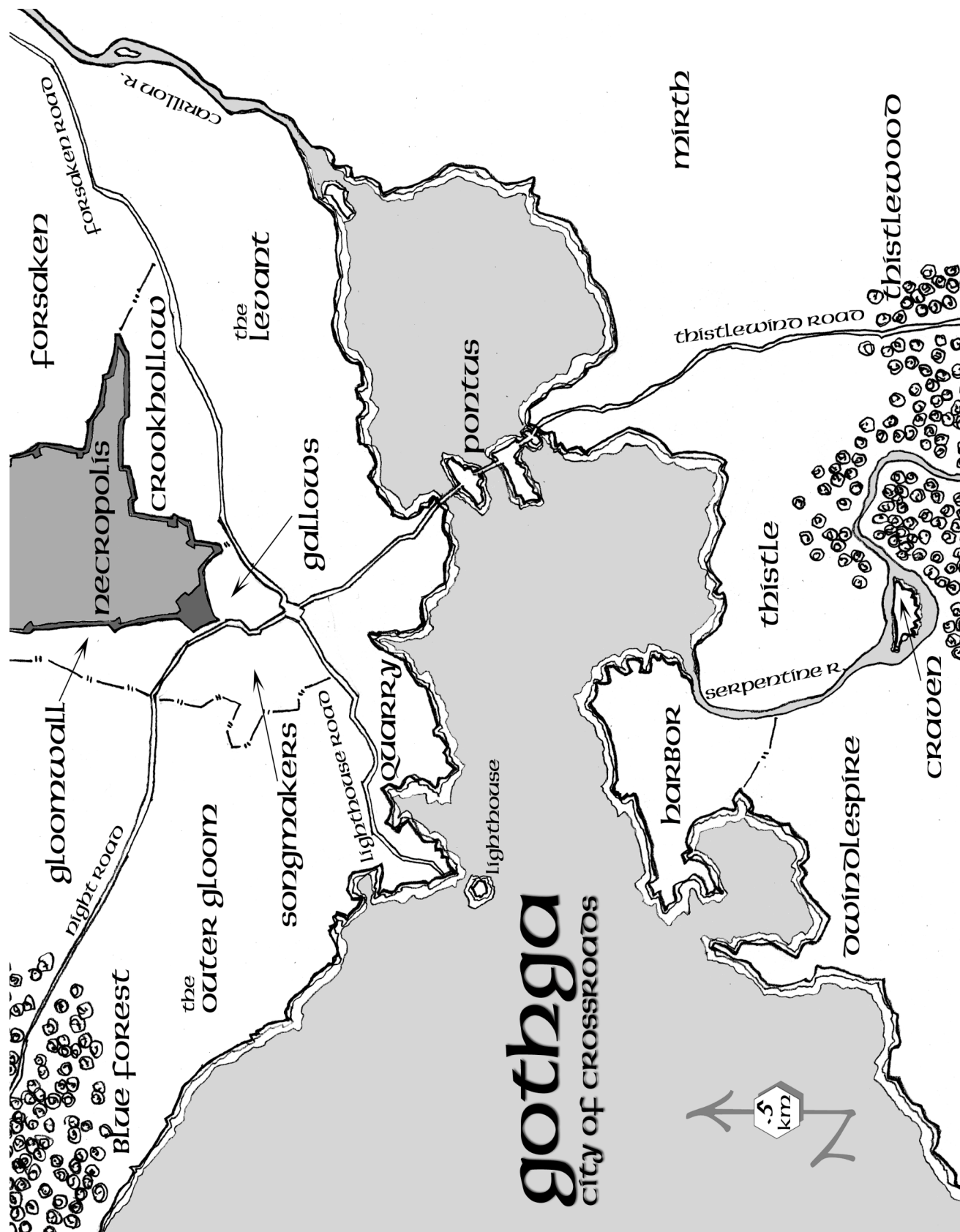
Tales abound of heroes of old going forth into the Necropolis and slaying the Hangman, but he always comes back. One night a year, on the winter solstice (the 15th of the month of the Spider), the Hanged Man is said to wander the streets of Gothga looking for someone to take back to the depths of the Necropolis. On that night all Gothgans stay indoors. Of course, on any given night there is always someone in the city being murdered or disappearing, so who can say whether the Hangman really does claim his annual due?

<i>the hanged man</i>			
Size	13	Endurance	38
Dream	25	Speed	12/24
Level	8	Damage	+4
		Level	Init
Claws	19	8	17
Rope	19	8	17
Dodging	16	8	

In the southwest corner of the Necropolis, built into its very walls, is the gloomy and convoluted Palace. While the families of those who have served as Padishah are buried nearby, it is also rumored that a warren of tunnels originates from underneath the Palace and extends into the Necropolis, some leading to ancient subterranean royal mausoleums, others to haunted areas where those who provoke the Court's severest displeasure are left to die.

**Forsaken.** Forsaken suffers from its proximity to some of the most notorious and feared areas of the Necropolis. This district is home to poorer subsistence farmers and laborers; by no means as destitute as the inhabitants of the Outer Gloom, but hardly comfortable. It is also on the northern regions of this district that much of the city's waste is dumped, and so Forsaken is also known as the home of Gothga's nightsoilmen. *City Survival* at -4.





**Crookhollow.** This relatively small quarter is fairly prosperous, more from its proximity to the government nerve center of the Gallows than anything else. It is the home to many of the cities professionals and minor bureaucrats. *City Survival* at 0.

**The Levant.** So called for its eastern location, this quarter is largely residential and home to the backbone of Gothgan society: shopkeepers and workers. Most *City Survival* rolls are at -2.

**Quarry.** The Quarry Quarter is home to the vast majority of Gothga's stone masons and is the source of most of its stone. The limestone cliffs which constitute this area overlooking the harbor have been mined and quarried for centuries. As accessible surface limestone diminished, the masons of Quarry delved deep in the earth. Today the subterranean quarries are extensive and many are still productive. Base *City Survival* rolls in this well-ordered district are at -1; the masons are a tight-knit community and look out for each other.

The quarries themselves are active and generally only the quarrymen go in them. Many have been abandoned over the years as they have been exhausted or become dangerous, however. A few centuries ago many Gothgans began burying their dead in the abandoned limestone mines as an alternative to the dangers of braving the Necropolis. Unfortunately, those same currents of nightmare which haunted the Necropolis (and their human devotees) also began to haunt the catacombs. Since then the practice of burying the dead in the catacombs has been largely stopped, and most of them sealed. But a few unpleasant things still haunt them, and nightmares occasionally surface. *Underground Survival* rolls are at -5 in the active quarries, and -7 in the abandoned catacombs.

The Light House Road defines the northern boundary of Quarry, and is one of the four major thoroughfares of the City of Crossroads. The Lighthouse itself is a monumental affair, built in the days when more trade took place with the Pythians and other long-gone peoples. By night a permanent *Air to Fire* illuminates the harbor and serves as a beacon for those few ships that still come to Gothga. By day the Lighthouse emits a towering pillar of black and orange smoke which is visible for leagues at sea.

**Pontus.** the great bridge which connects the older northern portion of Gothga with its southern districts is almost a town in and of itself. Pontus spans across two islands and the bridge in most parts is built on three levels, carrying a significant length of the Thistlewind Road as well as a major aqueduct and foot and cart traffic. On the bridge itself are houses and shops. The poor of Pontus ply a small trade in trinkets and small household items from a

moveable bazaar of skiffs and other small boats, while the children of the lower castes attempt to fish from the dubious waters of the bay. Base *City Survival* rolls are at -4 here.

**Harbor.** When Gothga was a major trade center in the Second Age Harbor was its economic heart. From here ship captains sailed across vast seas to trade with distant lands. Since the end of the Second Age, however, all attempts to reopen trade routes with Gothga's old partners have failed: all that the captains find today are open seas for as far as they dare to sail. Only the Pythians, a race of peoples who seem to lead entirely nomadic lives aboard their ships, now trade with Gothga.

As a result, Harbor is a mere shadow of its former self. What once was a center of commerce is little better than a fishing village inhabiting the ruins of former greatness. In places even entire ships have been pulled from the water and inhabited as buildings. There are a few sea captains and sailors left, but they seem to subsist only on the meanest piracy they can exercise on the small coastal communities and Pythian ships they find. This quarter is poor, yet there is enough swagger left in the denizens of Harbor to make them particularly lean and dangerous; base *City Survival* rolls are at -5 here.

There is in Harbor a small enclave of gnomes. These diminutive folk came to Gothga in the beginning of the current Age and established a colony in an abandoned portion of the quarter, with the permission of the Padishah. They have turned this small neighborhood into a hive of productivity, trading with the rest of the city in all things mechanical. The Clockworks, as their neighborhood is known, is stable and safe. Humans are welcome there, but the gnomes seem to have a calming effect on their larger, more violent neighbors. As proof, the street gangs of sailors' descendants leave the gnomes alone for the most part. While the gnomes still do not fathom the Gothgan penchant for baroque machinery — gnomish artifacts tend to be more useful devices like clocks, pumps, and locks — they will build Gothgan items if necessary, and certainly do a lively business repairing them. *City Survival* rolls in the Clockworks are at +1.

**Dwindlespire.** Once a separate and autonomous city unto itself, Dwindlespire is so called somewhat derisively. Dwindlewights, as they call themselves, are fairly independent and still tend to think of themselves as separate from the rest of Gothga, although naturally still recognizing the authority of the Padishah and his ministers. The quarter is reasonably prosperous, and contains a mix of tradesmen, merchants, laborers, shopkeepers and private homes — a sort of city in miniature. There is an independent guard which patrols

here, paid for by local taxes above and beyond the extensive burden that the Padishah places on all his subjects. *City Survival* at -1.

**Craven.** Situated on a hilltop island in the Serpentine River, Craven (a corruption of *Raven Crag*) is a sparsely populated enclave built up among the ruins of an ancient castle. Craven once served as the military center of Gothga, but as the city became literally cut off from the rest of the world and more and more introverted, it was gradually abandoned. An odd mix of folk live in Craven, but all share one thing in common: they shun contact with other Gothgans almost completely. Many are wanted criminals who have managed to escape and eke out a subsistence living among the ruins here. Others are Duskers who found life in the Outer Gloom so unbearable that they chose the relative solitude of windy Craven over the teeming filth of western Gothga. Life here is no easier, but it is quieter. Then there are the hermits and recluses who come here either to fulfill some Dragon Breath, or simply to pursue their own oneiric activities undisturbed. *City Survival* rolls here are at -3 when they apply, but characters are just as likely to check *Outdoor Survival* at -2 or even *Underground Survival* at -4 should they delve into Craven's many underground passages, some of which have already been claimed by those wishing absolute privacy...

**Thistle and the Thistlewood.** If the Blue Forest reeks of the supernatural, the community of Thistle and the northern reaches of the Thistlewood against which it is built reek of something else: soot.

Once this area was stone houses and broad streets, and ancient maps of Gothga show it as a thriving urban area, complete with bath houses and arenas. Nowadays, the

stones of old Thistle are likely to be used to shore up a faltering garden wall, and old men digging in their gardens and children playing in the broad grassy streets are likely to turn up an old fragment of the past in the form of a piece of statuary or a broken column capital. Many of the great buildings are partially standing, but they have fallen into grave disrepair and partial collapse, and repurposed for other uses. The great Arena, or what's left of it, is now an open-air stock market, and goats graze and are bought and sold where the great actors of the Second Age once spoke their lines.

Nowadays a community of woodcutters continuously harvest from the forest and burn the wood to make coal for the cooking fires of Gothga. This is a hard life, made harder of late by increasing Snork raids that have originated from deep within the Thistlewood, something unheard of even three generations ago. *City Survival* rolls in the sprawling and sparsely built community of Thistle are at -1; *Forest Survival* rolls in the Thistlewood are at -3 (and lower).

**Mirth.** The vast dour landscape to the northeast of the Thistlewood has been given the ironic name of Mirth by its inhabitants. It is said that once the very trees and brambles of the Thistlewood extended as far north as the gaping banks of the Carillon river, skirting the noble houses and broad avenues of Thistle. Now the only trees here are those that are bought from the coal sellers of Thistle and lit in the heating pans. The soil here is poor, thin and rocky. What little crop that farmers here don't keep for themselves they sell for a pittance to their fellow Gothgans. So maligned is the produce of the farms of Mirth that anything ugly in Gothga is said to have the face of a mirthapple (as the wretched potatoes that are grown here are called).



## appendix II:

## BOUNCER

Bouncer			
Size	1	Life	8
Constitution	14	Endurance	22
Strength	2	Speed	30/50
Perception	15	Damage	-5
Will	3	Enc	—
Dream	16	Protection	4
Level			
Cuteness	16	+ 5	
Dodging	14	+ 3	
Jumping	13	+ 6	
Vigilance	15	+ 4	

**Description.** Nothing is cuter than a bouncer. Naturally compared to a velvine (see Book Three: *Worlds*, p. 30), this little furball merrily bounces around, leaving behind a trail of smiles.

**Habits.** According to ancient lore, when a High Dreamer sleeping under a velvetine tree feels the wrath of a dragon (tail or breath), next time that the tree bears fruit, one of them will be a bouncer. The little chlorophyll-based “animal” will then die within two weeks, unless a humanoid comes within range (10 meters x **Dream** of the humanoid), whom the bouncer then adopts as its “owner.”

In many ways, the bouncer is more a boon than a burden. It is quite endearing, so cute that its mere presence grants an improvement of one place on the table: Bad morale checks become Indifferent, Indifferent becomes Good. If conditions are already Good, then there is no benefit. This improvement is applicable to everyone waking up in its vicinity. *Cuteness* is similar to *Seduction*, except that instead of working on members of the same species, this skill works on anyone who can see the bouncer as a pet (humans, notably).

The bouncer enjoys making people happy, a fact that often boosts the



popularity of its owner, who also enjoys a +1 to **Luck** (this virtual point cannot be spent). It is very sensitive to emotions, and the color of its “fur” will reflect the feelings of nearby creatures: crimson for anger, cyan for bliss, etc. Being able to sense hostility also makes it a convenient watchdog, above all since it never sleeps. When hostility draws near enough to mean danger, the bouncer becomes restless: it jumps and rebounds all around, faster and faster, which is usually enough to wake up anyone close by.

So what’s the catch? Is the bouncer secretly a devouring monster? Yes and no. Being basically a chlorophyll furball, the bouncer has no mouth and

would not harm anyone... physically. It only feeds on dreams. No one within 10 meters times its **Dream** score of it can dream, which means that no experience can be gained through dreams, nor any **Dream** point be regained. There is no discomfort involved, and even when someone begins to find odd the absence of dreams, it may not be so easy to guess the cause. Magic items work normally, as do previously-cast spells, but Dream entities lose 1 **Dream** point per minute, which they can regain only beyond feeding range of the bouncer, at the rate of 1/hour. Likewise, High Dreamers may not enter the Dreamlands, which is a form of dreaming, and so may not cast

spells within the bouncer's feeding range.

Now, how to get rid of the critter? That, at least, is simple. If the humanoid the bouncer has adopted starts to feel genuine hostility towards it, it will leave. It will not attach itself to anyone else but will die within two

weeks. During the same two weeks, its former owner suffers from a mere -1 to both **Luck** and morning morale rolls. If someone else than its owner tries to get rid of the bouncer, it will turn to its owner for protection; but to protect its owner, it will never fight. Bouncers are rare, nearly unknown. To have heard of them requires a very

difficult (-7) *Botany* or *Zoology* roll. A significant success means that the character knows about the bouncer bringing luck, as well as the meanings of its color variations. A particular success means that the character also knows that the bouncer feeds on dreams.

—*Bouncer* ©2003 Pierre-Alexandre Sicart  
illustration by Rolland Barthélémy