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A PLAYER'S PRIMER
⊕ ⊗ ⊕ ⊗
OUTLANDS



BOOK

♦ A PLAYER'S PRIMER ♦ ♦ TO THE OUTLANDS

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WELCOME TO THE OUTLANDS

Sigil was alive. At least, the Cage *seemed* alive, what with the shove and bustle of life pulsing through its streets. A body couldn't turn around in the city without bumping into humans, modrons, tanar'ri, fiends, devas, bariaur — just about every known type of being (and a few of the unknown kind, too). There were petitioners, planars, and, of course, the ever-present (and ever-clueless) primes.

It's easy to spot primes who're new to the planes — they've got an addle-coved look on their faces. Fact is, a group of 'em stood flat in the middle of the road like a ghoul's breakfast, the rest of the multiverse flowing around them (and a berk or two picking their pouches for loose jink). They'd heard of the endless planes where a cutter could find things he'd never even dreamed of, but now, having made it to Sigil, they didn't know what to do next.

The group's fighter unfolded the large map they'd gotten from a sage in Shadowdale. 'Course, the map was next to useless in this case — after all, few sages in the Prime know the dark of the planes.

"Okay," said the basher, his eyes roaming the map. "There should be a door-thing to Glorium around here, somewhere. . . ."

"No, you fool!" snapped the rogue. "That's the gate-town for Gladsheim. We're going to Bytopia. Where's its gate-town?"

"Don't know," said the basher, looking over the map, "but how far can it be?"

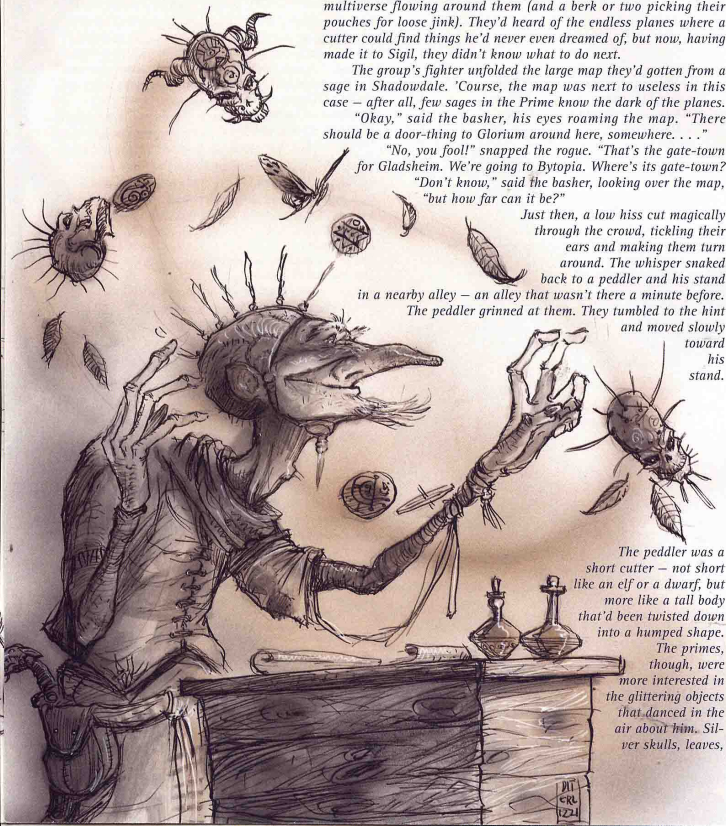
Just then, a low hiss cut magically through the crowd, tickling their ears and making them turn around. The whisper snaked

back to a peddler and his stand in a nearby alley — an alley that wasn't there a minute before.

The peddler grinned at them. They tumbled to the hint and moved slowly toward his stand.

The peddler was a short cutter — not short like an elf or a dwarf, but more like a tall body that'd been twisted down into a humped shape.

The primes, though, were more interested in the glittering objects that danced in the air about him. Silver skulls, leaves,



disks, and multi-pointed stars shone and spun like bright moons around a dead world.

"So, you're looking for the chant, are you?" asked the peddler. "Looking for . . . information?"

The basher nodded, watching the sparkling objects. "About the Plane of Concordant — uh, I mean, the Outlands."

The peddler let out a barking laugh. With a palsied hand, he reached up and snatched one of the skulls out of the air. He offered it to the fighter like a piece of fruit. "Ask," he said. "Point and ask."

The basher carefully took the skull in his hands, barely holding onto it for a second before letting it go. It floated up and hung in the air, slowly turning to face him. He pointed at the silvery skull with a cautious finger. "Okay, uh, what's the gate-town for Bytopia?"

Clicking softly, the skull said nothing for a few seconds. Then it began to speak, giving the quick chant on the town of Tradegate. The peddler smiled, and a sale was made.

The primes moved away from the stand, passing the skull back and forth among themselves as they bumped their way through the crowded streets of the Cage. The rogue took a last look around, but the peddler, his wares, and the alley itself had disappeared.

USING THE BOOKLET

This booklet is a handy travel guide to the Outlands, one of the many Outer Planes. The Outlands can be dangerous, and cutters new to the area need to know the dark of things — where to go, who to see, and what to do. 'Course, often more important is who and what to *avoid*, and that's here, too.

The first part of the booklet is a general introduction to the Outlands. It talks about the mimir, a new magical item that could become a cutter's best friend. Then, it gives an overview of the Outlands itself: how the place works, how to get around, and how to handle magic.

The bulk of the booklet is a more detailed look at the gate-towns and other locations that a cutter might want to explore (or avoid). While these sections don't tell a body all he might like to know, they'll most likely spare him from too quick a death.

All of this material is for players to read, consult, debate, and interpret. Some of it is further expanded upon in the *PLANESCAPE™ Campaign Setting*, and some of it is brand new, revealing locations not covered in that product. This booklet also contains rumors (adventure hooks) that a DM can use to craft his own adventures in the Outlands.

USING THE CD

The compact disc that comes with the booklet gives the dark on the planes in general and the Outlands in particular. Fact is, the CD's got all of the knowledge of the mimir (further detailed on page 4), which the players can buy, steal, find, or have given to them. During the game, the players should usually have free access to the CD (by asking the mimir a question and then playing the appropriate track). However, the DM should control that access when needed. For example, if the mimir is under the effects of a *feeblemind* spell, it'll just spit gibberish out of its bone-box, and the DM should tell the players to play the malfunction track.

The back cover of this booklet shows what's found on each track. The players are welcome to listen to them all right away — in other words, their characters ask the mimir about all of the topics in the track listing. 'Course, they might pay the music for being in such a hurry. Later in the game, they might find themselves running for their lives from some particularly nasty bloods, unable to remember just *where* they heard how to give 'em the laugh.

A WORD OF WARNING

The chant in this booklet and CD is treated as coming from sources in the Outlands. Some of it might be misguided, misinformed, or just plain wrong. What's more, the DM can modify or ignore material to suit his own *PLANESCAPE* campaign. Players who slavishly follow the information in the booklet or CD shouldn't flap their bone-boxes if their characters get stuck in a bind. Pointing to a reference in this product doesn't overrule a DM's decision, berk.

As far as the planes are concerned, let the Clueless beware, and pity the poor sod who treats the chant as the absolute truth.

NEW +@ +THE
PLANES, ARE Y@U?
THOUGH+ S@. I+'S +HA+
L@K @F W@NDER IN Y@UR
EYE. THE UNCER+AIN+Y
IN Y@UR S+EP. TH+T, AND +HE
"B@B ME" SIGN S@ME@NE'S
S+UCK +@ Y@UR BACK.

— PELLIN@RI, A NATIVE
@F SIGIL,
+@ A GREEN PRIME

THE MIMIR

The mimir (pronounced mih-MEAR, and also called the Well of Knowledge or the Speaking Skull) is a minor magical item available for sale in Sigil. Basically, it's a device that gives answers to spoken questions, as long as those answers have been recorded by the mimir's creator. Mimirs can shed light on any number of subjects that are dark, but the most common type gives a brief tour of the Outlands and its gate-towns.

Mimirs come in many forms — disks, cubes, leaves, stars, sunflowers (popular with droids), human and animal skulls, and plenty of other shapes. They're all made of an unknown silvery metal, which might be what makes 'em work. The metal shines and reflects light with a rainbow hue. If a body looks close, he'll see fine lines drawn in tight patterns over its surface.

To hear what a mimir's got to say, its owner just points at it and asks a question. It'll click for a few seconds, searching for any chant it has on the subject. If it finds any, it'll speak up, giving the answer in an instructive, conversational tone.

A mimir can also tell a body where he stands in the Outlands, but only in a general way. It can't give exact distances or location, but it'll say which ring outward from the spire he's standing in. That's an important thing to know, berk, because the closer a body gets to the spire, the more magic drops away.

Mimirs only work on the Outer Planes. If brought to the Inner, Astral, Ethereal, or Prime Material Planes, they'll just babble a load of gibberish. Take it back to the Outer Planes, though, and it'll work again.

Certain spells can block a mimir, too. A *dispel magic* will temporarily stop it from working, and spells such as *feeblemind* will make it babble. It won't work in a *silence 15' radius* or a *dead magic* zone, but it recovers instantly if taken out of the spell's reach.

These devices don't often get lost. They float naturally, and follow their owners just like *ioun stones*. 'Course, that means it's easy to mark a new prime — he's the one with the skull bouncing along behind him. For this reason, most folks keep their mimir in boxes, backpacks, or sacks. But they've got to take it out to use it. A mimir won't work unless it's floating freely, whether in air or in water.

No one knows the dark of where mimirs come from, but they're commonly for sale in Sigil and the gate-towns, usually from peddlers or berks in taverns. Some say they come from the chaotic good planes, but many a sod who's found their chant barmy or out of date has sworn they were spawned in the pits of Baator. Most mimirs sell for about 2,000 gold pieces, but a sharp cutter has a better chance of getting one by trading for another magical item. One mysterious peddler in Sigil who sells mimirs often takes other magical items in trade, including *cursed ones*.

A mimir should be treated as a metal object when figuring a saving throw against damage.

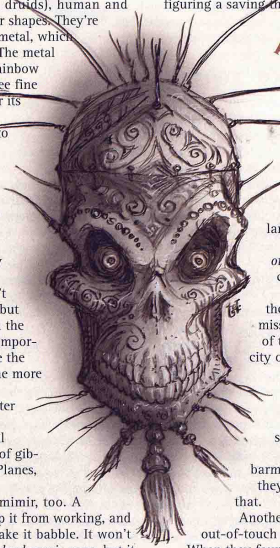
AN OVERVIEW OF THE OUTLANDS

The Outlands are known to the clueless as the "Plane of Concordant Opposition." (Fact is, they get most of the planar names wrong, which is a sure way to mark a prime.) Just one of many Outer Planes, the Outlands are still a very unique place. For starters, it's got entrances to every other Outer Plane, making it a central clearing-house for all sorts of planar beings. And then, of course, there's the spire. A body'd have to be blind to miss that — it rises up out of the middle of the Outlands, infinitely tall, with the city of Sigil hovering on top.

The spire's a good example of how primes worry too much. They always want to know how something that's infinitely tall can have something else on top of it. But that kind of thinking just drives a berk barmy. In the planes, things are the way they are, and it's best just to leave it at that.

Another problem is that primes figure their out-of-touch universe is the center of everything. When they found the Outlands — a plane connected to all other Outer Planes — they had to cobble up a quick reason why it couldn't be the center of the multiverse. So they called it the "Plane of Concordant Opposition," the idea being that the Outlands are *opposed* to the other planes.

Nothing is further from the truth, berk. The Outlands (sometimes just called the Land) are at the center of all things, with gates leading to the other planes. A traveler headed for one of those planes just has to use



the right gate. 'Course, creatures from the other side can come through the gates, too, so a berk's got to watch his step.

The gates see a lot of use in both directions, so folks figured it'd be a good idea to build towns around each one. These settlements are known as *gate-towns*, and each is described later in this booklet (starting on page 8).

Funny thing about gate-towns, though — they reflect the mood of whatever plane their gate leads to. For example, the poor sods in Bedlam are half-barmy (some would say *more* than half) just from living next to the Gate to Pandemonium. Even the town itself can take on the mood of a plane, buildings and all.

Fact is, if the mindset of a town gets too morally and ethically aligned to its plane, it'll get sucked through the gate. The whole burg just disappears from the Outlands and moves to the other plane. If the town of Excelsior gets *too* good and *too* lawful, for example, then it'll join the choir on Mount Celestia.

What happens next depends on the town. For some places, another copy just pops right up out of nowhere, taking the place of the original. Other towns, though, won't be copied. They'll have to be rebuilt by any cutters willing to lift a hammer. In any case, when a town's sucked away, the gate stays. 'Course, it might be a bit worse for the wear, but folks can't really say. Even a planar doesn't know the dark about everything.

But remember, berk — the gates work both ways. If a town can go through, it can come back out. Parts of the Outer Planes that don't measure up morally and ethically with the rest of their plane can break off and slide into the Outlands. For example, if a paladin built his home on evil Baator, it just wouldn't work. Sooner or later, his place would drift back to the Land (and good riddance, the baatezu would say). This usually only happens to spots on the upper levels of the plane — the stuff farther down is pretty well anchored. And given the endless nature of planes, such swapping back and forth is minor.

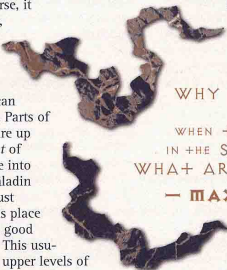
Besides the gate-towns, the Outlands have a good number of other spots a traveler should know about. Some are just small villages, but some are the realms of powers who like the unaligned, free-wheeling nature of the Land. 'Course, a truly *evil* power setting up shop in the Outlands suffers the same problem as the gate-towns. That is, Loki can create a citadel there and fill it with malicious berks, only to have it eventually slip into his native plane. This means that most of the powers of the Outlands are neutral, or, at least, amoral — beyond the ethical and moral definitions of most planars.

MOVING + THROUGH + THE OUTLANDS

Between the gate-towns and other populated areas, the bulk of the Outlands is pretty much open, empty space. Here and there, a traveler'll run into sharp-toothed mountains, rolling hills, windswept badlands, and forests of all kinds of vegetation. But these places've turned their backs on the "normal" rules for topography, geography, and climate. (Fact is, the Outlands map in the *PLANESCAPE Campaign Setting* boxed set is more suggestion than reality; DMs can mix and match terrain as they see fit.) Also, with chunks of the Land always breaking off or adding on, long-term structures like roads don't usually last too long. A body has to make it on his own.

But there's another way for folks who don't feel like walking: taking a gate from Sigil. The city's got a number of magical portals that lead to the gate-towns and some even go farther, right into the Outer Planes. These gates are real handy, but they tend to move around. Smart cutters'll find themselves a local guide.

Those who do cross the Land on foot often complain that it drives 'em barmy. Journeys take a random amount of time — as Outlanders say, "It takes as long as it takes, no more or less." A body can walk from Rigus to Ribcage in a few days, only to find the return trip takes several weeks.



SΘ, YΘU WANT + ΘΘ KNΘW
WHY +HE ΘU+LANDS HAVE
BΘ+H DAY AND NIGH+
WHEN +HERE'S NΘ SUN OR STARS
IN +HE SKY?
WHΛ ARE YΘU — CLUELESS?
— MAXIMA TARS OF +HE DUS+MEN

For gaming purposes, though, figure that it takes about three to eighteen days to move between nearby points — for example, a trip from Hopeless to one of its neighboring gate-towns, Torch or Curst. For longer trips, just add up the pieces. So, a body going from Hopeless to Ribcage must first get to Torch (three to eighteen days), and then press on to Ribcage (another three to eighteen days). Even if he tries to avoid any contact with Torch, the trip'd still take from six to thirty-six days.

Here's another example: A body wants to go from Hopeless to Thoth's Estate. (Folks who've *been* to Hopeless know why all the sods in these examples would want to leave.) First, it'd take three to eighteen days to reach the River Ma'at, then another three to eighteen days to follow it downstream to Thoth's Estate. By the

way, Thoth's Estate and the city of Thebestys are the only spots that don't follow the travel rule — they're really considered to be one area, and it takes little or no time to go between them.

The Clueless usually think that riding a horse'll make a trip faster. Not so. It'll take the same amount of time, no matter how a body goes. Then again, sods who get lost in the Outlands might appreciate a horse — to eat. (Some planars do talk of a growing herd of camels, and another of buffalo, that've been brought into the Land and left to go feral.)

MAGIC IN THE OUTLANDS

It's happened plenty of times: A prime makes it to the Outlands, gets herself into all sorts of trouble, and whips up a powerful spell or two to save her skin. Trouble is, if she's not standing in the right place or doesn't have the right key, the spell's likely to fizzle. The dead-book's full of the Clueless who didn't know the dark of how magic works in the Land.

Here, the strength of magic depends on how far a body is from the spire — the center of the plane. (Any berk who still has to ask how an infinite plane can have a center is in the wrong universe.) The direction away from the spire is generally known as *ringward* or *out-*

ward (toward the ring of the Outer Planes), while the direction toward the spire is called *spireward* or *inward*.

The Outlands are divided into concentric circles, though the borders of the circles aren't marked in any way. As a body crosses these borders, magical abilities drop away. In the farthest circle ringward, all magic works normally (as normally as it ever does in the Land). But as a body moves closer to the spire, more spells are locked out, until at the spire itself no magic works at all (except for Sigil, of course).

These circles are known as rings or layers, depending on where a body's from. Natives of Sigil call them rings, and count outward from the spire to the rim. Bashers from the Outer Planes tend to think in layers, and so that's what *they* call the circles, counting inward from the rim to the spire.

Table 1 below sums up how magic is affected on each ring and layer. It's not just spells, berk — all spell-like abilities get knocked out, too. For example, a beholder's disintegrating eye is treated as a wizard's *disintegrate* spell, which is sixth-level. Neither'll work within the fifth ring or fifth layer. These restrictions apply to magic for both wizards and priests.

All of the gate-towns sit in the outermost ring/layer, where magic isn't affected (except by the normal restrictions of the Outlands). Most of the other important sites are found in the sixth, seventh or eighth ring outward, since that's where the powers of the plane

TABLE 1: MAGICAL EFFECTS IN THE OUTER PLANES

RING	LAYER	SPELL EFFECTS	OTHER EFFECTS
9th	1st	None	None
8th	2nd	9th-level spells annulled	None
7th	3rd	8th-level spells annulled	None
6th	4th	7th-level spells annulled	Nongodlike psionic abilities annulled
5th	5th	6th-level spells annulled	Life-draining abilities don't function; illusions fail without proper spell key
4th	6th	5th-level spells annulled	Poison has no effect
3rd	7th	4th-level spells annulled	Demigod powers annulled; no conduits may reach this ring
2nd	8th	3rd-level spells annulled	Lesser powers annulled; no astral connections allowed
1st	9th	2nd-level spells annulled	Intermediate powers annulled
Spire	10th	All magic annulled	All godly abilities annulled

usually set up shop. Here's why: Too far from the spire, their domains could slip into another Outer Plane; too close, and they couldn't grant their worshipers all the magic they'd like.

There's one other thing that's pretty important about the rings and layers — they move. The sodding borders slide back and forth across the Land, so locations can fall into a range of different rings. A patch of ground'll be in the sixth ring one day and in the fifth the next. 'Course, a piece of land almost never moves more than one ring or so from its original spot. Bigger changes usually take place only if a nearby gate-town goes tumbling off into an Outer Plane.

Since the borders between the rings aren't marked, most berks aren't sure of where they are until they try to cast a spell and it fails. If a cutter's lucky enough to have a mimic, it'll tell her what ring or layer she's standing in, but it won't give the location of the next nearest ring or layer.

Travel between rings or layers takes just as long as trips between towns. From the ninth ring, a body'd go for three to eighteen days to reach the eighth ring, and then another three to eighteen days to reach the seventh ring. Just wandering around the Outlands crossing rings can really eat up a cutter's time.

Travel time between rings is separate from travel time between specific locations. That is, a body going from Curst to the Palace of Judgment takes the normal amount of time, no matter how many rings she crosses along the way.

The spire's another story — it's infinite, so it's not treated as a specific location. A body walking from Curst to the base of the spire'd have to cross a number of rings to do it, at three to eighteen days each.

SPELL KEYS

Even if a body's standing in the right ring or layer, she still might find that some of her spells don't work. That's just the way it is on the planes. But don't give up yet, berk — a spell key might set things right.

A spell key is a special item, method, or even another spell that'll allow a particular spell to be cast. Without the right key, a spell could putter out halfway through or not even work at all. They only work for wizard spells, though (priest spells use the mysterious power keys).

Cutters have to tumble to the nature of spell keys on their own. A lot of that stuff is dark to most folks. But the *kinds* of spells that need keys are pretty well known:

- ◆ Divination spells that contact powers and creatures in the Inner Planes.
- ◆ Elemental conjurations that summon creatures or effects from the Inner Planes.

- ◆ Ethereal-based spells that need access to the Ethereal Plane.
- ◆ Energy Plane spells that need access to the Negative or Positive Energy Planes.
- ◆ Shadow magic spells that need access to the Demiplane of Shadow.
- ◆ Spells of any type that conjure, contact, or tap energies from the Inner Planes, the Ethereal Plane, or any of the Demiplanes. These spells (like *dismissal* or *drawmij's instant summons*) might work just fine in the Outlands, but if a body wants to use them to reach one of those other planes, it'll take a spell key.

By the way, any berk who figures on using psionic abilities to duplicate these spells or reach the Inner Planes, Ethereal Plane, or Demiplanes is out of luck.

POWER KEYS

Power keys are clerical in nature. Like spell keys, they're used to boost certain spells on a particular plane. 'Course, as there aren't a lot of powers or pantheons in the Outlands (not as many as on some other planes, anyway), there aren't many power keys, either.

Fact is, the current chant says the Land's got no power keys at all. But cutters keep looking all the same. Here's the dark of it, though: If there *were* any power keys, they'd have to be created by a very high-up blood — in other words, the DM.

A TOUR OF THE OUTLANDS

The rest of this booklet shows a cutter just what he might expect to find in his travels across the Land. First, there's a good look at each of the gate-towns (on pages 8 through 27). There, he can get the dark on a number of subjects: a general description of each town and its people; who's in charge of the place; where and how to use the gate; interesting sites to take in or avoid; and the current chant from the streets about what's *really* going on.

Then, a cutter can read about various other locations in the Land (on pages 28 through 32). These spots include small villages, camps, realms and domains scattered across (and under) the surface.

Welcome to the Outlands, berk. Try to live long enough to learn a thing or two.



AUTOMATA

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 10,000 (reported as less in some volumes)

THE TOWN: The most perfect and ordered burg in the Outlands, Automata seems more like a machine than a living place. Inside its rectangular walls, the city's laid out as clean as a cartographer's study.

The town's a perfect grid; it'd take a leatherhead to get lost here. The buildings look like they were stamped by the same hand, and places are made different only where needed (for example, a stable has larger entrances than a tavern). Buildings rise up one to four stories, but each story's always 12 feet tall and carved of the same shining, gray-red stone. Bits of color in a sign or awning liven the place up a bit, but that's all got to be cleared by the Council of Order (see "The Hoi Polloi").

All businesses of a like type set up on the same block. A body can't run a tavern in a lodging block, but he *can* open that same tavern across the street in an entertainment block. 'Course, this means there's a half-dozen smithies within a hammer's throw of each other, but a sod in a mansion might have a long walk to the nearest greengrocer.

THE GATE: In the middle of the town sits the Gate to Mechanus, in a block all by itself. The gate's a great disk on its side, a turning, toothed gear. Travelers to Mechanus hop up on the disk and disappear. Where they come out depends on the time of day, the position of the disk, and probably a lot of other arcane factors. The government's got a whole building of accountants, calculators, and computers (the old-fashioned, humanoid type) who work at figuring out where the gate'll drop a body at any particular time.

The gate's surrounded by government buildings, with a wide exit spireward. This exit, Modron Way, is for the modrons who regularly spill out of the gate and start their long march around the Outlands. The march is called the Procession or the Modron Walkabout, but

only Primus, the lord of the modrons, knows the true dark of it.

The gate's well guarded during the day to stop travelers and other barmies from just jumping on. To be cleared for gate travel, a body's got to fill out stacks of forms in a number of different offices ('course, the offices all look the *same*, but that's Automata for you). Nighttime, though, when the law says folks should be sleeping, only a few guards watch over the gate. That's when most cutters try to sneak into the plane of ultimate law.

THE POPULACE: Most of the natives are either petitioners of law or folks (both planars and primes) who hope to profit from them. There are lots of humans, elves, and other mortal races, but few halfling, hin, gnomes, or kender. Once in a while a body'll run across a baatezu or archon in town on business for its lord. And there are always modrons — working, exploring, and marching off here and there for their own reasons.

The petitioners in town are easy to mark. They stick to a common uniform (currently, a red-gray robe of ankle length, bound by a white sash). "One dress, one mind," they like to say, figuring it'll help them make Automata so lawful that it slides right into Mechanus. Other planars and some primes tend to garb themselves in flashier colors.

Smart cutters can probably guess which faction's the strongest in town: the Fraternity of Order (or, in common chant, the Guvners). These bashers've got the bureaucracy of Automata in a stranglehold; they fill all low- and mid-level posts. Berks who play games with the laws of the town get marked by the Guvners, and *they've* been playing games with the laws a lot longer.

THE HOI POLLOI: The high-ups in town are the three members of the Council of Order — they hold the ultimate legitimate power. The Council's made up of Captain Arstimis, a githzerai fighter of the town guard; Pelnis the Clockmaker, a human representing the craftsmen; and Serafil, a tiefling and priestess of Lei Kung, who represents the temple districts. Officially, nothing can get done in town without their nods.

Mirroring the Council of Order is the secret and illegal Council of Anarchy, also with three seats. This council's made up of a githzerai criminal named Leggis Scrog, a female human vagrant named Ravis Corcuncawl, and a baatezu erinyes called Aurach the Fair. They rule the night and the mysterious Underworld (see "Local Sites"), and, without their nods, nothing *illegal* gets done in town.

A PLACE FOR EVERY PROPER THING,
AND EVERYTHING IN ITS
PROPER PLACE.

— SEVEN, A MODRON WHO'S BEEN
NUMBERED AND TATTOOED
BY THE LOCALS



LOCAL SITES: Most travelers will find that Automata gives 'em the yawn. Outside of the gate to Mechanus and its surrounding governmental offices, the town's a collection of blocks assigned to lodging, entertainment, industry, crafts, and more government.

Things're more interesting in the Underground. It's a secret city of chaos lurking beneath the clean, precise streets of order. Twisted passageways, hiding holes, concealed lairs, forbidden temples — it's got all the darkness and unrest swept down from the world above. Here the Council of Anarchy rules, and anything's fair game. Fact is, many planars support the place. If they didn't, Automata would be so pure that it would've washed into the clockwork plane long ago.

A cutter with jink to throw around can find natives who know ways to get down below. As a public service, though, one entrance is well known. The back of *McGuvol's Stabling Establishment* has a cast-iron circular staircase leading downward. It's sealed during daylight hours, but it gives the Clueless and other first-timers an easy way into the Underground. The bad news is that the stairs are watched by the proxies of Primus and other forces of law, and sods who come and go are marked.

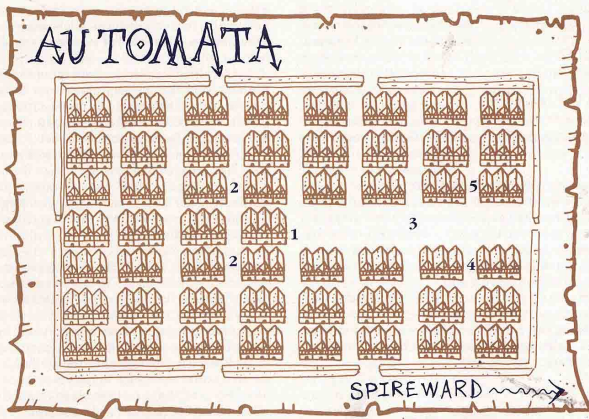
CURRENT CHANT: A local explorer named Loctus has reported a hill to the north that just suddenly appeared, a hill he says is "growing, like a hive or a boil." Make that *said*, because the bubber's since disappeared, and the bureaucracy denies any responsibility for his fate.

IMPORTANT SITES:

1. The Gate to Mechanus
2. The Council of Order building
3. Modron Way
4. *McGuvol's Stabling Establishment*
5. *The Divine Machine*, reportedly the best inn in Automata (Tourlac the Halfling, proprietor).

FILL ⊕+ THESE FORMS IN
+TRIPLICATE, +AKE +HEM ACROSS
+⊕WN +⊕ BE STAMPED, BRING +HEM
BACK HERE FOR INITIAL PROCESSING,
GE+ +HEM+ CHECKED ACROSS +HE
STREET+, THEN . . . SAY, YOU
WEREN'+ IN A HURRY +⊕ GE+ +⊕
MECHANUS, WERE YOU?

— GOVERNMENT+ WORKER #2601





BEDLAM

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 50,000

THE TOWN: Some towns in the Outlands have good parts and bad parts. Bedlam, on the other hand, has bad parts and worse parts. It's spread out like a giant fan against the side of Maurash, a hill of volcanic stone and residue. At the bottom of the hill (the base of the fan) is the Gate to Pandemonium, and from there eight worn roads spread outward and run like spines up the slope.

The worst of it is at the bottom of the hill, in what locals call the Gatemouth district. That area pays the music for being so close to the gate – it's strangled by chaos from the plane beyond. Here, kips and shops of every architectural style jam together at can't-be angles, with little regard for their neighbors. Throw in strangely-curved walls and corners that seem to alter space itself, and you've got the kind of place that makes a berk look twice.

Head uphill, though, and the burg starts to take a saner turn – the roads get a bit more workable, the buildings a touch more steady. The really top-shelf quarters (top-shelf for Bedlam, anyway) are found near

the top of the hill, in what's called the Citadel district.

THE GATE: A sod would have to try pretty hard to miss the door to Pandemonium. It's at the bottom of the hill, inside a huge tower of black obsidian as tall as the hill itself. (On top of the tower is what looks like a humanoid hand, reaching skyward. Some say the gate and the

hand are the remains of a forgotten god who tried to escape the Howling Land – unsuccessfully, they add. Others believe the town once sat next to a great volcano, now gone, and the tower is what's left of the volcanic plug. A few folks even mark the tower as an artistic rendering by Hruggek, Cyric, or Zeboim. Most, though, don't really give a pike.)

The gate's inside the base of the tower, with a half-dozen entrances around the perimeter. These entrances, called blastgates, are set in archways of iron and stone. Day and night, they spew out a rank, howling wind that sweeps up and over and city.

THE POPULACE: Primes who've been to both Bedlam and Xaos might think the people in each town are

pretty much the same – barmy. But, unlike the natives of Xaos, Bedlamites are malicious, petty, and hateful. No one knows why, though a sage once claimed the difference is that the people of Xaos have come to terms with their madness, but the people of Bedlam have not. The sod was quickly torn to bits by a pack of Bedlamites, but no one's sure if that meant he was right or wrong.

Residents of Bedlam include gnolls, bugbears, and humans, with a good mixture of the other mortal races, none of them all that sane. The Bleak Cabal is the strongest faction in town, and often tries to talk berks into going through the gate, which tends to end their mortal lives.

The natives of Bedlam are twitchy and self-absorbed, and many of them hear (and argue with) voices that seem to come out of the air. After a few days in Bedlam, a basher tends to hear voices himself, voices that tell him to let go of reason, emotion, and, eventually, sanity.

THE HOI POLLOI: The wizard Tharick Bleakshadow is the current Keeper of Bedlam. He's a member of the Xaositects, and a body flipping through *Kragspaw's Ponderous Book of Words* would probably find his picture next to "dotty old wizard." Fact is, he's senile, as much of a threat to his own cutters as to the enemies of Bedlam. No one ever seems to know what he'll do next (Bleakshadow included), but no one's been able to boot him out, either.

Apart from the Keeper, three groups of bashers put the hard hand to troublemakers in town. Farthest up on the hill, the *Windlancers* patrol the Citadel district – they're more or less a sane bunch, and they try to protect the place. Down around midtown, a shakier group of semi-criminals called the *Sarxer* hold sway. They're more like personal bodyguards, though the bodies they guard are usually their own. Finally, down in the depths, near the gate, a band of adventuring sods tries to stem the tide of madness. Not surprisingly, they're known as the *Misguided*.

LOCAL SITES: Each of the three main areas of Bedlam has its own flavor. The safest of the lot is the Citadel district, the arc of strong buildings on the hill-top. The powerful bloods who live up there want to profit from the gate without being crushed by its madness. A few, like Althax Darkfleece, even hope to cure it. Darkfleece is a bariar priestess of Shekinester, and she looks after the insane in her keep, the Sanatorium. She also provides a resting-place to good creatures who've been battered by Pandemonium.

YOU DØN'+ HAVE

+ Ø BE BARMY + Ø

LIVE HERE,

BU+ I+

SURE

HELPS!

— GØSSUP BLIN+

ØF +HE

BLEAK CABAL

Midtown is the wide area between the Citadel's curve and the immediate surroundings of the gate. Here, a visitor'll find most of the inns and taverns in town, along with a full assortment of barmies. The *Dark Draft* and the *Bonechill Wind* are both popular kips, but the best place for travelers (especially cutters of an artistic bent) is *Weylund's Inn*. Run by a dwarf named Pockmarked Weylund, it's an island of quiet in a addle-coved town.

The area right around the entrance to Pandemonium is known as Gatemouth, the stomping ground for most of the openly nasty and evil-aligned beings in town. The lowest (and most popular) dive in Gatemouth is the *Eye and Dagger*, run by a tiefling named Grist. This is a common hangout for fiends, tanar'ri, and the berks who choose to deal with them.

CURRENT CHANT: Word on the street warns of an upcoming invasion of Bedlam. Some think the bashers will come through the gate, while others say they'll come from the Outlands on their way to the gate. Berks who listen to these rumors should remember who they're dealing with. The town's been attacked before, but never when the locals say it's going to happen. Planars joke that when the barmies *stop* talking about an invasion, *then* you'll see the armies arrive.



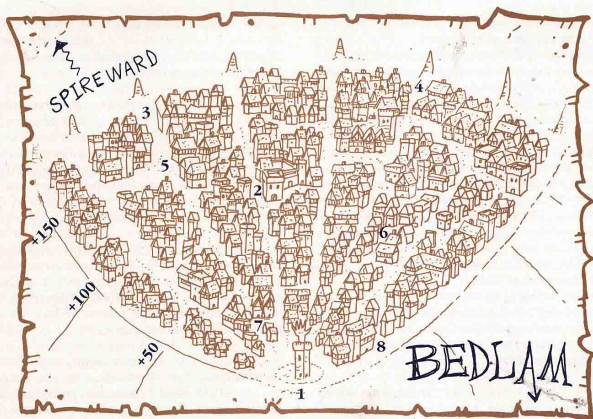
NØ. NØ! THA+T'S +HE CRAZIEST+ +HING
I'VE EVER HEARD! I — WHA+?
ØH. PIKE +HA+! WELL. SURE.
WHØ DØESN'+?
DØ YØU REALLY +HINK SØ?

— A BEDLAMITE, WALKING
+THROUGH +HE S+REETS ALONE

Another problem is Bleakshadow. He's been acting even twitchier than normal, complaining that some dark masters are plotting to overthrow him. Most people think he's just having delusions, but the wizard's torched a number of homes and inns in the Citadel and Midtown districts.

IMPORTANT SITES:

1. The Black Tower - Gate to Pandemonium
2. The Keep - home of Bleakshadow
3. The Sanatorium
4. The Windlancers' Headquarters
5. *Weylund's Inn*
6. Supposed base of the Sarex
7. The *Eye and Dagger*
8. Headquarters of the Misguided





CURST

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 15,000

THE TOWN: Curst is a near-circular walled city, with the Gate to Carceri right at the center of town. Four main streets lead straight out from the gate to exits in the wall. Within its wall, though, Curst is split into separate districts by five ring roads. Like ripples from a stone dropped in a pool, the five roads spread out from the center of town, each one larger than the last.

In the middle of town, a body'll find the government offices, the treasury, and the jail, in addition to the gate. This area's called the Gate Square by the locals, and it's surrounded by the first ring road. (Most primes are annoyed by the fact that it's not called the Gate Circle, but they usually get over it pretty fast.) Beyond the first ring are the best homes in Curst, built for the folks with the most jink in their pockets.

Beyond the second ring are the merchants and warehouses, beyond the third are craftsmen and their workshops, and beyond the fourth are the stables, taverns, and kips of laboring sods. Beyond the fifth ring road is the wall around the city.

The inside of the wall's covered with razorvine and patrolled by the Wall Watch. The bashers of the Watch don't seem to worry about letting visitors into Curst, but they cast a peery eye on any berk trying to *leave*. Unless they see proof of immediate business elsewhere, the standing order is to keep folks in — an order that's backed up by the razorvine.

It doesn't take an addle-cove to see that the natives are basically prisoners in their own burg. But, instead, they look at it as locking out the *rest* of the multiverse.

THE GATE: The Gate to Carceri is a four-pillared arch made entirely of black razorvine, its center glowing with a ruddy hue. Cutters who step into the arch are consumed by the hue, finding themselves on Othrys, the uppermost level of Carceri.

Despite being in the middle of town, the gate doesn't see much use to or from the plane. It could be due to chant that marks Carceri as a plane of imprisonment, making Outlanders unwilling to go in, and Carcerians unable to come out.

THE POPULACE: Few people in Curst are true natives. Most of them have come from — or been *sent* from —

somewhere else. They're refugees, escapees, and exiles, all driven by hatred and a desire for revenge against the bashers who sent them packing in the first place. Many of these poor sods think of Curst as just a base of operations. They're always trying to raise this or that army, so they can return and make their enemies pay the music — after capturing Curst itself, of course. Plans like that usually end up as drunken complaints in the bars. But the berks keep at it, and "politics" in Curst often means large-scale massacres, with blood running in the gutters.

Most residents are so busy whining, complaining, and plotting that they never actually leave the walled city. Humans, githzerai, creatures of the Lower Planes, and evil humanoids are common, and most'll let a body be (unless said body has something they need for their

plans). However, they take slights easily, and they hold a mean grudge, often as long as they can draw breath.

The Revolutionary League is extremely strong in Curst, and often acts to stop those seeking power. Fact is, their goal is to smash *all* structures of power. But the League's been broken up into quarreling sub-factions,

all claiming to be true Anarchists, each seeking the destruction of the others.

THE HOI POLLOI: The Burgher of Curst is the biggest and nastiest basher in town, and he usually has a strong body of support. The current Burgher is Tovus Giljaf, a githzerai wizard, once factol of the Athar before jealous rivals turned stag and bounced him out. Now he (and others) are building a power base for their revenge, which will mean the death of every Defier in Sigil. At least, that's what Giljaf says.

LOCAL SITES: The Burgher's house is on the Gate Square, along with the jail, government offices, and treasury. The rest of the city is a black, unpleasant tumble of buildings, inns, and rival headquarters. One spot worth mentioning is the *Quartered Man*, an alehouse catering to various rulers-in-exile.

CURRENT CHANT: The latest army being assembled is by (former) Baron Yurel Zarnthaskar, the commander of the Wall Watch. He plans to invade his prime-material homeland, but the Anarchists might have a say in the matter.



ECSTASY

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 25,000

THE TOWN: The first thing most visitors notice about Ecstasy is the plinths. Fact is, Ecstasy's known as the "City of Plinths," because the landscape's dotted with them — tall monoliths made of stone or iron. Something the Clueless might *not* notice is all the bodies on *top* of the plinths. These cutters are petitioners of Elysium, who sometimes sit up on a plinth for days, just contemplating the multiverse.

The rest of the town is pretty much like the petitioners, with no one in a great hurry to do anything. Ecstasy's a pastoral community where bodies have all they need, a town of plenty and peace. Most of the trouble comes from outsiders, and a true native of Ecstasy defines an "outsider" as "any berk who got here after *I* did."

As a town, Ecstasy's a sprawling, open place, with large manors and buildings grouped around the major crossroads. Gardens, orchards, and other greenery make up the rest, and, of course, plinths are everywhere. It's a mixed pot of styles and forms, but most visitors find the end result somehow very pleasing.

WHY + HIS SPOT? WHY + HIS
+ TOWN? WELL, IT SEEMED
LIKE A GOOD IDEA AT + HE + TIME.

— **CHERON BRAGABUCK,**
HIN NATIVE OF ECSTASY

THE GATE: There's a monolith made of ivory close to the center of town, known to residents as the Bone Plinth. Cutters who make it to the top'll find a pool of quicksilver, and stepping into the pool takes a body to Amoria, on the banks of the river Oceanus. That's about a day's travel from the Elysian city of Release From Care.

THE POPULACE: The petitioners on the plinths don't usually get in a body's way. But the rest of the people are just too sodding impulsive for most visitors. They're friendly, all right, but very direct — if they're interested in something a berk's got, they're likely to grab it for a closer look. A native here figures his first impulse is the best and acts on it, without letting thought slow him down. Why should he flap his bone-box over something as airy as law versus chaos, when he could be focusing on his personal growth?

Ciphers make up a good chunk of the planar population, along with petitioners of Ishtar, Majere, Mishakal, Chauntea, and Lathander. The town's often crowded

with halflings and other little people, too, since Sheela Peryroyl's realm is only three to eighteen days' walk spireward.

Evil is shunned in Ecstasy, with "evil" meaning anything that blocks a body's personal growth. Theft is a crime, but borrowing is not. Trespassing is a crime, but exploring is not. A rogue with a fast tongue can usually talk his way out of trouble, but berks like that don't stay in town long, not with curious natives always trying to find out what makes them tick.

THE HOI POLLOI: There are two main high-ups in Ecstasy, one for the day and one for the night. In daylight, the Sun Master rules the town, garbed in golden robes, her face hidden behind a golden disk. The current Sun Master is Regalia Tonn, formerly of Greyhawk, and her *Brightsteel Blade* is enough to convince most berks that her word is law. She's backed up by three solars the townspeople like to call Hinkus, Blinkus, and Nod (though other names get used, too, depending on a body's mood).

The Sun Master's never seen at night. That's when the Dark Hunter rules, riding with his pack of moon dogs. He wears the silver armor of a warrior, his helmet glowing like a mirror in the moonlight. Currently, the Dark Hunter is Karo Jantar, a native of the Outlands and member of the Ciphers. He stalks the town only at night, never seen when the sun's in the sky.

In general, the Sun Master and the Dark Hunter deal with serious problems, like a swarm of beholders or a group of primes rampaging in the beer garden. Townspeople take care of the smaller stuff, often forming quick courts with the first ten sods they can grab off the street. These people's courts make short work of justice, for better or for worse.

Both the Sun Master and the Dark Hunter hold their own courts, one in Solrise Tower and the other in Moondark Tower. These places are barred shut when their masters aren't in charge of the town.

There's another high-up in Ecstasy: the Philosopher King, who rules both day and night, but only inside the walls of the Philosopher's Court (see "Local Sites"). The current Philosopher King is Kagogius, a neutral and lawful wizard from somewhere on the Prime Material Plane.

LOCAL SITES: Travelers looking for a break from the dangers of the Outlands often come to Ecstasy. Here, there are temples to powers that'll sometimes help a cutter out — Lathander, Isis, Enlil, Majere, Mishakal, and others. Each temple's got support buildings for the petitioners and priests.

Visitors can stop at the Philosopher's Court, a wide, enclosed area where different factions from the Land come to debate and argue. 'Course, a basher used to making his point with a sword'll have a harder time than most, since a special enchantment protects all those within the court's walls. As long as there's a Philosopher King in office, no one's hurt by attacks, poison, or any personal harm. Sure, old age and natural causes can still get a body in the dead-book, but the enchantment sees to it that bashers have to win arguments by thought, not by force.

With all its factions and their clashing ideas, the court's a powerful anchor, keeping Ecstasy from sliding off into Elysium. On the other hand, petitioners who want to *help* it slide sometimes come here and join a debate, trying to get all the bashers in a like mind. Kagorius has a piece of advice for folks like that: "Good luck."

Another popular spot in town is *Revelhome*, described by one Torillian sage of great repute as "the ultimate festhall." It's the kind of place that'd please the most jaded Sensate – fine wines, mule-kicking meads, rich foods, pleasant dalliances, and deep romances. Its mistress is Madame Millani, assumed to be human though she's always veiled and hooded. Bubbbers should also plan some time to wander through the gardens, known for their statues of humans and humanoid creatures.

CURRENT CHANT: Natives say that Kagorius is tiring of his rule (and of dealing with so many "leatherheads" with strange attitudes all day long). If he steps down, the Philosopher's Court will lose its enchantment and violence could break out. Fact is, the factions will probably bash each other barmy until a new king is chosen. But *that* won't happen until one blood's able to convince all the others that he's the right body for the job. And don't forget what advice Kagorius might have on that.

IMPORTANT SITES:

1. The Bone Plinth
2. The Moondark Tower
3. The Solrise Tower
4. The Philosopher's Court
5. The temple districts
6. *Revelhome*

WELCOME +@ ECS+ASY, FRIEND.
 SAY, +HA+T'S A NICE LOOKING SWÖRD
 YÖU'VE G@+ +HERE.
 @H, AND LÖÖK AT +HA+. . .
 — "GRABBY" GANDÖR, PRESIDENT+
 ÖF +HE WELCOMING COMMIT+EE



EXCELSIOR

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 25,000 (including the picket keeps)

THE TOWN: When a prime talks about a city where the streets are paved with gold, he's usually flapping his bone-box over nothing. But when a planar talks about a place like that, chances are he's talking about Excelsior. Here, the town and streets are made of a yellow brick mixed with flecks of enchanted silver and steel — the whole place literally glows. It's a rich, ambient light, strong enough to read by in the evening, but not so strong that travelers can't find some sleep at a kip. The buildings feel warm all the time, too, so the only fires needed are for cooking.

The town's not walled off — it don't need to be, berk. Anywhere from three to a dozen floating castles (called picket keeps) circle Excelsior like moons. Each keep's the home of a paladin lord and his retinue, and these cutters protect the town. Every few decades, a keep lands at the edge of town and stays.

THE GATE: Somewhere in the highest tower in Excelsior is the Gate to Mount Celestia. The tower's full of nothing but staircases that twist and cross endlessly. Most of them eventually come out at an observation deck, where a body can see both Fortitude and Tradegate. One staircase, though, *keeps* rising. Travelers who climb it high enough'll suddenly find themselves in midair, twenty feet over the ocean at the base of Mount Celestia. The ocean's got the properties of *holy water* and the fall doesn't hurt, but passing through the gate sure wakes a berk up.

THE POPULACE: Natives of Excelsior are so pleasant, kindly, and understanding that visitors of nonlawful or nongood alignments quickly develop a facial tic. Fact is, all sods of nongood alignments are asked to leave. They won't be *forced* out as long as they don't break any laws, but peery natives'll keep a close eye on them at all times.

Apart from a few archons and devas, most residents are human — many of them paladins from prime-material worlds. One popular group in town is a sect of righteous cutters who call themselves the Order of the Planes-Militant. Just about everyone in Excelsior prefers light-colored garbs, especially white.

THE HOI POLLOI: The ruler of Excelsior is High Chancellor Miguala abd-al Ragarin, a paladin from Zakhara (found on the world of Toril). She's an elderly human, aided by two viziers: an archon named Blazara Lightmaker and a halfling warrior named Mendel.

The other high-ups in town (*really* high-ups, a body could say) are the paladin lords of the floating picket keeps. Many eventually land their keeps and join the city, but sometimes a strong paladin and his followers challenge the High Chancellor's right to lead. A challenge like that tends to be short and bloody, and all the paladin usually winds up with is a spot in the dead-book.

LOCAL SITES: One of the most important spots around is actually at the base of Mount Celestia — the town of Heart's Faith. Older maps of the Outlands show that it was once part of the Land before moving into the plane. Heart's Faith is ruled by a greater lammasu named Lebes.

The floating castle of Thotatis of Tyr is also well known. He's the most powerful paladin lord in town, but, overall, a pretty stiff-necked basher.

He feels that the High Chancellor hasn't been dealing too well with the matter of the Holy Shadow (see "Current Chant"), and that someone needs to give them a heavier hand.

Travelers in the mood to flap their bone-boxes might enjoy a stop at the Forum, a popular spot with many visitors. The Forum's an open amphitheater where good and lawful bodies gather to debate the nature of good, law, and paladinhood.

CURRENT CHANT: Believe it or not, there's a successful thieves' guild in town, known as the Holy Shadow. Some locals figure they've got nothing to fear, since the bobbies only work their cross-trade on nongood or nonlawful visitors. Bbt others feel the group is all that's keeping Excelsior from joining Heart's Faith in Mount Celestia.

WELCOME
+ PERFECT+ION
— AS BEST
AS M+R+ALS
CAN MANAGE.
— ABILIGIUS
+ THE
ARCHON

FAUNEL

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 900 humanoids, and probably twice as many other creatures.

THE TOWN: Picture a great human city made of stone. Now, picture it in ruins, with crumbling and broken buildings, cracked fountains that spill old water, and cathedrals split in half by trees. Nothing but wreckage, tied up in knots of vines and vegetation like a meal splattered in a spider's web. The air's always hot and wet, and heavy downpours seem to come out of nowhere, followed by rainbows (or moonbows, at night).

CAN'T SEE THE CITY FOR THE TREES?
BLAZING BAA+EZU, CU++ER,
THE CITY IS THE TREES!

— TROPSY,
A PETITIONER
IN LEOPARD FORM

Now, berk, picture the ruins inhabited by humanoids, animals, and planar creatures. That's Faunel — a broken city, full of life. Those who need structures to survive build with the old stone, but most bodies just form tents out of multi-colored tarps. The colors and markings of the tarps are unique, so a cutter can pretty much find her way around town (Joak the Sage's tent, for example, is bright yellow, with a constellation of red dots). Still, it ain't always easy to pick a path through the mixture of clutter and vines.

Legends tell that the ruins actually come from prime-material worlds. Chunks of abandoned cities are said to fall into the Outlands and become just another wreck in Faunel. True or not, there's plenty of chant that hints at gates to many prime worlds in the town's debris.

THE GATE: The Gate to the Beastlands is a wide pool, guarded by a large stone statue known only as Wrath. Some say that Wrath was once a mortal, a creature of living cloud, who rebelled against his fellow bashers. One story says he turned stag in a bid for power, while another marks his "crime" as seeking solid form. Hardly matters, though — the sod's now made of stone, a monolith with a human face and glowing blue eyes.

Wrath won't talk about his past, but he *does* ask the business of all travelers who want to cross into the Beastlands. Wise cutters answer him, and do so truthfully. Berks who ignore Wrath or lie to him tend to meet messy and quick ends on the far side of the gate. (The locals figure Wrath has a hand in it, but no one's quite tumbled to *how*.)

THE POPULACE: Faunel's natives are mostly non-humanoid petitioners from the Beastlands. They're thinking beings in animal form, and the Clueless are often startled to find that they can speak. (Fact is, they think and talk a lot better than some Clueless do.) The rest of the town's rounded out with a few elves, humans, bariaur, kender, and halflings. Many residents belong to the Sign of One faction, and they run a large complex they call the Center of Eternal Dreams.

THE HOI POLLOI: Faunel's got no official ruler, and bashers report that the only law here is the law of the jungle. Wrath is the most prominent figure in town, but he's got his own agenda. He only spills the dark of things if he figures Faunel or the Beastlands'll be safer as a result. Some chant says that Wrath's the only thing keeping Faunel in the Outlands.

LOCAL SITES: Lots of planars call Faunel "The Wreckage," and cutters seem to stumble on more and more ruins all the time. Many of these ruins have actually been there all along, and just get "discovered" when masses of vines die off or get cleared away. 'Course, this doesn't stop folks from thinking the rubble comes from prime-material worlds, or from spreading rumors about gates.

One place in town that doesn't come or go is the Signers' headquarters, the Center of Eternal Dreams. It's a blasted-out, roofless cathedral, with broken stained-glass windows covered in tarps and hangings of the faction. Maps used by Signers show the building as the central point of both Faunel and the Outlands (pity the sod who trusts her life to such a map).

CURRENT CHANT: Stories tell of a secret group operating in this part of the Outlands — a group of lawful evil bashers known as the Vile Hunt. With a nod from the Mercykillers, this crowd wants to track down the petitioners of the Beastlands and put 'em all in the dead-book. (To the Hunt, beasts with the minds of men are abominations.) Wrath's on their list, too. They want to get *him* out of the way so they can make their own gate to the Beastlands — the better to hunt with.

Y@U KN@W. I+ AIN'T SO MUCH
+HE HEAT, I+S +HE HUMIDITY.

— ROGGETT +HE DULL,
+RYING IN VAIN
+@ STAR+ A CONVERSATION
WITH WRATH

FORTITUDE

WELCOME + THE BEST-LOVED
AND BEST-KNOWN TOWN

OF THE OUTLANDS —
WE KNOW YOU'LL AGREE.

— ANTON LEVELSKULL OF THE
HARMONIUM

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 5,000

THE TOWN: Some planars call Fortitude “The Egg,” because the town sits inside a wall that curves to make a perfect oval. Near one end is the Gate to Arcadia, and near the other is a large stadium called the Confessional (see “Local Sites”). The two main entrances to the city are at either end, but plenty of smaller entryways dot the whole length of the town wall.

The streets of Fortitude are broad boulevards, spanning beautiful parks and orchards. Fact is, a good half of the land's filled with groves, parks, and fountains, and the other half with buildings. The blocks are all clean and well kept, each offering a body a good mix of different shops. Most buildings in this version of Fortitude have first stories of stone and upper floors of wood and mud, topped off by thatched roofs. Two prominent stone buildings in the area are the Gate to Arcadia and the Confessional.

THE GATE: The Gate to Arcadia sits on top of a low, circular step-pyramid made of seven stacked tiers, with staircases climbing it from four different directions. The gate itself appears as a large greenish flame, and travelers going to Arcadia just step through it, unharmed. Local chant has it that evil berks are purified by passing through the flame, but other legends say they don't get off that easily.

THE POPULACE: If it weren't for the citizens, Fortitude would be a nice place to visit. The townspeople here are a dangerous lot, a combination of primes, faction members, and petitioners of Arcadia. The petitioners have the ability to *know alignment*. Other natives of the plane (except for petitioners) are immune to both illusions and phantasms. And Fortitude's a popular place with the Hardheads (bashers of the Harmonium faction). They can cast a *charm person* spell once per day. All in all, the natives make sure that the town's well run — or else. Liars, peelers, and evil-doers give this place a wide berth.

THE HOI POLLOI: The high-ups in Fortitude are the seven members of the Secret Conclave, elected by all those in town who're both good and lawful in alignment. A new election is held every time the Modron Procession passes through the city. When the horde comes through, the voters pick seven citizens for Conclave positions. The list of winners is meant to stay dark from the general populace. However, one known member of the current group is Skylar Mendacin, a powerful human male fighter in the service of the Hardheads.

LOCAL SITES: Besides the Gate to Arcadia, the most important site in Fortitude is the Confessional. A great arena sunk into the ground, it balances the stacked pyramid found at the other end of town. The Confessional's well built, too — any cutter who stands on the low stage and rattles her bone-box can still be heard in the far edges of the arena.

The Confessional is used for admitting fault and handing out punishment. Several times a week, natives fill up the arena (travelers seeking good seats should arrive early), and anybody can take the stage to confess her crimes or flaws. The crowd then passes judgment, which, depending on its mood, ranges from simple verbal abuse to putting the poor sod in the dead-book. Refusing to accept her punishment gets a berk in the dead-book instantly — the mob'll execute her on the spot. Usually, the Hardhead guards drag criminals and suspects in for judgment, but a body'd be surprised how many folks volunteer to spill their sins. Some just seem to have a need to cleanse themselves.

Fortitude's got several excellent inns, but the most popular is *Tears of Tyr*, which offers a traveler a great view of the Confessional. Its owner, Gladola DeFarge, is a supposedly repentant priestess of Loviatar.

CURRENT CHANT: In the past few weeks, the air in Fortitude's been electric. The Secret Conclave has determined that the town is nearly worthy enough to join Arcadia. 'Course, this means the Confessional's been extra busy, both with volunteers and travelers scragged by Hardheads. Fact is, some folks say the town's *already* slipped into Arcadia, and that another copy's just taken its place on the Outlands.



GLORIUM

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 300

THE TOWN: Natives of Sigil tend to think of any city smaller than theirs as a "burg," which makes Glorium a burg by most planar standards. It's a small assortment of longhouses and workshops tucked along the shores of a deep fjord, with mountains on each side that seem to rise half as high as the spire itself. There's a single perilous path down through the cliffs, but most cutters prefer to sail into Glorium by sea.

The town's got a temporary look to it, more like the winter camp of wandering raiders than a permanent settlement. That suits the locals just fine, since they don't really want that many visitors.

THE GATE: Actually, *two* different gates lead into nearby Ysgard. The first is a maelstrom found at the mouth of the fjord, large enough to allow a ship to sail into the chaotic realms of that plane. This entrance, called the Watergate, reverses itself twice a day, so a body who knows the local tides can use it to sail back out of Ysgard.

The other gate is an entrance to fabled Yggdrasil itself, found in a cavern in the mountains above town. Sods who come looking for *this* gate'd better have hold of a reliable map. A number of other caverns in the mountains lead to realms that run deep below the surface of the Outlands, which means there are plenty of places for the Clueless to get lost.

THE POPULACE: What the natives of Glorium lack in number, they make up in volume. They're a loud, proud people (humans, mostly), and they're strongly influenced by the Ysgardian Norse pantheon in their attitudes and appearance. Strangers are given the peery eye until they prove themselves, slights are easily taken, and combat breaks out often. Fact is, a berk who rattles his bone-box the wrong way will probably end up with a fight on his hands. These kinds of battles go on until the first blood is spilled (and it usually comes from a visitor).

In the surrounding hills and mountains, there is an equally small community of bariaur, who patrol the region and keep most of the nastier creatures at bay. A few bariaur probably wouldn't mind letting the odd beholder slip into town, though — relationships with the residents of Glorium are strained at best.

THE HOI POLLOI: The town is ruled by a human ranger named Flatnose Grim, who typifies both Glorium and its people. He's a broad-shouldered, barrel-chested basher of great strength, loyal to a fault (and moody to a fault, as well). His force of muscle and will

grants him the rocklike devotion of his people, so it's best not to cross him.

The bariaur in the mountains are ruled by Jek Thanol, an ancient high-up with large horns and a jeweled eye patch. Local legend has it that he lost the eye in combat with Grim, and, as a result, the two ain't exactly close cutters.

LOCAL SITES: There's not much to recommend Glorium as a visitor's center — it lacks the taverns and inns of its neighboring cities, and outsiders are made to feel as welcome as larvae. Fact is, the only place worth stopping at is a small temple at the edge of town. The priests there spend most of their time worshipping Odin and the Norns, catching the rest of the pantheon in an offhand way.

CURRENT CHANT: Glorium is small, proud, and vulnerable. Rumors have been floating around for months that Gzemnid, the beholder god, is trying to gain control of the town and its gates. It's said the mountains are haunted by the god's creatures.

Also, more and more planars have been visiting Glorium lately, especially members of the Fated faction. They've offered to establish a stronghold (full of their own bashers, of course) to help defend the town. Flatnose Grim's told them to pike it. He's an Indep, and he knows that once the Fated sink their hooks in a place, they're harder to get out than flies.

WHA+ IS LIFE, BU+ S+RUGGLE?
WHA+ IS S+RUGGLE, BU+ C@NFLIC+?
WHA+ IS C@NFLIC+, BU+ BA++LE?
WHA+ IS GLORIUM,
BU+ ALL @F +HE AB@VE?

— FLA+N@SE GRIM

Travelers new to the region should also be peery of a young human (or someone who appears to be a young human) known to the townsfolk as "Lemming Boy." This berk is often found in the mountains around Glorium, and he offers his services as a guide, giving his name as Kai. Sods who follow him'll quickly find themselves ambushed by beholders, giants, or mind flayers, caught in avalanches or pits, or stuck in blinds so bad they'll think they crossed the Lady of Pain herself. Any survivors of Lemming Boy's "help" who're lucky enough to make it back to Glorium won't get much from the natives except laughter. That, and a toast to the honor of fools who trust strangers.

HOPELESS

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 20,000

THE TOWN: The best thing about Hopeless is that it's easy for a body to find her way around. It's a walled city with just one entrance, and from that entrance a single long road spirals down into a deep pit, ending in a courtyard at the bottom. A traveler can always tell when she's reached Hopeless, too — the entrance gate is a screaming human face carved in red stone, its eyes blank and blind, red tears cut by erosion running down its cheeks.

That red stone of the Screaming Gate (as it's called) is the only bright color in the whole town. The rest of Hopeless is built of gray stone and gray, weathered wood that becomes gloomier the farther a body goes beneath ground level.

THE GATE: At the base of the pit, where the road finally runs out, there's a flat courtyard of gray stone, with a low, gray well in the center. The well's filled to the brim with a thick, black ooze, similar to molten tar. Want to go to the Gray Waste? Just jump in the well. Cutters can also summon the gunk out, and a few folks in Hopeless know the dark of spells to do that. This method makes sure that a whole group ends up in the same place on the other side. (The blackness spurts up out of the well and covers the courtyard in a heaving bubble of tar. Those who've tried this compare it to bathing with a black pudding.)

THE POPULACE: The people of Hopeless are like depression on legs. Most drifted into town over the decades, having nowhere else to go and nothing else to do. The poor sods barely have the energy to be nasty. There's no chance of things being better — not here or anywhere — so why bother?

The nearness of the Gray Waste also takes its toll on the locals. After a few weeks of bunking here, a body takes on a grayish pallor (known in the Outlands as a "wasting tan"), and her eyes, comfortable with gloom, are hurt by bright colors. Fact is, a town law forbids bright or contrasting colors in the heart of the pit, and the natives have the right to tear colored things apart. Travelers who aren't sure exactly where the law takes effect usually find out the hard way when the natives attack, tearing at their garbs and hurling thick, wet balls of mud.

THE HOI POLLOI: The High Cardinal of Hopeless is a masked human female who calls herself Thingol the Mocking. She claims to have been a wizard who escaped the destruction of her prime-material world. As

the ruler, she garbs herself in heavy chains and a full-sized metallic mask in the shape of a black wolf.

Thingol holds her position thanks to her strongest supporters, a pack of seven identical beholders. They float throughout the pit in a constant patrol, keeping an eye (or ten) out for bashers who might harm their mistress. Their loyalty is absolute, and some think that Thingol traded her spellcasting ability (and her humanity) with dark powers for their service.

Thingol's goal is to keep the people in their place and very aware of the hopelessness of their situation. If nothing else, a body's got to admit she does a good job. Berks who cross her can look forward to long, painful executions, often lasting days. (A quick death might raise the bloodlust of the mob, and, besides, a slow crushing or garroting is much more painful.)

Travelers should know that Thingol's currently experimenting with performance art, such as painting a body bright blue and letting the crowd rip the poor berk's flesh off. Her most recent work, "Sonata for Songbird and Hammer," pulled in some wonderfully depressing reviews.

WHA++AYA G++
AGAINS+ GRAY.
BERK?

— THINGOL, THE
MOCKING,
HIGH CARDINAL
OF HOPELESS

LOCAL SITES: Having only one street in town does make it a bit easier to find places, but it's a real pox if a body needs to hide or flee. With foot patrols of Thingol's bodyguards and flying beholders looking every which way, things can get rough. This adds to the feeling of helplessness in the city, which, of course, is the whole idea.

The lone bright spot is the Chapterhouse of the Sisterhood, a collection of good-aligned cutters (of all sexes, despite the name) who provide aid and healing to the populace. 'Course, a lot of folks hate 'em for it, and members of the Sisterhood travel with armed bodyguards when outside their citadel. Their garb is always the same shade of light gray, which meets the requirements for color, but they keep their gowns and blouses spotless and seem to shine against the background.

For the traveler, the best inns — the least depressing ones, anyway — are near the top of the spiral. Of

... +HE FEEL-BAD HIT +OF +HE YEAR.
 ... REMINDS US ALL WHAT +
 IT MEANS +TO BE +RULY HOPELESS.
 IT'LL MAKE YΘU CRY.
 IT'LL MAKE YΘU CRY.

TWΘ SKULLS UP!

— EXCERPTS FROM REVIEWS OF
 "SONATA FOR SONGBIRD
 AND HAMMER"

these, the *Defenestrated Paladin* is the rowdiest, the *Open Tomb* is the quietest, and the *Castle of Bone* has the best rumors (including one that Cyric, the Prince of Lies, drops in regularly to torment the clientele).

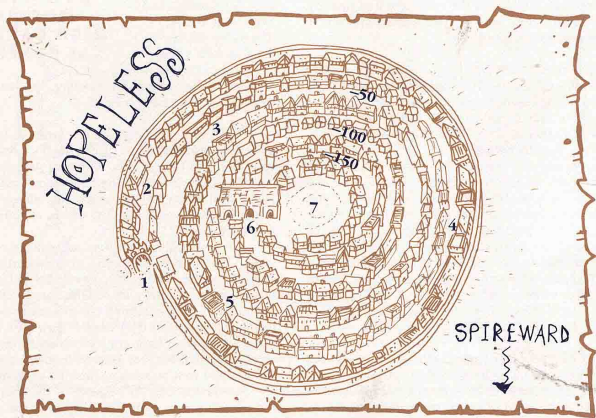
Thingol's own complex is a large sprawl of manor houses and towers that start in the depths of the pit and rise up, crossing the spiral road three times. Near the uppermost entrance, she cleared space to provide a stage for executions and performances. (Visitors who've been here before may remember the orphanage that used to stand on the site.) Many criminals scragged by Thingol's "justice" get the chance to perform, told that they'll be set free if they can make her feel an emotion. But even with all the sods she's hauled in, she's never had to make good on that offer.

CURRENT CHANT: The people of Hopeless tend to keep their eyes open and their bone-boxes shut. That is, unless they'd *enjoy* being telekinetically suspended between two beholders while a third disintegrates their skin one layer at a time. But even still, there's some buzz about the well down in the courtyard.

Locals expect the well to overflow someday, filling the pit and taking all of Hopeless into the Gray Waste. But now stories tell of humanoid creatures, made of the black tar of the well itself, pulling themselves loose and stumbling into the city. A handful of sods in town say they've seen it happen, and one or two swear they've even been attacked, or watched the creatures meld right into the stone of buildings. 'Course, Thingol's not too pleased with these reports, painting them as the lies of drunken bubbers. As a public service, her thugs track down anyone who spreads or listens to these lies, showing them how such rumors can be bad for their health.

IMPORTANT SITES:

1. The Screaming Gate
2. The Chapterhouse of the Sisterhood
3. The *Defenestrated Paladin*
4. The *Castle of Bone*
5. The *Open Tomb*
6. The palace of Thingol the Mocking
7. The courtyard and Gate to the Gray Waste



PLAGUE-MORT

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 20,000

THE TOWN: Plague-Mort is an Outlander town that demonstrates a basic rule of the Abyss — the strongest bashers thrive and do as they see fit with the weak. In this case, though, the weak make up most of the town.

Plague-Mort's a bundle of shacks, kips, and ruins clustered about the walls of a shining, silver-steel keep. In the keep sits the Arch-Lector, who rules the city with an iron fist. Outside the keep is the rest of the burg, with temples, residences, and merchant districts left to fend for themselves. As a result, most of the town is gray, wrecked, and abandoned.

The Arch-Lector's keep, though, is a grand, ornate building. Its roof shines with metallic tiles, and its eaves are dotted with gargoyles, real and otherwise. Razorvine and bloodthorns cover the keep's walls to make sure that outsiders stay out.

THE GATE: One wall of the Arch-Lector's keep is breached by three large archways. The center and rightmost archways lead into the keep, but the leftmost leads into someplace even worse. This archway is the Gate to the Abyss, and travelers who look through it will see the blasted landscape known as the Plain of Infinite Portals (the uppermost layer of the Abyss). The Plain is a desolate wasteland, empty except for two things: huge pits that are conduits to deeper layers, and iron fortresses that are outposts of powerful tanar'ri lords.

Like the rest of the keep, the gate's entwined with razorvine, so a berk's got to watch his step going through. On the other hand, the razorvine might be the best part of the trip.

THE POPULACE: On the whole, the people of Plague-Mort are here for the benefit of the Abyss. Some look for adventure in the Plain of Infinite Portals, some seek favors from the dark powers, and some just have temperaments that match this vile city. Wherever a body looks, though, he'll find treachery, oppression, and pain.

Most of the locals are humans and tieflings, along with such evil-aligned humanoids as orcs, gnolls, and ogres. But with the Abyss so close, a berk's just as likely to bump into one of the quasits or tanar'ri (mostly alu-fiends and cambions) who make Plague-Mort its home.

THE HOI POLLOI: The current Arch-Lector of Plague-Mort is Byrri Yarmoril, a tiefling priest of some secret and destructive goddess. He pulls the strings of the town, but, in turn, has his strings pulled by the Abyss itself.

The Arch-Lector keeps the terror through his own personal militia, a gang of planar/human crossbreeds known as the Hounds. This pack of tieflings, alu-fiends, and cambions jumps at the master's command, and they'll even leave the city to chase down sods who've offended him.

LOCAL SITES: Beyond the Arch-Lector's grand keep, Plague-Mort is a foul, rotting, gray city of dirty stone and collapsing timbers. However, there are a few places a traveler might want to look into (or away from).

One popular spot for many locals is an abandoned temple, not far from the keep. The chant says it was once used to worship the neutral deity Oghma. But some bone-boxes flap about a second, darker temple hidden beneath its ravaged altar.

Plague-Mort's also known as the Tradeate of the evil gate-towns, offering goods for jink or for trade. Cutters who come to town for this game have plenty of inns and taverns to choose from, including such well-known watering holes as the *Eye of the Dragon*, the *Bell and Whistle*, and the *Golden Griffon*. 'Course, that last place is also a favorite hang-out for the Hounds, and it should be skipped by any berk with a strong attachment to his life.

CURRENT CHANT: Ask any bubbler in the street the goal of the Arch-Lector, and chances are good that he'll know (if he's not passed out, that is). There's nothing dark about it — Yarmoril hopes to pitch Plague-Mort into the Abyss, a move that'd bring rioting and death to most of the residents. If he doesn't deliver the town, he'll earn *himself* a spot in the dead-book. Needless to say, Yarmoril is highly motivated to send the burg to its final resting place.

SHE MAY BE A
PØXY DØXY,
BUT SHE'S THE ONLY
+OWN FOR ME.
— REFRAIN +Ø
"PLAGUE-MORT'S
MY LADY,"
BY BLIND LEMON
DULMASTER



RIBCAGE

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 35,000

THE TOWN: The Vale of the Spine is a towering ridge of mountains that starts near the plane of Baator and creeps spireward almost to the River Ma'at. A smaller spur of the mountain range separates for a brief space into two parallel ridges, forming a tight valley between them. The narrow peaks of each ridge curve inward, looming over the valley like the ribs of some insanely-huge (and thankfully-dead) beast.

The town of Ribcage is tucked neatly into this space, filling it entirely. The natives have walled up the gaps between the mountains, so travelers on foot have to use the large iron gates at each end of the valley. Once inside, visitors'll find that the town's full of towers and private keeps. Most houses are built of shiny black or smooth gray stone, and high-ups with wealth and power show off by covering their cases in ornate decorations. The brick roads of Ribcage are the color of fresh blood.

The most impressive place in town is the Citadel, the home of Quentill Paracs, the Lord of Ribcage (see "The Hoi Polloi"). It's a self-contained city within a city. The walls are carved from solid blocks of obsidian and ebony, and its steel portcullis is laced with strange and exotic items. Any berk who catches a gander at the Citadel *knows* who runs this burg.

Outside of the Citadel, the city's been divided up among five competing families, each with its own support. The different domains aren't walled off, but each group has checkpoints and guards to keep tabs on the traffic.

THE GATE: The Gate to Baator is in a separate complex somewhere within the Citadel, which means a cutter's got to march right past Paracs' nose to find it. The gate itself is a tall, spinning pillar of red light, filled with dancing motes of silver (said to be the disintegrated remains of berks who tried to cross the Lords of the pit). The Clueless should be aware that planars don't call this the *cursed* gate for nothing.

THE POPULACE: People here tend to be hard-working, suspicious, and grabby. Unlike their neighbors in Torch, they live for more than just coarse jink. In Ribcage, the goal is power in *all* its forms — monetary, military, and magical. Influence is the coin that pays the bills, and a basher with an edge over his fellows had better use it, or it'll be wrenched away.

Most of the population is tiefling, with a strong dose of lower-planar blood coursing through their veins. There are also humans, evil humanoids, bariaur,

githzerai, and a few other races present, but the tieflings have the edge, and having the edge is all that matters.

Most visitors are surprised to find few natives of Baator in Ribcage. Fact is, Lord Paracs and the senators have little love for the Lords of the Nine. They don't want to see their town get sucked into that infernal plane, and they do what they can to keep fiends out.

THE HOI POLLOI: Lord Quentill Paracs, a tiefling fighter and mage, rules the city, and all hop to his tune. A squat, hunched, fat old man, Paracs' goal is to make the city his personal domain until his death (and, some say, after it, as well).

To maintain the look of fairness, Ribcage has a council of five senators who are said to be able to out-vote the Lord. But it's just a peel rigged by Paracs. The dark of it is that he holds three of the senators in his pocket at any one time, whether it's through bribes, threats, or hostages. Like the rest of the bashers in town, Paracs does what it takes to get ahead and stay ahead.



RULES ARE MADE +0 BE
+AKEN ADVAN+AGE 0F.

— FROM "THE WILL
AND WISDOM
OF LORD PARACS"

LOCAL SITES: Ribcage ain't known for its hospitality, berk. Most taverns aren't much more than dives carved out of recently-abandoned buildings. A bit ringward, though, there's some hot baths built over volcanic springs. There, a body'll find a few decent spas and resorts. These places are popular with travelers who have business in Ribcage but don't feel like butting up against Lord Paracs and his cronies. The best of the lot is the *Gymnasium of Steam*.

Toward Rigus, the Vale of the Spine is ruptured by the Great Pass, a flat pathway through the mountains that cuts the trip to Rigus in half. 'Course, a lot of planars who've *been* to Rigus consider that a mixed blessing.

CURRENT CHANT: Lord Paracs is thinking about setting up an embassy in town for cutters from Excelsior, Tradegate, and other gate-towns of good alignments. He figures a strong pocket of goodness will keep his city (and it is his city) firmly rooted in the Outlands and under his control.



RIGUS

"OBEY OR DIE" ISN'T JUST A REAL GOOD IDEA —

IT'S THE LAW.

— CAPTAIN THOD DIREWRACK OF THE MERCYKILLERS

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 20,000

THE TOWN: Rigus is a huge, permanent military encampment, rising wall upon wall and battlement upon battlement to dominate this part of the land. The camp's divided into seven stacked rings, each built all the way around a great hill. The largest ring's set around the bottom of the hill, and the smallest (called the Crown) is set around the top. Octagonal walls of iron separate each ring from the others; a wall surrounds the bottom ring, too, to block Rigus off from the rest of the Outlands. Travelers can use a gate in the bottom wall, but watch it, berk — the wall's been treated with mild poisons to keep rust monsters (and, some say, all visitors) at bay.

THE GATE: The Gate to Acheron is far below the surface of the earth, but in the Crown there's a mile-long staircase that'll take a body right down to it. The stairs empty into a huge underground chamber that contains an archway made of bariaur bones. In the archway is what looks like a gigantic cat's eye: a swirling mass of green-yellow color, with a stripe of black running down the middle. This is the Gate to Acheron, also called the Lion's Gate.

The chamber has other entrances, too, with tunnels that snake off into distant parts of the underground. Legend has it that they lead to realms of dark powers and even some far-off gates. Fact is, creatures pop out of the Lion's Gate all the time and use the tunnels to spread throughout the Outlands.

THE POPULACE: Folks in Rigus are given ranks to show how high-up they are (or aren't). Each one starts out as a "citizen," even the newborn and travelers who've settled in town. Citizens can be promoted by the Great Generals to a higher rank: private, sergeant, lieutenant, captain, or general. 'Course, berks can drop below citizen, too — law-breakers and captives from raids get stuck with the rank of "slave-soldier." A body's expected to follow the orders of higher ranks without question, and the populace sticks to the letter of this law. Any disobedience is treason, and those who turn stag in this manner get put in the dead-book.

Sods new to town get a bit of a break. They're given slate plaques to wear around their necks on heavy iron chains, so natives can see that they're in the

dark about the laws. But pike off a higher-up in rank, and a berk'll find her plaque torn off and destroyed, leaving her open to the laws and to the gangs that rove around looking for recruits and slaves.

Humans, tieflings, and evil humanoids are the main races in Rigus. The place tends to draw bashers who understand military discipline, such as orcs and hobgoblins. And, of course, the Mercykillers have a lot of pull with the town's military orders. The chant even says that many generals are secretly members of that faction.

THE HOI POLLOI: Rigus is organized with military efficiency; groups called military orders take the place of clans or families. Each order's ruled by a general with the necessary officers below him, ending with the citizens and slave-soldiers. Of the hundred or so military orders in Rigus, the most powerful is a grim bunch called the Toll of Doom Brotherhood.

However, even the generals answer to higher-ups. Within the Crown (the highest ring of the city) is a crypt that houses the true rulers of Rigus. These bloods are former generals who've been lost throughout the years, but in the Crown spirits never depart, so they live on in a half-life similar to those of liches. These creatures give the orders to the generals, who've been trained all their lives to obey their superiors (no matter how bad they might smell).

The best known, most respected, and most feared of the current generals is Nagaro, a female warrior from Taladas, on the world of Krynn. She was once a paladin.

LOCAL SITES: Strangers ain't exactly welcome in Rigus — they're encouraged to complete their business as quickly as possible and then leave. Most of the taverns aren't much better, either, since they're usually run by one military order or another. However, one independent spot that's been able to hold its own is the *Broken Slate*, and many travelers stay there while in town.

CURRENT CHANT: There's been talk lately that Nagaro and her fellow generals are thinking of pushing the boundaries of their domain. As first targets, Ribcage and Automata are both good bets, despite the powerful forces in their connected planes.



SYLVANIA

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 1,000

THE TOWN: Travelers who get the yawn from more peaceful spots like Ecstasy will find *this* burg a little more bone-rattling. It may not have a huge population for a gate-town, but Sylvania's known as a nonstop party. The natives revel night and day in a constant beat of drums and drinking songs, Olympian dirges and elven ballads, and the hoarse shouts of petitioners, planars, and primes. Here, sensual delights swirl and blend, and a cutter'd swear she could *taste* the drumbeats or see the meaty smell of cooking flesh.

It's easy for a berk to get lost here, especially if she's been bubbling it up at a tavern or three. Sylvania's shaped like a rough circle, but the whole town's full of curved, winding streets that meet and cross at odd angles. (Some say the builders must've hoisted a few too many themselves.)

Buildings in Sylvania are just as barmy, a hodge-podge of stones and styles. Lots of them are shaped like animals, ships, or human faces, and some of 'em even *move*. Cogs and waterwheels turn, whole buildings revolve in place, and houses sometimes fold in on themselves, creating brand-new structures.

For travelers who like their flora large, Sylvania's got some of the wildest greens in the Land: huge plants and trees that swallow up entire blocks. Elves like to make their homes in the shadows and branches.

THE GATE: Sylvania is surrounded by woods, and somewhere in those woods is the Gate to Arborea. 'Course, the gate's invisible, and it floats randomly around the forest like a bubbler's tipsy walk. To find the gate, all a berk has to do is get lost in the woods (easy for some, harder for others). Then, while poking around for a way out, she always seems to pass into Arborea. Travelers using this gate should be careful, though — it doesn't always drop a body where she wants to go.

THE POPULACE: The natives are evenly split among humans, elves, and bariaur races. Folks here tend to be a boisterous bunch, and each group loves to drive the others to ever-wilder states of excess.

THE HOI POLLOI: The town's run by eternal beings known as the Seven Spiritors. Not quite undead, not quite petitioners, and not quite gods, these high-ups rule through bodies they possess (it works a lot like a *magic jar*). They usually take new bodies every few decades, and most folks who get possessed are volunteers. But mind that word *most*, berk — violent troublemakers have sometimes been known to come down with sudden attitude changes.

The Seven are known by titles that reflect their natures: Thought (currently in a female bariaur's form), Knowledge (a human male), Action (a halfling female), Passion (an elf male), Reflection (a male bariaur), Pain (a human male), and Rest (a human female). They've got no permanent home in Sylvania, and visitors can usually find them wandering around inside its borders.

LOCAL SITES: The most prominent place in Sylvania is the Sensate Embassy (which is said to be just a bureaucratic outpost for a larger palace on Arborea). Travelers should stop in and catch a gander at the architecture. The building's a great hollow pyramid made of petrified wood, with quarters and offices suspended from the sloping walls. The open central area beneath is used for combat and (of course) revelry.

Not too far from the embassy, two large temples loom, one devoted to the Greek pantheon and the other to the great elven powers. The Greek temple is an acropolis on a low plateau, with supporting columns in the shape of female warriors (and look out, berk, because they animate to protect the city). The elven temple's carved from within a huge, living banyan tree, with small buildings erupting from the upper branches.

Sylvania's got more than its share of bars and taverns, but visitors shouldn't miss an inn called the *Dipping Dragon*. Its upper floors, shaped like a dragon, are mounted on a pivot. They tilt forward and back, allowing the dragon to "drink" from a nearby pool.

CURRENT CHANT: Take care not to get caught between the petitioners of Olympus (the Greeks) and Arvandor (the elves). They favor bloody street battles as a means of proving the superiority of their gods.



D ⊕ ? WH ⊕ SAYS
A C I + Y IS
SUPPOSED + ⊕
D ⊕ S ⊕ M E + H I N G ?
— M I G ⊕ N + H E S L Y

TORCH

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 17,000

THE TOWN: Torch is built on the slopes of a set of volcanic spires formed from hardened molten rock. Around the spires is a blood-red marsh, which often floods into the lower parts of town, bringing pestilence, death, plague, boils, and killer frogs. As a result, the high-up cutters in Torch are just that — the ones who live the farthest up the slopes, away from the marsh.

But, as the locals say, "Trouble below, trouble above." Some of the spires are still active, and they continually spit out lava and gases that ignite upon exposure to the air. The light from these constant flames gives the town its name and keeps it bright day and night. Fact is, Torch never truly sleeps, but instead is busy around the clock. (Besides, a body'd have a hard time dozing comfortably with fire over his head and frogs at his feet.)

DIRECTIONS TO THE ARENA?

I DUNNO, PAL,

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

— JANGOR THE FAT, PUBLIC GUIDE

THE GATE: Torch offers travelers the Gate to Gehenna, but it sure don't make it easy for 'em. The gate looks like a blood-red eye or carnelian gemstone hovering in midair, a hundred or so feet off the ground. Flight, of course, is the best way to reach it, but cutters feeling lucky can try to drop into it from an overhanging spire above. Those who've gone through say that the return gate is on more stable ground, but a few berks supposedly giggled when they said it.

The local chant talks of a second gate somewhere in the blood marsh that surrounds the town. However, some folks think that's just a peel put out by the Lords of Baator to lure eager bashers to a drowning doom.

THE POPULACE: The people of Torch are greedy, vicious, and extremely dangerous. They believe that everything in the Outlands (and why stop there?) should by rights be theirs, and they'll use any means, legal or otherwise, to get it. 'Course, since they all think the same way, they spend most of their time pillaging each other, much to the relief of neighboring towns.

The natives of Torch include humans, tieflings, evil humanoids, githzerai, thieves of every class, and a number of creatures from the Lower Planes (some of whom have even reached positions of power).

Unlike many gate-towns around the rim of the Outlands, most of the natives here are none too keen on joining their related plane. It all comes back to their greedy nature — Gehenna has less to grab, and the bashers doing the grabbing there are a lot more powerful.

THE HOI POLLOI: Torch is supposedly run by the Council of All, a general gathering of the people in the small, ruptured arena next to the spires. However, locals tend to call it the "Council of Brawl," since most of the decisions result in mob violence. The Council's often used as a tool by the wealthier citizens, who decide if the group is to be called at all.

The blood with the most jink is Bantrice the Potter, a native of Sigil who emigrated to Torch for health reasons. A measure of his success is that he's never had to address, or even attend, the Council of All — his minions and flunkies take care of things behind the scenes. There ain't much in Torch that can't be solved by threats, money, violence, or more threats.

LOCAL SITES: Torch has no less than six major thieves' guilds: the Gray Orb, the Kindred of Yoj, the Severed Hand, Brotherhood Janko, Tiamat's Chosen, and the Fire Lords. Each group wants to corner the cross-trading market, and their fights often spill out onto the streets. Fact is, any berk with three friends (or, more often, lackeys) ends up forming his own guild, gang, or power center.

The best "neutral" site for meetings of the guilds is the resplendent *Festhall of the Falling Coins*, operated by a wheezing, stoop-shouldered drow named Badurth. It's said that Badurth knows everyone and everything in town.

CURRENT CHANT: A few folks whisper that Bantrice has never set foot in Sigil in his life. They agree that he moved to Torch for his health, all right, but say that he's really a foul creature from Baator in hiding from his masters. A berk who swore he had proof of this was recently found lying in the blood marsh. His intestines and brain, though, were not.

I JUST FIND TORCH SO MUCH MORE
RELAXING THAN SIGIL.

THE LAVA, THE EXPLOSIONS,
THE BOILS,

THE BLOOD MARSH —

IT JUST DOES A BODY GOOD.

— BANTRICE THE POTTER

TRADEGATE

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 20,000

THE TOWN: Tradegate is a city of commerce, a swirling hive of activity, with old structures constantly being knocked down and new ones put up in their places. 'Course, the new stuff's just like the old, but the natives don't seem to mind.

This burg's a walled city of grayish stone, shaped like a star, with a great open plaza in the middle. The plaza's known as the grand bazaar, the center of trade in this part of the Outlands. It's a sprawling collection of booths and stands, built on a checkerboard pattern of gold and purple tiles. Buyers come all the way from Torch and Curst to poke through the goods, and there's *always* a crowd.

THE GATE: Even primes who've done some gate-hopping in their day might have a tricky time with the Gate to Bytopia. The gate's actually a creature named Master Trader, a large bariaur with ornate, curved horns. He wanders the forests near town, sometimes straying as far spireward as Tir na Og, and a body gets to Bytopia by making a successful trade with him. Most of these trades are complicated, involved deals, so cutters had better be on their toes. Master Trader always seems to know what gate-seekers need and what they can pay. His price may be high, but it's tailored to each body or group who comes to see him.

Rumors have floated around the Outlands that Master Trader is actually another incarnation of a being called the Peddler. Others swear that both are masks worn by a third, more powerful figure. And the mercantile bashers of Tradegate say that folks who listen to any of these rumors are barmy.

THE POPULACE: Many communities in the Outlands are full of petitioners hoping to push the burgo into their related planes. Not Tradegate — natives here like their town right where it is. They want to establish a center of commerce that rivals the Cage itself. ('Course, since few major powers *live* in Bytopia, there's not much drive to move the town there, anyway.) This kind of thinking makes Tradegate an attractive place for Indeps.

Humans and gnomes make up most of the population. They're nothing if not industrious, and they expect everyone else to match their work ethic. Begging's frowned upon, vagrancy's punished by a stay in the workhouse, and adventuring's seen as a poor excuse to pillage and peel. Fact is, natives pretty much decide for themselves what's evil, and they don't put up with slavery, thievery, senseless killing, or plenty of other things an average basher's likely to do. Berks caught on the wrong side of the law end up paying the music.

Most of the town's trade is in barter or cold, hard jink — there's no such thing as credit for visitors. Tradegate also mints its own coins, which have a star on one side and a picture of Ilmater (one of the few powers of Bytopia) on the other. The townsfolk like to say the coin's two faces mirror the dual nature of Bytopia itself.

THE HOI POLLOI: Tradegate is ruled by the Parliament, an informal council of merchants that hands down regulations, mostly on trading practices. To get on the council, a body needs just two things: a nonevil alignment and at least 500,000 in gold. (While it's said that some members cloak their true alignment, berks can't fake the jink — they either have it or they don't.) The Parliament meets every seven days, and a majority of those who show up may enact new laws.

LOCAL SITES: The grand bazaar takes up the center of town, flanked on four sides by the Parliament building, the accounting house and mint, the armory and barracks, and the library. (Interested travelers can stop at the library to see all of the accounting records for the town, though its list of Tradegate's master merchants is a bigger draw.) The fifth side of the bazaar's flanked by the hotel district, where there are plenty of upscale inns to separate a wealthy visitor from her jink. The best of the lot, though, is the *Golden Hound*.

CURRENT CHANT: The cutters in Tradegate don't hand out anything for free, not even information. But some say that here a body can literally sell her afterlife to the town, giving up all chance of resurrection for a pile of Tradegate coins.

SURE,
I'LL
GIVE YA +HE
+IME OF DAY,
BERK,
BU+ I+ 'LL
COST+ YA.
— KØR
+HE
MERCAN+ILE

XAOS

ESTIMATED POPULATION: 1,000, or 2,000, or 40,000, or five. It seems to change.

THE TOWN: So close to the plane of ultimate chaos, Xaos (pronounced KAY-oss) is a town gone mad. The whole place is in a constant state of flux, awash in the power of elemental chaos. The only thing a berk can count on is that he can't count on anything (and sometimes he can't even count on *that*). No map or mapper can nail this town down. Fact is, a body's mind just can't tumble to how reality swirls and rearranges itself in this place. Even the name of the town changes from time to time, the letters jostling about at random in search of a new identity.

The region surrounding Xaos (pronounced SACK-so) is a mess of rocks, swamps, pits, fields – every kind of terrain and climate, really, all lit by rainbows of light. To get to town, a cutter's just got to plunge into the most frightening and mind-warping area. Next thing he knows, he'll be there (like it or not).

THE GATE: The Gate to Limbo changes along with the city. One minute it's a small blue pyramid in the palm of an iron statue. The next, it's a glowing ball of exhausted spirits drifting through the marketplace. In an hour it could even be a pit lined with spikes, berk. But no matter *what* it looks like, for some reason a body can always mark it as the Gate to Limbo.

THE POPULACE: More mind-blasted than the sods of Bedlam, the folks of Xaos (pronounced AX-oss) aren't thrown by the twists and turns of their reality. Everything changes, including themselves, so that's the way it should be. The warrior who attacks a berk in the morning becomes the waiter who serves him a hot cup of lint soup for evening breakfast. For amusement, the locals like to watch visitors slowly go barmy as they try to sort things out (naturally, the Clueless make for the best entertainment).

Humans, humanoids, bariaur, slaadi, and githzerai are all common natives of Xaos (pronounced soaks). But just because they're chaotic, that doesn't mean they don't have goals – they just pursue their goals in a roundabout fashion. A slaad intent on killing a traveler will still try to do so, but it may send flowers first. A basher of the Xaositect faction may try to build an army by marking buildings with random magical signs. Here, such things work. Most of the natives just don't let it get them down.

When in Xaos (pronounced AY-socks), a traveler'd better have a tight grip on his identity. If he doesn't, it, too, will be sucked into the whirlpool of change.

HARK!

WHAT MEDALS CAN YOU
BUMBLE? WHY UNWIND
WHEN I SHOULD LOWER
THE GROUNDSNAKES?

— DREW+ON +THE HANGED,
IN A MORE LUCID
MOMENT+

THE HOI POLLOI: Who's in charge? Depends what time it is. Literally, no one and everyone is a high-up in Xaos (pronounced OCK-sa). A prime new to town might find himself the supreme law-giver for about a minute and a half, and then suddenly go back to being an average sod, subject to the whims of others. 'Course, laws often evaporate long before anyone could actually be sentenced under them.

LOCAL SITES: Trying to describe landmarks in town is a sure road to the barmy house. Nothing remains the same for long. On the other hand, *everything* is an important landmark – a unique creation that exists once and is gone, leaving only unstable memories in the minds of those who were privileged to see it.

CURRENT CHANT: Xaos (pronounced bob) is teetering on the edge of Limbo, perilously and joyously close to slipping from the Outlands. Some say the town jumps back and forth between the two planes all the time, and folks just don't notice. According to the chant, though, the slaadi are very interested in keeping the place in the Land. It's said they're trying to lock it down with shots of chaotic energy and constructs.

On the other hand, a group of modrons from the far end of the Outlands has arrived, apparently to build something that'll last. So far, though, their constructs change with each passing hour, and the faster they build, the barmier things start to look. One construct sank into the ground, another floated away, and a third rose on two legs and walked off in the general direction of Plague-Mort. Even the modrons themselves are starting to change, losing confidence in their own identities and warping into new shapes.

OTHER LOCATIONS IN THE OUTLANDS

The Outlands are more than just a collection of gate-towns, berk, even if those spots are the biggest draw for travelers. The Land's also home to a lot of powerful (and not-so-powerful) bodies. Some locations even act as gates to areas beyond, and they seem to be immune to the plane-sucking effects that plague many gate-towns. In any case, cutters really need to get the *full* chant on the Land — a body never knows if one day his travels might take him uncomfortably close to one of these locations.

These summaries of other places are provided for handy use by travelers. The **IN A NUTSHELL** section tries to sum up the entire region in a few lines (a masterful task, that), while the **TRAVELER'S ADVISORY** section gives details on points of interest, spilling the dark on what wary adventurers should — and, more importantly, *shouldn't* — do.

BARIAUR TRIBES

IN A NUTSHELL: Mobile encampments of bariaur are found throughout the Outlands, but most often in the arc from Ecstasy to Glorium. These groups of ten to one hundred bariaur often provide aid to the hurt, shelter to the helpless, and directions to the Clueless.

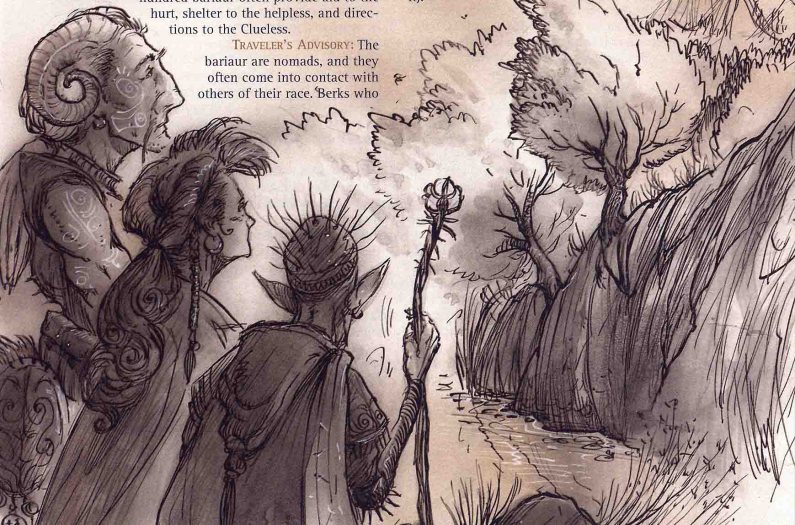
TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: The bariaur are nomads, and they often come into contact with others of their race. Berks who

cheat or attack one tribe soon find that their descriptions have spread quickly to others. Travelers may be interested in this advice from a native of Rigus: "So don't leave any survivors and ya got no problem."

THE COURT OF LIGHT

IN A NUTSHELL: This is the home of Shekinester, the Three-Faced Queen of the Nagas. It's divided into three parts, each nested inside the last. Outermost is the *Loom of the Weaver*, a maze of tangled and thorny vegetation. Within the Loom is the *Hall of Tests*, Shekinester's palace, and within the palace is the *Arching Flame*, a spirit-cleansing fire that keeps the rest of the known planes running (or so they say).

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: The Court of Light is often sought out by cutters who want to test and purify their spirits. But a body really shouldn't enter the tangled Loom unless he's looking for revelations (or is tired of life as he knows it).



THE DWARVEN MOUNTAIN

IN A NUTSHELL: This is dwarf central in the Outlands, the home of three dwarven powers: Vergadain (wealth and luck), Dugmaren Brightmantle (invention and discovery), and Dumathoin (mines and exploration). The entire operation is below ground – the nearest surface community is Ironridge.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Bring money and be a dwarf. There are many dwarven communities beneath the barren, snow-topped mountains of this realm, and they react to strangers about as well as dwarves anywhere else (in other words, evil humanoids beware). The best armor and weapons in the Outlands come from Dwarven Mountain.

GZEMNID'S REALM

IN A NUTSHELL: These deep tunnels are the stomping ground of Gzemnid, the beholder god of deception. It's a jumble of winding passages that look like – and mingle with – those of Ilsensine's Realm. Gzemnid's lair is also laced with traps and illusions, as befits the most subtle of the Eye Tyrants.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Berks who tread through these tunnels do so at their own risk; the beholder god ain't too fond of other races. But some say the realm's got permanent gates to various Lower Planes. Sure enough, fiends are often found prowling the maze, apparently with Gzemnid's consent.

HERMITAGES

IN A NUTSHELL: There are a number of lone buildings and homesteads in the wilds of the Outlands, known collectively as hermitages. Some are occupied by planars seeking time alone, some by petitioners seeking meditation, and some by proxies on the run from their masters (these are more common closer to the spire). Folks in hermitages can be of any human race.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Don't just march into a hermitage, or any unknown building for that matter. Outlander courtesy usually involves hailing the house from a safe distance first. Remember, berk, the place could hold a peasant family accidentally sucked into the Outlands, but it might also be some elder god on a fishing vacation.

THE HIDDEN REALM

IN A NUTSHELL: Not found on any map, the Hidden Realm of the giant god Annam is said to be cloaked by magic, or maybe even sit in some parallel demiplane

with a gate to the Outlands. Wherever it is, Annam sits in a crystal tower at the top of a huge mountain, watching over the clockwork of the multiverse.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: How does a body give tips for traveling in a land that ain't there? One group of sages claims the Hidden Realm doesn't even exist, while another bunch says it's really the master control room of the planes (which shows what sages know).

THE HINTERLANDS

IN A NUTSHELL: Most of the attention in the Outlands falls on the circle of gate-towns by the rim. Primes (and even planars) can forget that the Land's an infinite plane. Between the circle of gate-towns and the rim, it stretches out forever, a wild, ever-changing, generally unexplored land. Some folks've heard talk of lost cities, new gates to unknown planes, even whole other realities if a body ventures far enough.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Distances are tricky business in the Outlands, and especially in the Hinterlands. A cutter can journey past Tradegate for a year and day, and still never lose sight of the spire behind him. Then he can turn around and be back in Tradegate in just a few days. Whatever there might be in the Hinterlands – life, realms, domains, gates, or towns – it's still all pretty dark to folks closer to the spire.

ILSENSINE'S REALM (+THE CAVERNS OF THOUGHT+)

IN A NUTSHELL: An incredibly hostile realm tied to that of Gzemnid, the Caverns of Thought are the territory of Ilsensine, the mind flayer god of magic. It's a confusing knot of dark passages, lit only by sickly-growing fungus. Even fiends of the Lower Planes steer clear of these tunnels.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: The only reason for a cutter to come here is knowledge. Ilsensine (who looks like a huge, glowing, green brain) is said to know the dark of many things. However, the god demands a heavy price for its knowledge, often part of the asker's mind. Plenty of berks who figured they'd give Ilsensine the laugh have ended up as brain-burned zombies.

INDEP VILLAGES

IN A NUTSHELL: Some small communities in the Outlands aren't gate-towns or realms of powerful deities. They exist more or less on their own, trying to be as enclosed and self-supporting as possible. Anywhere from one hundred to six hundred bodies call a village home, and the natives are folks who want to avoid the

usual muddle of petitioners, proxies, and powers. Interestingly, these villages are often the birthplace of cutters who end up making names for themselves in the greater world.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: The nature of these towns varies with their location in the Outlands, but all value their privacy. Ask an Indep why and he's likely to bring up Goldheart, a ruined town near Torch. It was a thriving Indep village before an army from Ribcage (under Lord Paracs) conquered it, burned it, and marched the survivors into slavery. Now, most Indep villages treat visitors with suspicion. Generally, the villages are found between the fourth and seventh rings, though there are reports of some closer to the spire.

IRONRIDGE

IN A NUTSHELL: Ironridge is a mostly human community, nestled in the forbidding mountains that separate Glorium and Xaos from the spire. It's a good jumping-off point for travelers heading for the Dwarven Mountain, Gzemnid's Realm, or the Caverns of Thought. The town often brings in dwarves looking for trade and fiends looking for slaves (or dinner).

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Most cutters head to Ironridge instead of the Dwarven Mountain or any other site, since entrances to the other domains are only about a day's walk from the town. But it can be tricky to find: Ironridge's location varies between the fifth and eighth rings of the Outlands.

LOST PATROLS

IN A NUTSHELL: The Blood War between the tanar'ri and the baatezu rages throughout the Lower Planes, and often the fiends use the Outlands for flanking maneuvers. Just as often, though, parts of those attacking forces wander off, becoming lost patrols of about ten fiends of various types, under a single leader.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Lost patrols come in two flavors: successful and unsuccessful. Some of these bashers have managed to feed and equip themselves by raiding, sometimes terrorizing or taking control of Indep Villages. But the patrols that barely keep themselves alive are more willing to bargain with a stronger opponent — that is, until they get a chance to turn stag. In either case, cutters should watch their backs.

THE MAUSOLEUM OF CHRONEPSIS

IN A NUTSHELL: Though it's now ruined, this place looks like it was once a city of great power. Only one resident still lives here: Chronepsis, the dragon god of

fate, who dwells in a cave below the ruins. Chronepsis is surrounded by hourglasses, which measure the life of every dragon in all the planes of existence (at least, that's what dragon theology says).

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Chronepsis likes to be left alone, and a berk who goes tromping in to see him had better have good reason. There are tales of some world-bound cutter thieving a dragon's hourglass from his lair and then using it against that dragon, but this might just be puffery and lies.

THE MODRON PROCESSION

IN A NUTSHELL: Every so often, Mechanus sends (some would say upchucks) a huge horde of Modrons into Automata. The horde is mostly monodrones and duodrones, with a sprinkling of the higher-level modrons. They all march around the ring of gate-towns in a clockwise path, but only a handful of them ever make it back to Automata — the Land is a tough place, berk.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: The low-level modrons have little or nothing to say, and bashing one brings the entire horde down on the attacker. A cutter who runs into the procession should just stick to that old prime saying, "Live and let live." Fact is, keeping a good distance wouldn't hurt, either.

THE PALACE OF JUDGMENT

IN A NUTSHELL: The Palace of Judgment is the main headquarters of a pantheon called the Celestial Bureaucracy, and it's a bustle of activity. The bodies here spend their time granting audiences, reviewing cases, and assigning dooms.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: The high-up in the palace is Yen-Wang-Yeh, but he's usually too busy sorting out fates to sit and talk with just any cutter who walks in the door. The big draw of this realm is its conduits to every other Outer Plane. 'Course, getting the nod to use these conduits is a different story.

THE REALM OF THE NORNS

IN A NUTSHELL: This gloomy grove is the home of the Norns of the Norse mythology. It's a small realm, easy to miss in the wilderness that sprawls spireward of Faunel. The area's so overgrown that a berk standing in its depths would swear he's in an underground vault. The Norns usually gather around the Well of Urd, at the center of the realm.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: A cutter shouldn't knock on this door without a pretty good reason. But most folks who come here have a strong one: a root of Yggdrasil

(much like the one found in Glorium) is said to be somewhere nearby. 'Course, the realm also draws those who're looking for the Well of Urd. The chant says that a body who looks into the well will see his fate. (A warning to the Clueless – poor sods who learn their fates usually curse the day they did.)

THE RIVER MA'AT

IN A NUTSHELL: A sluggish, wide flow that oozes from the region of Semuanya's Bog, the Ma'at twists and turns its way from Torch to Excelsior before evaporating in a shining salt flat. The whole river's dotted by small villages, many of which hold petitioners to Thoth.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: The Ma'at regularly overflows its low banks, and the fertile silt carves a lush path through the rolling hills of the Outlands. Most of the river flows along the seventh ring, but a boat traveler'll find that it crosses a ring here and there. Watch out for wildlife, too – crocodiles and crocodile-like creatures are common.

SEMUANYA'S BOG

IN A NUTSHELL: A dismal swamp on the far shores of Tir fo Thuinn, Semuanya's Bog is ruled (in theory, anyway) by the god of the same name. The swamp's a wild, untamed region, filled with lizard men and, some say, dinosaurs.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: There's not much to brag about here, which makes it a plum spot for folks who want to hide out. Stories often float around about berks who find themselves unwelcome in Curst retiring to this bog to raise an army of lizard men. Unfortunately, the lizard men usually have better things to do – for instance, eating sods who try to raise armies.

SHEELA PERYROYL'S REALM

IN A NUTSHELL: A traveler to this small, quiet, agricultural community spireward of Ecstasy might think he stumbled into an Indep village. That is, until he noticed the residents (halflings all) and its supposed mistress (the halfling goddess of agriculture).

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Some peery bashers think that the whole "goddess" idea is just a peel run by the halflings. If it is, it works, because the realm's survived plenty of incursions. Travelers are encouraged to be polite, eat all their vegetables, and be careful standing up (low ceilings).

THE SPIRE

IN A NUTSHELL: The centerpost of the Outlands, the spire is an infinitely tall column topped by the city of Sigil. It's the heart of the Land and can be seen from anywhere on the plane (weather permitting).

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Magic doesn't work near the slopes of the spire. What's more, there are better ways to reach Sigil, so apart from a barmy berk or two trying to climb the blasted thing, it's an empty region. Fact is, the few climbers who've started up the impossible slope have always failed, and their bodies never found.

THEBESTYS AND THOTH'S ESTATE

IN A NUTSHELL: These two spots are usually considered to be the same place. The estate's really just a few villages clumped around the River Ma'at, a part of the bigger city of Thebestys. Fact is, the burg is one of the largest nongate-towns in the Outlands, with a population of several thousand humans.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: The key spot in Thebestys is the Great Library, which is said to have the answer to any question a cutter could ask. 'Course, *finding* that answer could take a body a long time. Thoth himself stays within the walls of the city – his presence (and his backing from the rest of the Egyptian powers) has made would-be invaders think twice.

TIR FO THUINN

IN A NUTSHELL: Once merely a piece of Tir na Og, this lake at the base of the spire is now a realm of its own. The part of the lake ruled by Manannan mac Lir, the Celtic sea god, is found ringward of the sixth ring.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: The sea god's territory is completely underwater, without any markings on the surface. This is bad news for berks crossing the lake for the first time. Manannan mac Lir and his people don't take kindly to folks passing overhead, and strong storms often come out of nowhere to drive off or sink vessels.

TIR NA OG

IN A NUTSHELL: This is a sprawling realm spireward of Tradegate. Mostly rolling hills and farms, it's spotted with a number of small villages and single homesteads. The region's also home to the bulk of the Celtic pantheon.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Getting to Tir na Og isn't a problem, but within the realm the Celtic powers all have separate domains. *That's* the problem. The



rule of three to eighteen days of travel seems to apply to each domain in the realm, so a body looking for a particular power may have a bit of a trip on his hands. Travelers also need to look out for the Wild Hunt, a pack of mystical hounds with an armored charioteer.

TVASHTRI'S REALM

IN A NUTSHELL: Some planars who've been here call it Tvashtri's Laboratory or Tvashtri's Workshop. The realm is a building set into the side of a hill. Inside the hill is an unending jumble of labs, libraries, workshops, and construction areas, and outside the whole place thunders with great energy crackling beneath its surface.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: Tvashtri's realm might not win any contests, but it sure could come close. It's said to be the second-best place for crafts outside the Dwarven Mountain, the second-best library outside of Thebestys, and the second-best source of magic outside of Tir na Og. 'Course, here it's all in one place. Most of the petitioners are human worshippers of Tvashtri, but a lot of gnomes have come along over the years, too.

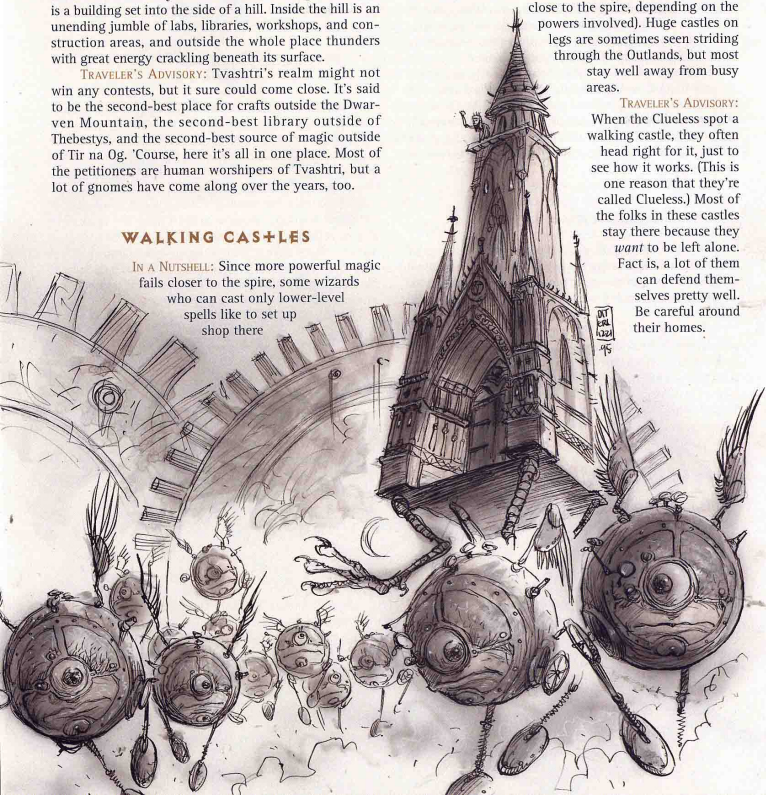
WALKING CASTLES

IN A NUTSHELL: Since more powerful magic fails closer to the spire, some wizards who can cast only lower-level spells like to set up shop there

(and so do *other* sods who're just hiding out). For example, a mage who can only cast fourth-level spells would be a leatherhead to live beyond the fourth border ring — he'd be a ripe target for those who can toss higher-level spells.

'Course, the border rings move around, and these folks want to be able to move with them. The answer, for many, has been to make their castles mobile, and they've found three ways to do it: technology (which is not affected by the rings), magic (which is more effective ringward), and godly boon (which can be effective close to the spire, depending on the powers involved). Huge castles on legs are sometimes seen striding through the Outlands, but most stay well away from busy areas.

TRAVELER'S ADVISORY: When the Clueless spot a walking castle, they often head right for it, just to see how it works. (This is one reason that they're called Clueless.) Most of the folks in these castles stay there because they *want* to be left alone. Fact is, a lot of them can defend themselves pretty well. Be careful around their homes.

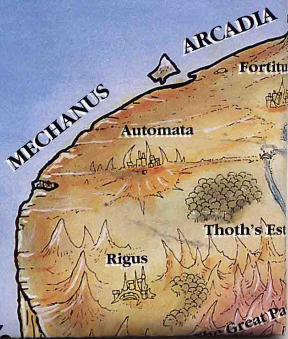


EXCELSIOR

SCALE = 1000 feet

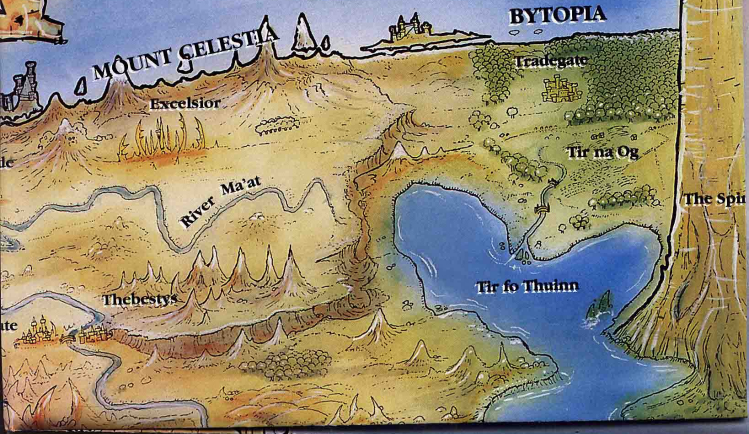
Key: Excelsior

- 1) Gate to Mt. Celestia
- 2) High Chancellor's Keep
- 3) Picket Keeps
- 4) The Forum
- 5) The Waystop Tower (inn)
- 6) Pilgrim's Rest (inn)
- 7) Haven (tavern)



A PLAYER'S PRIMER

Out



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To

The

SIGIL

LANDS



ELYSIUM

Ecstasy

THE BEASTLANDS

Faunel

ARBO

Sheela Peryroyl's Realm

Tyashtri's Realm

Sylvania

Realm of the Norns

Mausoleum of Chronopsis

Ironridge

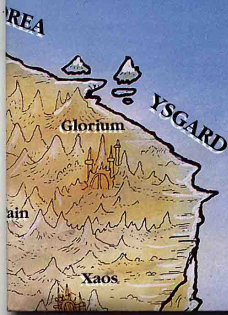
Dwarven Moun

Gzemnid's Realm



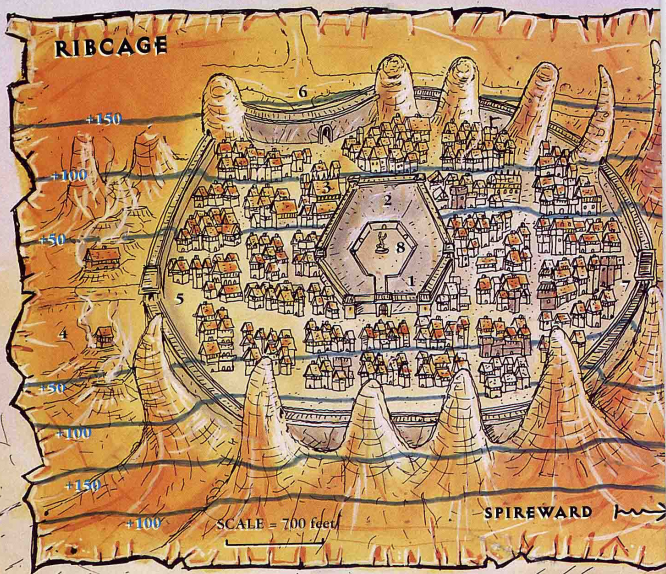
Key: Sylvania

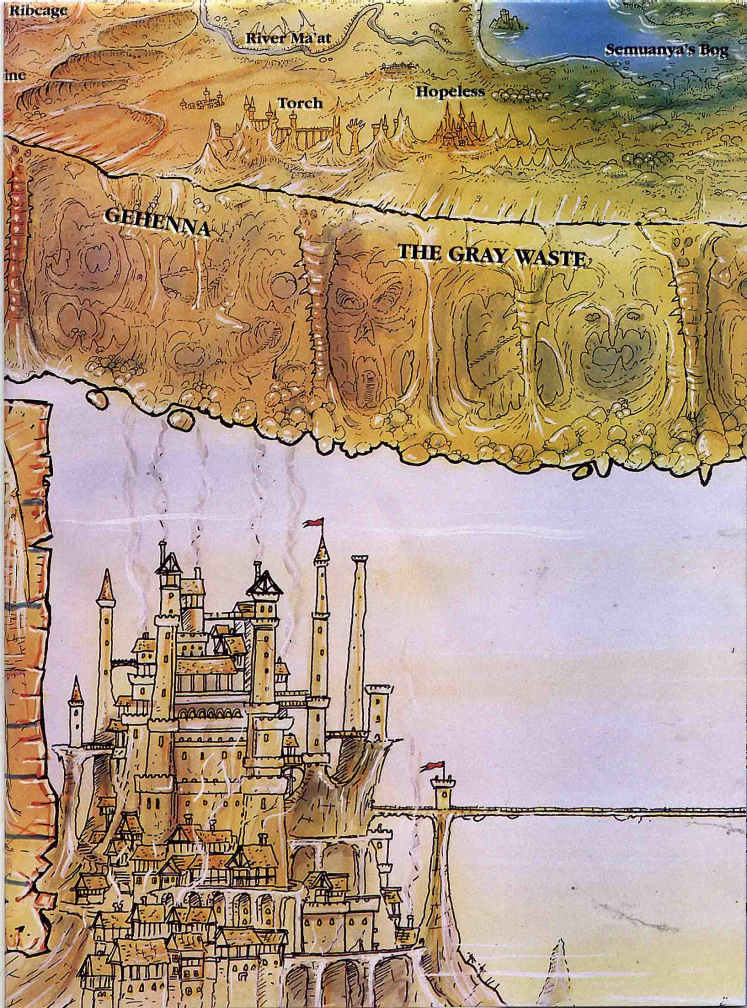
- 1) Sensate Embassy
- 2) Acropolis of the Olympian Pantheon
- 3) Elven Living Temple to Arvandor
- 4) The *Dipping Dragon* (inn)
- 5) The *Fountain of Gotbmar* (open plaza)
- 6) *Thunderhouse* (festhall)
- 7) *Greyfalcon's* (inn)



Key: Ribcage

- 1) Baron Paracs' Citadel
- 2) Gate to Baator
- 3) Council Quarters
- 4) *Gymnasium of Steam* (resort)
- 5) Steam Gate
- 6) Rigus Gate (to Great Pass)
- 7) Spire Gate
- 8) Statue of Paracs





Palace of Judgment

Isensime's Realm

Bedlam

Court of Light

Curst

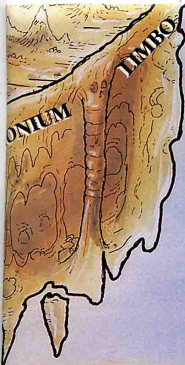
Plague-Mort

PANDEM

THE ABYSS

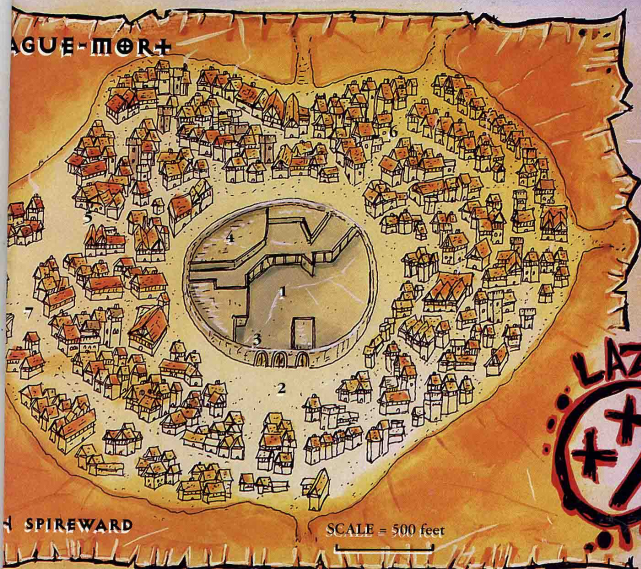
CARCERI

PL



Key: Plague-Mort

- 1) Keep of the Arch-Lector
- 2) Plaza of the Great Archways
- 3) Gate to the Abyss
- 4) Abandoned Temple of Oghma
- 5) The Eye of the Dragon (inn)
- 6) The Golden Griffon (inn)
- 7) The Bell and Whistle (tavern)



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by Jeff Grubb and Colin McComb

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