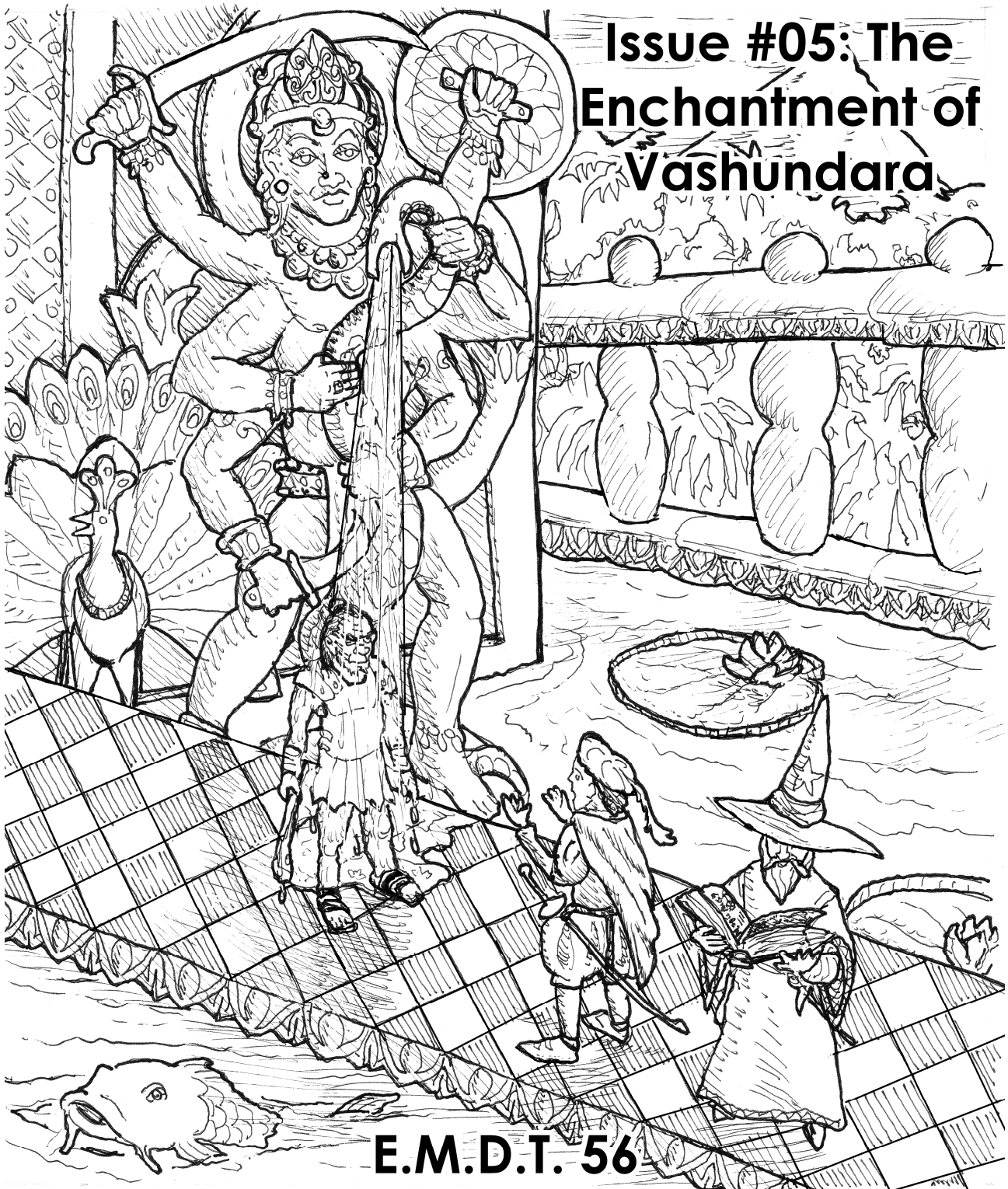


Echoes From FOMALHAUT



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First Hungarian
D20 Society

Issue #05: The Enchantment of Vashundara





Issue #05: “The Enchantment of Vashundara”

by Gabor Lux (various), Zsolt Varga (pp. 2–11)

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Dream worlds populated by wonder and menace are the essence of fantasy; their colourful landscapes and bizarre creatures the building blocks of imagination. And yet, truly fantastic fantasy is a rare thing in genre literature, and just as uncommon in gaming. Extraplanar realms are carefully guarded from player characters – “you must be this high level to enter” – and when they are finally accessible, the results are often disappointing. What is there to find on the demiplane of salt? Why waste your time in Elysium?

Perhaps there is another way. In this issue, the characters get to visit the home dimension of a god, and their actions will determine his eventual fate. No need for +3 vorpal maces and two wands of Orcus per character: this is an open-ended scenario for third-level adventurers, and no less fantastic for that. I was very happy to publish this adventure in the original Hungarian (it won second place in a module writing competition I was judging), and I am just as happy to see it in English.

From the Isle of Erillion, this issue's content revolves around two small towns. Tirwas is a divided community ruled by an uneasy alliance of landlords in a feudal system gone mad – challenged by both inside and outside forces which may bring about its downfall. Will the characters be the instruments of destruction, or will things change utterly only to stay the same? Can Tirwas be fixed at all? And what lies down the Stone Sacks, a network of limestone caverns once used as a communal shelter, and now a storehouse for forgotten and abandoned things? Answers await here, and around the game table.

And in Sleepy Haven, everything is fine. The idyllic coastal community seems unaffected by orc invasion, rampant piracy, the ghosts of the nearby highlands, and internal strife. Can such places still exist? Find out in this issue.

Gabor Lux
Pécs, 13 July 2019

The Enchantment of Vashundara

adventure module for levels 3-4

by Zsolt Varga, with maps by Menyherth Gergye

Playtesters (1st group): Laszló Feher (Ugbus the Lepidopterist, Cleric of Dornak 3), Laszlo Satori (Tyr, Magic-User 3), Benedek Bereczki (Scarn the Bodyguard, Fighter 3), Tamas Ruppert (Flynn Rider, Thief 3).

Playtesters (2nd group): Dora Petras (Erza and Urza, amazon Fighters 3), Menyherth Gergye (Slika, Thief 3), Daniel Fedor (Jean Baptiste, Cleric of Istar 3).

The poems in the adventure are from The Birth of the War-God (Uma's Nativity) by Kálidása, translated from the Sanskrit into English Verse by Ralph T. H. Griffith, M.A.

(<https://archive.org/details/birthofwargodpoe00kali>)



Background

Karttekeza, the god who was once man is in trouble. Vashundara, the snake demon exploited his love of beauty, when she arrived at his palace in the form of a gorgeous woman. Slowly she seduced all six heads of the god, trapped him in chains, and ransacked his palace. The demon swallowed Karttekeza's cart-drawing peacock, whom she is digesting in the home of the god. Amrita, the giant fighting peacock is dying of poison, but Praveena, his mate is set on a journey throughout the worlds to find help. Those who would offer their aid have no time to waste, because Vashundara is slowly getting back on her feet and will surely finish what she started: *kill Karttekeza!*

One way to start the adventure is the following. The heroes encounter Praveena, the giant peacock. The gorgeous creature's intelligence matches Amrita's, but she cannot speak – at least not in the human tongue. She has no opportunity to tell what she wants, and all she can do is stand before them, lowering her wings and waiting for the company to climb on her back. She flies away with them above the clouds. She soars slowly but steadily above a seemingly endless ocean, until the mainland appears with dense jungle. As the sun sets, a splendid white marble building is seen in the jungle, and she flies them there, close to the front gate. She waits patiently till the heroes dismount, then sneaks away: from a little distance, she carefully watches them and the building.

The heroes may explore the villa of Karttekeza, talk to various animals living there, free the god and defeat the demons. Or the other way round?



Gamemaster's tips

The villa is vast. Karttekeza is a giant with a height above 18 feet and the world is in line with his size. On the map, one square is the equivalent of 5 feet for Karttekeza, but 20 feet for the heroes. A level of the villa is 26 feet for Karttekeza's scale, but 65 feet for the heroes. A cushion can serve as a bed for the characters, a dagger as a longsword, and an arrow as a spear. The local fauna consists of giants around them, and the trees of the jungle are hundred yards tall. Vashundara and her henchmen are not from this world, and thus their size matches the heroes'. However, the demon-mistress took the proportions of Karttekeza as a beautiful woman with the help of various spells.

While running the adventure,

1. Highlight the problems coming from the size differences.
2. Make the location dynamic: guards should be on patrol, and react to events.
3. Be generous with information: talking animals are everywhere, and they know the villa (or at least parts of it), they can help the heroes in reconnaissance. Animals love the master of the villa, so they'll help if the characters are working towards freeing him.



The mountainside villa

The Enchantment of Vashundara is a location based adventure. Player characters can explore the villa as they see fit. There is no ideal path to saving Karttekeza or defeating Vashundara; moreover, heroes may face multiple problems at certain locations. Treat the place in a dynamic way as Vashundara's henchmen walk around. If they see something suspicious, they will guard their prisoner and their mistress with increased attention. There might be very dangerous, even unconquerable enemies around the villa, but if the heroes are clever and form alliances, they can be triumphant. In the domain of Karttekeza, **the time of the day** follows the god's wishes, but now that he is unconscious, he is not in control. Every hour, roll a d12 and change the scene according to the result:

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1-2 | Starry night: darkness for an hour, only the stars shed light on the villa. |
| 3-4 | Monsoon: heavy raining for an hour, dim light and plenty of noise. |
| 5-6 | Silent sunset or sunrise, shadows or patches of golden light in the villa. |
| 7-10 | Heatwave: midday with torrid sunlight from the sky. |
| 12 | Solar eclipse: total darkness in the villa and the jungle for an hour. |



Garden and Ground floor

A. Gateway: Behind the gate, the enormous villa with its hanging gardens and splendid entrance stairs is clearly visible. There are no gates, for the home of Karttekeza is open to all. Two figures wrapped in dark shrouds, and wearing a breastplate from a dark, hard material are guarding the entrance on the two sides of the entryway (**damned souls**). One carries a battle axe, while the other is holding a curved sword. They are unable to talk, only being capable of tortured moans and cries. They are not really loyal to each other; however, they both fear and hate Vashundara.

Damned souls (2): Fighter 3; AC 3; Atk battleaxe 1d8 or scimitar 1d8; Spec immune to mind-affecting and electricity, ½ from acid, cold, fire; MR 20%; ML 7; AL CE.

Hp 13 9

B. Stairs: A wide flight of stairs in front of the gateway, leading to the first floor of the villa, where parts of a huge **statue** are visible: it looks like a giant holding a trident. At the top of the stairs, **two damned souls** are standing guard.

Damned souls (2):

Hp 8 22



Garden Encounters (1d6)

- 1 Small group of **1d3+1 giant guinea-fowls** (flightless) scratching for grubs.
- 2 **Giant constrictor snake** hunting a guinea-fowl.
- 3 **Giant centipedes** (1d4+1) are feasting on the corpse of a guinea-fowl.
- 4 **Giant spider** is spinning its web among the leaves. If the heroes are not really careful, they might touch the web and alert the spider looking for its meal.
- 5 They find a spider nest among the leaves: thousands of tiny white globes. If they touch it, two **giant spiders** arrive to protect the eggs.
- 6 Nothing special.

Giant guinea-fowls: HD 3; AC 7; Atk 2*kicks 1d4 and peck 1d6; ML 5; AL N.

Hp 18 13 9 18 14 13
9 11

Giant constrictor snake: HD 4+2; AC 6; Atk bite 1d4 and constrict 2d4/r; ML 7; AL N.

Hp 15

Giant centipedes: HD 1; AC 9; Atk bite 1d4 + poison (1d3 r, 12/0); ML 6; AL N.

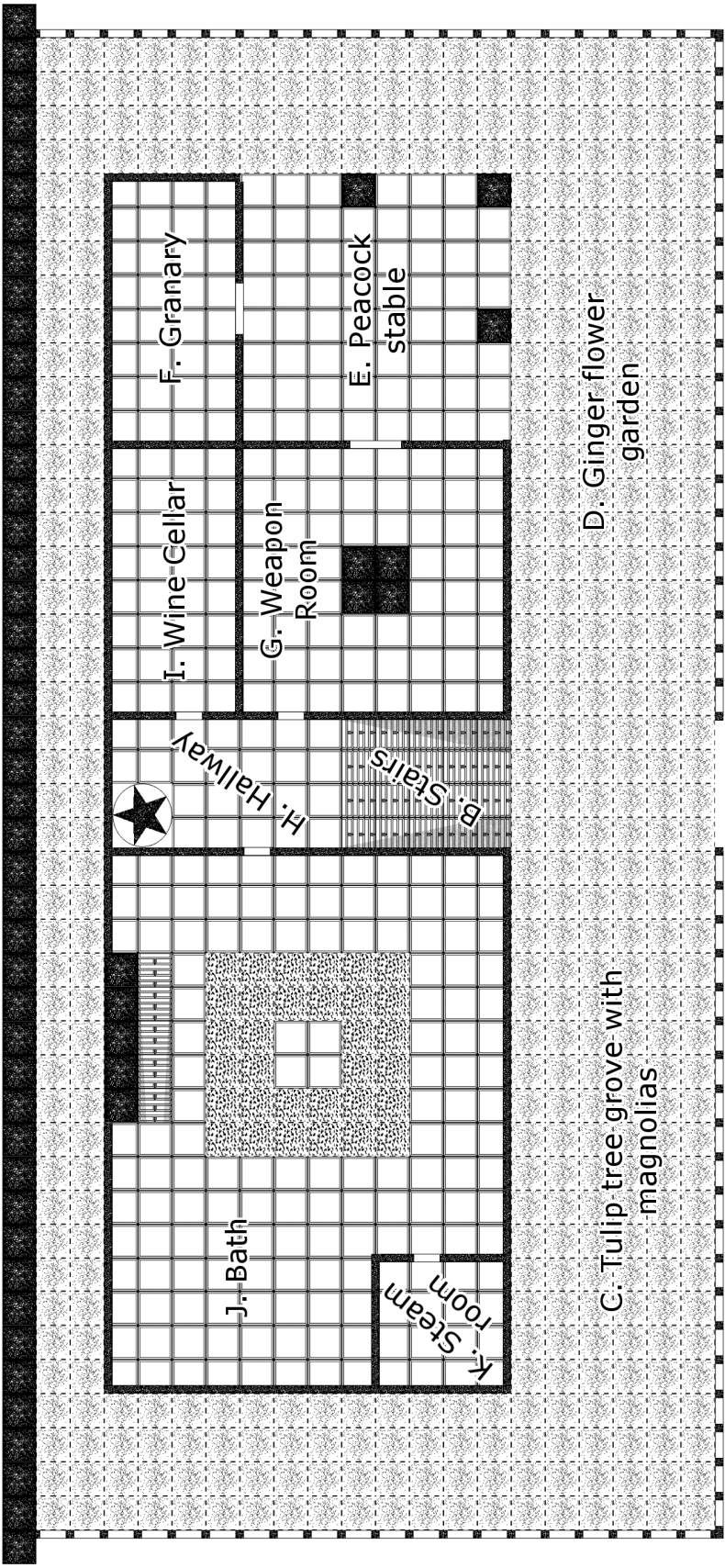
Hp 4 3 8 8 5 5

Giant spiders: HD 4+4; AC 4; Atk bite 2d4 + poison (1d3 r, 12/0); ML 7; AL N.

Hp 32 27 24



Garden and Ground Floor



A. Gateway

5'x5' for Karttekeza ☐
20'x20' for the PCs ☐

C. Tulip tree grove: A loose group of shrubs with large leaves, yellow and cyclamen colored narcotic blooms, droning bees and wasps. It is easy to hide among the shrubs; however, the heroes might face multiple enemies on the front, sides or back of the villa. For the encounter, roll 1d6.

At the back of the villa, the wall is covered with **vines**. They are easy to climb, with 65' between floors; however, there is a 1:3 chance the climber gets close to a **killer vine**. A successful hit indicates entanglement or a fall (1:2 of either, falling PCs may save vs. petrification to grab onto a different vine before plummeting to their doom).

Killer vines: HD 4; AC 5; Atk vines 1d6 and grab; Spec strangling 2d6/r, immune to mind-affecting; ML 12; AL N.

Hp	13	9	20	18	22	21
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D. Ginger flower garden: The white and red tuberous flowers have thick, wide, dark green leaves, and are on the short side (3.5 feet). Behind this part of the garden, there are columns seen at the corner of the villa, with four hooded **damned souls** guarding the front and sides of the villa.

Damned souls (4): Fighter 3; AC 3; Atk battleaxe 1d8 or scimitar 1d8; Spec immune to mind-affecting and electricity, ½ from acid, cold, fire; MR 20%; ML 7; AL CE.

Hp	10	8	16	23
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E. Peacock stable: In the open space covered with straw, the giant **Karttekeza** lies on his knees. All his six hands are chained to the walls and columns, with rings, chains and **three padlocks**: a bronze, a silver and a golden one. The giant is unconscious while the chains are holding him, kneeling with closed eyes in a trancelike state. He is unable to communicate or wake up. If he is freed, he easily defeats the demons in his home and rewards the heroes.

A **giant scorpion** is lurking next to the drinking through.

Karttekeza, six-headed giant: HD 15 MAX; AC -4; Atk 2**wave-bladed sword* +3 2d10+6 or 2*giant composite longbow 2d10; Spec he can cast a spell each round in addition to attacking; Str 18/00; MR 60%; ML 10; AL CG.

Spells (unlimited): dimension door, fireball, lightning bolt, minor globe of invulnerability, stone shape, wizard's eye.

Hp	90
----	----

Giant scorpion: HD 5+5; AC 3; Atk 2*claws 1d10 and stinger 1d4 + poison (save or die); ML 10; AL N.

Hp	29
----	----

F. Granary: The food of the peacocks is here: rice, wheat, and corn in sacks. Nothing especially interesting.

G. Weapon room: A massive central column with a wide cloister around it. On the walls are the **weapons of Karttekeza**: swords with wavy blades, spears, bows and shields. Most of these are too heavy for the heroes, but if they can somehow reach it, they can use one of the daggers of Karttekeza. It functions as a *shortsword* +2 with the additional features of granting luck in the villa (+2 to saving throws, and any one roll can be rerolled once per day).

H. Hallway: In the corner of the room stands a **sculpture** of Karttekeza: the god is standing on a chariot drawn by peacocks, with a curvaceous woman, a book on poetry, a drawn bow, two wavy bladed swords, and the carcass of a rabbit in his six arms. On the **opened page of the book**, the following is written:

*„A rosy glow filled all the brightening sky,
An odorous breeze came sweeping softly by,
Breathed round the hill a sweet unearthly strain,
And the glad heavens poured down their flowery rain.”*

Whoever reads the poem out loud will be healed of his or her wounds, any poison is negated, and they will feel gorged like after a feast. This effect can be used once per day.

I. Wine cellar: Cool chamber with giant wine barrels by the walls. **Sheela, the cat of Karttekeza** is hiding among the barrels. A talkative, flaming red tom-cat, very hungry, scared of snakes, a coward in general. Knows the building well, will tell as much as he can to the heroes for some fresh meat. If the GM has to, use the statistics of a lion.

Sheela: HD 5+2; AC 5; Atk 2*paws 1d4 and bite 1d10; Spec spring 30', rake if both paws hit, 2*1d6+1; ML 4; AL CG.

Hp 25

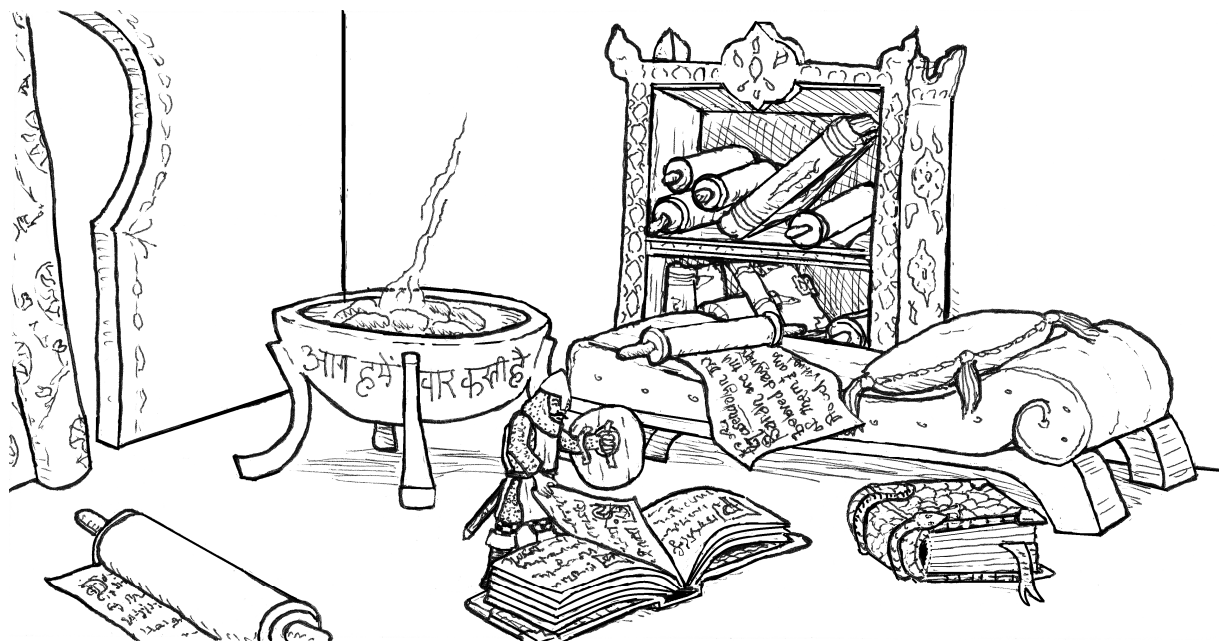
J. Bath: Pool filled with crystal-clear water, with a cetacean-shaped well in the center. Ornamental mosaics on the bottom of the pool showcasing the glorious battles of Karttekeza: hydra, sea serpent, phoenix and a three-headed elephant. By the side of the **steam cabin** is a cyclamen-coloured bathing sheet and two giant braziers filled with incense.

The **bronze key** is hovering in in the water, 5 feet above the bottom of the pool. The key is within the body of a **gelatinous cube**, which is almost impossible to detect underwater (surprise 5:6 unless called out).

Gelatinous cube: HD 4; AC 8; Atk cube 2d4 + paralysis; Spec paralysis 5d4 r, surprise, immunities; ML 12; AL N.

Hp 21

K. Steam cabin: The drawing of a brazier with stylised steam cloud above it is seen on the floor. If opened, hot dry air gushes out, and anyone entering the room will suffer 2 Hp damage per round (1 Hp if undressed). Leaving the room and entering the cold water in the pool heals 2 Hp for each round spent in the steam cabin. Can be used once per day.



Middle level

L. Statue: A giant fighting a sea serpent made of marble. Water is gushing from the pedestal to the middle level's, and from the serpent's maw to the upper level's pool.

M. Reading room: Comfortable divan, scroll holders and shelves around, with plenty of reading material. Demons have ransacked the place: many scrolls were put to fire, and the contents of the shelves were swept down to the floor. **Two damned souls** are protecting the sleeping chamber behind the reading room. In the middle of the room is a **30' wide brazier**, with the following poem written on the bottom of it:

*„Then was it sweet, as days flew by, to trace
The dawning charm of every infant grace,
Even as the crescent Moons their glory pour
More full, more lovely than the eve before.”*

Reading the poem aloud will make the fire roar up, shedding bright light on the room for an hour, consuming anything in the brazier.

Damned souls (2): Fighter 3; AC 3; Atk battleaxe 1d8 or scimitar 1d8; Spec immune to mind-affecting and electricity, ½ from acid, cold, fire; MR 20%; ML 7; AL CE.

Hp 11 24

N. Sleeping chamber: The **treasure room** is accessible from the sleeping chamber (its door is guarded by **two damned souls**), while on a huge dais is the bed of Karttekeza with pillows and pelts. A basin on the wall provides clean, cold water.

On the bed is a huge sleeping female shape with coal-black skin. She wears a gold bracelet on her ankles, and a **golden key** is hanging from a necklace between her breasts. Her stomach is enormous due to the fact that she is presently digesting a giant peacock. **Vashundara** will wake up with a 1:6 chance each round if a fight takes place. Otherwise, she will rise and regain her strength 1d4 days after the heroes' arrival. Her combat statistics are modified to account for the fact that she is digesting at the moment.

Vashundara, serpent demon (as digesting giant woman): HD 7; AC 2; Atk seize and bite 3d4 + poison (save at -3 or die); Spec *charm* gaze, spells, demon summoning, immune to mind-affecting and electricity, ½ from acid and fire, +1 or better to hit; MR 20%; ML 9; AL CE. Spells: ph. force*2, improved ph. force, invisibility, mirror image, spectral force, hallucinatory terrain, suggestion.

Hp 29

Damned souls (2):

Hp 13 8

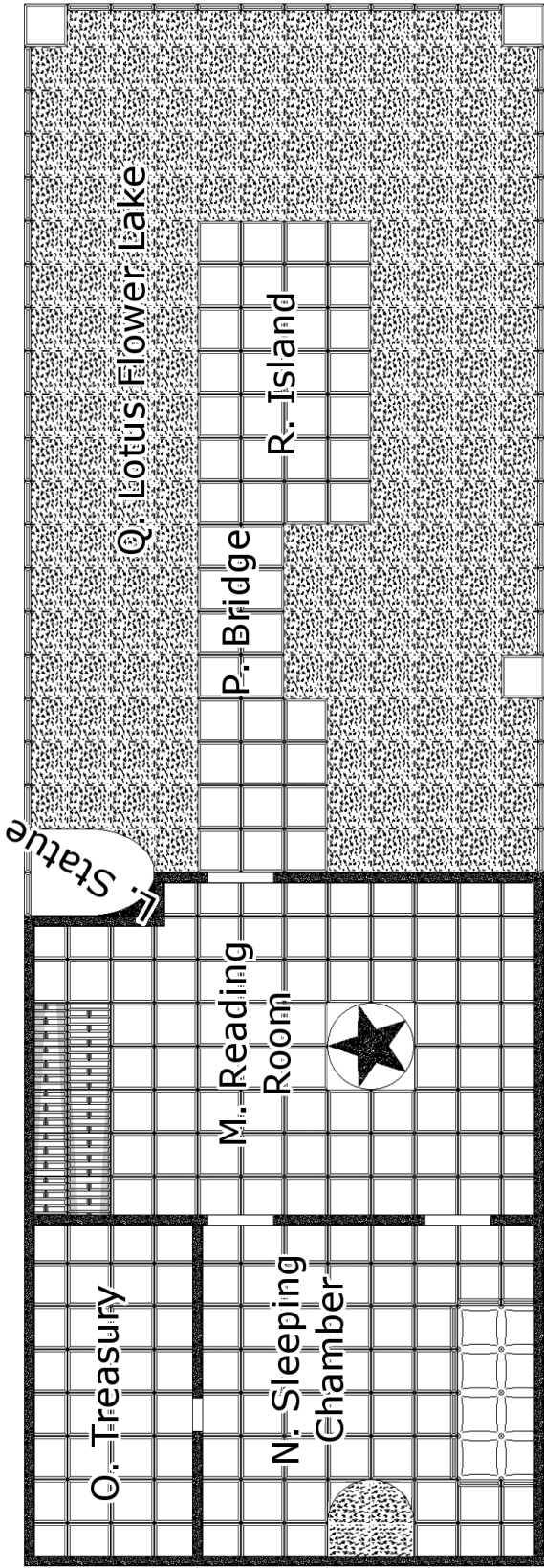
O. Treasury: The door is **magically locked** with the following **unfinished inscription**:

*„Now beauty's prime, that craves from art no aid,
Ripened the loveliness of that young maid-
That scorns the wine-cup's help to fire the heart,
The bow of Love without his flowery dart;
There was a glory beaming from her face,
With love's own light, and every youthful grace:
Ne'er pictured lily more divinely fair
Unclosed her beauty to the **[[morning air]]**.”*

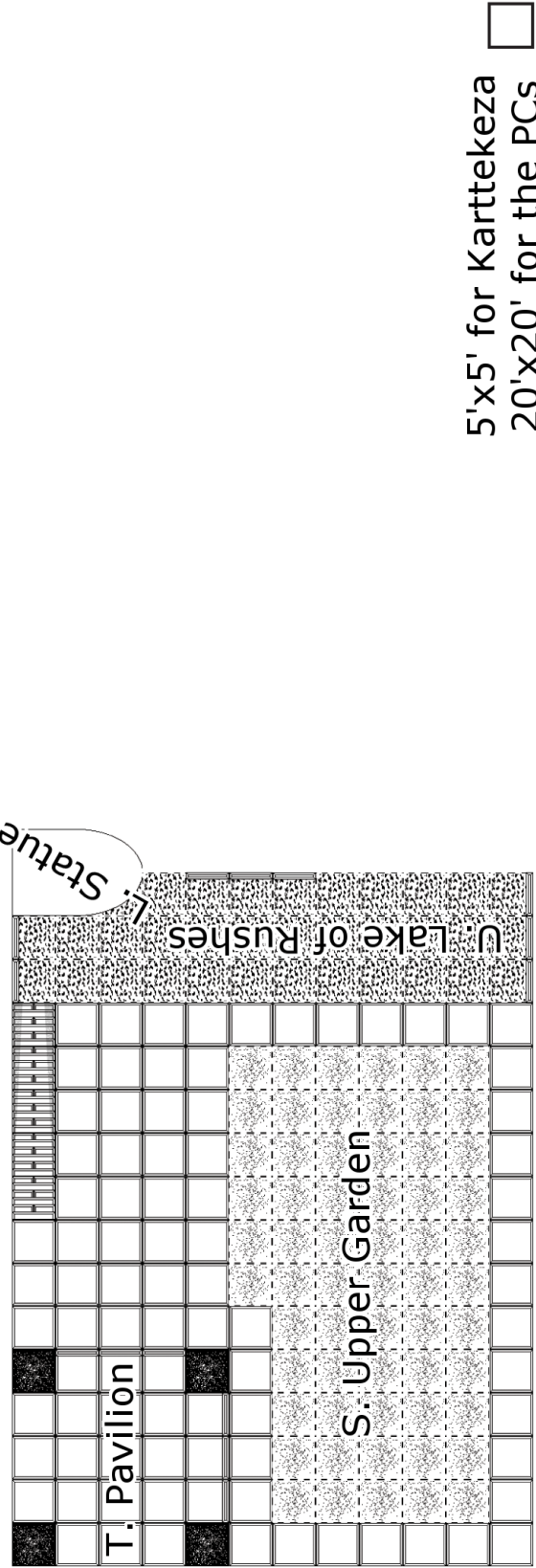
Anyone saying out loud „morning air” (or something similar that fits the poem) will open the door. The following are found in the treasure room:

- **Clothes** in the size of Karttekeza: cloaks, boots, a whaleskin and a golden-scaled armor, most of them magical.

Middle Level



Hanging Gardens



- **Rare books** (40-90 lbs each): encyclopedias, travel journals, legends and religious texts.
- **Gems** (fist sized) in a box, worth thousands of gold.
- A **quiver of arrows** made from the feathers and teeth of a phoenix. Heroes can use an arrow as a *spear* +2 dealing an extra +3 fire damage.
- **Three potions** in vials the size of a human head: *neutralise poison*, *potion of youth*, *potion of fire breathing*.

P. Bridge: Wide bridge arches over the pool. Railing, white stone slabs, a few steps.

Q. Lotus flower lake: Thousands of **lotus flowers** are floating on the lake surface among round dark green leaves. Due to their size, they can carry the heroes. The water is 10' deep, and under its surface lives a **giant turtle** with **four giant crabs**. The **silver key** is in the turtle's stomach, so the heroes must either descend down its maw, or somehow make him vomit it out. The turtle can talk, and while he is not too smart, he is very sad because he loves and pities Karttekeza. He might ask for help from the heroes. Crabs can't talk and they are very aggressive.

Giant turtle: HD 10; AC 0; Atk bite 4d6; Spec limbs/head AC 5; ML 7; AL N.

Hp 49

Giant crabs (4): HD 3; AC 3; Atk pincers 2d6; Spec surprise 4:6, break wpns on 20; ML 7; AL N.

Hp 15 13 9 19

R. Island: Comfortable pillows on a marble divan, the place where Karttekeza used to enjoy the view of the lake and the mountains.



Hanging Gardens

S. Upper garden: The top of the villa is a great garden with palms, orchids and figs. Due to the presence of the demons, the inhabitants of the garden became aggressive and they attack any intruder. Every 10-minute turn spent in the garden, roll 1d6:

- 1 Nothing special.
- 2-3 **1d4 giant ravens.**
- 4-6 **1d6 giant butterflies.**

Giant ravens: HD 3; AC 7; Atk beak 1d10; ML 8; N.
 Hp 7 6 17 12

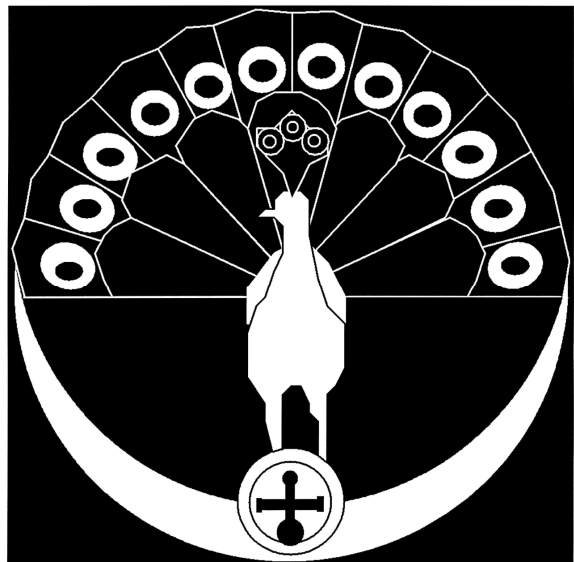
Giant butterflies: HD 2; AC 8; Atk tongue 1d4 + poison (1d4+1 r, 0/15 Hp); Spec pollen (1d6 – 1-2 irritant, -2 to hit, 3-4 narcolepsy, save vs. poison or asleep, 5 paralysis 1d3 turns, 6 airborne poison, save or 3d4 Hp; ML 6; AL N.
 Hp 6 8 13 9 10 12

T. Pavilion: A place for rest built of stone, with slender pillars. On the floor, **Amrita** the giant riding peacock of Karttekeza is dying. The bird is poisoned, and may have a few hours before his death. If the heroes help him somehow, he will be their ally, and he will scare off any opposition in the hanging gardens.

The following **text** is inscribed on the dome of the pavilion (underside):

*„Bright as a Lotus, springing where she trod,
 Her glowing feet shed radiance o’er the sod:
 That arching neck, the step, the glance aside,
 The proud swans taught her as they stemmed
 the tide,
 Whilst of the maiden they would fondly learn
 Her anklets’ pleasant music in return.”*

On the **roof** of the pavilion – after climbing the 60 foot tall pillars – is a **nest of crows** with the treasures they have collected: 30 silver pieces in a bronze bowl (20 gp each).



Amrita the giant peacock: HD 5; AC 6; Atk beak 1d10; Spec flies; ML 10; AL N.
 Hp 5/24

U. Lake of rushes: The 10 feet deep pool is full of tall rushes. Among the roots lie **two giant clams**. Both hold a fist-sized pearl (320 and 200 gp).

Clams, giant (2): HD 4; AC 2; Atk bite 2d6 and grab; Spec bite 2d6/r, immune to mind-affecting; ML 12; N.
 Hp 12 18

The Gift of the Deity

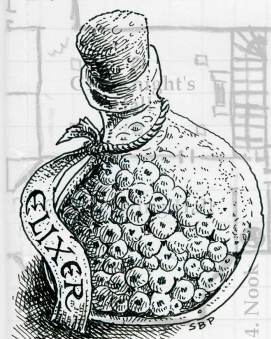
Karttekeza will be very grateful if the heroes free him and especially if they destroy Vashundara. As a gift, he lets each hero choose one of the following:

- Once per day as a cleric of equivalent level, they can cast a first level spell (choose from *bless*, *create holy water*, *protection from evil*). The character will develop an urge to own and wear exotic, flashy clothes.
- The character will be able to cast *raise dead* once. A peacock eye will open on the forehead of the hero, but will disappear after the casting of the spell.
- Karttekeza will send Praveena at a time of their choice, and she will carry the heroes wherever they want. Wherever the hero goes, peacocks will make inquiries after and will love him or her. They will follow him or her as long as it is safe.
- The gift is his long wave-bladed dagger, which can be used as a *bastard sword* +2. Whoever receives the sword will become proficient in it. The first swing of the sword in each combat will be followed by a loud penetrating screech.
- The hero grows a third arm (+1 action every second round), which is very useful in certain tasks. However, many religions will see him or her as an adversary.
- *Mechanical peacock* that can sing in the beautiful voice of a woman. Unable to fight, but many will admire it, functions as a guard and will alert its sleeping owner if anyone is approaching him or her with malicious intentions.
- A giant emerald worth 3000 gp.



Louie, Thief 1, turned to stone by a goatrice
Ma'theryll, Elf 1, turned to stone by a goatrice
Paul, heavy footman, decapitated by a guillotine trap
Arhang, heavy footman, decapitated by a guillotine trap
Burkus, dog, killed by a ghoul
Vitae, heavy footman, killed by the pigeons from Hell
Wulf, heavy footman, broke his neck on a slide trap
Pierre de Montremartre, bowman, fried by a
lightning bolt from Countess Maltricia Malévol
Fritz, light foot, fried by a
lightning bolt shot by Countess Maltricia Malévol
Renée, heavy footman, killed by
Renée Malheur, the Countess' charmed paramour

*Still brewing... but will it be
safe for human consumption?*

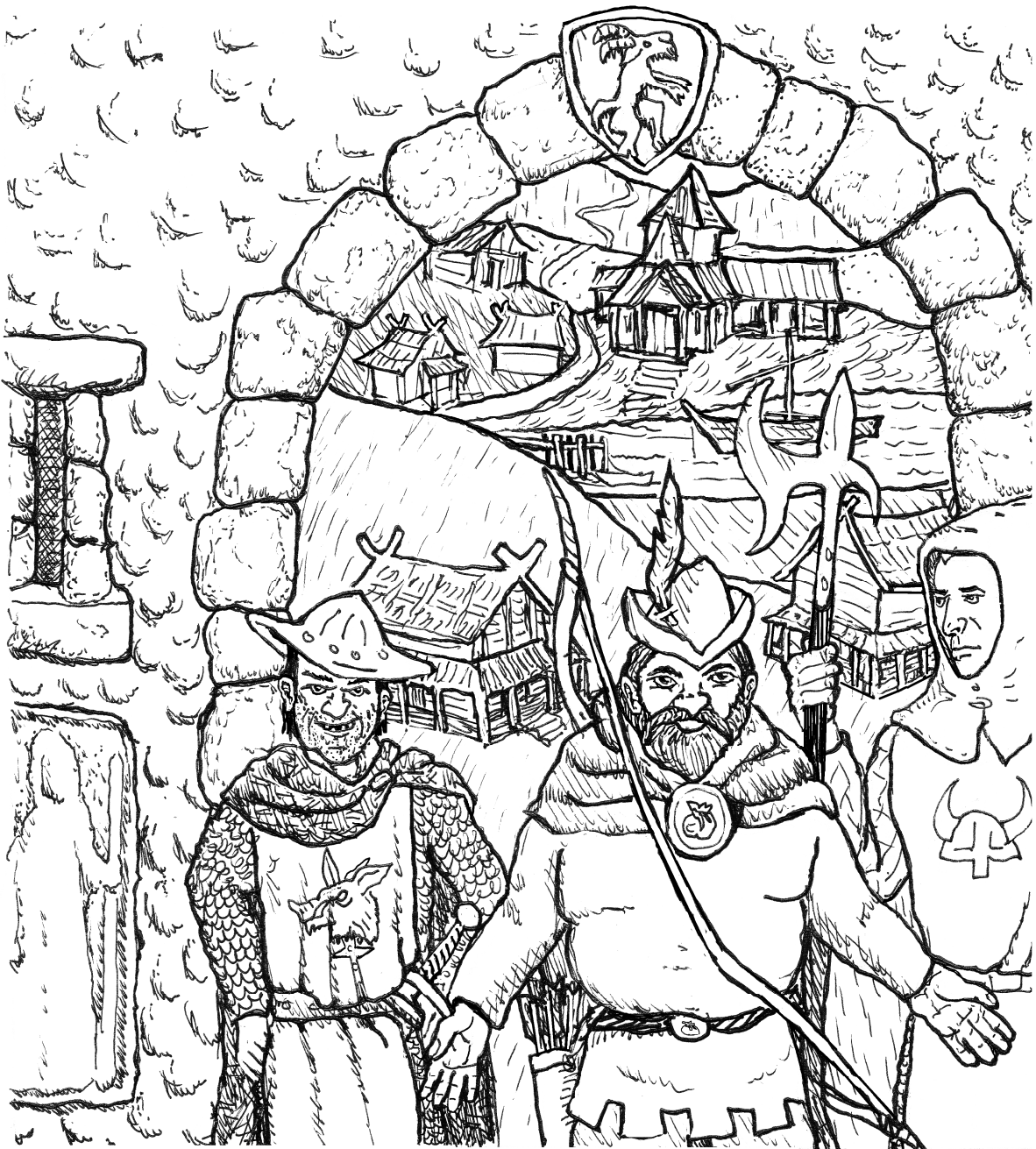


Say no to Xyntillan!



THE DIVIDED TOWN OF

TIR WAS



Tirwas, easternmost town on the Isle of Erillion, had never achieved a position of relevance over its long history. It had always been there as far as memories stretch, an overgrown village that had never made it beyond a poor excuse for a town. The people of the surrounding lands, an archaic mix, are perhaps the island's original inhabitants. At any rate, there are no others to question this position, nor are there many who take an interest in their origins. Faded carven stones are found all over town, built into the houses or left sunk into the ground, suggesting a great antiquity; and the Stone Sacks, a network of shelters and storage caverns under Hedgerow Hill, have been left over from times before recorded history.

It is better known that Tirwas had once been ruled in a communal fashion, centred around the House of Wool, a longhouse still standing in the middle of what is known as "the Old Village". This hall, rebuilt multiple times after periods of raiding and wartime destruction, has been both family home and common workshop; and the old laws of Tirwas are still displayed before it on a runestone, even if they are now illegible. Over time, power in and around the village had passed into the hands of the few, and eventually became consolidated under a group of feudal proprietors collectively known as the Landlords. While the position of these oligarchs is not hereditary, it has proven to be long-lasting and thorough. Today, most denizens of Tirwas and the surrounding villages owe fealty to one of these powermongers.

While situated on Erillion, Tirwas is often considered one of the Twelve Kingdoms, even if this position is peripheral due to its distance from the others. The Landlords had resisted the princes of Baklin as long as they could, and eventually subjugated, still grumble and contemplate treachery. Many in the court of Baklin believe the terms of surrender had been too light, while the Landlords can cite a long list of grievances and vicissitudes. As for the general inhabitants, nobody has cared to ask their opinion.



THE LANDLORDS

There are altogether eight Landlords, although four rule over the "External Estates", and are only involved in common decisions when it pertains to their interests. Beyond arable land, each Landlord also controls numerous tenants in the nearby hexes, multiple businesses, and other dependents through a system of patronage. The strongest symbols of their position are their fortified manors, which provide refuge from barbarian raids when needed (replacing the now derelict Stone Sacks).

The Landlords form the *de facto* government of Tirwas, responsible for its defence, policing, road maintenance, and all other functions except tax collection (which, inviting bitter protest, is in the hands of Baklin). Since the Landlords can rarely agree among themselves, this means precious little beyond rag-tag militias extracting protection money from foreigners, and the joint collection of fines and levies. A town wall, commissioned by Prince Lodovic 20 years ago, was started but abandoned when it turned out most of the funds had been misappropriated. Lodovic's failure to punish the responsible was widely seen as a sign of weakness by all but the Prince himself.

The current Landlords of Tirwas, and their symbols, are...

- **Tharborodlac the Black Knight, Fighter 8, LE (horned full helmet):** The fiercest Landlord, who has an evil reputation for bride-napping and the mistreatment of his underlings. His interests have recently turned towards the Twelve Kingdoms, where his son leads a mercenary company to profit from the ongoing civil war. Tharborodlac greatly fears the arrival of a black dragonship which has been foretold to be the sign of his downfall. Accordingly, he has sent permanent guards to the lighthouse (P), and – as a sweet bonus – has set his eyes on the priestess Sidisha.
- **Bangolric the Beast, Fighter 9, N (speared boar's head):** Although crude and uncouth, Bangolric is more benevolent than he seems, mostly interested in feasting and hunting. He seeks a white stag with golden antlers. He is a frequent ring-giver, inspiring loyalty in his vassals, but has a mean streak which surfaces when drunk.
- **Keollar Karwen, elf Fighter 4, CG (bow and arrow):** Still bitter about his exile from the court of Gilmoren the Faerie Lord in the Twelve Kingdoms, and resentful about “living in this dreary land”. He has “lost the music”, and is given to long periods of brooding when he is incapable of making decisions. Keollar Karwen is the custodian of the Stone Sacks and the Tirwas jail, but leaves all of these affairs to his followers, having no knowledge of the smugglers, monsters, and slaving operation right under his feet. He wears a distinctive gemstone brooch in his cap.
- **Fruskell, Fighter 4, NE (full sack):** A recent arrival in Tirwas, who had become rich in the Twelve Kingdoms, and purchased Ramshorn Hall, the manor house of the impoverished and elderly Agonthane. He has a hand in trade, and has also been buying lots of farmland from impoverished tenants in the area (at the behest of Brellonek).

The Landlords of the four External Estates live in villages outside Tirwas, and are only indirectly involved in town affairs. Their ruling seats are listed here briefly; slightly more detail was included in the individual hexes described in **Echoes #04**.

- **Lady Sharbra, Ranger 5, N (horsehead, Unwold [0403]):** Elderly and increasingly senile, she lives alone in the company of her servants and opportunistic suitors.
- **Lord Morkund, Fighter 3, LG (ship and star, Morkund [0404]):** Lonesome and withdrawn to his island home after losing his only son.
- **Brellonek, He Who Laughs, Magic-User 9, CE (oak leaf, Merkadon [0603]):** Revered as a living saint in his village, Brellonek had emerged naked from the forests to proclaim “the era of the New Peace”. He has been buying up farmland in the area through Fruskell, and having the former tenants driven out by his men.
- **[EMPTY SEAT] (mountain peak, Helmorak [0601]):** These holdings were recently sold to a group of rich peasants by Huorlan Helmorak, last of his line and a distant heir to the Helmorak inheritance. This development is watched with some consternation by the other Landlords, who suspect it is a threat to their rule.

The power of balance among the Landlords may seem precarious, but while each tries to subtly expand his or her influence, they are also bound by strong common interests. None are strong enough to retain influence without the others, and if any of them becomes more powerful than “due”, the others band together to right the situation.





CUSTOMS

Tirwas has specific and peculiar customs which differentiate it from other locales on Erillion.

- **Hospitality:** The system of patronage in Tirwas is based on the dual duties of hospitality and giftgiving: hosts must protect their guests, and the guests are expected to give gifts in return – which could be money, a valuable item, or labour (most travellers just work off their dues). Over time, this tradition has become formalised and somewhat impersonal: people entering town are offered to choose a patron and wear his emblem during their stay, benefitting from a protection all other Landlords will recognise. Those who are not under anyone's hospitality (without emblem) are fair game for provocation, theft, and outright banditry – some opportunistic, and some targeted, since it is in the Landlords' interest to set a good example.
- **Crime and punishment:** Absent a central authority, law enforcement in Tirwas is patchy, and based on the protection of the Landlords, who look after those who wear their emblems. Serious wrongdoers are tied to a stone and pitched into the sea ("salted ballast"). A community jail in the Stone Sacks is maintained for minor offences, and as a form of harassing emblemless travellers – those who are careless may easily find themselves arrested for made-up offences. The nominal custodian, Keollar Karwen cares little about running the jail, and leaves it in the hands of the jailer, Mungo (SS, 23), who has abused the system by running a slave-trading operation right under his master's feet.
- **The Stone Sacks:** Once communal shelters, these tunnels and caverns under Hedgerow Hill are now mostly used as storage space, although large parts are abandoned and dangerous to visit.

- **Carved images:** Several old stone carvings, made of a smooth, black stone not otherwise found nearby, are found scattered through town, and in the outlying areas. Most have been incorporated into various buildings, while some are free-standing. The stones depict animals and vague human figures, and are said to be of special significance, even if nobody in our time remembers their purpose. Local superstitions suggest they impart their nature to the living, while some believe they had once been part of a careful design which had been hopelessly muddled once they were moved from their original positions. The common folk still leave simple offerings next to them, but this custom is on the way out.
- **Smuggling:** Smuggling is recognised as a honourable profession through Erillion, and Tirwas is no exception. Simmering distrust of Baklin's rule means the rules are even more lax than elsewhere, although the town's peripheral location and the difficulties of overland transportation naturally limit the scope of this activity. Using stone weights to sink smuggled goods in Horkner's Bay for later retrieval is common practice; and "Give it some ballast" is a phrase that can mean both emphasis and threat, depending on the circumstances. Among the coastal smuggling bands, two are based in the Stone Sacks (SS, 27 and 31).



LOCATIONS

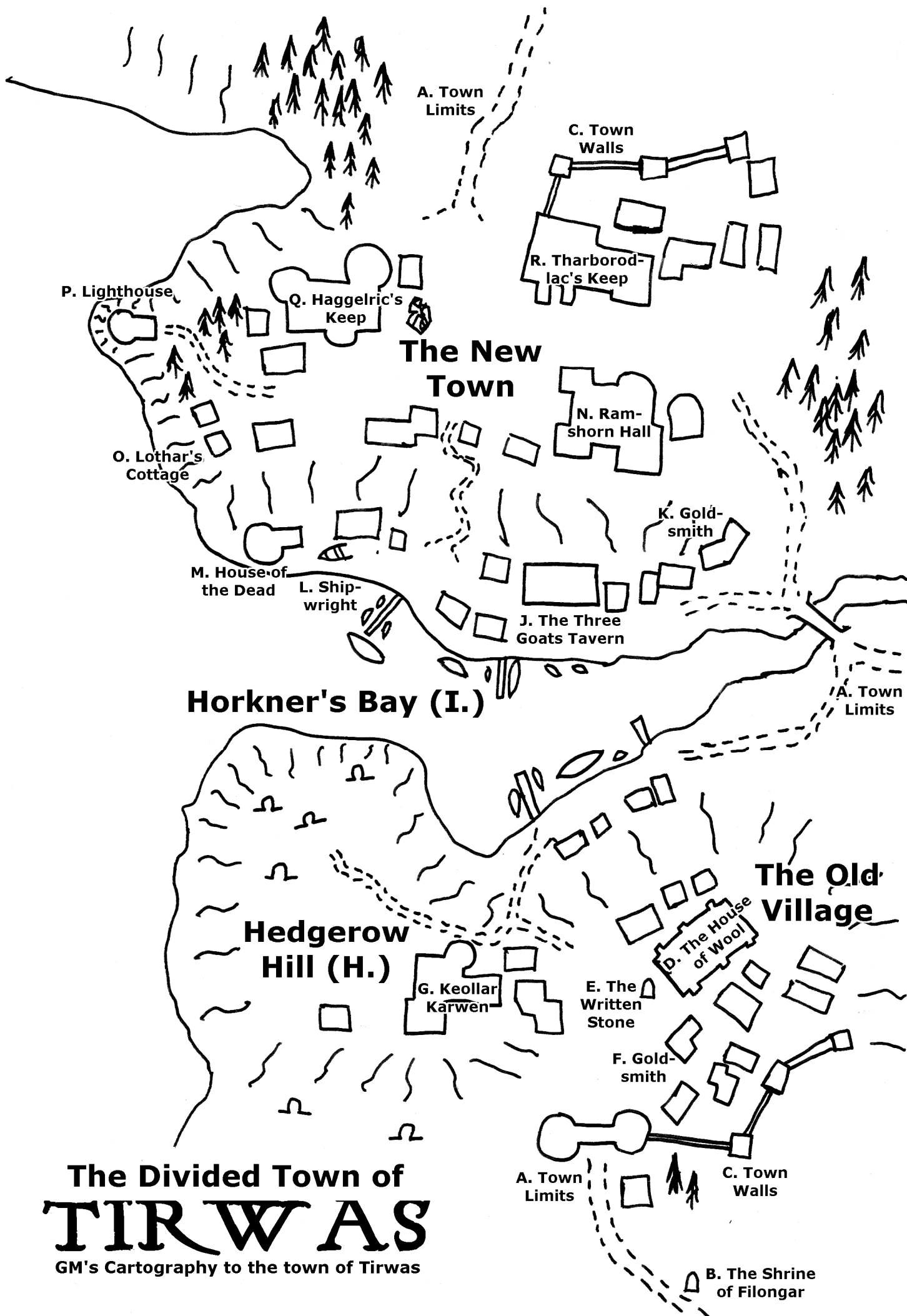
A. Town limits: Three roads leading to Tirwas, particularly the highway to the east, are jointly controlled by the Landlords' militias on an equal basis (2/3 each for 8/12 men, respectively). There is no gate fee; these rag-tag fellows are placed here to stop travellers, explain the local system of hospitality, and sell them on temporary emblems (with particular emphasis on the hazards of emblemless status). The guards will embellish the advantages of joining their respective masters, and try to jostle for position, but are shrewd enough to avoid a protracted bidding war – this is a fixed game. Prices vary on an estimation of how much they can get away with (2 sp to 2 gp per day, more for merchants).

The militias are friendly, even jovial as long as characters collaborate, but turn surly and threatening if they are refused. Emblemless characters will be 2:3 blocked at choke-points for a shakedown, 1:2 set on by roving gangs, 1:6 accused of made-up crimes, and 1:6 that discreet tips will be placed with the town's freelance thieves (J, O).

- **The fugitive:** Pendaric, local brigand, was last seen fleeing north along the road on stolen horse, carrying a tied-up farmhand behind him.
- **A cart of precious cargo** belonging to Hamous of Borontium, emblemless visitor, was plundered at night by unknown attackers. There is no trace of the perpetrators.

Militias (8-12): Fighter 1; AC 6 (ring, shield); Atk spear 1d6 or shortsword 1d6 or hand axe 1d6 or 2*bow 1d6; ML 7; AL N.

Hp	5	3	6	5	4	9
	3	3	10	4	7	2
	3	4	1	2	10	5
	4	5	6	10	9	9
	5	7	2	6	9	7



The Divided Town of TIRWAS

GM's Cartography to the town of Tirwas

B. The shrine of Filongar: This humble wayside shrine bears the carving of an oak leaf. Simple offerings of food and homemade items; 1:6 of 2d6 sp. 1:6 that old hunter Haregon (Ranger 1) is here, tending the place. Haregon can *cure light wounds* and *cure* (simple) *diseases*, but reserves these powers for the needy and the worthy.

- The Wayward Wolf, a lone wolf-mother, has brought signs of a turning moon, when old sins will be unearthed and an ancient evil righted. Prepare thyself!
- Bad tidings from the House of Wool; misery is everywhere and songs of defiance are afoot. But what hand shall avenge hidden wrongs and revive old glories?

Haregon: Ranger 1; AC 6 (chain shirt); Atk longsword 1d8 or 2*longbow 1d6; Spec +1 vs. giant-kind, spells; ML 8; AL NG; symbol of Filongar, 1d3 traps, faerie flame in a box.

Spells: cure light wounds, cure disease.

Hp 6

C. Town walls: Only a gatehouse and parts of a stone wall were completed from this building project due to theft and mismanagement; while to the north, Tharborodlac had used the funds to start a wall around his private estate. None of the walls are manned, and the gatehouse is only used in cold or rainy weather. The stonework is crude, already crumbling a mere 20 years after its construction.

D. The House of Wool: An enormous timber longhouse on a stone foundation, burned down and rebuilt multiple times over its history. This is the centre of the “Old Village”, the original centre of Tirwas, and now serves as a common hall for crafts, song, drink and gossip. Fruskell has increasingly been gaining influence over the place as the main buyer of the wool and other goods produced here, and has been looking for ways to seize it or buy it on the cheap. Grunac the Blessed (Fighter 2), mother of four and bearer of an old heroine's axe, has been a voice of independence, but the dwindling number of freemen following her has made her position increasingly precarious.

- “Men were buried under this hall, and there they shall remain until this place is no more. But then shall they rise and wreak terrible vengeance!”
- No bards sing in the house anymore; it is as if they had departed Erillion.
- Lograc, young fisherman, has had his boat seized by ruffians, and will ask for Fruskell's help if he can't have it back.
- Petrified trees conceal a harvest of amber in the Forest of Woe, and a skeletonised wyrm guards the richest trunks. Gontell Sureheart knows a way to obtain it...

Grunac the Blessed: Fighter 2; AC 10; Atk war-axe 1d10+1; Str 15, Int 8; Wis 10, Dex 11, Con 11, Cha 13; ML 9; AL LG.

Hp 10

E. The Written Stone: Old Northman runes are inscribed on a standing stone, detailing the old, more egalitarian laws of Tirwas. Precious few can now read these glyphs, and in any case, they are too faded to matter.

F. Goldsmith: Proprietor Fauberk (Fighter 3), grown prosperous from sales to the nobility of the Twelve Kingdoms, lives in a fortified house with his wife Ythraine. Fauberk believes business rival Zellin (K) is out to get him, and is eager to strike first – offers generous reward to those who would “do him a small favour”.

Fauberk: Fighter 3; AC 10; Atk 2*dagger 1d4 + poison (1-3r, 0/15 Hp); ML 4; AL LE.

Hp 5

G. Keollar Karwen: Fortified mansion of the reclusive elven Landlord and his household. The master is usually “not to be disturbed”, and only the exterior is guarded by day, while life mostly goes on in the nearby barracks and servants’ quarters. The barracks, overseen by Captain Uhouzod (Fighter 4), has a hatch down to level 1 of the Stone Sacks (15). Bag of 80 gp and 110 gp ring in stuffed elk head. Locked armoury of common weapons.

- Rumours of weird temple and bizarre noises heard by guards in Stone Sacks.
- “Shepherds under Bangolric’s patronage and claiming right of passage have been grazing their animals on the hill – our hill! They must be looking for something.”
- Two serving girls have seen wisp-lights out on the sea... actually smugglers’ boats.

Captain Uhouzod: Fighter 4; AC 5 (chain); Atk 2*longbow 1d6 or axe 1d6; ML 8; AL LN.
Hp 24

Keollar Karwen: elf Fighter 4; AC 10/5 (*elfin mail*); 2*longbow 1d6 or *longsword* +2 1d8+3; Str 16, Int 12, Wis 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Cha 14; CG; *cloak of elvenkind*, 600 gp gem brooch.
Hp 26

H. Hedgerow Hill: Barren, flat hilltop overlooking Horkner’s Bay, with a few hardy shrubs clinging to its white rocks. A path leads by Keollar Karwen’s mansion to the known entrances of the Stone Sacks; two others (unknown to most) lie at the foot of the hill. This location is described in the subsequent article. Only shepherds and guards on duty visit the hill; all others are halted and questioned about their purpose.

I. Harbour: The quiet harbour of Horkner’s Bay is mainly used by fishermen, although the occasional large vessel stops over to resupply (1:6 of 1d2 ships with cargo & crew). Two ramshackle warehouses on waterfront, Tharborodlac’s failed businesses, lie mostly empty and unattended, 1:6 of precious cargo guarded by bored armsmen. Most of the local louts are drinking in the Three Goats (J). They immediately crowd out if a ship sails into harbour, trying to sell the usual protection racket (see A). Ship owners who fail to pay the fee invariably suffer grievous material damage during the night (5:6).

J. The Three Goats Tavern: A proud two-story structure surrounded by humble fishermen’s cottages, the tavern’s name stems from a mysterious stone carving in one of the walls – next to a former entrance that has long been bricked up and plastered over.

Burly proprietor **Mumpus Clod** (Illusionist 3) commands respect without having laid hands on anyone through sheer menace... aided by *wand of fear* under the counter, and the threat of getting barred from the only pub in Tirwas. Clients are fishermen, sailors and never-do-wells from all over. **Mungo**, **Greenleg** and **Twitch**, the jailers from the Stone Sacks (23) are a constant presence. Upper floor suite is perpetually occupied by freelance thief **Callon** (a.k.a. “the Wire”), posing as well-off traveller while on “vacation” from Baklin, and targeting wealthy-looking visitors, particularly if emblemless.

- The old door: wild story of entry leading “elsewhere” through bricked-up doorway – sound of bagpipes and wild clamour.
- The second cellar: Mumpus’ back room, reputedly leading to a hidden cellar behind locked iron door, concealed by hanging carpet.
- Haregon (B) has lost something precious out in the forests – some say it is his soul, and some say it is an enchanted clearing he could never find again.
- “Krago the sea monster still lives out there beyond the bay... call his name three times on a foggy day, and there he be, rising from the deeps!”

- Grunac (D) has lately been calling to burn down the House of Wool rather than let the Landlords have it. She means well, but she has gone insane.
- Callon has been looking for a way to get into the lighthouse (P), and suspects there is more to it than meets the eye.

Mumpus Clod: Illusionist 3; AC 2 (*bracers*, Dex); Atk –; Str 18, Int 16, Wis 11, Dex 16, Con 15, Cha 12; ML 9; AL NG; *wand of fear*, *potion of gt. strength*, iron key, 120 gp.
 Spells: 2/1; 1: audible glamer, change self, gaze reflection; 2: blur, fog cloud.
 Hp 10

Callon, the Wire: Thief 5; AC 8 (*cloak +2*); Atk rapier 1d6 or 3*darts 1d3 + sleep poison; Spec backstab*3, PP 50%, OL 42%, FT 40%, MS 100%, HS 31%, HN 20%, CW 90%, RL 25%; Str 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Dex 15, Con 14, Cha 13; ML 5; AL N; *boots of elvenkind*, 3*gemstones (50 gp, 400 gp, 90 gp), ancient runestick.
 Hp 19

K. Goldsmith: Zellin (Fighter 2), originally from Baklin and constantly suffering from the coughs, had come to Tirwas after hearing of Fauberk's (F) rising fortunes. The two immediately became implacable enemies, and Zellin is looking for outsiders to settle the affair once and for all. Always has an axe and alarm horn in arm's reach.

- Adventurers coming from the heart of the Forest of Departures had recently sold ancient gold plates, never returning. There could be more where they came from.

Zellin: Fighter 2; AC 8 (leather, under wool vest); Atk hand axe 1d6; ML 6; AL CE; horn.
 Hp 2

L. Shipwright: Thorlag the Nail (dwarf Fighter 8), master shipbuilder and five sons (Fighter 1), construct dragonships in the Northman style. They know the tricks of building sturdy warships, a closely guarded secret, for which Thorlag had been twice sought out by hired assassins – but survived due to the protection of the Cackling Cur Society.

- Redwood Isle: lost island of great trees, suitable for unassailable ships.
- Prowlers are afoot 'round the bay – they wear weapons under their hooded robes, and they aren't the usual smugglers.

Thorlag the Nail: Fighter 8; AC 0 (*chainmail +2*, *shield +2*); Atk 3/2 battleaxe 1d8+1; Str 16, Int 11, Wis 8, Dex 11, Con 16, Cha 9; ML 8; AL LG; *potion of heroism*, ring 300 gp.
 Hp 46

Thirlag-Son-of-Thorlag, Thurlag-Son-of-Thorlag, Thrinlag-Son-of-Thorlag, Gorlag-Son-of-Thorlag, Murlag-Son-of-Thorlag: Fighter 1; AC 6 (ring mail, shield); Atk battleaxe 1d8; ML 9; AL LG; Thurlag (*) has a *potion of speed*, and Murlag (**) has a *potion of healing*.
 Hp 5 6* 4 7 4**

M. House of the Dead: Round, domed building administered by the knights of Yolanthus Kar. Dead from town and nearby villages are brought here, and later carried by cart to the Valley of Barzak Bragoth. Sir Durmer (Fighter 6), careful not to align himself with any Landlord despite their offers, contemptuous of their dishonour. Uncertain what to do with Sidisha's advances. Five junior knights (Fighter 3), sterns and fiery.

- Several Northman bodies have recently been brought in from the northern villages. Something does not add up, and Sir Durmer wants someone to look into the matter.

Sir Durmer: Fighter 6; AC 2 (plate, shield); Atk morning star 2d4; Str 13, Int 10, Wis 7, Dex 13, Con 14, Cha 11; ML 9; AL LN.

Hp 33

Knights (5): Fighter 3; AC 4 (chain, shield); Atk longsword 1d8; ML 9; AL LN.

Hp 19 21 14 16 26

N. Ramshorn Hall: Squat, fortified mansion previously owned by the elderly Agonthane, still locked away in a half-forgotten tower suite. The new Landlord, Fruskell (Fighter 4), has strayed far from his former life as a ranger, but his successes in commerce have made him forget. The courtyard is piled with incoming and outgoing wares, and money is flowing smoothly – letting him purchase sizeable holdings in the wider area. Fruskell distrusts Bangolric, who looks down on him, and secretly fears Tharborodlac.

- **Hamous of Borontium**, trader too stingy to pay for an emblem, got robbed. Fruskell, innocent but suspected, would appreciate if the blame was shifted on someone else.
- 250 gp to discover new landowners' plans in Helmorak – and how to gain from it.
- Lord Morkund and Lady Sarbra have both been growing old, and are suspected to be senile. Investigating their state of mind and financial circumstances may greatly help in arranging a fortuitous inheritance... with a generous reward for helpers.

Fruskell: Fighter 4; AC 10/6 (chain shirt); Atk morning star 2d4; Str 13, Int 14, Wis 14, Dex 10, Con 14, Cha 11; ML 6; AL NE.

Hp 25

O. Lothar's cottage: Lothar Avictus (Thief 6) maintains a comfortable retreat here, where he is sometimes visited by a mistress from Baklin. Lothar's occasional services to the Landlords (particularly as it pertains to certain taxation plans) have made him invaluable, and he enjoys their full hospitality. Targets the clueless and wealthy-looking only, and he'd rather approach a stronger group to inquire about affairs in Baklin... a subject he shows both surprising knowledge and interest in. Lothar is a high-ranking Guild operative with close ties to guildmaster Hyacintho Eskumar. Secret chest under cellar stones: 500 sp, 300 gp, silk spools 500 gp, *fog horn* (*fog cloud* or *stinking cloud*, 18x), tr. map.

- Lothar greatly desires Keollar Karwen's *cloak of elvenkind* – whatever the cost.

Lothar Avictus: Thief 6; AC 5 (*cloak +1*, *bracers AC 6*); Atk shortsword 1d6 or 2*daggers 1d4; Spec backstab*3, PP 55%, OL 47%, FT 45%, MS 40%, HS 37%, HN 20%, CW 92%, RL 30%; Str 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Dex 16, Con 8, Cha 16; ML 7; AL N; *dust of disappearance*.

Hp 24

P. Lighthouse: Sidisha (Cleric 4), reclusive lighthouse keeper, maintains this fortified structure commissioned by the Prince of Baklin. The lighthouse is in Prince Lodovic's ownership, a fact endlessly protested by the Landlords, who would prefer it razed to the ground rather than let it intrude on their sovereignty. Sidisha keeps to herself, and has rebuffed Tharborodlac's advances while having an eye out for the handsome Sir Durmer (M). As a priestess of Rualgar, she is dedicated to maintaining and concealing secrets, intentionally misleading visitors her with real but distant legends. Sidisha will try to detect good/evil, and use this to appeal to PCs. She routinely consults omens and animal messengers. Sidisha is the estranged daughter of Elendir and Ymlissa Kortnar of Gont (c.f. *Echoes* #02), disowned over a grudge they now all regret.

The Armsmen of Tirwas



A secret stairway leads to the shrine of Rualgar, where five heavy old iron keys lie on the red marble altar. Each key opens a mystery somewhere on Erillion, but seizing each *bestows a curse* that may not be removed before relinquishing the respective key.

- Rimeskell the Frostbiter, intl. sword, frozen in icy lake & guarded by dragon's reflection.
- An enchanted flower, growing deep in valley ringed by steep mountains.
- The valley of the lost amazons, mystery hidden among the tall peaks.

Sidisha: Cleric 4 of Rualgar; AC 10; Atk 2*dagger 1d4; Spec secret sight; Str 13, Int 15, Wis 15, Dex 13, Con 18, Cha 16; ML 7; AL N; *wand of enemy detection* (x36), *potion of extra healing* *2.

Spells: 5/3; 1: cure light wounds, detect good, detect evil, light, sanctuary; 2: augury, hold person, speak with animals.

Hp 25

Q. Haggelric's Keep: Bangolric the Beast (Fighter 9) is a powerful lord taking after his father Haggelric, and successful commander in an otherwise ill-fated campaign on Kassadia's borderlands. Now back home, he delights in boasting, drinking and wooing lasses, but takes similar pleasure in crude jokes and servant-baiting. 1:3 to be away with entourage on hunting expedition, leaving behind his house guard. Bangolric is a generous ring-giver, and stores a great wealth somewhere only known to himself.

- A *shield* +1 as the reward for Madon the Gooseherd, who has shamed and beaten him thrice in outrageous disguises in revenge for an old spat where Bangolric had had his geese seized and his soles caned.
- 200 gp reward for the trail of the white stag with the golden antlers.
- Fearful servants whisper of lost tunnels among three keeps; once leading to council chamber, now haunted by ghosts of Tharborodlac's former brides.

Bangolric the Beast: Fighter 9; AC 3 (*chainmail* +2); Atk 3/2 *two-handed sword* +3 1d10+4 or *crossbow* +1 1d6; Str 16, Int 11, Wis 11, Dex 14, Con 13, Cha 7; ML 10; AL CN; *potion of extra-healing*, *amulet of mind-shielding* (+3 vs. mind-affecting), 5*rings (1d10*50 gp each).

Hp 53

R. Tharborodlac's Keep: Foreboding, tall structure surrounded by multiple outbuildings and a defensive wall. Tharborodlac (Fighter 8) is greatly feared in town, and particularly among his underlings who have noted he has not aged in thirty years. The dark knight is said to consult with a malign underworld spirit in his tower room, although some claim it is just one of his servants. He is known to be cruel and unjust, having kidnapped multiple women for his brides, all of whom have later met dark fates. Yet Tharborodlac, who has sent his equally corrupt son into the Twelve Kingdoms' interne-cine wars, is himself afraid of an omen, one that shall herald his downfall...

- Rallostan, brother of the latest bride, has attempted to kill Tharborodlac, and has been dragged off to jail under the Stone Sacks. He was more fortunate that way.
- The master rides out into the woods every new moon... at night, alone.
- The master has set his eyes on Sidisha, keeper of the lighthouse, the poor thing.
- The tongue of a serpent speaks from Tharborodlac, and the heart of a wolf beats in his chest: he is no ordinary man, and his fate is not for commoners to write!

Tharborodlac: Fighter 8; AC -2 (*plate* +2, shield, Dex); Atk 3/2 *morning star* +1 2d4+2; Spec at will *detect good*, 1/day *cause disease*, vampirism (drain 3d6 Hp), 1/week *bestow curse*, can be turned as vampire, *will return from death until his weird is fulfilled*; Str 17, Int 13, Wis 15, Dex 15, Con 17, Cha 12; ML 8; AL CE.

Hp 67



Plunder of the Stone Sacks

adventure module for levels 3–5



Playtesters: **Gabor Acs** (Phil the Terror of Turkeys, halfling Archer/Thief 3/3); **Istvan Boldog-Bernad** (Armand the Scumbag, human Assassin 5); **Kalman Farago** (Drolhaf Haffnarskörung, northman Barbarian/Thief 3/3); **Laszlo Feher** (Lafadriel Hundertwasser, elf Fighter 5); **Gabor Izapy** (Drusus the Historian, human Magic-User 5)



Background

Originally a series of limestone caves under Hedgerow Hill, the Stone Sacks were later enlarged and connected with rough-hewn additions by successive generations. Before the Landlords, they had served as communal storage in times of peace, and a refuge of last resort in times of war. Great boulders were devised to block off the entrances from the inside, turning the modest hollows into an impregnable fortress. Local families would gradually claim individual caverns, turning them into shelters with basic comforts to ease the long months of self-imposed confinement.

As wars grew less frequent and the land more prosperous, the Sacks became even more elaborate: now there were guild halls, secret exits, and well-constructed defences. Family shelters were objects of pride, lavishly outfitted in a competition for status. A small shrine dedicated to weird subterranean forces was turned into a decorative chapel, followed by other places of worship. At last, with the onset of peace, the Stone Sacks lost their true purpose, and gradually receded from everyday use. Families still kept their caverns, but visits grew infrequent, and disuse gave way to decay. Some would still store hidden valuables here “just in case”, but for most, the Stone Sacks are little more than a quaint old custom, or a place to stash the family junk.

The Sacks today are of little interest to either the Landlords or the common folk, yet they are not entirely inactive.

- The entrance sections are still maintained and patrolled by **the militias of Keollar Karwen**, the Sacks’ custodian. These forces are light and fairly careless in their work, more night watchmen than ready fighters.
- **Smuggling** has been an old custom in town, and continues to be viewed with a sympathetic eye – if the Prince of Baklin wants his due, he should come and take it!
- The **jail of Tirwas** is located on the second level, ostensibly used as a lockup for drunks and troublemakers. Nobody suspects the jailer and his men for being slavers, but they have been busy arresting careless travellers and selling them to unscrupulous merchants. **Mungo** the jailer is exploiting a legal loophole which allows him to have any captive transported to stand trial in the city of Baklin: little does anyone know that their destination lies not in Erillion’s capital, but the mines of Tol Grannek, the mountain fortress of the orcs.

Accordingly, the coming and going of shady types does not arouse suspicion as long as they remain unobtrusive, nobody gets killed, and no family heirlooms turn up on the local market.



Trails to the Stone Sacks

Campaign-specific reason to involve the PCs are easy to devise, but a few general ones follow:

- Disappearances in town have mostly been restricted to people who were not missed by anyone of consequence. At least not locally: the slavers, hungry for gold, have finally made a mistake and nabbed someone with connections to important people.
- The taxmen of Baklin have had a long-standing interest in uncovering the smuggling networks of Tirwas, but they have lost a few agents in town. They would gladly sponsor an investigation to obtain evidence of wrongdoing.
- The Cackling Cur Society, a secretive gang of assassins, have been known to operate out of Tirwas, and were suspected to maintain their meeting place in the Sacks. Their recent lack of visible activity has aroused some suspicion – are they planning something big? Have they been weakened in a way that could be exploited? Inquiring minds would pay handsomely to know.
- The Teramagnetic Shrine is barely known, but old manuscripts and legends may mention it – along with an enchanted metal cylinder of sorcerous reputation.
- The disappearance of local shepherd Ramtram has been explained by some as the result of an orc attack, by some as wanderlust and the boy’s fecklessness, and by yet others as a consequence of a broken heart. But Ramtram had been known to graze his sheep on Hedgerow Hill, and some suspect he is lost down in the Sacks.

Wanderers of the Stone Sacks (1d12)

In the passages, random encounters occur every turn with a 1:6 probability. These spaces are patrolled, although the guards' attention is lax, and they will ignore anything but clear signs of foreign presence and property destruction. They have 5:6 to investigate loud human speech or a light source, but only 1:3 to check out a general noise. The guards all "know" there are dangerous things down in the Sacks, and they are easily spooked, with poor morale. They are wary of Mungo's men, whom they know to be smugglers, and "up to no good".

1-6. Guards (2d6, 20 max): Fighter 1; AC 6 (ring mail, shield); Atk flail 1d6+1 or javelin 1d6 (x3); ML 6; AL N; lantern, oil flask, wineskin, flint and steel, rations.

Hp	1	2	4	9	4	7
	6	10	6	1	9	6
	10	4	8	6	1	4
	7	5				

7. Maederic and Jullin, two children playing monsters and hoping to scare guards with hooting and banging on an iron pot. 1:2 to be lost in the darkness and close to panic.

8. Brugalon, Master of Shrooms (32), stalking around the passages. Prefers to hide in shadows (40%, as 5th level Thief).

9. Jailers (1d2) on an errand from their lair at **26**. This is either **Greenleg**, **Twitch**, or both. They are unfriendly, and interrogate interlopers about their purpose down here. They threaten the company with an arrest, but "let them go on notice" if they agree to leave at once. If they think the group is weak, they'll alert their companions and go for an ambush.

10. Smugglers (1d6+2): Fighter 2; AC 7 (leather, shield); Atk hand axe 1d6 (can be thrown, x 2); ML 7; AL NE.

Hp	16	7	12	6	2	17
	12	15	18	16	6	8
	11	7	6	10	8	5

*Equal chance for the group from **27** and **31**. 1:2 to be transporting crates of untaxed plonk.*

11. Helmfried and Holmra: HD 2; AC 7 (hides); Atk club 1d6+1; Spec surprise 5:6, see in the darkness; ML 6; AL N.

Hp 13 13

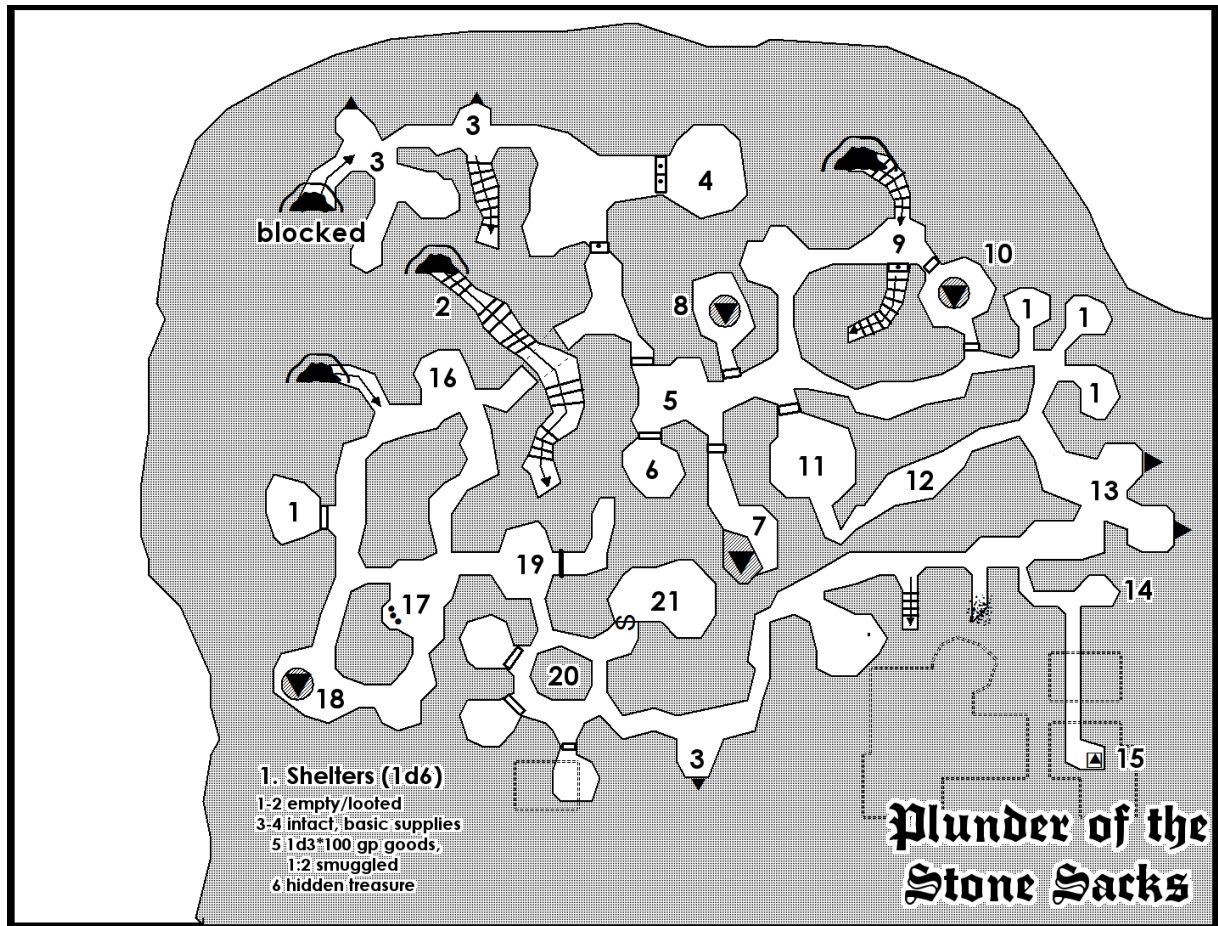
"Survivors" who have become convinced some great calamity is to befall Tirwas, and sold off their belongings to retreat to their chamber in the Sacks. Sneaky, distrustful, cunning.

12. Azeric: Thief 3; AC 5 (Dexterity, leather); Atk shortsword 1d6; Spec backstab*2, PP 40%, OL 33%, FT 30%, MS 27%, HS 20%, HN 15%, CW 87%; Dex **17**; ML 8; AL LE; lantern, 3*oil, lockpicks, rope, crowbar, wineskin, saw, 5*spikes, mallet, 2*sacks.

Hp 9

This wily opportunist is staying at the Three Goats, and has ventured down here to check for easy pickings. He has seen a struggling man protesting his innocence dragged to jail, and while glad to offer a tip on the man's behalf, he isn't getting involved.





The contents of the Stone Sacks

Entrances: Hedgerow Hill is a barren, flat hilltop overlooking Horkner's Bay. No hedgerows are in evidence, but a few clusters of hardy shrubs afford some place for concealment. By day, the hill is in plain sight of the Old Village, not to mention Keollar Karwen's manor house: intruders will be spotted and approached by his men to inquire about their business. At night, only the wind wails overhead, although the main trail is watched by a guard post next to the manor.

Three of the four main entrances lie open; the massive round stones which can be rolled into place to block the way have fallen into disuse, and would require four men each to budge (open doors). The northernmost entrance, leading to the bay defences, is closed and nobody pays it any attention. Further secret entrances are found at sea level (**27, 29, 31, 44**), and in a thorny thicket south of the hill (**37, 45**). They are unknown in town, and not in use. Finally, a ladder leads down from Keollar Karwen's barracks to **15**.

LEVEL 1

1. Shelters: One of the family-owned shelters. Roll 1d6 for state and contents; -2 if door missing.
 1 – 2 empty / looted
 3 – 4 intact with basic furniture and supplies, marked with a family name/symbol
 5 as above, and used to store goods of 1d3*100 gp value, 1:2 smuggled
 6 hidden treasure: 50% of 2d4*50 electrum, 50% of 1d6*50 gp, 20% of 1d3 gemstones (1d10*50 gp ea), 20% of minor art object (1d10*50 gp).

2. Steep stairs: Discarded torch stubs, rotting sawhorse, pieces of crates by entrance. The meandering descent is frequently travelled; 1:6 of immediate guard encounter.

3. Defences: Defensive positions overlooking the bay, old **ballistae** ready to fire (or 1:6 to fall apart on use). **Supplies** include weapon racks, barrels of rancid oil half turned to grease, incendiary missiles. To south, **storage passage** is filled with mouldering sacks, more mice than grain. Looted wooden shields of Northman make, and the prow of a dragonship.

4. Community storage: Locked and well-maintained, with stacks of crates and barrels. 300 gp worth of spirits, 500 gp of oilglass panes, 400 of fine elven pottery – but busy hands have carefully stolen 90% of the latter two, substituting worthless filler. Horsehead amulet with torn chain among forgotten junk.

5. Council room: Heavy wooden **table** surrounded by stools; unlit chandelier from ceiling. **Shields** on the wall bear devices of the Landlords, ca. 40 years ago: a hog's head (Haggelric, father of Bangolric), a hawk (Agonthane, Fruskell's predecessor), a ship and a star (Lord Morkund), a horsehead (Lady Sarbra), and an oak leaf (Lord Merkadon). One shield has recently been painted over with black (Helmorak).

6. Decaying shelter: Intact door but lock has been broken. Water seeping through the walls have reduced furniture and food supplies into worm-eaten mess (1:2 of **rot grubs**). Set of stonecarving tools and hand mill.

7. Collapse: Rotten remains of doorframe and door splinters opening into natural limestone cavern with numerous intact stalactites (**18 piercers, 4 of 2 HD**). The floor has collapsed into a **vertical shaft**: 30' to second level, and 30' more to the bottom. Anyone trying to climb will be attacked by 2d4 piercers. On the bottom, torn rope still tied around waist of **mouldering corpse** (thoroughly exsanguinated), pierced plate mail, 15 electrum, 30 gp, spiked mace, prayer mat with nightingales.

Piercers (18): HD 1, 2; AC 3; Atk skewer 1d6 or 2d6; Spec camouflage; ML 12; AL N.

Hp	2	6	7	7	5	2
	4	3	6	8	3	2
	8	1	//	10	9	13



8. Food storage: Sacks of old supplies have gone to waste in dome-shaped chamber – tubers have sprouted what look like sickly white “tentacles”. A **winch system** above the **30’ shaft** can lower cargo in a leather harness (1:6 to collapse if used).

9. Guard post: 1:6 of guard encounter. Oil lamp, weapon rack and wooden stools. Locked old **iron door** to the south is marked with the symbol of merchant’s scales, and the inscription: “THE LEAGUE OF THE MEASURE”.

10. Food storage: Wooden planks have been laid across the **30’ shaft** in this dome-shaped chamber (1:6 to collapse per character). Pickaxes and shovels lie by the wall. A **gray ooze** clings to the ceiling just above the shaft, falling on the first character across the planks.

Gray ooze: HD 3+3; AC 8; Atk ooze 2d8; Spec corrosion; ML 12; AL N.
Hp 19

11. Food storage: Dome-shaped chamber, mostly depleted of its reserves. Dead mice and rats around bag of poisoned grain.

12. Reinforced passage: Water seeps from ceiling cracks and collects in muddy puddles. Colonies of fleshy **fungi** thrive on the timber supports. A **red X** marks a collapse hazard.

13. Defences: Defensive positions overlooking the bay. Ballistae have been dismantled and placed in **storage crates**, only their supporting stands remaining. The chamber serves as a hub for the guards – 1:3 of two groups.

14. Stone slabs: Three vertical **stone slabs** stand embedded into the walls, each equipped with a *magic mouth* which speak when room is entered – purpose long forgotten.

- **spider-headed man:** Hisses while spitting webbing from mouth, spell scroll (*web*).
- **crowned ape:** “Fool and wise were made equal in the end. It was a great waste, and at last the gates of Tol Grashmak were shaken...”
- **knight holding a wheel:** “There is no way into Barzak Bragoth. Leave this place if the *ring of gates* thou dost not bear!”

15. Barracks exit: A steep ladder leads to the guard barracks by Keollar Karwen’s manor house (G). This hatch is always guarded.

16. Beehives: Old rotting beehives have been discarded in an unruly pile, now the nest of a very territorial **rat swarm**.

Rat swarm: HD 4; AC 5; Atk swarm 2d4; ML 6; N.
Hp 23

17. Shrine to Gladuor: Sooty brass **candelabra** in floor before a recess protected by a thick **iron grille**. This is a small shrine to Gladuor, the god of aqueducts and civilisation. A **reliquary** made of noble woods contains a holy symbol, measuring instruments and tools, blessed mortar and four bottles of holy water. Someone who defiles the shrine must save vs. petrification or sink to the waist in the stone. Only a sincere oath to repent and build something in Gladuor’s name will release the culprit.

18. Cavern: Limestone cavern, only the stubs of broken stalactites remain. The floor is muddy and the **hole** in the ground is a treacherous, slippery slide – down into the lair of the roper (**43**)!

19. Walled-up passage: A new wall has been recently erected to seal this passage. One of the bricks is loose, and is secretly used by Mungo to deliver food to a secret captive: **Ghorac of the Lakelands** had crossed the dark knight Tharborodlac, and was chained to the wall here to spend the rest of his days. Ghorac, an illiterate, has lost his tongue in the bargain, but he can draw a map leading to a well-kept secret that will greatly complicate Tharborodlac’s life.

20. Circular passage: An old section; rotting beams support the ceiling, and water collects in muddy puddles. Pieces of **broken stone slabs** have been sunk into the floor, bearing traces of faded writing: "Feed not he who shall take labour's fruits from the just: instead...", "...and as far as he looked, he saw them lying there like scattered logs, struck down where they were...", "...and from his lips the WORD was carried off by the winds, and the winds became the messenger, calling alike to governor and pauper, and..."

21. Looted shrine of Irlan: Stone tablets in this hidden sanctum have been broken into a myriad pieces, the chest holding them hacked apart. Overturned benches rot in disarray. In the empty prayer niche, some good-smelling **oil** has collected: this is a healing balm that cures 1d3+3 Hp, and burns the god's symbol into a Lawful Good character's hand before slowly fading away.

LEVEL 2

22. Jail entrance: Several **footprints** in the mud suggest regular traffic. 1:2 of loud snoring from **25. Western door** is reinforced wood with sliding observation panel made of rusty metal. **Sign** with an untidy scrawl reads: "JAILER. NO PRIVATE ENTRANCE" And below: "OR ELSE!"

Neither Mungo nor his underlings will admit anyone under any condition, nor release someone for any reason except a writ from one of the Landlords (a forgery will do 5:6). The jailers are hostile to anyone setting foot down here. In case of combat, Greenleg will dump *Yag Amnun's dreadful dust* through the sliding panel while Mungo calls for reinforcements from **24**.

23. Jail: Rows of small, cramped **cells**. A further door leads to the lair of the smugglers, who can be summoned if needed. **Guard room** to the north is the lair of the three **jailers**:

- **Mungo** (Fighter 3), former pirate, now moonlights as a slave trader. Flat feet & broken nose.
- **Greenleg** (half-orc Assassin 5), formally an underling, actually the real man in charge. He is an agent of Agak the Orc God, and acts as a spy for the masters of Tol Grannek in addition to ensuring a steady supply of slaves.
- **Twitch** (Fighter 3). Looking more ogre than man, this brute is Mungo's main legbreaker.

The current **prisoners** are:

- **Hullobert**, villager, here for a drunken brawl. To be released the next day.
- **Rallostan** (Ranger 2), put to the hot irons for the attempted murder of Tharborodlac, who had kidnapped and murdered his sister. He has seen numerous slaves pass through the jail, and has developed a grudge against the Prince of Baklin for tolerating this state of affairs. If freed, he will try to foment rebellion around Tirwas.
- **Rogold the Billygoat Beater** (Assassin 5), sent from Kassadia as an emissary, but discovered shady affairs within the Combination. He suspects the Cackling Cur Society has recently been hit by some great calamity, as all of its agents have gone silent. He knows the Society is based in one of the neighbouring villages, but got caught before he could find out which.

Mungo: Fighter 3; AC 2 (chainmail, shield, Dex); Atk battleaxe 1d8; Dex 16, Con 15; ML 8; AL LE; *bladegrass* (sharpens blades for +3 damage), pipe & pipeweed, silk handkerchief, treasure map, lantern, flint & steel, wine bottle, 20 gp (freshly minted), necklace 200 gp, keys.

Hp 24

Greenleg: half-orc Assassin 5; AC 4 (chain shirt, shield, Dex); Atk shortsword 1d6 + poison (1-3 r, 0/25 Hp) or 2*dagger 1d4 + poison; Spec surprise, backstab *3, assassination 0-1 70%, 2-3 65%, 4-5 55%, 6-7 45%, 8-9 30%, PP 40%, OL 33%, FT 30%, MS 27%, HS 20%, HN 15%, CW 87%; Dex 15, Con 15; ML 9; AL LE; *antidote*, *Yag Amnun's dreadful dust* (1 r, 3d6/4d6 Hp), *clerical scroll* (create blessed oil, *augury*, *blindness*), holy symbol of Irlan, unholy symbol of Agak, 10 electrum, 40 gp (freshly minted), 300 gp gemstone brooch (anyone who has met Keollar Karwen shall recognise it as the cracked, but matching pair of the one in his cap!), lockpicks, signet ring (spider sign), keys.

Hp 24

Twitch: Fighter 3; AC 7 (studded leather); Atk two-handed mallet 1d10+3 or heavy stone 1d6+3; Str 18/68; ML 7; AL LE; wine bottle, finger hammer, shrunk monkey head, pair of tight red boots, whip, torch, shovel, flint & steel, 25 sp, 110 gp pearl, keys.
Hp 27

24. Harbour: An **elevator platform** descends into this cavern via an ingenious pulley and winch mechanism. When not in use by slavers, the place is the lair of **6 smugglers** dealing in rare goods (currently 200 gp of Arxine grain spirit, 700 gp of ancient bones, and 200 gp of rare pinecones used as a green dye).

Smugglers (6): Fighter 2; AC 7 (leather, shield); Atk hand axe 1d6 (can be thrown, x 2); ML 7; AL NE.

Hp 16 7 12 6 2 17

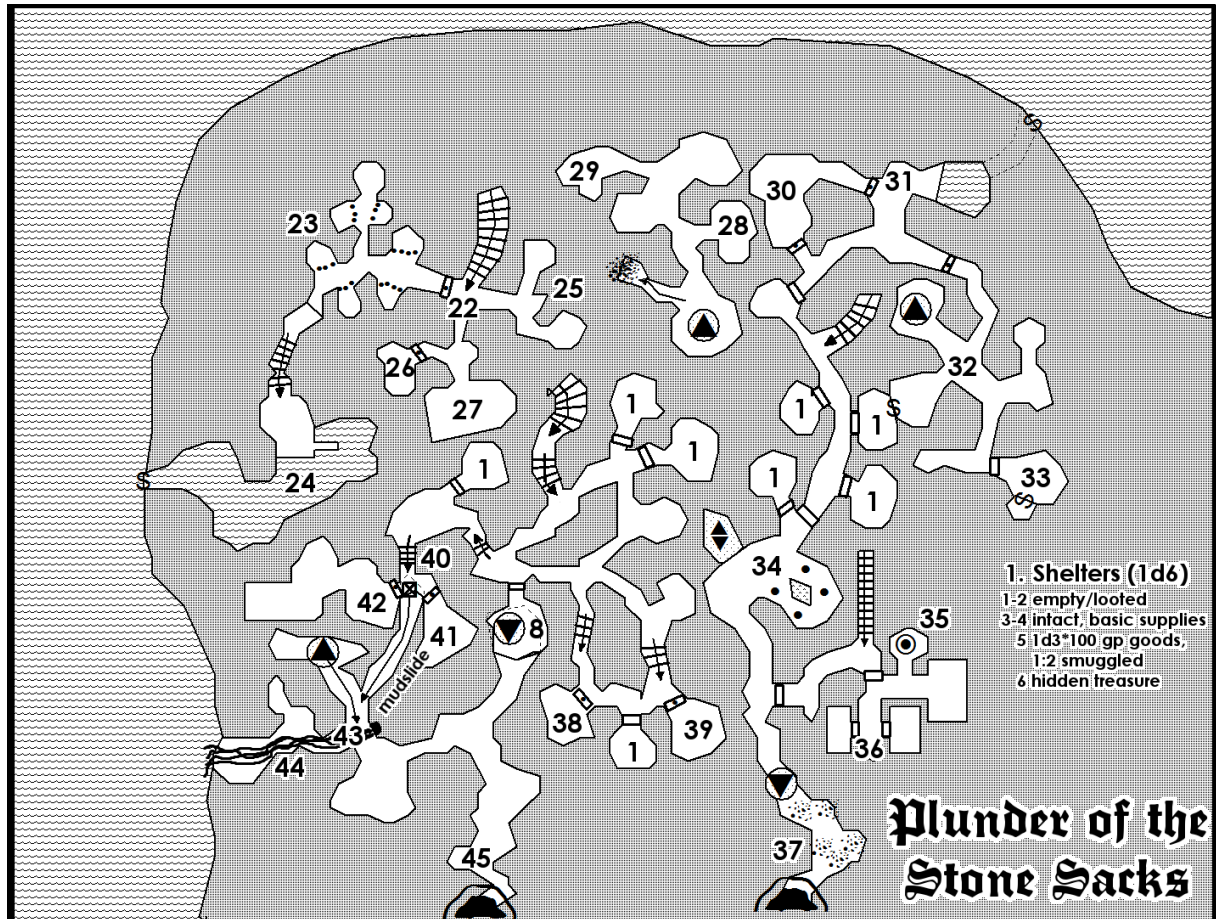
25. Storage: These former shelters have been converted into the jail's storage space, one for rations, and the other for beer kegs. 1:2 of Twitch from **26** snoring next to one of the kegs.

26. Locked shelter: A neatly written **sign** reads: "GARLAND THE BOOTMAKER. ABSOLUTELY NO ENTRY!" Therein are 150 pairs of boots, shoes and sandals. The place is haunted by **the ghost of Viorl**, Garland's immured wife.

Viorl: HD 10; AC 0; Atk touch 1d4*10 years; Spec horrific appearance (save vs. death on -2 to all rolls), wail (*fear* equivalent), ½ damage from silver; ML 9; AL LE.

Hp 37

27. Council room: Long, decaying **table** surrounded by collapsed chairs. **Banners** bear the sign of three golden crowns. **Wooden statues** along southern wall are overgrown with fungi, and seem to be weeping. **Buried guild chest** under table: 300 gp wrapped in linen, *cursed bastard sword* +1 (character under curse cannot benefit from magical spells).



28. Summoning room: Gnawed-on body parts, blood, and a **broken magic circle** between two candelabra; acrid smell of smoke. A **8-headed hydra** is flickering in the circle, 1:6 to blink out each round (1d6 turns). If slain, **treasure cave** on the other side remains accessible for 1d3 r; all crossing are violently ejected back into our world afterwards. 1000 sp, 600 gp, gemstone 200 gp, dagger with inset opal 500 gp, mahogany globe on four lion legs 80 gp (cracked), trident, plate mail with lion device, mahogany arrows*24.

8-headed hydra: HD 8; AC 5; Atk 8*bite 1d8; ML 9; AL N.

Hp	36	//	8	8	8	8	8
	8		8	8			

29. Stone innards: Limestone formations have turned into shapes resembling bones and organs with various magical effects. Slight throbbing.

- **Brain:** save vs. spell or character's mind is read by extraplanar influence, leaving slithering thought in consciousness: "...strange observer..."
- **Liver:** green, dripping poison (1 r, 0/35 Hp).
- **Stomach:** crushed gemstones within are 3d6*40 gp.
- **Heart:** +1d8 Hp on touch (may exceed maximum, second time needs system shock).
- **Uvula:** slimy coating is super-glue.
- **Lungs:** exhale smoke, save vs. poison or -1 Con (permanent).
- **Intestines:** gold nugget 120 gp, lamp oil.

30. Fishermans' League room: **Doors** are marked with the sign of a boat. The interior, long out of use, is decorated with nets, oars, hand axes and harpoons. Smugglers have converted part of the hall into storage for **trade goods:** 500 gp of low-grade amber, crate is labelled "ESKUMAR" (Hyacintho Eskumar is a magnate in Baklin, and the secret head of the Thieves' Guild); 300 gp of snow fur (valuable but bulky). A corroded **bronze statue** in NW corner depicts a fighting woman in plate and shield with the sign of a wheel pierced by a straight sword. Approaching the statue, a distant female voice in the intruders' head intones: "Time, and time again..."

31. Sea exit: Natural cave used as a harbour by **smugglers** (1:6 present at night, unloading a skiff), who have learned to throw some fresh meat to the **5 giant crabs** under the water. Pearls in nearby clams are 130 gp, 150 gp, 80 gp and 100 gp.

Smugglers (1d6+2): Fighter 2; AC 7 (leather, shield); Atk hand axe 1d6 (can be thrown, x 2); ML 7; AL NE.

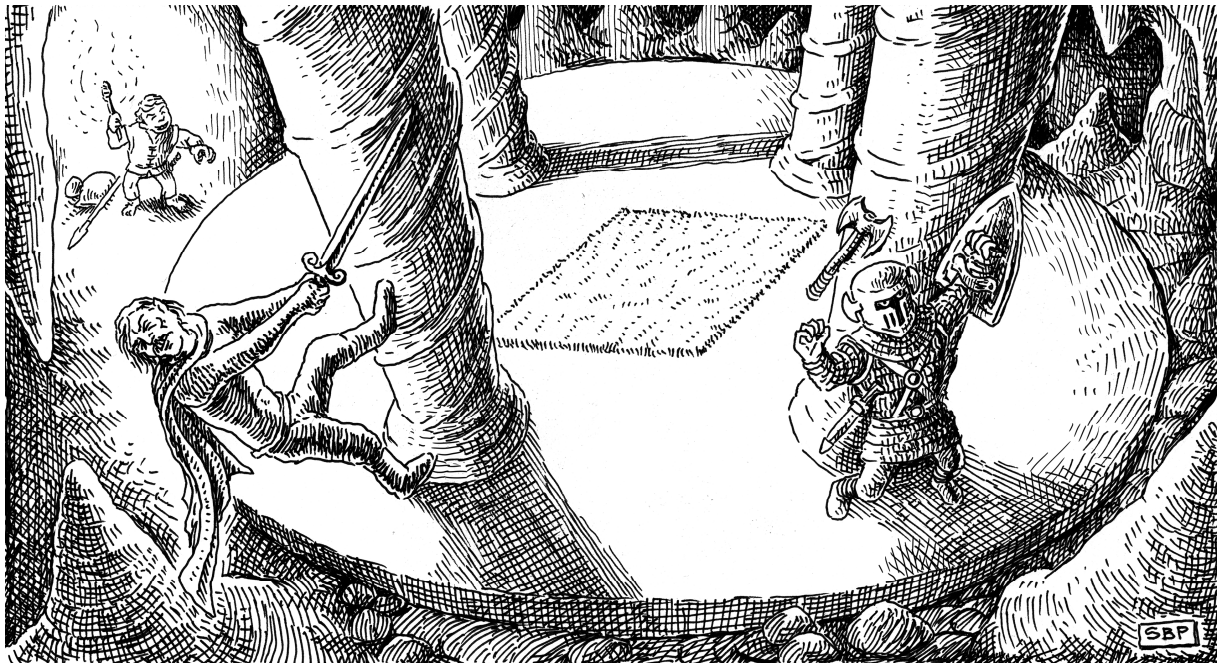
Hp	12	11	4	14	15	10
	13	10				

Giant crabs (5): HD 3; AC 3; Atk pincers 2d6; Spec surprise 4:6, break weapons on natural 20; ML 7; AL N.

Hp	21	7	16	4	10
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32. Fungus room: Pale fungi of all kinds and sizes grow on soil heaps strewn with manure and straw. 1:3 of the sackcloth-dressed **Brugalon, Master of Shrooms** (Hp 3, *detect food* at will, 3*hallucinogenic paste) feeding his crop with buckets of "super-serum" (molasses). He is very protective of his cave, since "they grow so well here" (due to two round boulders with odd spiral patterns buried under the soil).

33. Brugalon's lair: Simple bed, **cabinet** with Brugalon's meagre possessions. The **secret niche** contains a crude stone altar, upon which rest: a skull with antlers, a treebark scroll showing the "antler sign" (a hand gesture of ancient origins, used to reveal hidden secrets in the woodlands), 2 doses of hallucinogenic paste, and a rose preserved in its own oil (300 gp as a perfume, and the beginnings of a *potion of love*). Living things placed on the altar sprout and grow at a prodigious rate.



34. The Teramagnetic Shrine: This shrine was dedicated to subterranean forces which were already old when the first men arrived in Tirwas, and are now barely remembered. The guards shun the place, and routinely hurry through on their rounds. A **collapse** has left a vertical shaft next to the cavern (30' up, 30' more down – see 7).

The **shrine proper** is a natural limestone cavern with the addition of four stone **columns** on a marble base. A mauve **rhombus** of a soft, unknown material lies in the centre. The columns have strange magnetic powers which affect all earth-borne metals. The pull is barely felt on the NW perimeter, but it is strong near the shrine (open doors check), and overwhelming among the columns (bend bars check). Stuck items may be discarded to escape safely, which then gradually sink into the rhombus and are lost. A plentiful sacrifice of magical items yields a boon in the form of a hollow tube from a rare underworld metal (*chime of opening natural gateways*).

Spending too much time in the proximity of the shrine, or desecrating the place conjures its guardian, ****NORX**** (a xorn). ****NORX**** communicates via telepathy, broadcasting precise but simple phrases referring to its activities, such as "NORX", "DEMANDS PRECIOUS METALS", "ATTACKS ATTACKS ATTACKS ATTACKS ATTACKS ATTACKS", or "SINKS INTO THE GROUND." ****NORX**** can be placated with at least 600 gp of valuables.

****NORX**:** HD 7+7; AC -2; Atk 3*claws 1d3 and bite 6d4; Spec surprise 5:6, immune to fire and cold, ½ from electricity, travel through stone; ML 10; AL N; 11 gems (80*5, 50*4, 400, 80).

Hp 34

35. Well of crows: A deep well decorated with carvings of crows. Seven pickaxes, lantern.

36. Abandoned barracks: Well-furnished but dusty barracks, several shields on the wall with the sign of the crow. In western room, one of the shields hides a **cavity** with a bag of stolen knick-knacks: 140 gp, surcoat with the sign of a crow (garnet eyes 200 gp), *dagger* +2.

37. Secret entrance: Thorny thickets conceal an entrance choked with rubble. Within are the **bones** of about half a dozen sheep. At night, 1:3 of villein **Friskin**, an epileptic who believes himself a werewolf, and hides here from the moon to avoid murdering his family.

38. Love nest: Door looks undisturbed, and seems stamped with a **hanging seal** (however, it can be easily removed). Finely appointed and well-maintained interior is equipped with furs, a comfortable bed, food and wine, a bundle of twigs, exotic oils (240 gp) and silks (460 gp).

39. Archives: Crates of mouldering **documents** have been left among chopped firewood and the remains of old furniture. Most documents are of marginal interests, but some are accounts between a previous generation of Landlords: Grodewon, Meriant, Aliche, Langmark, and The Fishermans' League. The numbers obviously don't add up, revealing a scheme to expropriate free landholders (Int 15+).

40. Bronze face: Great bearded **bronze face** between two **locked iron doors**. Examining it instead of averting one's gaze results in a *confusion* spell (2d4 subjects, 9 r, save each round: 01-10 wander away, 11-60 stand confused, 61-80 attack nearest, 81-00 attack face). The trap can be neutralised by pushing both eyes into their sockets (they are slightly shinier than the rest). There is also a **slide trap** underneath, activated by the doors' locking mechanisms. The muddy slide deposits characters in the roper's lair (**43**).

41. Treasury: **36 chests** enchanted with *magic mouths*, central one has gilded handles. The chests laugh in a chorus and exclaim "*Poor fools!*" if the central chest is touched. The true danger is a **lurker above**, positioned above the centre of the room. The **chest** is empty, but the letter "VI" has been carved into its interior. Fake bottom contains the true treasure: 600 gp necklace, *Zorlan's composite longbow +2* (never runs out of projectiles), *acid bomb* (cloud, 2d4 Hp/r, 10 r).

Lurker above: HD 10; AC 6; Atk constriction 1d6; Spec surprise 4:6, smother in 1d4+1 r unless killed, victim can only use small weapons; ML 10; AL N.
Hp 45

42. Cackling Cur Society guildhall: Black banners with the sign of a rearing dog in this dusty, abandoned hall. Black clothes, nets and training swords, two beds set aside for rest, table and chairs. A **poison cabinet's** contents have largely gone to waste, but two doses of scorpion venom (1 r, paralysis/death) and one dose of crushed black widows (airborne, save at -2 or die) remain.

Documents in **scroll case** are of recent provenance. One is an unsigned draft contract between the CCS and Grave Wight, the head of the Assassin's Guild in Gont. The draft outlines plans of deeper cooperation, mutual access to each other's facilities ("*the hideout underneath Gont and the hidden castle of Helmorak*"), and plans for extending activities overseas in Kassadia and the Twelve Kingdoms. The second document is a list of active agents.

43. Roper lair: Your average limestone cavern, except one of the stalagmites is a **roper**. Slippery mud and puddles of water; in combat, slip on natural 1. **Human remains** in a corner are the digested traces of Ramtram the lost shepherd – bones, silver knife, haversack, shepherd's crook.

Roper: HD 10; AC 0; Atk ropes weakness (1/2 Str in 1-3 r) and bite 5d4; Spec weakness, strands (open doors to sever), immune to lightning, ½ from cold, save -4 vs. fire; ML 10; AL CE; 8*gemstones in gizzard (4x40 gp and 4x90 gp).
Hp 48

44. Trapped exit: An underground **stream** flows into the sea through a narrow cave passage filled with limestone formations. A **crude trap** (+25%) of rusted grapnels and mud-caked ropes is set here (1d6+2 Hp, 1:3 of reduced movement due to limping.)

45. Shepherd's lair: Thorny tickets conceal cave entrance. Here are the torn remains of a **tent** made from old sails, a fireplace with a skillet, a wooden flute, salted fish (spoiled) and bread (**rot grubs!**), shears, 5 bells, and the customary tally stick to account for the sheep.





All is Well in Sleepy Haven



"If you seek excitement, seek elsewhere" is a saying often attributed to the inhabitants of Sleepy Haven. Propitious naming or just a confirmation of the tiny fishing and logging town's peace and quiet, its name and reputation are both well deserved. There is little excitement to be had except when ships stop here on their way to Gont, Baklin, or distant Kassadia – but they mostly don't. There are rumours of strange monsters and dangerous ruins in the Forest of Death to the north (a name with much less positive connotations), or the Highlands of Sibirk to the west – but they don't bother with Sleepy Haven. Pirates, too, thrive in the archipelago to the east – but they have set their sights on other targets. Can a town like this exist? Apparently yes.

This bucolic place lies under the protectorate of Gont; and it is governed by **Commander Armalis** (Fighter 4), formerly of the Harpoonsmen, Gont's city guard and main military force. Known in his day for corruption and gross negligence, **Lord Gramantik the Grey Fox** has seen fit to remove the commander from his position, and place him where he might do less damage to his reputation. Commander Armalis has changed not one bit in his exile except growing even fatter, and appointing his friends and cronies to make-believe positions while spending most of their days feasting and drinking at the governor's mansion. And yet, the money keeps flowing, and while it does, Lord Gramantik is content.

A. Governor's Mansion: While erected to stand guard over the town and repel invaders from both land and sea, the white walls of the mansion have never been besieged, and most of the additions have been for comfort, not warfare. Under its current tenant, it has been more hunting lodge than sea fortress; and the major battles are fought either by the dinner table or in hunting stories recounted innumerable times around the fireplace. **Commander Armalis** is 1:3 to be away on a hunting expedition with his retinue, leaving a skeleton crew. If present, he usually sleeps until noon, and receives guests in the early hours of the afternoon before a prodigious meal, and preparations for the evening's trials. The commander's hangers-on are...

- **Garnast the Green** (Fighter 3), also of the Harpoonsmen, good-natured but very dim.
- **Remadric** (Fighter 3), also a former Harpoonsman, rants and raves about hunting adventures. Claims to be pursued by manticores.
- **Rallon the Prepared** (Thief 2), man of many interests. His current one concern the silverware, which he collects compulsively – looking for discrete buyers.
- **Ortag of Baklin** (M-U 3), never misses his quarry... with his wand of magic missiles.
- **Licandor** (elf Fighter 2, *elfen boots*), huntsman looking for spring of youth.
- **Burnolt**, random drunk Armalis has invited here because he liked him.

Commander Armalis: Fighter 4; AC 7 (furs); Atk scimitar 1d8+1; Str 16, Int 9, Wis 10, Dex 12, Con 16, Cha 9; order of the starstone silver class (400 gp, stolen valour), ring 300 gp, 150 gp, 90 gp, *potion of plant control*.
Hp 30

B. The Spurned Rooster: Comfortable and spacious inn, quiet most of the time except for the evenings – clients are fishermen, loggers and the occasional traveller. The widowed **Wolkun Windrider** (Fighter 1) is helped by his children, **Varanthus** (Fighter 2, bowman), **Illgawen** (Fighter 1) and the pretty **Silia** (M-U 1). Drinks are free for elves, as Wolkun is eternally grateful to the noble elven lady who had saved Varanthus and Silia from the illness which had taken his wife, and left without telling her name (c.f. **Echoes #03**, p. 35).

- **Grado Thunnwit** (Fighter 1), fletcher looking for wispswillows for his special arrow shafts, seeking guides to escort him across Highlands of Sibirk.
- **Viglas** and **Baltho**, two local fishermen, are said to know their way along the coast, including the hidden coves and mysterious places. Alas, they are haunted by bad luck – some of those who had followed them had met a bad end.
- Disappearances: Jack Carsius, tracker, disappeared after leaving for the Highlands of Sibirk. Come to think of it, that fool drunkard, Gurnald Yex, had not been in town for a while either... (c.f. **Echoes #02**, pp. 37–43)
- Orcs have been sighted in the woods above town, closer than ever before. They seemed organised, almost like the vanguard of an army.
- Dread pirate Saydir the Kassadian is known to frequent Knifetooth, the lawless town of freebooters and smugglers (**1814**). It is a miracle he is avoiding this place!
- Ever since Garrodik the Seer, famed minstrel of Gont has died, there has been no song in this place to cheer up people. Wolkun would pay liberally for a skilled gleeman!

C. Monopoly: A general store of sorts, administered by **Busy Braktor** (dwarf Fighter 1: always close to his ledger, increasingly shortsighted without glasses). This is the only place in town to purchase supplies: sailing equipment, household goods and tools are in generous supply. A breastplate & longsword are the only military equipment, but Braktor has a wooden case of pearls he is selling by the piece (120 gp, 170 gp, 90 gp), or as a matched set at 370 gp.

- Two treasure-seekers have recently purchased pickaxes and shovels for a wilderness expedition – Viglas and Baltho may know where they went. Never came back.





All is well in Sleepy Haven

GM's Cartography to
the town of Sleepy Haven

D. Shipwright: Rattling Ballodar (Fighter 4), retired from the seas to practice his trade with his son **Karlon** (Fighter 1), a dreamy lad. They do a brisk trade in fishing vessels, but Ballodar would like Karlon to finish his masterpiece, an incomplete cog, and pass on the business. He is willing to consider an offer, in exchange for a favour...

- Ballodar feels the weight of an old debt towards Dorlond, a friend he had wronged and never made up with. Dorlond lives in the village of Jarkin (2412).
- "Did you ever look at the Tower of the Overseer? Yea, it was here long before the mansion! The great pirate, Johno Bonifaces had built it, before he sailed off to Tol Tazeloth, the citadel that would be his doom. There is a secret to it... wish I knew what."

Rattling Ballodar: Fighter 4; AC 10; Atk hand axe 1d6; ML 7; AL N.

Hp 16

E. Ruined house: This burned-out ruin used to be the house of the magic-user Murdel the Dark. Adventurers had discovered Murdel was involved in black magic, and the angry townsmen put his dwelling to the torch. A fresco has mysteriously escaped the conflagration: the triumphant Murdel holds the crescent moon in one hand, and three stars in the other. Casting *detect magic* makes the moon and stars glow; the glyphs of the *monster summoning II* spell are also revealed, and can be transcribed

F. The Garden of Memories: The Knights of Yolanthus Kar lack the manpower to maintain a presence in town. Hence, the House of the Dead is kept closed, with the key kept in the care of Governor Armalis. No bodies are buried on site due to the custom of Erillion, but the names of the departed are listed on clay plaques embedded into the town wall. **Brother Halmor** (Cleric 4), follower of "Transcendental Meditation" is caretaker of this garden – in truth, he is a spy sent by the evil monks of Barzog, who plan to re-establish their presence in the area. The good brother tries to discover the alignment of adventurers in town, and use them as pawns to learn about nearby mysteries by appealing to their values.

Brother Halmor: Cleric 4; AC 10; Atk flail 1d6+1; Str 10, Int 12, Wis 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Cha 14; ML 8; AL LE; 50 gp, *amulet of Barzog* (foils detection spells), *scroll* (neutralise poison, poison), treasure map (to coastal ruin, *chainmail* +2 and 16**sling stones* +1). Spells: 3+2/2+2; 1: detect good, detect magic, command, purify water, read magic; 2: detect charm, hold person*2, know alignment.
Hp 18



G. Tower of the Overseer: This squat watchtower and lighthouse is built on top of the steep hill overlooking Sleepy Haven, its gleaming tin roof visible from distant ships. A stone plaque above the entrance depicts a crest with an anchor and three scallops, the device of the long-extinct Bonifaces family (**Echoes #01**, pp. 28–36. **Five soldiers**, bored out of their skulls, man the top floor. Downwards, the stairs terminate in a dead end before a wall constructed from heavy stone blocks.

H. Yllmir's house: **Misbegotten Yllmir** (Fighter 6), former amazon princess, lives here in a house bedecked with flowers and weapons. Once an adventurer in the Twelve Kingdoms, she appreciates the quiet life of this town, and fancies herself its secret protector. Yllmir feels Sleepy Haven is in danger, but cannot tell why or from whom – and she could use a few helpers to look around the area and find out.

Misbegotten Yllmir: Fighter 6; AC 0 (amazon, chain shirt, shield, Dex); Atk *battleaxe* +1 1d8+1 or 2**javelin* 1d6; Str 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Cha 12; ML 9; AL CG; *ring of the ram*, gemstone diadem (1700 gp), 300 gp, heart-handled key.
Hp 36

Zine Conventions

While much of old-school gaming originates from the same lineage, and its products remain largely cross-compatible, there is much devil in those details. Every table and every party has its own ideas and house rules, and it is a good idea to lay these assumptions out into the open. Therefore, the conventions governing this fanzine are thus:

- Unless otherwise noted, the materials published here were designed for **Advanced** rules.
- A thousand gold pieces is **worth a small fortune**. Monetary treasure is relatively scarce.
- Conversely, **XP for treasure** is gained through squandering it in hedonistic excess (or any kind of lavish spending which has no discernible benefit), with a ***5 multiplier**. If you adjust the treasure values, adjust the multiplier as well.
- **Level demographics** form a very flat pyramid: low-level NPCs (1st to 4th level) are commonplace, while mid-level ones (5th to 8th level) tend to be outliers – present in most communities, but never numerous. Few NPCs reach more than 9th level, and over 12th is almost unheard of.
- Magic is limited to **5th level spells** or lower. Magic items are limited to **+3**.
- Fighters can do **carryover damage**: when fighting grouped opponents, the damage remaining after a killing blow is transferred to the next opponent.
- **Roll-under morale** is in effect (see **Morale & Men in Echoes #01**).
- The **gods are limited in their powers**, but actively involved in the fate of the world.

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Prestigious Plunder

2003
EMDT 1 – The Garden of al-Astorion +
2008
EMDT 2 – SWORD & MAGIC
EMDT 3 – MONSTERS & TREASURES
EMDT 4 – GAMEMASTER'S GUIDELINES
EMDT 5 – The Temple of Pazuzu (+)
EMDT 6 – Black Blood +
EMDT 7 – Sacrificial Lamb #
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EMDT 9 – The Unholy Secrets of Protoros #
EMDT 10 – Strabonus +
2009
EMDT 11 – The Menestratos School #
EMDT 12 – Sea Lords +
2010
EMDT 13 – Molonei +
EMDT 14 – Isle of the Water Sprites +
EMDT 15 – City Encounters # +
2011
EMDT 16 – Towards Fomalhaut +
EMDT 17 – The Temple of Torments #
EMDT 18 – The Barbarian King +
EMDT 19 – The Main Cities of Fomalhaut I. (+)
EMDT 20 – Sea Demon +
EMDT 21 – City Encounters II: The Nocturnal Table +
EMDT 22 – In the Name of the Principle! +
EMDT 23 – Below the City +
EMDT 24 – Oolar's Time #
2012
EMDT 25 – The Blood Drinkers of Yukum #
EMDT 26 – Khosura: City State of the Four Myst. +
2013
EMDT 27 – Trials on Tridentfish Island +
EMDT 28 – Feathers of Fire #

EMDT 29 – The Ghost City of Arun-Kha #
EMDT 30 – The Tower of Manistrid #
EMDT 31 – Tempest Dreams #
EMDT 32 – The Burial Chamber of Carnaic Arnoc #
EMDT 33 – Ratcatcher #
EMDT 34 – HELVÉCZIA
EMDT 35 – GAMEMASTERS ALMANAC
EMDT 36 – Ammertal and the Oberammsbund
EMDT 37 – The Accursed Cellar
EMDT 38 – Slaughter in the Salt Pits +
2014
EMDT 39 – Curious Marriage #
EMDT 40 – Until Dawn
EMDT 41 – Ill-Gotten Merchandise
2015
EMDT 42 – The Cloister's Secret #
EMDT 43 – The Serpent Girl and Other Stories #
EMDT 44 – The Fools' Feast at FÜROCHEN #
EMDT 45 – The True Weapon Cache for the
Helvetians' Delight #
2018
EMDT 46 – Echoes #01: Beware the Beekeeper! +
EMDT 47 – The Barbarian King (REVISED) +
EMDT 48 – Echoes #02: Gont, Nest of Spies +
EMDT 49 – Echoes #03: Blood, Death, and Tourism +
EMDT 50 – Cloister of the Frog-God (HU) (+)
2019
EMDT 51 – The Enchantment of Vashundara (HU) #
EMDT 52 – Echoes #04: Revenge of the Frogs +
EMDT 53 – The Lost Valley of Kishar (HU) # +
EMDT 54 – Murderous Devices (HU) #
EMDT 55 – The Lost Valley of Kishar (EN) # +
EMDT 56 – Echoes #05: The Ench. of Vashundara +
EMDT 57 – The Nocturnal Table

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+ Indicates title available in English



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