

Fiery Dragon

MONTE COOK PRESENTS:

IRON HEROES

Blood Storm



An Adventure for Levels 5-9

Adam Windsor

Blood Storm

*"But when the blast of war blows in our ears, / Then imitate the action of the tiger: / Stiffen the sinews,
summon up the blood."*

—William Shakespeare, Henry V

A Fantasy Roleplaying Adventure for the Iron Heroes System

Requires the use of *Monte Cook Presents: Iron Heroes*. Some additional rules taken from *Mastering Iron Heroes*, but ownership of that book is not necessary to play through this adventure. For ease of reference, this E-Book release contains appendices of all necessary stat blocks and all maps referenced in this adventure.

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INTRODUCTION

Blood Storm is a mini-campaign adventure designed for parties of four or more *Iron Heroes* characters who begin at 5th level. The adventure primarily features a mix of dungeon- and city-based adventuring, but there is also a short wilderness section you can expand if you wish.

The adventure revolves around the Cult of the Crimson Path and that organization's sinister plans for the region known as the New Coast. Under the cover of a war brewing between the regional powers of Borat and Malador, the Cult seeks to unleash a terrifying creature known as the Blood Angel. Partially summoned decades ago by one of the vanished Masters, the Blood Angel was intended as a final weapon of destruction in the Masters' War. Fortunately, the Master was slain by her enemies before she had the chance to complete the summoning ritual, and the creature has been trapped partway between its own nightmare plane of reality and the Swordlands ever since.

Although trapped, however, the Blood Angel was not impotent. Threads of its power extended into both realms, allowing it to influence the minds of mortals and demons alike. Plagued by the Blood Angel's visions of death and destruction, men and women succumbed to madness, forming the apocalyptic Cult of the Crimson Path. They began to work toward the Blood Angel's design, causing death and destruction in the belief that it was humanity's destiny to destroy itself. Each death strengthened the Blood Angel, allowing its demonic minions to pass into the Swordlands. There, they took positions of power within the Cult, turning the cultists' efforts more and more toward the release of their fell master.

As this module begins, the Cult has come within striking distance of the final release of the Blood Angel — an event that, if not averted, will unleash great devastation on the Swordlands.

This module details the major regions and settlements of the Kingdom of Borat, as well as the principle non-player characters within the kingdom. From the rebellious mining town of Copperdell to ancient vaults of the Masters, from the bustling streets of Borat itself to the wilderness of the western border, the module provides many locations for adventurers to explore, both as part of the adventure's main narrative and in scenarios of your own design.

By the conclusion of **Blood Storm**, starting parties of four 5th-level characters should reach 9th level. Providing hours of game play, this adventure is the perfect way to take your *Iron Heroes* campaign into the mid- to upper levels and to demonstrate to your players the growing power of their characters within the setting.

About this Module

Blood Storm is specifically designed for the *Iron Heroes* game, published by Malhavoc Press. The adventure's challenges and rewards have been tailored for the bold, self-reliant characters featured in *Monte Cook Presents: Iron Heroes*.

Dark Harbor

Although **Blood Storm** is designed to function as a stand-alone adventure, it is set in the same region as Fiery Dragon's earlier release **Dark Harbor**, and can readily be used as a sequel to that module.

If your player characters do play through **Dark Harbor**, their actions in the final chapter of that adventure may have significant effects upon the city of Malador, Borat's chief rival in the New Coast and its military adversary should things come to war. These effects also have implications for **Blood Storm**, for they may well affect relations between the two city-states.

Below is a summary of the issues you will need to take into consideration, based on the possible outcomes in the "Aftermath" section of **Dark Harbor**.

Impasse: This outcome works well with the events of **Blood Storm** as written. A divided Council in Malador lends itself readily to the duplicity of the Maladoran authorities over the events in Chapter 2 of this book. Sufficient time passes during the course of this adventure for a gradual hardening of the Maladoran council's position to occur (by Chapter 4 in this adventure, war seems inevitable).

Captains of Their Own Destiny: This outcome also works well. Though unified in antipathy to Borat, the Sea Captains are not eager to face the kingdom in war, explaining their initial subterfuge in Chapter 2 of this adventure. As they become more confident in their rule of Malador, and in the wealth of the city's coffers, they can afford to become more belligerent, which works well within the parameters of **Blood Storm**.

Unionist Triumph: Although it would seem that a pro-Borat council in Malador would force considerable changes to the events outlined in **Blood Storm**, this need not be the case: Unionist loyalty to Borat was always based on coin. With the Sea Captains discredited, the Unionists gain access to the profits from the Drowning Towers — profits they soon become loathe to hand over to King Darragan.

Collapse of the Council: Representing as it does a large number of possible outcomes within **Dark Harbor**, this option cannot easily be covered here. If the heroes contrived to seize power for instance, then most Maladoran activities will be eliminated from this module. It is recommended that, in this situation, you make it apparent to the player characters that war with Borat can only lead to defeat for Malador at this time. This gives them a powerful impetus to investigate and resolve the events of **Blood Storm** in order to avert war until the city has more time to prepare.

If some other group has risen to power, then — unless they are genuine enthusiasts for Borati rule — they will likely pursue the same steps as are outlined for Malador in this module. If they are genuine Borati sympathizers, you may need to implement a rebellion in Malador that leads to a new, more independent government in order for this module to work.

Non-player characters in this module make use of the Iron Heroes character classes, feat masteries, and skill groups. If you are intending to run **Blood Storm**, you should make sure you are familiar with the effects of these feats, the combat applications of skills, and the mechanics for skill challenges, combat challenges, and stunts. Many of the NPCs in this module make use of the Iron Heroes game mechanics to perform special actions or maneuvers.

Additionally, this module makes use of the rules for combat zones and NPC classes from *Monte Cook Presents: Mastering Iron Heroes*. All the necessary information to use these mechanics for the encounters in **Blood Storm** are included here, in case you do not have access to *Mastering Iron Heroes*. This module also makes use of creatures from *Monte Cook Presents: The Iron Heroes Bestiary*. However, in each case, alternative monsters that might be substituted in their place are noted in the text for those who do not have access to the *Bestiary*.

This adventure is intended for the use of experienced DMs, and it includes plenty of scope and opportunity for players and DMs alike to expand the adventure in new directions of their own choosing. The adventure consists of six chapters, which are broken down as follows:

Chapter One provides both a brief summary of Borat's history and details of the kingdom's relationship with the neighboring city of Malador. It includes maps of the kingdom and of the surrounding region, and also provides an overview of the city of Borat itself, along with its people, its landmarks, and its districts. A brief description is given of some of the major landmarks and the role they play in Borat's daily life, as well as any role they may play in this adventure. (If a location is described in more detail elsewhere in this book, a page reference for that description is given.) Finally, this chapter contains details of the leaders of Borat, Malador, and the Cult of the Crimson Path, including their goals, resources, and motivations.

Chapter Two is the beginning of the adventure itself. It provides reasons for the PCs to make their way to the rebellious settlement of Copperdell, as well as the necessary hooks to begin uncovering the hidden agenda of the Crimson Path. During the course of this chapter, the adventurers will gain (1) their first insights into the Cult's larger plans; (2) an understanding of the political relationship between Borat, her dominions, and the city of Malador; and (3) a deciding role in the conclusion of Copperdell's rebellion. The player characters should reach 6th level by the end of this chapter.

Chapter Three transfers the action to the city of Borat itself, where the player characters are summoned as guests, envoys, or prisoners. The heroes have an opportunity to investigate the Crimson Path if they wish, but their attention is likely to be drawn to a series of gruesome attacks in the city streets: Dismembered and semi-digested victims are found on the streets each morning, indicating that some fearsome creature has been loosed in the city. Investigating these killings leads to an underground vault filled with many dangers, but that also contains hints of the Crimson Path's plans. The player characters should reach 7th level by the end of this chapter.

Chapter Four sees the the Crimson Path strike directly at the heroes, who have interfered with their plans once too often. The player characters are framed as spies and saboteurs. They must avoid the agents of both Borat and the Cult, and make their way to the frontier village of Rannemort. Only there can they uncover the last of the Crimson Path's agents and learn the location of the Cult's great ritual. The player characters should reach 8th level by the end of this chapter.

Chapter Five brings the cult's plans to a climax and the heroes' investigation to its end. As the Crimson Path gathers to enact the *Rite of the Blood Storm*, the heroes must race to an ancient temple, overcome the guards, and then find some way to kill a creature that, legends say, can die only at the hands of those who summoned it. The player characters should reach 9th level by the end of this chapter.

Chapter Six contains suggestions for possible developments in the New Coast, based on the player characters' decisions in the previous chapter, and additionally provides hooks for further adventures in and around the cities of Borat and Malador.

CHAPTER ONE:

BORAT AND THE NEW COAST

During the time of the Masters, Borat was a settlement of only moderate consequence. Although it was the largest community in the area now known as the New Coast and served as the administrative center of the then-inland region, it was still less than a tenth of the size of the mighty coastal cities, with perhaps a fiftieth of their wealth. Rather than being ruled directly by a Master, it was administrated by an Overseer, a member of the First called Darragan.

The very inconsequence of the town was probably what saved it when the Masters went to war. As mighty spells and armies devastated the coastal regions — ultimately causing hundreds of miles of territory to sink into the ocean — Borat remained largely untouched by the war. Overseer Darragan raised a strong militia when the war began, but it was tested only by a few rogue war beasts that had somehow slipped the Masters' control. More citizens died of starvation than of any other cause: the war made trade and travel almost impossible, and Borat's food supplies came mostly from surrounding villages rather than from among its own people.

With the Masters' apparent destruction and the resulting end of the war, the Overseer sent groups of militia out to reestablish contact with the other settlements of the region. It quickly became apparent that many of these, too small to defend themselves from even the tiniest ripples of the war, had been devastated in the intervening years. In most cases, only a handful of families remained, often living in half-ruined buildings so as to conceal their presence.

With Borat's supplies depleted and its people on stringent rationing, Overseer Darragan knew that to go another year without a harvest would lead to massive loss of life. He consequently ordered a public lottery. Fully half of the town's families were selected at random and sent out to repopulate the desolate villages. There, they had to forgo their previous occupations to till the soil and provide the crops Borat so desperately needed. Units of militia would accompany each group to ensure that the Overseer's orders were obeyed.

This enforced resettlement and the clear establishment of military rule were the beginnings of the present-day Kingdom of Borat. As the years passed and one crisis or another always threatened the Borati people, the Overseer's "emergency measures" to ensure survival became rule-by-decree in all but name. Invasions of beastmen, waves of refugees to be housed and fed, rebellious craftsmen angered at being turned into farmers, all were dealt with by stern and immediate action. As the years passed, more and more citizens could remember only this form of rule. Few thought anything of it when their ruler changed his title from Overseer to "King" — an event that occurred only fifteen years ago.

In the current day, Borat is a strong, centrally organized state. The king holds all the powers and privileges of an absolute monarch, though he has the good judgment to delegate responsibility and authority to subordinates in a

variety of fields. Most settlements have their own Bailiff, for example, who keeps order and deals with any local concerns. There are also ministers for the army, for trade, and for public works, as well as close to a dozen other portfolios. The king's rule is stern and autocratic, but also capable and sure. The same is true of most of his officials: Corruption is much less of an issue here than in the Byzantine bureaucracy of Malador, for instance.

However, every system has its flaws, and the kingdom's vast army and rapid growth places a large tax burden on its citizens. Normally, this pressure results only in grumbling and discontent. In those few cases where it is combined with incompetent or corrupt officials, however, it can flare into open rebellion. **Blood Storm** begins with just such a rebellion.

The Immortal King

You will notice the history of Borat implies that today's King of Borat is the same man who ruled the city for the Masters. It has been assumed for the purposes of this module that the lifespan of the First is much longer than that of humans. This helps to emphasize the "otherness" of the King's heritage, as well as hinting at his personal power (by the end of this module, he will be almost unique on the New Coast in being individually more powerful than any of the player characters).

If you have previously established a more normal lifespan for the First in your campaign, however, you can easily assume that today's King Darragan is perhaps the son or grandson of the first Overseer, and that he has simply adopted the same name as his great forebear.

The New Coast

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

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

Creatures listed with an asterisk (*) in the Typical Encounters sections below can be found in the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*.

The Gray Steppe

North of Borat, the ground rises into scrub-covered steppe. The earth here is gray and powdery, giving the area its name. It was across this region that many refugees fled to Malador and Borat in the decades following the Great War. Before the Masters' war, these lands were lush and fertile farms. The magical energy unleashed in the conflict scoured

this territory, burning the rich earth into arid dust. Pockets of fertile land still exist, forming a series of oases that make it possible to cross the region, but few ever enter this region.

The terrain gets steadily more and more desolate and dangerous the further north one travels, until it becomes true Ghostland some 120 miles from the city. Harsh winds often blow from this direction, whipping up blinding, choking clouds of gray dust. A human can suffocate in such storms . . . even assuming that the wind brings nothing more dangerous out of the Ghostlands with it.

Other than the arid terrain and choking dust storms, the most common danger of the Gray Steppe are roving bands of bestial humanoids. While only misfortune will cause a traveler to encounter these creatures in the arid stretches of the steppe, they are often found at the oases. Such a band, usually 40 or 50 strong, tends to remain in a fertile area until its members' waste has fouled the water to the point where even they will not drink it; then they move to a new location. By the time they return, the effects of their last visit have abated, allowing them to repeat the cycle.

Strange monsters, spawned in the Masters' war, also prowl the Gray Steppe. They emerge from time to time from the Ghostlands, and may be of almost any size, shape, or nature. Such beasts occasionally travel far enough south to threaten Borat itself. When this occurs, the King dispatches a unit of his Kingdom Guards to deal with the problem, though he is usually willing to pay a bounty to any adventurers who deal with the creature before the soldiers can do so.

Typical Encounters: Ankheg, bulette, chimera, digester, flesh flayer*, gnoll, griffon, manticore, necrophage*, sand homunculous*, troll, yeth hound.

Bleakwater

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

Despite the lack of fresh water, few people die of thirst in their attempt to cross Bleakwater — for there are numerous dangers that will quickly overcome anyone weakened by the effects of serious dehydration. The area is infested with reptilian beasts of all sizes, from foot-long lizards to snakes as long as a man and crocodiles that weigh hundreds of pounds. The area is also home to flesh-eating birds that have little compunction about picking over the still-living body of a traveler who has become too weak to fight back.

There are also many rumors of tribes of intelligent creatures, human or otherwise, living in the Bleakwater, but most, if not all such tales are widely thought to be mere travelers' gossip.

Typical Encounters: Assassin vine, dragon (black), emerald serpent*, fungus, hag (green), hydra, kobold, lizardfolk, naga (water), ogre (merrow), shambling mound, shellback*.

Malador

To the east of Borat lies the coastal city of Malador, a sprawling metropolis twice the size of Borat's capital. Malador plays a large role in **Blood Storm**, for it is Borat's chief rival and imminent adversary in war. (See the "Malador vs. Borat" sidebar, nearby, and also "King Darragan's Dilemma" on page 18 for more details.)

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

Some years after this cataclysm, fishing boats from Malador's newly built docks discovered the half-submerged remains of the Masters' cities. Many of the buildings were in a few dozens of feet of water or less, and those with many stories or that stood on higher ground often jutted well above the water line. Curiosity and greed quickly overcame fear, and ships' crews ventured into the accessible levels of the buildings — finding them filled with rich furs, gold cups and plates, and many other valuable treasures. However, many of the explorers did not return. The towers were filled with dangers far beyond the capabilities of mere fisherfolk, but the people of Malador quickly came up with a means of gaining the tower treasures with a minimum of risk: any mercenary willing to enter the towers in search of treasure could do so, provided they paid the city a tariff of one-half of all treasure they recovered.

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

Typical Encounters: Most dangers in Malador are human, although ghouls and feral animals can sometimes also be a threat. Refer to the Fiery Dragon adventure **Dark Harbor** for many encounters in the city.

Malador vs. Borat

As Borat's power on the New Coast has continued to grow, it has become steadily more apparent that, sooner or later, the kingdom will clash with the City of Malador. The council that rules the port city jealously guards the wealth and prestige its members gain from their monopoly over the Drowning Towers, and they do not wish to share. For his part, the King of Borat needs that wealth in order to replenish his treasury.

To date, Malador's council has avoided any hint of desiring armed confrontation with the king's forces. The Maladorans' organized armed forces are minimal, and while they have an extensive militia, they are not confident of the competence of that group if it should come to war. Instead, they have chosen to rely on diplomatic means to delay any conflict. In theory, the time they have spent at diplomacy could have been used to raise and equip a standing army, but such an action has not been undertaken for two reasons: (i) a fear that it would provoke Borat to war and (ii) a greedy reluctance to spend the large sums required for such a task.

As **Blood Storm** begins, the Maladoran council is still pursuing a policy of public negotiation with Borat while covertly employing agents to destabilize the rival kingdom. The councilors hope that by encouraging civic unrest in the existing Borati lands, they can keep the king's larger, better-trained army too busy to be turned against Malador.

As the adventure continues, however, the council realizes that this delaying tactic is no longer enough, and it begins to take a more openly hostile attitude toward King Darragan and Borat.

The Drowning Towers

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

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

The Towers represent the lifeblood of the city of Malador. Without them, the city would be just another isolated

village. Malador's council is willing to go to almost any length to protect this vital source of income.

Typical Encounters: Chuul, dragon turtle, hag (sea), locathah, naga (water), sahuagin, sea cat, skag [see the **Dark Harbor** monsters appendix], tojanida.

The Cloven Lands

South and southwest of Borat lie a series of steep and irregular valleys and hills, cutting back and forth across the land in a series of natural barriers to speedy travel. A few travelers have successfully crossed the area, but most give up after the third or fourth time they are forced to backtrack around an unexpected and impassable cliff face.

As though the ruggedness of the terrain were not enough, the region is laced with a mixture of razor-sharp rocks and a fine, silty black dust in which travelers can sink to the waist if they do not take care. Even if this hazard is avoided, any kind of movement causes the dust to kick up in choking clouds of sooty black smoke.

Despite the many unappealing characteristics of the Cloven Lands, Borati settlement extends into its fringes. Thick growths of gnarled trees make the ground relatively firm in these areas, and, while the silty dust by itself is unable to support vegetation, it has proven to give excellent crop yields when small amounts of it are mixed into normal earth; however, it also gives the waterways in the area a slightly metallic taste (giving the Ironwater River its name).

Typical Encounters: Aranea, chimera, cliff ogre*, ettercap, glitterwing*, goblin, hobgoblin, mephit (dust, earth, magma, ooze, salt), monstrous vermin (all kinds), trondar*.

The Kingdom of Borat (see map on page 68)

In some ways, Borat resembles a military body more than a true nation-state. The City of Borat functions like an army headquarters, in that the king and his immediate advisors review intelligence gathered from across the kingdom and then issue orders and directives to the Town Captains. Such orders often include what is essentially the military drafting of civilians. For instance, to build a dam on the river near Willowslow, the king had hundreds of laborers and engineers relocated from other parts of the kingdom in order to work on the project; these men and women were obliged, without recourse, to pack up their families and move for several months until the dam was completed.

If Borat itself is the military headquarters, the smaller settlements that surround the capital each function like a combination of guard post and foraging crew. Supporting a garrison of troops that conducts regular patrols of the area, each settlement provides warning of any approaching danger, as well as acting as the first line of defense. Additionally, the surplus production of farmers and herders in these towns is transported to the capital, where foodstuffs are stored in case of need during siege or winter scarcity.

The following sections provide information about the kingdom, its culture and laws, and the major settlements within it. Many smaller settlements also exist, but for the sake of brevity they are not discussed here.

CLIMATE

Most people in Borat live off the land, working family farms to support themselves and, if they are fortunate, to produce a small surplus that they can trade at market. As a consequence, the weather is of considerable importance to the country's health and prosperity.

The tables below provide all the necessary detail to generate daily weather randomly for Borat. The events of **Blood Storm** are assumed to begin during early summer, although this can be changed if you desire.

SEASON	TEMPERATURE	SPECIAL CONDITIONS (ROLL D20)
Spring	Day: 45+3d10° F Night: 15+3d10° F	1 storm; 2–4 precipitation; 5 severe wind; 6–7 strong wind; 8–9 fog; 10–20 no special conditions.
Summer	70+3d10° F 40+3d10° F	1 precipitation; 2–3 strong wind; 4–20 no unusual conditions.
Fall	Day: 30+3d10° F Night: 10+3d10° F	1–2 storm; 3–6 precipitation; 7–10 severe wind, 11–14 strong wind; 15 fog; 16–20 no special conditions.
Winter	Day: 15+3d10° F Night: 3d10° F	1–3 storm; 4–10 precipitation; 11 severe wind, 12–15 strong wind; 16 fog; 17–20 no special conditions.

The effects of special weather conditions are outlined below.

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

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

All movement costs in outdoor environments are doubled during snow.

Storm: The combined effects of precipitation and wind that accompany all storms reduce visibility ranges by 75% and impose a –8 penalty on Spot, Search, and Listen checks. Storms make ranged weapon attacks impossible, except for those from siege weapons, which suffer a –4 penalty on attack rolls. A storm automatically extinguishes candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames, and causes protected flames, such as those of lanterns, to dance wildly, with a 50% chance of being extinguished.

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

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

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

At your discretion, some or all of the information presented here can be uncovered by player characters who make a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Gather Information check.

The Kingdom's Defenses

The Kingdom Guards are a visible reminder of the militarism that permeates Borati culture. Dressed in their distinctive red and black tabards, the Guards are Borat's police force and army. There is a contingent of the Guards in every Borati settlement; their tasks are to patrol the streets and walls and to man the city gates. The gate guards check the business and identity of everyone entering or leaving the town. Guard patrols within the towns or on the kingdom's roads can also request this information from anyone they pass, and often inspect anyone who seems suspicious.

To facilitate these inspections, every adult in Borati territory is issued identity papers that he or she is required to carry at all times outside the home. Persons without papers are

detained and escorted to the nearest Guard House for questioning as to their identity, lack of papers, and purpose in Borat. If the Guards are satisfied with the answers they receive, they may issue the travelers new identity papers on the spot — for a cost of 1 gp per traveler.

In border areas, an answer of "We just arrived in the kingdom" is considered a satisfactory reason not to have papers. However, missing one's identity papers without a satisfactory reason is a major crime under Borati law (see The Kingdom's Laws, page 8, for more details).

Travelers used to poorly disciplined or corrupt city guards (such as those in Malador) will immediately notice the professionalism and discipline of the Kingdom Guards. The soldiers are generally polite but firm in their duties, and highly resistant to bribery and intimidation: Punishments for failing in their duties are harsh, and any stranger offering them a few coins to "look the other way" could easily be an agent of the King, testing their loyalty.



The Kingdom Guards generally operate in units of 12 when manning the gates or patrolling the roads. Such units are comprised of 5 soldiers and 5 veterans, one sergeant, and one captain (see Appendix for the stats of each). Three of these patrol units comprise one *platoon*, which is the basic unit used for true military operations. Command of the platoon goes to the captain having the greatest seniority (that is, usually, the one who has been a captain the longest). Three platoons are in turn considered a *company*, along with a headquarters unit of 10 sergeants, a captain, and a colonel. There is rarely a need for a larger force than the 120 soldiers of a company, but when such need does arise, the force is led by a specially appointed Kingdom Marshall, chosen personally by the king and invested with full powers to represent the monarch.

In total, Borat supports a little over 3,000 Kingdom Guards. Nearly half are assigned to garrison and/or policing duties in the kingdom's settlements. At any given time, there may be as little as a single patrol unit in charge of patrolling several small villages, or as many as three full companies in the case of the capital. In addition, four companies are charged with keeping Borat's roads free of monsters, bandits, and vagrants. These companies usually operate in the usual twelve-man patrols, but they may concentrate into larger forces if a particularly significant problem is encountered.

One further company is assigned to watch over the various indentured workers used on national projects (see The Kingdom's Laws, page 8, for more details) The remainder of the Guards, close to 1,000 troops, are retained as a reserve, able to respond to any issue that threatens the security of the Kingdom as a whole.

The Kingdom's Government

Borat is an absolute monarchy. Of course, the day-to-day operation of the kingdom, by necessity, has been delegated to a cadre of officials, but all power ultimately vests in the king. Even when Darragan appoints someone to act on his behalf, that person is invariably answerable to the king for the outcome — and failure often carries heavy consequences.

On-the-spot authority for each settlement within Borat rests with the local Town Captain. Often, this is the highest-ranking member of the Kingdom Guards to be based in the town, although the king can appoint a minor noble to the role if he wishes; generally, he does this only with the major towns of the kingdom.

Town Captains are responsible for publicizing the king's announcements, collecting all necessary taxes, and ensuring the smooth operation of all state industries within their region. They are also responsible for the upkeep of the settlement's fortifications, for the payment of all Kingdom Guards under their command, and for adjudication of all civil legal matters. If a Town Captain is also a Kingdom Guard captain, as opposed to a noble appointee, he or she is also responsible for the adjudication of criminal cases.

In return for their heavy workload, Town Captains receive a salary based on the size of the settlement they administer. This salary is quite generous, but if the Town Captain wishes to hire a clerk or any other kind of aide, he or she must pay the assistant's wages out of his or her own income.

The Kingdom's Finances

The King of Borat raises his finances from three sources:

Poll Taxes and Land Taxes: After the thaw each spring, Borati officials conduct a census under their administration and levy taxes on anyone within the area. First of all, a flat annual tax of 1 gold piece applies for every adult, and 2 silver pieces for every child. (Anyone over the age of 12 is considered an adult.) In addition to this tax, which impacts the poorest members of society most severely, a complex system of land taxes is applied.

Land taxes are calculated based on the quantity of land an individual owns, the land's location, and the purpose for which it is used. Land used for primary industries such as farming enjoys the lowest rate, while the highest rate is reserved for lands used privately: gardens, hunting reserves, and the like. Similarly, land closer to the capital is assessed a higher rate than land on the frontier.

Regime Change

Idealistic heroes may want to conspire against the Borati king's autocratic administration, in pursuit of a more democratic government. Those PCs with more "flexible" ethical standards may conspire against the king in pursuit of snatching power for themselves. Whatever the motivation, any such conspiracy faces some difficult challenges.

The king is an experienced politician as well as a redoubtable warrior, and he has an established network of spies and police to sabotage any such efforts, as well as the support of a considerable army. However, overcoming challenges is what Iron Heroes is all about, and if your players are interested in fomenting revolution, there's plenty of opportunity for exciting adventures. Leading a rebellion can be particularly rewarding for those heroes who have invested heavily in Social feat masteries, such as the Devious Manipulator and Political Mastermind chains.

While the forces arrayed against a regime change would be extensive, there are some possible allies available to the heroes. The Council of Malador might be willing to fund a rebellion, for instance. There's every chance they would provide only enough aid to produce a stalemate, of course, since that's the ideal situation to allow them to gather more power for themselves. But no one ever said a revolutionary's life was an easy one!

Travel Licenses: Standard identity papers in Borat specify a person's home town. Traveling more than 3 miles from this location requires a special license. Such licenses can be purchased from the Kingdom Guards, for a fee based on the distance of travel and the duration of the license. The cost is 1 sp for any distance up to 3 miles, plus 1 sp/mile beyond that, for each day the license is valid. The duration always begins on, and includes, the day on which a license is issued. Persons traveling on state business, such as royal messengers or Kingdom Guards, are granted free, unlimited travel licenses for the duration of their service.

Traveling without a license is a minor crime under Borati law (see The Kingdom's Laws, right), but punishment is generally waived if extenuating circumstances apply. For instance, a group of travelers who have only just arrived in Borat would not be charged, though they would be required to purchase a license if they wished to travel more than 3 miles from the settlement where their papers are issued.

State Enterprises: All mining and logging industries in Borat are under state control. The workforce for these operations is comprised largely of indentured workers who are given only room and board; only overseers are paid. All profits from these industries go directly into the kingdom's treasury.

Additionally, the King receives 10% of the income from all agricultural output across the kingdom. This output is gathered and sent to the capital, where perishable supplies are sold immediately and the remainder is stored against future shortages.

The Kingdom's Laws

Kingdom Guards, and not the nobility, are responsible for maintaining order and arresting law-breakers throughout Borat. Depending on the circumstances, the Guards might make their rounds in groups as small as two, or in full patrol units of 12 soldiers. Generally, the smaller the settlement, the smaller the units.

The Kingdom Guards are not a police force in the modern sense. They do not investigate crimes or track down culprits. Their job is to arrest anyone they catch committing a crime, and to respond to any hue-and-cry raised by citizens. In theory, this means that only guilty persons are arrested, and therefore the onus is on the defendant to prove his or her innocence when brought before a King's Justice.

Arrested characters are immediately placed in a cell at the guard barracks, where they generally remain until the most senior officer has time to interview them. Generally this interview occurs the next day, but in times of unusual disturbances it may take longer. During the time they are in the cells, prisoners are given water and plain food (such as gruel or bread) once a day.

When brought to the senior officer for an interview, the accused has an opportunity to plead his or her case. Such efforts are rarely successful, but the Kingdom Guards do listen to explanations and may reduce or put aside any punishment in exceptional circumstances. Borati justice is often harsh and perfunctory, but rarely corrupt.

Kingdom laws divide offences by severity rather than type. It recognizes three categories of offence: *minor*, *major*, and *capital*.

Minor Crimes: This category includes acts of vandalism or theft involving less than 50 gold pieces' worth of goods, as well as non-sexual assault that leaves no permanent injuries. Publically speaking against the king is also a minor crime, as is traveling more than 3 miles from your home settlement without the necessary license (extenuating circumstances, such as recent arrival in Borat, are taken into account). The standard sentence for all such offences is a fine of 100 gp. If the convicted person cannot pay the fine (which is usually the case), he or she is generally sentenced to 1 year of indentured labor instead.

Major Crimes: This category includes any act of vandalism or theft involving 50 gold pieces' worth of goods or more, all forms of sexual assault, and any non-sexual assault that leaves permanent injury but does not result in death. Being found without identity papers is also a major crime (extenuating circumstances, such as recent arrival in Borat, are taken into account). Those found guilty of these crimes are sentenced to 5 years of indentured labor and are branded on the left shoulder with the Lawbreaker's Rune, a permanent mark of their offence. If a character branded with a Lawbreaker's Rune is convicted of a second major crime, he is treated as if he had committed a capital crime.

Capital Crimes: Desertion in the face of the enemy, murder, manslaughter, and treason (that is, actually conspiring against the king, as opposed to merely speaking ill of him) are all punishable by hanging.

Indentured Service: Characters sentenced to indentured service have all of their carried possessions confiscated. They are issued prisoners' garb (sandals, a tunic, and breeches, all dyed canary yellow) and also have their heads shaved. Groups of such characters are then brought together to do the heaviest, dirtiest jobs on civil works projects.

For example, indentured work parties are used to lay and repair roads, work in mines and quarries, and labor on dams, city walls, and other large construction projects. Escaping from a work party is treated as desertion in the face of the enemy under the law—that is, it is a Capital crime, punishable by immediate execution.

BORAT'S MAJOR TOWNS

The following section provides a brief description of the nine most important settlements in the kingdom, including brief details of their population, major industries, and key NPCs. Many more settlements exist, including numerous towns of several hundred people apiece.

The descriptions that follow are in no way meant to be exhaustive: some settlements featured in **Blood Storm** are described more fully in the appropriate section, while the other settlements have been left for you to develop further.

Borat

The kingdom's capital is a walled city of some 5,000 inhabitants. Three companies of Kingdom Guards are on active duty to police and defend the city at any one time, all under the command of Guard Colonel Ameira Lanslaine (see Appendix for stats). An additional six companies are kept on standby, ready to march to any part of the kingdom if needed. Colonel Lanslaine is respected as a competent organizer and tactician, as well as being known for her considerable skill at arms.

Borat's Town Captain is Marlog Trepp (see Appendix), who has served the king all his life. Trepp began as a page in the court, gradually working his way up through the years. Now in his sixties, he is probably the closest thing to a friend King Darragan actually has. A self-made man, Trepp has no time for those who seek advancement and privilege by shortcuts, and is widely regarded as incorruptible.

Naturally, the capital is also home to King Darragan, who oversees the administration of the kingdom as a whole and remains in close contact with Lanslaine and Trepp over matters in the city. The king is rarely seen in public, generally appearing only for major festivals. Most of his time is spent at the castle, meeting with his advisors and hearing reports from across the kingdom.

Borat is described in more detail later in this chapter.

Camp Cloven

Located in the southwestern part of the kingdom, Camp Cloven was founded as a logging camp shortly after the end of the Masters' War. Since then it has grown to become a community of some 1,100 people, although nearly a third of them are indentured workers at the logging camp. However, in recent years the region's fertile soil, created by small

quantities of black sands blowing in from the Cloven Lands, has seen an increase in the number of farmers in the area. The town's principal crops are corn, barley, and other grain products, though apples and other temperate fruit are also produced.

Due to its high proportion of indentured workers, Camp Cloven has two platoons of Kingdom Guards on hand for security. The Town Captain is Josian Nebber (Kingdom Guard), a relative newcomer to the role. Eager to please the king with increased revenue, Nebber has raised the local land taxes (citing the enhanced productivity of the local fields) and increased the length of the logging camp's work hours. The locals are unhappy with these changes, but thus far have done nothing more than grumble about them.

Copperdell

The most eastern of Borat's towns, Copperdell has long served as the gateway between the kingdom and the city of Malador. It is also the site of one of the kingdom's main mining operations, and — like Camp Cloven — a large percentage of its population comprises indentured workers. In fact, more than three-quarters of the town's population of 800 is comprised of indentured workers and their families. A full company of Kingdom Guards are expected to keep this population under control.

The Town Captain is Ombrosian Hannant, who is proof that King Darragan is not infallible in his judgement of appointees. Hannant's arrogant and overbearing manner toward the townsfolk (free and indentured alike), coupled with his flagrant corruption, has brought Copperdell to open rebellion as **Blood Storm** begins.

Copperdell is described in more detail in Chapter 2.

Elbern

The scrubby dales and low hills that surround Elbern make for poor crop yields, but are excellent grazing grounds for sheep and goats. This town is the pastoral heartland of the kingdom, despite its location on the northern frontier. The flocks here provide Borat with most of its wool and a large proportion of its meat.

Despite its population of almost 2,000 souls, Elbern retains the aura of a sleepy market town. In truth it is a great deal more than that, but the lowkey approach of long-serving Town Captain Freda Washeman (appointed) allows the steadily growing town to retain its "country village" feel. Washeman has only a single platoon of Kingdom Guards at her disposal, having personally petitioned the king not to send any more. Her ability to maintain order with such limited resources is almost uncanny, and some of her rivals in other settlements whisper dark things about witchcraft. Of course, such tales are surely not true...!

DM's Note: If you prefer to develop an adventure based on the idea of Freda Washeman's having magical powers, consider making her a skaerrim (from the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*) or an arcanist of an appropriate level to challenge the player characters.

Grayward

East of Elbern lies Grayward, a dusty and rather unattractive town of some 1,500 inhabitants. Located closer to the Gray Steppes than any other Borati settlement, Grayward has a large garrison: no less than five full platoons of Kingdom Guards protect the town.

Despite its shabby appearance and potentially dangerous location, Grayward is a bustling town due to the presence of considerable deposits of iron, silver, and tin within the region. Many small mines dot the area, and they send large quantities of ore to the capital every week. The slow-moving wagons take four days to make the round trip to Borat, returning heavily laden with barrels of food and other supplies. During the time that the caravan is on the road, a full platoon of troops is missing from the town as it escorts the wagons on their journey.

Grayward's Town Captain is Bannelan Kyte (see Appendix), a self-styled "old warhorse" from the Kingdom Guards who has proven an excellent administrator. With the risk of monstrous incursions from the Gray Steppes, the veteran Kyte was an obvious candidate for the role, which he has held for more than a decade.

Moddrik

Located in the midst of fertile plains, Moddrik is simply the most prominent of a patchwork of small towns, each dedicated to farming vast fields of crops. The town itself has a population of only 300, but its position right athwart the road to Copperdell makes it the ideal place for traders and goods wagons to break their journey. Its location also means that a vast amount of goods pass through the town. In order to ensure the security of these caravans, two platoons of Kingdom Guards are stationed here.

The local Town Captain, an appointee whose duties really extend over all the small towns of this region, is the easygoing Alden Barleyman (*male expert 5*), once a local lad who has returned to the home of his childhood now that he has risen high in the king's service. Barleyman is popular in the region, although it is rumored that some in the capital feel he pays too much attention to his family's brewery and not enough to his duties as Town Captain.

Rannemort

The kingdom's southernmost settlement of any significance, Rannemort has a population of a little over 300 farmers and their families. Located in an area where traces of the black sands of the Cloven Lands cause greater fertility and growth, Rannemort produces a quantity of crops well beyond what seems appropriate for its size. At the capital, Rannemort is seen as a model settlement: its taxes are received promptly, its crop yields rise every year, and its Town Captain reports that unrest never exceeds a level that he and his platoon of guards can handle.

Unfortunately, the truth is that Town Captain Paraz Ghent (see Appendix) has been subverted by the Cult of the Crimson Path, and that he is actively assisting in the cult's schemes by deflecting outside attention from the village.

Rannemort is described in more detail in Chapter 4.

Tellerthan

Between the River Borat and the Ironwater, before they merge to form the Malador River, lie the Borati Moors. Near the center of the moors lies the town of Tellerthan, a rather dank and grimy place. Folk do not come to Tellerthan for the scenery, however; they come because the nearby moors contain rich deposits of coal and peat for use as fuel, as well as bitumous tar that can be refined into oil.

Due to the unpleasant conditions and high rates of sickness amongst the ranks, Tellerthan's company-strong garrison of Kingdom Guards is rotated every month. Town Captains have to stay longer, due to the administrative issues that would arise from such rapid changes, but even they are replaced every year. The 1,200 locals, many of them indentured workers, are not often so lucky.

Tellerthan's current Town Captain is Eldoo Rayne (an appointee, but treat as exhausted due to her sickly condition), who has spent most of her three months in the role on her sick-bed due to the noxious conditions. Her illness has led to a number of administrative snarls, and the common opinion is that she will be replaced in the near future.

Condition Zone (burning charcoal): Tellerthan and the area for several miles around it is almost always lost in a haze of soot and foul-smelling smoke. The scent special ability is negated in this area, and all Spot checks suffer a -4 penalty. Those who spend more than a week here are liable to become *sickened* (check each day, Fortitude DC 13; three consecutive failures result in *exhaustion*, curable only by 3 consecutive days out of this zone).

Willowslow

Following the River Borat upstream brings a traveler to Willowslow, home of the kingdom's largest logging operation and also of the mighty Willowslow dam. The dam was completed 10 years ago, designed to assist in the transport of lumber downstream to the capital. Previous to that, the logs could be floated downstream only when rains were heavy; otherwise the river was too shallow. The dam allows the loggers to bank up water for a week, then release it when they are ready to make a shipment.

Town Captain Trei Nollis (see Appendix) was the architect of the dam project, and has now been in her position for nearly two decades. She is widely considered the most likely candidate to become Town Captain of Borat when Marlog Trepp retires or passes away.

With a population of roughly 800, Willowslow is garrisoned by two platoons of Kingdom Guards.

LANDMARKS OF BORAT

The map of the City of Borat (page 67) has several locations marked upon it. Few of these locations are central to the events of **Blood Storm**, but some details are included below because they are significant within the city — that is, landmarks that most locals will know of, and that your heroes may wish to visit during the course of their adventures in the Kingdom.

Each landmark is identified with a unique number. In addition, they are collected into six categories, each of which is designated by a different letter code after the location number. For instance, Location 6L is the sixth landmark described below, and is also a Lodging landmark (i.e., as explained in the chart below, a place where characters can get meals and overnight accommodation).

The categories of landmarks are as follows:

Category	Code	Description
Commercial	C	This category includes any building where equipment or services other than lodging are produced or available for purchase.
Government	G	This category includes any location which is involved the administration of the kingdom, including the king's palace and judicial buildings such as courts.
Lodging	L	This category includes any location where characters can purchase meals or accommodation on a daily basis.
Military	M	This category includes any building which is important to the defense of the city.
Religious	R	This category includes houses of worship of all kinds.
Sights	S	This category includes location which is notable solely as a landmark, such as statues, fountains and so forth.

It is not the objective of the descriptions below to give exhaustive information about each location. Instead, the purpose of the descriptions in this section is to give you seeds that you can flesh out in the course of describing Borat to your players, so that the city feels more vibrant, more "alive" during your game.

Most of the information presented here is common knowledge within the city. Generally, it can be learned automatically by visiting the location, or by making a DC 5 Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check. If there is specific information that cannot be learned simply by visiting the location, then the Gather Information and/or Knowledge DC needed to learn the information is noted at the end of the relevant text (i.e., the sentence or paragraph). If a Knowledge category other than local applies, this fact is also noted.

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

1S. Coronation Statue

Forged of iron and coated with bronze, this 15-foot-tall statue commemorates Darragan's coronation, when he exchanged the title of Overseer for that of King. The statue stands on a 10-foot-high stone pedestal on the hillside below

Typical Buildings in Borat

Stone and wood exterior and wooden interior, 1d3+1 stories; 2d4+1 squares wide by 2d4+4 squares deep. Each has 1d4 rooms per story, and may have bedding in the roof space, accessible via ladder. Any building is 90% likely to be a residence.

Buildings used for commercial purposes are often larger (add 1d4–1 squares to both dimensions), but have fewer rooms per level (1d4–1, minimum 1).

Exterior Walls (and interior walls for A8): Hardness 8; hp 90; Break DC 35.

Interior Walls: Hardness 5; hp 30; Break DC 23.

Typical Door or Window Shutters: Hardness 5; hp 15; Break DC 18, Open Lock DC 20.

the palace. It faces southwest across the city and depicts the king with his right hand shading his eyes as he stares piercingly into the distance, his left hand resting on the pommel of his sword. The impression is evidently meant to be one of vigilance and resolve.

Although there was considerable fanfare made over the statue when it was unveiled, the average Borati citizen pays it barely any mind these days. It draws a crowd only during its weekly clean-and-polish, when children come from across the city to watch the cleaners do their work and, in the case of the bravest, attempt a darting lunge up one of the ladders to touch the statue's sword. (It's said that doing so will make a youngster grow up to be a mighty warrior, yet for most it achieves little more than a cuff 'round the ear from the nearest cleaner.) (DC 10)

NPCs: Normally 1d6–1 people are nearby (artisans, laborers, or professionals, *Com1*), heading in one direction or another. During the weekly cleanings, there are 1d3+1 laborers doing the work, and a gaggle of 2d6+6 children watching them.

2R. Covenant of the Return

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

In the decades immediately following the War, the Covenant's was a popular theology, but its popularity has diminished as years have gone by without the promised return (DC 15 Knowledge [religion] or Gather Information). It's sometimes whispered that the King takes a dim view of the Covenant's teachings, although coaxing anyone to admit this is difficult (DC 20, Gather Information only).

The Covenant's temple is located not far from the southern gate of the city. This old building is in poor repair; except at service time each evening, when the doors are opened for public access, it is all but abandoned. The Covenant's fortunes have fallen so low that no ordained priests remain in the city. The daily services are instead led by a lay preacher, Wensen Ippalo (see Appendix), who lives in the temple's back room. This man is known to sleep most of the day, rising only when dusk falls to prepare for the service. The local children believe that this is because he is a vampire (DC 20). If pressed, a local adult might admit to having seen unsavory types entering the temple late at night: their assumption is that Ippalo is involved in smuggling or some similar activity (DC 25 Gather Information).

Development: Although he is not a vampire, Ippalo is a member of the Crimson Path. His mission in the city is twofold: (i) to recruit any believers in the Covenant who are willing to oppose the king based on his antipathy toward their faith (which has been a complete failure); and (ii) to prepare the way for other operatives searching for the Masters' vaults.

In his second task, Ippalo has been quite successful, gaining the aid of local criminals in exchange for letting them use the temple to store stolen goods. If confronted with accusations of being a vampire, Ippalo laughs his accusers off with an offer to watch the dawn with his accuser. Accusations of smuggling are met with an angry (but false) denial.

If the PCs are unable to find the Masters' Vault for themselves in Chapter 3 (due to disinterest in the killings that should lead them there, or through a lack of the necessary skills), then having them come across Ippalo's operation may present a way to bring them back on track.

Tactics: Ippalo fights to the death if his membership in the Crimson Path is exposed. He makes considerable use of terrain to assist him, relying on his excellent speed and movement abilities to let him outrun his opponents and to

come at them from unexpected angles. Ippalo's recruits are much less committed than he: they surrender immediately if they are injured, or if any of their allies are killed.

NPCs: Wensen Ippalo. During services, held about an hour after dusk each evening, there are also 4d10 worshippers (mainly older laborers and artisans).

Between midnight and dawn, 1d4+1 Crimson Path cultists are present to receive orders from Ippalo. There is also a 50% chance of 1d6+2 street thugs bring present. The cultists and thugs always enter from the rear of the building, away from the eyes of the guards in the nearby towers.

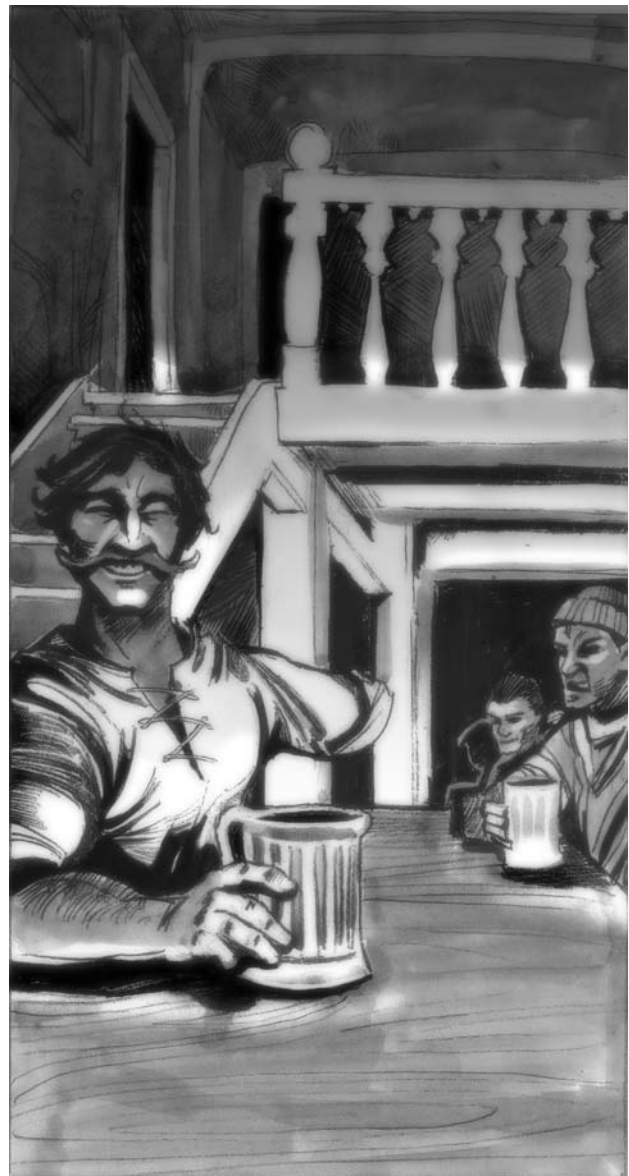
3L. The Crown Inn

One of the two main inns in Borat, the Crown is generally regarded as the more "refined" of the two. The three-storey building contains a cozy taproom with seating for about 40 patrons, as well as a common room with 30 cots and 8 private rooms that offer two beds apiece. The common room costs 2 sp a night, while a private room is 1 gp (whether it is used by one occupant or two). The taproom offers a decent

Walking the Crimson Path

The mad dreams of the Cult of the Crimson Path form the major impetus for the events in **Blood Storm**. After years of effort, the cult's leadership has finally unearthed information about three ancient vaults, built by the Masters, that have been lost since the devastating war. In these three vaults are the details of the *Rite of the Blood Storm*, the magical ritual by which the Blood Angel was to be summoned. This knowledge was considered so dangerous by the Masters that they separated it into these three well-guarded locations in order to prevent any lesser creature from attempting the summoning.

The cult's plan is to recover the information from each of the three vaults (constructed within hills in the towns of Borat, Copperdell, and Rannemort, respectively) and to invoke the ritual at an ancient temple within the Cloven Lands. Once the Blood Angel is fully drawn into the Swordlands, it will wreak destruction and death upon every living creature it encounters, giving substance to the cult's dreams of apocalypse.



selection of wine, ale, and cider, as well as hot meals served at night. A minstrel is usually hired to provide entertainment each evening.

The Crown is owned by Aylan Magra, whose family have long held the establishment. As a youngster, Magra had little interest in the family business. He joined the Kingdom Guard, but lost his left arm at the elbow in his second year of service. He's been at the inn ever since, and can now work the bar better with one hand than most might with two. Friendly and gregarious, Magra is well-liked by his clientele, which includes many off-duty Guards (DC 20).

NPCs: Aylan Magra (*male War 1/Com 2*), 1d4 serving staff, 2d6 customers (daytime) or 2d10+20 (evenings). Customers are a mix of artisans, guardsmen, and merchants.

4R. Gospel of Divine Duty

According to the Gospel of Divine Duty, every living creature is beholden to a creature greater than itself. This, the Gospel priests argue, is the natural order. Beasts owe obedience to men, men to the Overseer, the Overseer to the Masters, and the Masters to the Gods. Or, at least, that was the original doctrine — since Darragan declared himself King, any mention of his duty to the Masters has been quietly phased out.

As might be expected of a faith that equates religious virtue with obedience to the king, the Gospel of Divine Duty has an excellent relationship with the state. This royal patronage has ensured a steady growth in attendance at services, and it is by now far the dominant faith in the capital. Perhaps the most telling symbol of the Gospel's success is its new temple, built when the old one became too small to hold everyone at services. This large, marble-clad stone building was given royal approval to be constructed more than halfway up Beacon Hill, the first building of any kind to be permitted construction so high on the slope (see Area 5S). A gilded offering box just inside the door is emptied after every service, but can contain as much as 2d10 gp worth of silver and copper coins when a service has just concluded.

The Gospel has three priests, each of whom conducts one service per day (either morning, noon, or evening). Each has personal quarters in the rear of the building.

NPCs: Ehris Nashalt, Vendal Marrick, Cothan Klar (clergy [see Appendix]; Ehris is female, the others male). At any time, 1d10–2 petitioners are present, seeking private consultations with the priests. During services, a further 4d10+40 worshippers are present (any background).

5S. The Great Beacon

When the Masters' War began, Overseer Darragan ordered the construction of a great stone tower on the highest point in the city. Towering 60 feet high, the cylinder was topped with a massive pile of wood, peat, and other flammable materials. In the event of an attack on the city, the Great Beacon would be lit, the resulting flame and smoke a call to arms both for the people of the city and, it was hoped, for the surrounding area. All construction was also banned on the upper half of the hill, to ensure that the view to the beacon would remain unobstructed.

In any event, the beacon has never been lit, and most locals give little thought to its original purpose. Beacon Hill has instead become a popular recreation spot, for there is a wide expanse of grass and flowers on which folks can stroll, take lunch together, or meet friends. Still, the beacon has never been decommissioned, and a standard patrol of Kingdom Guards remains on duty at the tower at all times, ready to light the warning bonfire should it be needed (DC 20).

Development: If the fire is lit for some reason during the course of the adventure, it gives off thick clouds of red smoke (due to alchemical treatment of the combustible materials). This smoke can be seen for up to 15 miles if the weather is clear, or about 5 miles if it is not. The immediate response to the fire being lit is that every Kingdom Guard in the city goes into active duty. Over the next 2 to 4 days, other Guards arrive from other parts of the kingdom, as each garrison sends half its men to respond to the call.

Anyone foolish enough to light the fire without good cause is almost certain to be punished as if she had committed a major crime.

NPCs: Kingdom Guards (10 guardsmen, 1 sergeant, 1 captain). During daylight hours, 2d10 locals (any background) are present having picnics or strolling in the fields. After dark, 1d4 young couples are scattered around the area, enjoying some privacy together.

6L. The King's Arms

Located near the northern gate of the city, the King's Arms is considered the slightly rowdier of the two established inns in Borat, though this perception comes at least in part from the fact that the Arms, as it is commonly known, is busier during the day. Much of the inn's business comes from the nearby markets and is thus comprised of laborers, craftspeople, and stall holders of all kinds.

The Arms offers a variety of ales and ciders, as well as a stout house wine. More potent spirits are also available from time to time. Food is served throughout the day (mostly black bread with soup, though cuts of roast meat are sometimes available at night). There is always entertainment in the tap room, whether minstrels, dancers, jugglers, or some other kind of act. The spacious taproom can seat 60 guests, and is often packed with revelers.

Grelgar Thwaite, proprietor of the Arms, also offers bunk-style accommodation in the second storey of the building. He has six rooms, each capable of sleeping up to six people, and he rents each bed out at a rate of 5 sp per night: Those wanting privacy must pay for every bed in their room in order to get it.

NPCs: Grelgar Thwaite (as merchant from the Appendix), 2d4 serving staff, and 10d6 customers (daytime) or 3d10+30 customers (evenings), from any background.

7C. Kingdom Armory

A sign outside this expansive building proudly proclaims "By Royal Appointment." All weapons and armor for the Kingdom Guards are produced here. The head armorer is Ashra Gleeve, a tall woman in her early forties who bears

dozens of small burn scars on her arms and legs. Gleeve is a taciturn, no-nonsense type who sticks to supervising the eight forges that operate here every day. Customers are left to her husband Pental, a short, portly fellow with a personable air.

The smiths at the armory can produce any iron tool or trinket, including masterwork equipment if required. Prices are standard, but most work is produced on order, and may therefore take some time to be crafted depending on the complexity of the task. Generally, items take about one day per 5 gp of their cost, but this time can be halved by paying a “rush fee” of an additional 20%.

NPCs: Ashra Gleeve (*female Com 3, Craft [metal/trinkets] +12*), Pental Gleeve (use merchant stats, Appendix), 1d4+4 artisans, and 1d4–2 customers (any background).

8G. Kingdom Guard Headquarters

This imposing two-storey stone building is the central point of organization for the Kingdom Guards both within the city and across the kingdom. Any character who is arrested is brought here and kept overnight in one of the twelve cells before being questioned (and most likely sentenced) the next morning. The cells are located underground and get their light only from tiny, barred openings near the top of their walls. The single entrance to the cell block is locked and guarded at all times, and visitors are not allowed.

Other than the cells, the headquarters contains a number of departments, each assigned a particular responsibility:

- The financial clerks prepare the budgetary requirements and ensure that all payroll chests are sent to their appropriate units on schedule.
- The operational clerks prepare the patrol schedules for the city’s contingent of guards so that all fortifications are properly manned and all regions of the city properly patrolled.
- The punishment clerks maintain records of all indentured workers in the kingdom, including their crimes, their sentencing dates, and their pending dates of release. They also maintain records of all executions.
- The quartermaster clerks handle the logistical and operational requirements of the garrisons in other parts of the kingdom, and they also process all reports received from those garrisons.

Ameira Lanslaine spends most of the daylight hours here, overseeing the clerks and receiving reports from her guards. She leaves only if she must meet with Marlog Trepp or report in person to the king himself. During any emergency within the city, she is either here or in the field, resolving the issue in person.

NPCs: Ameira Lanslaine (see Appendix), 4d6 clerks, 1d8–3 patrols of Kingdom Guards (minimum 1), and 1d8 prisoners (any background).

9M. Kingdom Guard Barracks

Each of these square stone buildings has sufficient barracks space for a full company of Kingdom Guards, including the headquarters unit. Six of the buildings are kept in use for the reserve forces held in the capital, allowing the other two to be kept spare for emergency accommodation, or for when one of the currently occupied buildings needs renovation.

In the event of a military or civic emergency, the immediate response comes from these buildings. Two companies of the Guard are kept at “ready” status, so that they might begin marching anywhere in the kingdom with an hour’s notice. Two further companies are at “reserve” status, meaning they can be ready within 1d4+2 hours. The last two companies are “off duty,” but could generally be combat-ready within 1d6+6 hours. This includes time for the majority of the guards to report for duty and be organized into their appropriate units.

NPCs: There are 90+3d10 Kingdom Guards here per occupied building. There is a 25% chance of 1d4 laborers and 1d4 artisans in each of the unoccupied buildings.

10C. Kingdom Markets

The lower eastern slope of Palace Hill has long been given over to housing a daily open-air market, thronged with crowds picking over the fresh produce and other goods on sale at the dozens of brightly painted market stalls. With the exception of weapons and armor, almost any item worth 50 gp or less can be purchased from one or more of the vendors in the market. Many vendors are willing to barter their wares for goods if their customer lacks or prefers not to use gold.

Due to the degree of competition at the market, goods are sold here at 10% below standard prices. However, shoddy workmanship can be a hazard to customers looking for a bargain: There is a 5% chance that any item purchased here breaks after 2d6 uses. Cutpurses are also known to prowl the market, so characters are well advised to keep their money pouches secure at all times.

Entrepreneurial PCs may wish to sell goods at the market. Space for a stall can be rented for 1 gp per week, payable at the Public Halls. Profession (merchant) checks can be made, as normal, to see how much such a character sells in that time (assuming they have sufficient stock to sell that much, of course). Characters without the Profession (merchant) skill can substitute a Diplomacy check instead, but at a –4 penalty.

Development: As mentioned above, pickpockets are a problem in the market. For every 10 minutes a character spends here, there is a 5% chance (non-cumulative) that a pickpocket attempts to rob him or her. Resolve this attempt normally. If the PC detects the attempt and pursues the would-be thief, other market patrons may try to help stop the quarry. The heroes are likely to see similar pursuits during their visits to the market (and may even have a chance to intervene in one, if you wish). This can be a useful way to introduce them to a NPC you wish them to meet.

Captured pickpockets are taken by the nearest Kingdom Guards, to be charged depending on the value of the items they were attempting to steal.

NPCs: During daylight hours, there are 1d10+10 merchants, 5d10+50 customers (any background), 1d4+2 pairs of Guards (one veteran and one soldier) on patrol, and 1d6 pickpockets (see Appendix).

11C. Massiran's Bazaar

Tucked away near the city's western wall, Massiran's would easily be mistaken for just another home were it not for the strange and exotic music that constantly emanates from the half-open front door. Inside, the place is a jumble of items that are every bit as strange and exotic as the music, all placed on shelves — or on each other — with seeming disregard for any kind of order.

At most times of the day and evening, behind the small counter, buried right at the back of the shop, sits a wizened, pale-skinned man with only three teeth and a similar number of hairs on his head. This is Massiran Kunge, a lifelong collector of curios, oddments, and other strange items. Many of the things Kunge has collected are junk: oddments of twisted metal that, he claims, were parts of the Masters' machines; hundreds of small glass beads; and other items and bric-a-brac of that nature.

However, in his obsessive collecting of the unusual, Kunge has uncovered one or two genuine artifacts (information about these items is not available through skill checks, but only by roleplaying — i.e., by speaking to Kunge):

- A strange organ with many pipes and nozzles, from which the shop's exotic music emanates. The organ need simply be wound up (a full-round action), and it then plays by itself for 1 hour. Kunge refuses to part with this item for any price, for, he says, the music is soothing to him.
- A yellow sphere made of what appears to be glass, but far more resistant to harm. Kunge can make this item give off a soft glow, equivalent to lantern light (activating it requires a DC 16 Use Magic Device check; it glows for 10 minutes at a time). Kunge believes this to be a "powerful artifact of the Masters." He's wrong, though — it was a child's toy, used only to teach the basics of magical lore. He will not part with it for less than 75 gp, and initially asks 180 gp.
- An ornate cage containing a small tin bird. The broken clockwork mechanism on the base of the cage is beyond Kunge's ability to repair (it requires a DC 30 Disable Device check), but the item is notable merely for its exquisite carving. Kunge initially asks 150 gp for the item, as is. If a PC manages to repair it, he may part with it for as little as 60 gp, though he remains loathe to do so. The repaired bird twitters and moves on its perch whenever it is wound up. Should a hero repair the bird and then allow Kunge to keep it, he or she has a friend in the old man for as long as they both live.

- An ancient book, ironbound and written in First Speech, entitled *Rituals & Ceremonies*. This book contains many entries detailing magical rituals of the Masters, one of which is "Summoning the Blood Angel": "By means of a great effusion of their own blood, a summoning circle may call forth the Blood Angel. Only a Master can control such a mighty power. Were lesser beings to summon it, untold chaos and devastation would be wrought, for it is an engine of destruction that can be harmed only by those whose blood called it forth, and they would not survive the ritual." Kunge's initial asking price for the book is 100 gp. He will also translate the relevant section for the heroes if none of them understands First Speech, whether or not they purchase the book, but charges 5 gp for this service.

- Other items at your discretion

The biggest problem with buying from Kunge is that he is loathe to part with anything. It all has a profound sentimental value to him, and he talks at length about where and when he acquired every single item about which a PC expresses an interest. As he does so, he gets misty-eyed about his "personal attachment" to it and then balk at selling. It requires a DC 18 Diplomacy or Profession (merchant) check, or an offer of double the initial asking price, in order to make him release the item.

Development: If the PCs ask around Borat for people who might know something of ancient magic or rituals (such as the *Rite of the Blood Storm*), they are directed to Massiran's Bazaar. The old man does have information, as outlined above, although he is likely to make the heroes sit through hours of anecdotes about how he acquired the book before selling it to them.

In addition to Kunge's value in advancing the heroes' knowledge of the Blood Angel, his shop may well become a common stopping-point for heroes who discover unusual oddments in the course of their adventures. The old man can afford to spend roughly 50 gp per week on such items. Of course, no one is entirely sure where he gets the money, since he so rarely sells anything. (The adventure's default assumption is that he simply has a large inheritance that he is quietly eroding in his old age, but you can easily substitute this with something more exotic if you prefer).

Other than buying and selling, the most likely thing the PCs are likely to try here is theft, either through subtlety or force. Kunge certainly isn't capable of stopping them! Selling the items once they are stolen definitely presents a problem, however — most of Kunge's "artifacts" are virtually worthless (despite what he thinks), and those that have value are quite recognizable, which means that selling them without being implicated as the thieves will be difficult.

NPCs: Massiran Kunge (*male Exp 3; Use Magic Device +11*) and 1d6–4 customers (usually professionals or merchants).

12M. The Old Keep

When Borat was first founded, this ancient building was one of the first to be raised. Constructed of black stone that

seems impervious to any human interference (even the strongest of men cannot chip the surface), it is a relic of the Masters' time. Even today, several hundred years after it was first built, it is the last and best stronghold of Borat. Should an enemy arise against whom all other defenses fail, the king would mount his last stand in these black-walled halls.

Although very strongly built, the Old Keep is far too small to be an effective defense for the whole city, which is why it serves now only as Darragan's last bastion. The exterior dimensions are roughly 50 feet to a side, but the walls are 5 feet thick, leaving an interior space of only 40 feet. Even with triple-bunking, no more than 500 people could shelter here, and if they did, food and water would soon be exhausted. Such matters of supply were no concern to the Masters, who could summon anything they needed with magic, but these realities are a critical failing of the keep in current times. To combat the problem, the king has ordered a large stockpile of food and water to be kept ready in the building. A defending force of 200 men could be supplied for a month from the stockpile. (DC 20)

Few people have seen the interior of the keep, for it is not open to the public. The layout is very simple: each of the four stories is basically an open space, with ranks of bunk beds taking up one half of the floor and tables, and chairs and other supplies the other half. A spiral staircase runs up the center of the building. Several siege engines such as mangonels and ballistae have been placed on the roof. (DC 25)

NPCs: Four veteran Kingdom Guards watch over the Keep's doors at all times. Otherwise, the building is kept empty except during the weekly cleaning and replacement of the stockpiled supplies, when the guard is tripled and 1d6+4 laborers are allowed inside.

13G. The Public Halls

Comprised of two large buildings on the riverfront, the Public Halls are the centre of civil administration in Borat (for both the city and the kingdom). In these paneled and marbled halls, all civil court cases are decided, either by Marlog Trepp himself or by an appointed Justice with full powers to render judgments. This is also the site of all planning for public works such as the city walls and river gates, and for compiling, assessing, and responding to the reports of the appointed Town Captains. In particular, taxation reports (but not the actual tax monies) are received and assessed here.

Marlog Trepp has his office here overlooking the river. He is almost always present during the daylight hours, and often well into the night as well. His office has an adjoining bedroom for those occasions when he decides not to bother going home overnight.

The Public Halls are also used by the king to make public addresses, though he does this only rarely. More often, any decisions are simply relayed to Trepp, who sends out criers to inform the citizens of the city. Some civic functions are also held here, such as the annual Merchants' Ball.

The facilities can also be hired as meeting space; in fact, some trade guilds hold their monthly meetings at the Halls.

NPCs: Marlog Trepp (see Appendix), one patrol of Kingdom Guards. During the day, 2d20 petitioners (any background) are here conducting business, while 2d6+20 clerks are here at work. The building never closes entirely, and even late at night there are 1d6–3 petitioners and 2d4 clerks on hand.

14M. The River Gates

The River Borat flows right through the middle of the capital. Initially, the city walls were built right across the river, with culverts set into them to allow the water to pass through. When the Willowslow dam was built, the planners realized that the culverts would not be able to deal with the extra water flow needed to transport goods down river, and these sections of walls were demolished.

In their place, two giant gatehouses were built. Each set of gates has been oiled and greased to protect it from the elements, then set into the city walls where they reach the river. Heavy iron chains hold the gates open, allowing the water to flow through the gap without obstruction, and also allowing goods brought along the river to be transported right into the heart of the city. However, should the city need to be defended, the chains can be released, and the flow of the water will bring the gates swinging shut (to be locked with chains from the inside), thus barring entry to the city through the river.

The gates themselves are made of 4-inch-thick iron bars, with a similar amount of space between each bar. This allows the flow of water to continue into the city during a siege, though the defenders will need to watch out for attackers poisoning the river.

Development: If for some reason the PCs decide they need to close the gates, the only way to do so is either by releasing the chains from their connections to the city wall (which requires overcoming the guards in the towers there, or somehow convincing them to go along with the plan), or by attacking the chains directly. The chains have a hardness of 10 and each requires 40 points of damage to sever.

NPCs: The gates are attached to the walls at guard towers, which have the usual garrison (see "The City Fortifications," below). Otherwise, there may be 1d6–4 locals around (any background), perhaps fishing in the river or attending to tasks of some kind.

15G. The Royal Palace

A great deal of the actual work of running the kingdom is done elsewhere, but all power resides in this impressive edifice. King Darragan usually listens to the counsel of his advisors, and even relies heavily on them to complete the many tasks he orders, but there is never any question of his rulership.

The palace is merely a two-storey structure, though the high vaulted ceilings of each level are twice the height of those in an ordinary building. The square central section is given over to the Great Hall, the Court Room, and several smaller meeting rooms. The western wing holds sleeping quarters, libraries, and other facilities for the king and his entourage, while the eastern wing includes servants' quarters, the kitchen, and the laundry.



Some visitors to Borat are surprised by the opulence of the palace and its lack of fortification, but both qualities are quite deliberate: the opulence was designed to give an impression of great wealth and power (even though the impression of wealth is these days false) while the lack of fortification avoided what would likely have been an expensive and futile round of construction — as designed, the palace would simply be too large, with too many windows, to be efficiently defensible. And with the Old Keep nearby, the king already had a strong defensive point that he could easily reach in the event of an attack. (DC 25)

Entry to the palace is prohibited to anyone who does not carry an invitation bearing the royal seal. Guards at each entrance check every visitor to make sure they have this invitation: even those with familiar faces, such as Marlog Trepp, must show the proper paperwork (both Trepp and Ameira Lanslaine have invitations that are valid at any time or date). (DC 30 Knowledge [local] or DC 25 Gather Information). Forging the royal seal is very difficult, requiring a DC 30 Forgery check.

NPCs: King Darragan (see Appendix), 1 platoon of veteran Kingdom Guards (4 Guards with the king, the remainder patrolling the palace and guarding all entrances in further groups of four), 2d10 guests and friends of the king (use courtier stats), and 2d6+20 servants.

16L. Stinkwater's Place

If one were to ask most locals about places to stay in Borat, they'd suggest only two options: the Crown (Area 3L) or the Arms (6L). In fact, there actually is a third option, although even at a glance it is easy to see why it's rarely mentioned. Stinkwater's is a dive of a place, located at the downstream end of the city. By the time the river reaches this area, it's badly fouled with the waste of the whole city, creating a truly noxious stench. (DC 15)

What Stinkwater's Place lacks in bouquet, it does make up for in . . . well, not much. The place is truly disappointing: its bare floorboards are sticky from ancient spillages, the furniture is wobbly and mismatched, and the clientele is as rough as the décor. Its one redeeming feature, at least in the eyes of its regular customers, is that "Old Stink's" is the only place in town that always has strong spirits in stock, and at bargain prices — sure the stuff tastes foul, but it's potency that's valued at Stinkwater's. (DC 20)

Olan "Stinkwater" Vesk is the proprietor. His nickname comes from its being said that he is the only man in Borat who would smell better for a dip in the river water outside. In addition to the powerful spirits he serves, Vesk has a couple of rooms upstairs with simple straw mattresses tossed on the floor. Anyone can sleep there, no questions asked, for 1 cp per night. Vesk doesn't limit the number of guests, so sometimes these 20-foot-by-20-foot rooms are jammed with more than two dozen people apiece. (DC 25)

Vesk is also said to be an excellent source of news and information, if one can stomach speaking to him. He expects to be paid well for anything he passes on, but he hears a surprising amount of what's going on both within and around the city. (DC 25)

As might be imagined for an inn of its kind, Stinkwater's is a good place for meeting the true underbelly of the city — the kind of people who beg on streetcorners so they'll have enough coins to drink themselves into a stupor each night. The heroes won't meet any "respectable" criminals here (that is, any crook who has a reasonably successful operation), but there's always someone in Stinkwater's willing to do just about anything for a surprisingly small amount of coin.

Development: Olan Vesk is actually an agent in the service of the king . . . at least indirectly. The information he sells is always as accurate and complete as he can make it, but he passes details of all his clients and their questions on to Marlog Trepp, whose opinion is that it's better to help traitors and criminals make contacts with each other — for then you can net them all at once, saving time and expense.

Tactics: Vesk attempts to silence anyone who learns his secret, preferring the use of poison or a knife in the dark. He never risks a straight-up fight if he can avoid it, knowing that his best chance of success is from ambush. Unless his secret is exposed to them, Vesk's clients will all rush to his

aid (though they suffer a –2 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks due to their inebriated state).

NPCs: Olan Vesk (see Appendix), plus 2d12 patrons (usually common laborers, occasionally artisans).

THE CITY FORTIFICATIONS

In addition to the landmarks listed above, one major element of construction seen by every visitor to Borat is the imposing city fortifications. (These have not been given numbers on the city map because they encompass the entire outer wall, the inner wall around the Palace Quarter, and every guard tower in the city.)

The Outer Wall: A massive earthwork wall roughly 15 feet thick at the base and 10 feet across at the summit, the outer wall also features a 5-foot-high wooden palisade along its top, allowing defenders to lean over and fire on anyone approaching the wall while retaining cover themselves. A platoon of Kingdom Guards patrols the walls at all times, usually split into groups of 3 men. Patrol schedules are changed daily.

The Inner Wall: Surrounding the Palace Quarter, the inner wall is a 30-foot-high barrier of fitted stone 8 feet thick. It is equipped with a parapet, crenellations, and regular battlements, with cauldrons at the ready to pour boiling water (oil is too expensive to pour on enemies by the barrel). As on the outer wall, a platoon of Kingdom Guards is assigned to this wall at all times, patrolling on a schedule that changes every day.

Guard Towers: Borat sports no less than 17 guard towers, each 40 feet high and garrisoned by a full 12-person patrol, though only 4 Guards are on duty at any one time in each tower. The entrance to every tower is set level with the top of the wall into which it is built, and each tower is constructed of fitted stone for maximum strength. The towers have cauldrons of boiling water on their roofs, as well as numerous arrow slits for the use of the defenders.

KING DARRAGAN'S DILEMMA

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

Despite his success in achieving control, the King faces difficulties in maintaining it. Many inhabitants of the region feel no attachment to the nation of Borat. They feel loyal to their families, their neighbors, or, at most, their home settlement. Those who feel loyalty to a "nation" imposed on them by a distant capital are rare to the point of non-existence. It's true that equally few are willing to risk their lives to oppose the king's authority, but it takes more than a lack of opposition to sustain a nation; it takes officials to implement and maintain the laws, workers to build the

roads and buildings, and troops to protect them all. Most of all, though, it takes money to pay for all these things.

Until now, Borat's gold has been raised through heavy taxation. But one can tax people only so harshly and for so long before there is nothing left to tax, and Borat is no more than a decade from economic collapse. King Darragan needs more gold for his treasury — a lot more gold. And on the New Coast, the name widely associated with gold is Malador. Unless Borat can get access to some of the wealth that flows through Malador, it will remain financially crippled, with an ever-increasing risk of collapse. Taxes are simply too severe, and loyalty to the center too fragile, for the nation to endure long in its current state.

The king has two main options for dealing with Malador: force and diplomacy. The prior course is the most obvious, and at least in theory Borat should be able to conquer the other city quite readily. Malador has no standing army of any consequence. However, large numbers of adventurers live in Malador, and (in order to claim tax concessions) most of them are members of the Malador militia: In theory, they are required to report for duty if the city is attacked. The numbers and abilities of those who might respond are an unknown quantity, and a considerable deterrent to the use of force — for as Darragan well knows (being of heroic stature himself), even a small group of experienced Iron Heroes could fight a much larger force to a standstill.

There is also the question of what other mercenary forces Malador could raise, and what havoc Maladoran gold could wreak in Borat itself if its agents lavished around enough money. An invading Borati force would have to guard its supply lines closely, or it might find itself cut off by rebellion at its rear.

With these concerns in mind, King Darragan has thus far relied on diplomacy to get what he wants. In this case, "diplomacy" has included considerable bribery, a practice that has further depleted the royal treasury, and all without any measurable results. The rulers of Malador are understandably reluctant to give up the principal source of the city's — and their own — wealth.

As **Blood Storm** progresses, the growing poverty of Borat and the rising tensions between the kingdom and the city of Malador mean that the time for diplomacy comes to a bitter end.

Chapter Two: Storm Warning

During this chapter, the PCs find themselves in the midst of a rebellion enacted by the miners of Copperdell. Depending on the hook you choose to use with your heroes (see “Welcome to Copperdell” for suggestions), this rebellion may or may not have started already when the PCs arrive in the town. The section below is written assuming that the rebellion has already occurred, but you can easily assume it has not yet taken place if that works better for your game.

Rebellion in Copperdell

Although most of those involved do not know the real cause, rebellion has flared due to the actions of the Cult of the Crimson Path. Of course, while rebellions and civil wars are part and parcel of the cult’s apocalyptic agenda, in this case provoking a revolution was not the original intent: they simply wanted to steal some mining tools.

Copperdell’s problems began when Ombrosian Hannant was appointed to the role of Town Captain. King Darragan usually makes good choices in his appointees, but mistakes do happen from time to time — and Hannant was one of those mistakes. Arrogant and condescending, he treated all the locals as if they were indentured workers, even if they were free folk. He also increased the ore quotas at the mine without reporting the change to his superiors. The extra production was sold illegally to Malador with the assistance of several corrupt guards.

Hannant’s arrogance and corruption created a smoldering resentment against his authority that soon led to small acts of indiscipline and sabotage. His response to these minor acts of rebellion merely compounded the problem: Hannant had workers arrested on the flimsiest of suspicions and severely punished for the incidents, often without the knowledge of the local Guard Colonel, Gann Chovett. These overreactions caused a rising anger and a sense amongst the indentured workers that they had little left to lose.

The event that eventually shattered all sense of order, however, was the theft of a large quantity of shovels, pick axes, wheelbarrows, lumber, lanterns, and other mining equipment. In total, over 100 gp worth of equipment went missing, causing Hannant to hit the roof. After a search failed to turn up the goods, dozens of workers were hauled away and beaten to make them reveal who had taken the items, but none would admit who it was.

In truth, the workers *couldn’t* reveal where the stolen goods had been hidden because none of them knew. The theft was committed by the local members of the Crimson Path, who needed the equipment in order to tunnel into an ancient vault of the Masters. The search for the vault had been long and difficult, and once they finally located it, the cultists had no patience to acquire the necessary items by legal means.

After two days had gone by without any word of the stolen goods, Hannant implemented a truly draconian measure: if the culprits did not confess and return the equipment within six hours, he would randomly draw the names of one-tenth of the miners. Each worker drawn would be considered equally and fully responsible for the theft, and be punished accordingly. Because of the amount of the theft, this would

be tried as a major crime under Borati law, so any man or woman who already bore the Lawbreaker’s Rune would be subject to death by hanging.

More than half of the indentured workers in Copperdell bear that rune.

Faced with the realization that many of them would be executed and many more branded for a crime they did not commit, the workers rose in rebellion. Hannant was caught completely by surprise; worse, so were the local Kingdom Guards, for they had not been warned of Hannant’s actions or his ultimatum. Well-armed and well-trained, most of the guards fought their way clear of the initial uprising, but they were too few in number to stop the rebellion from sweeping through the town; after several hours of fighting, the Guards were forced to retreat to await reinforcements from the capital.

Before or after the Rebellion?

There are advantages and disadvantages to having your player characters already present in Copperdell when the rebellion first takes place. The advantages are that they get to see Hannant’s treatment of the workers and witness the formation of the Rene-Soyval-Porey leadership. This can make the PCs feel much more connected to events.

The disadvantage is that the PCs might decide to fight against the rebellion, and with the aid of powerful heroes, the Kingdom Guards will likely crush the rebellion before it starts. This isn’t a problem in some respects: it provides an excellent reason for the player characters to be asked to Borat in Chapter 3, for instance. It does mean, however, that the best opportunity to learn about the Cult of the Crimson Path within Copperdell is lost.

If this opportunity is lost, you may use a different hook to make sure the heroes still tangle with the Cult here. For instance, if they previously completed **Dark Harbor** and Porey learns who they are, he might decide to have them assassinated as revenge for their actions in thwarting the Crimson Path in Malador.

Running This Chapter

This chapter does not offer much in the way of scripted encounters (though there are some). Instead, it outlines the important locations in Copperdell, as well the principal NPCs involved in the rebellion (on all sides of the situation), the information they hold, and their agendas. There are literally hundreds of ways that events can play out in this chapter, and no attempt has been made to address them all. Instead, you are given all the necessary information about who is involved in the rebellion and what they are trying to do. It’s up to you to determine how these motivations and plans interact, and what effect the actions of the heroes have upon them.

You will also notice that no attempt has been made to present a list of all the possible questions and options the heroes might employ, nor to assign DCs to the innumerable

plans they may undertake. You should assign these values yourself as the situations arise, based on the capabilities of the heroes and the DC guidelines for each skill in the *Monte Cook Presents: Iron Heroes* rule book.

Five sections remain in this chapter:

- “Welcome to Copperdell” provides possible reasons for the heroes’ presence in Copperdell.
- “Copperdell Factions” describes the major NPCs active in Copperdell, noting their allegiances, motivations, and personalities, as well as their usual locations. These are the characters who are actively involved with the rebellion, on either side, and/or with the Cult of the Crimson Path.
- “Copperdell Locations” provides details of the principal locations in and around the town, including the rebel headquarters, the Kingdom Guard camp, and the Crimson Path’s hidden stronghold.
- “Copperdell Encounters” outlines some designed encounters that the heroes may have in the town, depending on their actions in resolving the situation.
- “Aftermath” details the events which follow the conclusion of the rebellion.

A party of four 5th-level heroes should earn enough experience to progress to 6th level by the end of this chapter.

Welcome to Copperdell

Here are some suggestions for getting your player characters to Copperdell and involved in the rebellion:

- The heroes are working as guards for someone traveling from Malador to Borat; this person might be a merchant with a particularly rich cargo, for example, or an ambassador on a diplomatic mission. The rebellion flares up just as they arrive, and the heroes must extricate themselves and their employer from the situation.
- If any of the heroes are from Borat, they may have a friend or family member in Copperdell and be concerned for that individual’s safety. A small group of skilled individuals should be able to slip into the town and check on a friend’s or relative’s condition.
- The rebellion presents an excellent chance for Iron Heroes to hire themselves out to the highest bidder. If your PCs are a mercenary bunch, this might be the best motivation for them. (Of course, surviving to spend their payment could be a challenge!)
- Depending on the player characters’ reputation with the authorities of either Malador or Borat, they might be hired by one side or the other to intercede in the conflict (see the information on the Maladoran and Borati factions below for the goals they will have the heroes pursue).
- The heroes may have heard rumors of an ancient vault of the Masters in the Copperdell area, and they have come looking for it. This option presents the

PCs with a piece of information that they will otherwise have to discover for themselves; it can be a useful choice if your group lacks characters with investigative skills.

In all cases, the PCs should be aware from the very beginning of two important facts: (i) that none of the factions involved in the rebellion will willingly allow anyone to leave Copperdell until the situation is resolved; and (ii) that anyone bearing arms when the village falls to Borati troops (as it almost certainly will without the heroes’ intervention) is likely to be treated as a rebel and a traitor to the king, even if they are not actually from Borat.

Entering Copperdell

For the player characters, the two keys to success in this chapter are (i) discrediting Ombrosian Hannant and (ii) revealing Ildwin Porey as a servant of the Crimson Path. Achieving these goals is almost impossible without gaining access to the town of Copperdell. If the heroes begin the adventure outside the town (for instance, as employees of Borat or Malador), then they will need to somehow make their way inside. The two best means of achieving this goal are diplomacy and stealth.

If they are present at one of the truce negotiations, the heroes can request access to the city as “observers.” This requires a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check against Katherine Soyval (if the heroes are in Borat’s employ), Maxxen Juthe (if they serve Malador), or both (if they are freelancers).

Alternatively, the heroes can opt simply to sneak into town. The walls are guarded, of course, but the typical rebel guard has a +0 modifier to Spot and Listen checks. That’s enough to detect soldiers in heavy gear, perhaps, but their chances of spotting stealthy Iron Heroes are very slim. Of course, not having an “official” presence in the town will complicate the PCs’ lives, for in that case they cannot readily approach the various NPCs there.

COPPERDELL FACTIONS

Detailed in the shaded text below are the four primary factions involved in the Copperdell Rebellion. Following the shaded text are detailed descriptions the various non-player character(s) who lead each of these groups, sorted in alphabetical order by given name. Unless noted otherwise in parentheses following a particular character’s name, the stats for all of these NPCs are listed in the Appendix.

Borati Loyalists

Leaders: Gann Chovett (Guard colonel), Maxxen Juthe, Ombrosian Hannant (appointed Town Captain)

Objectives: End the rebellion in such a way that the king’s authority over Copperdell is clearly established and further rebellions discouraged. Also see the individual character descriptions below for the leaders’ personal agendas.

Forces: When the rebellion breaks out, there are 80 Guard soldiers, 20 veterans, 10 sergeants, 9 captains, and one colonel (Gann Chovett). Roughly a third of these forces are lost (killed, injured, or captured) during the retreat out of the town. Of these forces, 12 soldiers, 3 sergeants, and 1 captain are wholly in the pocket of Hannant, who uses them for his dirty work.

When Juthe arrives, he brings a further 120 soldiers, 80 veterans, 20 sergeants, and 10 captains with him.

Copperdell Rebels

Leaders: Ildwin Porey, Drammoc Rene, Katerine Soyval

Objectives: End the rebellion through a negotiated settlement so that none of the members are executed for their actions. (In truth, they don't expect this to be possible unless they get military aid from Malador. In the absence of Maladoran aid, the rebel leaders hope simply to hold off the Kingdom Guards long enough for someone other than Hannant to be put in charge so that they might get less draconian terms.)

Forces: Approximately 400 rebels

Cult of the Crimson Path

Leaders: Ildwin Porey

Objectives: Continue the rebellion as long as possible so that the Cult has time to hide its operations before the Kingdom Guards overrun the town and find their stronghold.

Forces: 4 Cult converts (rebels), 6 Crimson Path cultists, 5 cult champions, 2 dire glooms

Maladoran Envoy

Leaders: Holpan Seamander

Objectives: Win as much advantage for Malador as possible from the situation, while committing to as little risk as possible in return.

Forces: 4 bodyguards (as veteran Kingdom Guards), 4 assassins (kept hidden from all other factions)

Drammoc Rene

Position: "Military Commander" of the Copperdell Rebels

Usual Location: Rebel Headquarters, Copperdell Mine

Biography: Drammoc Rene has always had a problem with his temper, a fact that has gotten him into trouble many times during his life. He had served three different one-year terms as an indentured worker before he was twenty. For several years after that, he managed to avoid trouble: he got permission to move to a different part of the kingdom, where he could start afresh, and he avoided contact with others as much as possible to limit the chances of one of his "incidents" occurring again.

Unfortunately, some local ruffians, seeing a large, broken-nosed man who kept to himself, decided to prove how tough they were by picking a fight. Drammoc did his best to

avoid the situation, but eventually one of them backed him up against the wall and slapped him. When Drammoc recovered his senses, the other two ruffians were running for help, while the first lay screaming on the ground with both arms broken.

Drammoc was sentenced to a five-year term for this incident, and has now served three of those years. Until Hannant's order to arrest one-tenth of the workers for the theft of the tools, Drammoc had been a model prisoner. When he heard Hannant's announcement, however, something snapped in him once more. His explosion of anger resulted in the crippling of two guards, and was in fact the spark that ignited the rebellion.

Agenda: Drammoc has been chosen as military leader for the rebels due to his personal prowess in combat. He's quickly become aware of just how little he knows about conducting a military operation, but he's doing the best he can. He has sent most of the rebels to garrison the city wall, but has split out a smaller group to work on fortifying the mine. These men and women are transferring as much food and water as possible into the depths of the mine, as well as constructing barricades and other defenses around the mine shaft.

When the wall falls (as Drammoc is sure it will when the Guard attacks in force), he plans to fall back to the mine to make a last stand. The rebels know the mine, and especially the tunnels, better than the Guards, and he's hoping this advantage will let the rebels hold out longer than they otherwise could. Maybe, if they hold long enough, they'll get better terms from the king.

Drammoc limits his activities to military matters. He leaves diplomacy and negotiation to the other rebel leaders. He likes Katerine Soyval far better than he does Ildwin Porey, although he keeps this to himself and is not quite sure what it is about the latter that unsettles him.

Roleplaying Tips: Drammoc is a direct, no-nonsense fellow whose first instinct is always to take action. He works tirelessly toward any goal he sets for himself and, in his current circumstances, sees no reason to avoid confrontation.

When playing Drammoc, sit forward in your chair and speak in rapid, clipped sentences, and make eye contact with whomever you are addressing as often as you can. Your portrayal of Drammoc should convey a sense of strength and energy. He also has a broad sense of humor and a "robust" vocabulary: He often curses and makes off-color remarks, so you should do so too, within the limits of what is considered appropriate for your gaming group.

Stats: See Appendix.

XP Note: If the heroes attempt to protect the rebel leaders from Borati revenge and manage to keep Drammoc alive, award them 300 XP each.

Gann Chovett

Position: Guard Colonel of Copperdell's Kingdom Guards

Usual Location: Guard encampment, or in the thick of any fighting

Biography: Chovett is rather stolid and unimaginative, qualities that have been a great boon to his career as a soldier. When given instructions that most soldiers would consider suicidal, Chovett sees only an order to be obeyed. He always grinds his way slowly but surely toward any objective he has been assigned.

Unfortunately, the qualities that won him promotion to Colonel also leave him completely unequipped to deal with a sly and disingenuous man such as Ombrosian Hannant. When Chovett gets an order from Hannant, he obeys it, even though he often does not understand why it has been given. That he should ask for Hannant's reasons behind any decision does not enter his head: Hannant is his superior and, in Chovett's worldview, that means he should be obeyed. The only exception to this rule occurs with purely military decisions.

At the beginning of the rebellion, Chovett is the senior officer in the field, and he commands in his measured, impassive way: that is, he fights until it is clear that the battle cannot be won immediately, and then withdraws to regroup and plan in an orderly and disciplined fashion.

Agenda: After the initial fighting and the Guards' retreat, Chovett immediately sent to the capital for reinforcements. That the new troops will doubtless come with a more senior commander than he is a secret source of relief for him: he will be able to return to what he does best — following the orders of a superior military officer, one whose instructions will not seem as random and inexplicable as Hannant's.

Chovett's primary objective is to suppress the rebellion as soon as possible, and thereby reestablish the king's rule over Copperdell. Given his personality, however, he does not have any specific plans of his own for how this should be done. Were he forced to plan the campaign, he would launch a concentrated attack on one point of the town wall, then keep his troops in a single unit as he ground his way through the rebel positions: bloody work, but now that his men are concentrated and organized, it would be effective. To Chovett's relief, however, the king sends Maxxen Juthe, endowed with the temporary rank of Kingdom Marshall, to take over the military command.

Roleplaying Tips: Deliver Chovett's dialogue in a slow, measured tone. Never leap to the point you want to make; always start from the beginning, establishing the situation and the underlying issues that affect it.

For instance, if asked for his opinion on making a direct attack against a position, Chovett won't simply say, "That would be a bad idea because we don't have the manpower to hold anything we take"; instead, he'd begin with an outline of the forces he had, the forces his enemy had, the strength of the position, the time and difficulties of getting into position to make the attack, and so on (and on, and on...).

Stats: Use standard Guard colonel stats.

Holpan Seamander

Position: Maladoran Envoy

Usual Location: Truce Grounds

Biography: The Seamander family owns a moderate fleet of fishing boats that operate from Malador. While they lack the power and prestige of more established families, they are definitely a part of the city's elite.

Holpan spent the first years of his adult life working on his family's boats, learning the trade on which their wealth was based. During that time, being a natural actor, he quickly picked up the mannerisms of a bluff and hearty seaman, a demeanor he has put to excellent use since then as a disguise for his ruthless and canny negotiating abilities. Many who have struck deals where they thought they were fleecing the "saltwater fool" have learned, much to their chagrin, that they were the ones being played.

Now the head of his family and just past his fiftieth birthday, Seamander is thinking of running for the next open position on the Maladoran Council. The successful completion of his task in Copperdell is vital to those ambitions.

Agenda: Officially, Malador has dispatched Seamander in order to "aid in bringing the current unfortunate circumstances to an end, with a minimum of bloodshed." In truth, his purpose here is threefold:

- If possible, prevent Hannant's illicit trade of excess ore with Malador from being discovered. If their arrangement does become known, Seamander is to deny categorically that his government was aware of the trade and to blame the transactions on "rogue businesspeople."
- Give the rebels enough encouragement regarding forthcoming "Maladoran aid" that they continue their resistance (in order to weaken the king's authority elsewhere in the kingdom), as well as increasing the cost to the Borati treasury. Seamander is of course forbidden from making specific or binding promises to the rebels: Malador does not *yet* want war with Borat.
- To assure the Borati of Malador's overall goodwill and friendship (all the while attempting to learn as much as possible about the king's instructions, the disposition of the Borati army, and any other intelligence he might uncover).

As noted above, Seamander's ambitions will be damaged if he fails his duties in Copperdell. To that end, he is willing to use virtually any measures necessary to ensure success, up to and including the murder of anyone who gets in his way. At least one such assassination is listed under "Copperdell Encounters," and others may arise at your discretion.

Roleplaying Tips: Seamander always plays up his past as a fisherman. He sprinkles his conversation liberally with nautical terms: "Let's clear the decks"; "You can't run straight into the wind"; always using "port" and "starboard" instead of left and right; and so forth.

Seamander is also adept at making others feel as if he is taking them into his confidence. He does this by leaning close to whomever he is speaking with, dropping his voice, and glancing around as if watching out for anyone else who might overhear.

Stats: See Appendix.

XP Note: If the heroes manage to reveal Seamander's duplicity to Maxxen Juthe, Katherine Soyval, or both, award them 300 XP each.

Ildwin Porey

Position: Copperdell's "Civil Liaison" with the rebels; secretly head of the Cult of the Crimson Path in Copperdell

Usual Location: Rebel Headquarters, Truce Grounds, Crimson Path Stronghold

Biography: Ildwin Porey was a typical recruit for the Cult of the Crimson Path: the embittered third son of a respectable family, a youth who felt that the world owed him. He was recruited shortly after quitting his second apprenticeship, seduced by offers of the power to punish those who had belittled and held him back all his life.

Porey soon proved himself a recruit of exceptional promise. He embraced the nihilism of the sect wholeheartedly, showing no compunction at any of the tasks he was set — even to the point of allowing himself to be branded and sentenced to five years' indentured service in order to seek out more recruits amongst the convicts. In time, the Cult marked him for a more senior role and sent him to Copperdell to oversee the search for the lost Vault of the Masters there.

Unfortunately, finding the vault itself took longer than he expected. Impatient to complete his task and to prove his worth for yet more prestigious appointments, Porey gave the order to steal the equipment necessary to break into the vault. That order precipitated the rebellion.

Agenda: Porey didn't intend to cause a rebellion. After his initial elation at the death and violence the uprising would bring, he quickly realized that it could present a very real danger to his mission. If the king's forces overran the rebels too quickly, it was likely that the Cult's operation would be uncovered. Such a discovery could badly damage the prospects of success for later stages of the plan.

Porey therefore put himself forward as an intermediary between the townsfolk and the rebels, gently warning the inhabitants of the village that they must deal openly with the rebels or face anarchy in the streets (a claim that was much enhanced by the looting of the Emporium; see "Copperdell Locations" below).

To the rebels, he presented himself as a sympathizer, disclosing his own Lawbreaker's Rune, which he claimed was earned for burglary. Of course, Porey is no burglar, so his actual working knowledge of burglary is limited, but it has not yet been challenged. However, if a character with at

least 5 ranks in Open Locks speaks with Porey even briefly about such matters, that character can quickly discern that he has little knowledge of the subject. If confronted about this, Porey attempts to storm out of the room, then races to the Crimson Path stronghold and, assuming that his cover is blown, orders his men to break out of the village.

Porey's main objective in joining the rebel leadership was twofold: first, to encourage them to continue resistance long enough for his followers to hide all traces of their operation; and second, to take part in the negotiations and thereby slip his information to Crimson Path contacts in the besieging force.

Roleplaying Tips: Porey likes to portray himself as the voice of reason (which is ironic, given how profoundly unhinged he is), and is quick to try to placate others when they become upset. As DM, you should play him as bright and alert in his conversation, with a slightly smug smile. He's a good judge of others' abilities, and is effusively friendly if the PCs are presented to him as allies of the rebellion . . . and unfailingly polite even if they are presented as enemies. (In either case, he instantly recognizes how dangerous they are, and works to ingratiate himself with them.)

Stats: See Appendix.

XP Note: If the heroes manage to uncover Porey's true allegiance (as they should, eventually), award them full XP for defeating him even if he manages to escape justice.



Katherine Soyval

Position: "Chief Representative" of the Copperdell Rebels

Usual Location: Rebel Headquarters, Truce Grounds

Biography: Katherine Soyval grew up in the poorest neighborhood of the capital, and was determined to one day rise above her lowly beginnings. An intelligent young woman, she taught herself to read and to do arithmetic, ultimately earning a job as a clerk in the Public Halls. Unfortunately, her exposure to the vast sums of money being transacted by the kingdom proved too great a temptation for the nearly destitute youngster. She soon began to process an occasional false invoice, pocketing the money when the treasury paid out on the fake transaction.

Katherine got away with her scheme for many months, but eventually, overconfident, she wrote up one too many false claims. Her trickery was discovered, and she was quickly sentenced for the theft of over 300 gold pieces. She was sent to Copperdell, where she was employed by Rodderin Fleck, the previous Town Captain, as a clerk. Fleck knew of Katherine's previous crimes when trusted with such a position, but made it clear to her that she would pay the full penalty if she tried such a scheme with him. Katherine worked honestly for a year before Fleck retired and was

replaced by Ombrosian Hannant. The new Town Captain immediately dismissed her from her role as clerk, instead sending her to work in the mines.

Katerine assumes that Hannant dismissed her because he didn't trust her not to steal. In fact, he did so because he feared that, with access to the accounts, she would soon uncover *his* thefts. If Katerine ever sees the documents from Hannant's residence (see "Copperdell Locations"), she almost immediately realizes what he has been doing.

Agenda: In the immediate aftermath of the rebellion's first battle, there were several hours of disorder and chaos. The uprising was unplanned, and there was no one ready to step in and take control. Katerine initially wanted nothing to do with the rebellion, but she felt she had to do something when she saw the violence in the town begin to escalate. Securing the aid of Drammoc Rene and several other strong fighters, she set about restoring order.

At the time, Katerine's intention was simply to prevent mob rule. To her surprise, she found that people continued to look to her for leadership once things had settled down. Shouldering this unexpected responsibility, she instructed Drammoc to organize the defenses, and then tried to think of some way out of the situation that didn't involve a wholesale massacre of the rebels.

Unfortunately, as Katerine soon realized, the rebels have no hope of winning a long-term battle with the Kingdom Guards, having neither the training nor the equipment. The best they can hope for is to bloody the Guards a bit before they are all captured and executed. The best that she herself might be able to do is offer surrender in exchange for an agreement that only she and the other "leaders" would be executed — but there is little chance now that either her own people or Hannant himself would accept that offer.

But now, three things have happened that give Katerine a tiny glimmer of hope: First, Hannant is no longer in command of the besiegers, and his replacement may prove more reasonable; second, Malador has sent an envoy to the town, so perhaps the rebels can win some kind of protection from the port city; and third, Ildwin Porey has begun assisting her, and his confidence that the rebels can survive has given a great boost to her own morale.

With Porey's encouragement, Katerine plans to hold off the king's forces long enough to strike a deal with Malador: She is willing to pledge every last ounce of the mine's production to win Maladoran protection. Unfortunately for her, neither the Maladoran envoy nor her own trusted aide, Porey, is truly interested in an agreement.

Roleplaying Tips: Katerine is an organized, efficient, and responsible person, but she is not a flamboyant personality. She is in fact the kind of person who prepares a detailed agenda for every meeting and who takes precise minutes of what was discussed. When portraying Katerine, you should make constant references to this paperwork: "Just let me make a note of this," "I think I have a report on that," "In fact, what he said was . . .," and similar expressions are all perfectly suitable things for Katerine to say.

Stats: See Appendix.

XP Note: If the heroes attempt to protect the rebel leaders from Borati revenge and manage to keep Katerine alive, award them 300 XP each.

Maxxen Juthe

Position: Kingdom Guard General and currently King's Marshall, sent by Darragan to suppress the rebellion

Usual Location: Guard Encampment, Truce Grounds

Biography: When he joined the Kingdom Guards at the age of sixteen, Maxxen Juthe had vague hopes of one day becoming a sergeant-at-arms, like his father. Forty years later, he is one of the highest-ranking soldiers in Borat, a man who has been promoted many times due to his personal bravery, tactical ability, and unswerving loyalty to his king. His promotions have brought him great personal wealth and prestige, but he remains an old campaigner at heart, more comfortable in his armor than in courtier's clothes, and happier facing an enemy on the battlefield than at the truce table.

It might seem that a man who hates diplomats and diplomacy would be a poor choice for a royal negotiator, and in truth General Juthe is more prickly and difficult at the truce table than most. Still, he always means what he says and says what he means. This directness, coupled with his unquestionable loyalty, makes him a favored agent of the king.

Agenda: Juthe wants to end the rebellion as quickly as possible. However, unlike Hannant, he has some concern for the lives of the men under his command and even, though to a much lesser degree, for those of the rebels and their families. If the rebel leaders surrendered themselves, he would probably spare most of the rebels themselves, for to execute so many experienced miners would be a considerable drain on Borati ore production (and at a time when the need for good weapons and armor is as high as it has ever been).

Juthe is willing to consider any resolution to the rebellion that does not involve violence, if it can be done without compromising the king's authority. What Juthe must have, however, is a clear establishment of the king's rule. In the end, someone must be punished: he'll openly tell the player characters as much if they ask him. If the heroes negotiate this chapter *very* well, it's just possible that the people to pay will be Hannant and Porey, however, rather than Drammoc and Katerine.

Roleplaying Tips: Juthe is a former common soldier whose rare courage and tactical skills have raised him to a role in which he is not really comfortable. In negotiations, he is brusquely military in his demeanor and comments, leaving the cagey diplomacy ("a dirty game of lies and half-truths," in his opinion) to those more suited to it. In these situations, portray him as stiffly upright and impassive.

If the heroes manage to meet Juthe in a less formal setting, they will find him an honorable and reasonable man who is willing to listen to all sides of a situation, but whose loyalty rests firmly with his king. He will pursue whatever course he believes is best for Borat with dogged determination.

Stats: See Appendix.

The Fate of Maxxen Juthe

If your heroes have played through **Dark Harbor**, it's almost certain that they met Maxxen Juthe. The way they acted toward him in that situation and the part they played in resolving Councilor Rohdell's murder will have a significant impact on Juthe's attitude toward them now: Slightings will be remembered, and so will honorable and courageous behavior.

If Juthe somehow died during your run through **Dark Harbor** (an unlikely but not impossible occurrence), then simply use his personality and objectives as written here, but rename him and make him a different person.

Ombrosian Hannant

Position: Town Captain of Copperdell

Usual Location: Guard Encampment, Truce Grounds

Biography: Success, in some case, is merely a matter of one's *seeming* successful. This is a truism by which Ombrosian Hannant has lived his life: He has built a career on being close enough to others who have worked hard to gain some of their luster for himself.

In recent years, this history of indolence and opportunism has compounded into outright corruption. Hannant has routinely used each of his steadily more important appointments to promote himself and to line his wallet, often stealing the ideas of more talented subordinates and claiming them as his own. Eventually, Hannant's skill in taking credit for himself led to the greatest appointment of his life: Town Captain of Copperdell. Here was a great opportunity to establish himself as one of the great men and women of the kingdom.

The problem with great opportunities is that they are often also great challenges. Hannant simply didn't have the necessary skills to be successful in this role. He treated it exactly as he had all the others: an opportunity to make himself richer at the expense of others, never dreaming of the repercussions.

Agenda: The rebellion has shattered Hannant's once comfortable and complacent outlook on life. He knows his career has been badly damaged merely by the fact that the rebellion occurred. Far worse, the evacuation came so suddenly that he actually left incriminating documents in his home when he fled the town. If those documents should come to light, he is likely to join the rebels on the scaffold: stealing from the king is high treason, and Darragan would certainly choose to make an example.

Hannant is not handling the stress of the situation well at all. He is shrill and unreasonable in negotiations, demanding immediate and unconditional surrender from the rebels. This is counter-productive to his needs, as a more generous settlement would end the rebellion faster and reduce the risk of his documents being found, but he is far from thinking clearly at this point — in his mind, the rebels are a threat to his privileged lifestyle, and therefore they must be killed.

If his financial indiscretions seem likely to be revealed, Hannant takes desperate measures to wrest control of the situation (see Copperdell Events). Should everything fail, he shrilly denounces or implicates everyone about him, including Malador, in an attempt to drag as many people down with him as he can.

Roleplaying Tips: Depending on the circumstances, Hannant can be anything from a sniveling toady to a pompous, boastful bully. He's a political animal through and through, used to adjusting his behavior to suit the occasion. He's not quite on top of his game at the moment, however, so it is best to portray him as a bit oily and insincere. Smile too broadly, make extravagant compliments in a not-very-sincere tone of voice, and show a bit of sullen anger whenever Hannant does not get what he wants.

XP Note: If the heroes successfully manage to persuade Maxxen Juthe of Hannant's corruption and incompetence, award them 500 XP each.

Stats: Use standard Town Captain (appointee) stats.

COPPERDELL LOCATIONS

The map on page 66 shows the major locations within Copperdell and the surrounding area. Each is described in detail below.

Typical Buildings in Copperdell

Wooden exterior and interior, 1 storey; 1d4+3 squares wide by 1d4+3 squares deep. Each has 1d3 rooms and may have bedding in the roof space, accessible via ladder.

Any building is 90% likely to be a residence. Buildings used for commercial purposes sometimes (40% chance) have two stories, with living quarters equivalent to a standard building on the upper level and a single room on the lower storey.

Exterior and Interior Walls: Hardness 5; hp 30; Break DC 23.

Typical Door or Window Shutters: Hardness 5; hp 15; Break DC 18, Open Lock DC 20.

1. Rebel Headquarters

The rebels have made their headquarters in the barracks normally used by the Kingdom Guards. The barracks and its outbuildings are centrally located and were built to be defensible. Only luck and the suddenness of the uprising allowed the rebels to capture the holdings from the Guards.

The main barracks building is one of the few two-storey structures in the town; it is made wholly of stone. The ground floor contains a long galley-style kitchen and a mess hall, while the upper floor is where the soldiers had their beds. The rebels have now pushed all the beds into one end of the room and covered the walls with rough charcoal drawings of the town and of enemy positions outside it.

Dark smudges show where corrections and changes have been made. The lower floor, meanwhile, is still used for its original purpose: food for the rebels is prepared and served here, and a constant flow of people comes in as they seek to get a bite to eat before or after their shifts.

The building also has a cellar in which the Guards' stores were kept. Only a few scraps remain, for the rebels have many more mouths to feed than the cellar was designed to support.

Off the cellar are four cells. Previously these were used to hold anyone arrested by the Guard: now they hold 11 captured guardsmen.

Creatures: Unless she is negotiating at the Truce Grounds, Katerine Soyval is almost always here; she usually sleeps in one of the beds in the upper room. Drammoc Rene and Ildwin Porey are usually here as well. At any time of the day, there are also 2d10+10 rebels, as well as the captured Kingdom Guards.

Development: One of the captured guards was in Hannant's pay, and took part in several of the secret trades with Malador. If suitably questioned about such matters (DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate), he can confirm the details of Hannant's secret deals, including the fact that several prominent Maladoran officials (and not just "renegade businesspeople," as Seamander would protest) attended the trades. If the heroes gain this information, award them 200 XP each.

The rebels here and in all other locations are more than willing to discuss the circumstances of the rebellion with outsiders, passionately claiming that the rebellion is not against the king, but against Hannant and his murderous orders. Many of them are willing to accuse the former Town Captain of various other sins, although they likely have no proof of their accusations, whether accurate ones of theft and corruption, or wild and most likely unsubstantiated tales of debauchery and the like.

2. Copperdell Emporium

This building clearly used to be a shop of some kind, based on the smashed shingle on the ground outside and the many broken shelves within. What kind of goods it carried cannot be ascertained, though, for everything has been taken.

When the rebellion occurred, the proprietor of the Emporium attempted to triple his prices. He assumed that there would be no other source of goods while the siege lasted, so he could charge what he pleased. However, he grossly miscalculated what would be the rebels' response to his actions: as soon as word of his business tactics spread, a mob of more than forty people stormed the shop, forcibly removing all stock and smashing everything they couldn't take.

Creatures: The proprietor, Mandagon Gax (use merchant stats), still lives in the rooms above the store. He loathes the rebels and is willing to tell any number of exaggerated and vindictive stories about them, while completely overlooking his own attempts to exploit them.

3. Copperdell Mine

From the surface, Copperdell's primary industry appears to be little more than a hole in the ground, surrounded by large piles of unsightly ash and charred rock, each several times higher than a man. Four smelting furnaces are also located here for refining the ore brought out of the mine. Even now, after the onset of the rebellion, when these furnaces have been allowed to go cold, there is a perpetual stink of smoke permeating this entire area.

Although no mining goes on during the rebellion, this area remains a site of considerable activity as Drammoc Rene prepares it for use as a final redoubt against the Kingdom Guards.

The tunnels of the mine have not been mapped in this adventure. You can develop them for your own use if you wish to stage adventures within the mine (for example, the miners might accidentally have broken into caverns populated by some subterranean race . . .), or if the course of the rebellion leads the heroes to assault or defend the mines.

Creatures: Ten rebels are always present here, standing guard near the entrance. These guards (mostly men, but with some women among them) challenge any strangers, telling them to identify themselves or leave the area. There are also an additional 3d10 rebels in the area, building fortifications and carrying supplies into the mine as part of the preparations against an attack by the Guards. Those carrying supplies are armed and equipped as normal, but they do not normally stop or challenge the PCs unless a fight breaks out, in which case they come to their comrades' aid.

Drammoc Rene is often here during daylight hours, supervising the work against the impending siege.

Condition Zone (close confines): The tunnels within the mine itself are narrow and winding, making it difficult to maneuver or to use large weapons. Characters wielding two-handed weapons while in the tunnels suffer a -2 penalty to attack and on damage rolls. Additionally, all Tumble checks in the tunnels are considered "severely obstructed" and thus impose a +5 modifier to the Tumble DC (see "Tumble" in Chapter 4 of Iron Heroes).

Option Zone (mine carts): Reusable. The mine has several stretches of tracks with mine carts on them for transporting ore and rock out of the mine. A character can heave a cart toward his opponents, knocking them to the ground as the cart slams into them. The character must make a Strength check as a full-round action to push a cart. The cart travels one square per 5 points of the Strength check result, following the tracks laid out on the map. Any creature on the tracks must make a Reflex save (DC 15 + the pushing character's Strength modifier) or take damage equal to 1d6 + double the pushing character's Strength bonus. The mine cart stops at the end of its movement or at the end of the tracks, whichever comes first.

4. Truce Grounds

When he arrives at Copperdell, Holpan Seamander establishes his camp a short distance outside the town gates, just away from the main road along which any attack is

likely to proceed. The camp consists of four silk tents, three of them sized for two occupants, the last a pavilion large enough to hold a conference for twelve people.

Seamander uses one of the small tents as his personal quarters, with two of his bodyguards always nearby (just outside his tent) and the other two off duty. The off-duty guards sleep in one of the other two small tents, while the third tent stores the supplies of food and drink Seamander brought with him. Visitors to the camp who ask to examine these tents are allowed to do so; Seamander claims to have nothing to hide. In fact, anything incriminating — including the small team of assassins at his disposal — is kept out of sight in the nearby woods.

Within the large tent are a table and several chairs, which Seamander brought with him on the back of a wagon. Flags of Malador and Borat (the latter a little moth-eaten) hang within the tent. Whenever the rebels and loyalists meet here, Seamander provides a supply of sweetmeats, wine, and ale from his stocks. None of these foodstuffs have been altered in any way: Seamander aims to obstruct any compromise solution by more subtle means than poisoning.

Development: The Truce Grounds are an important site in the context of this adventure. It is here that the PCs can meet all the major players in the rebellion in one place, and it is also here that some of the main intrigues in Copperdell are played out.

Alert heroes may notice any of the following things at the Truce Grounds (DMs are encouraged to arrange scenarios for these occurrences, including appropriate skill check DCs, as needed):

- Seamander meeting privately with Katherine Soyval and Ildwin Porey (but only if the PCs keep the Truce Grounds under close surveillance at night, for these meetings take place under cover of darkness). Heroes who manage to sneak close enough might even overhear the envoy promise Soyval that he is working to persuade his superiors in Malador to support the rebels, and encouraging her not to accede to Borati demands. This is a clear indication of duplicity on Seamander's part, as his official role is to aid in finding a peaceful resolution. Heroes who look to see if Seamander actually follows through on his claims to Soyval will quickly realize that he is also lying to the rebels, for he makes no appeals to Malador on their behalf.
- Porey passing on his information to his Crimson Path associates, and getting instructions in return. Heroes present at the negotiations may perceive these quick conferences, though Porey does his best to make them as unobtrusive as possible. The Crimson Path is given all the information it needs during the first truce meeting, though Porey and his contact in the Borati camp still confer sometime shortly after each subsequent meeting in case of additional news. The simple fact that Porey is consulting with a Borati should seem odd, and a curious and stealthy (or lucky!) player character might even be able to get close enough to the meeting to hear what is being said.

- Seamander meeting with the leader of his assassins. Seamander calls such a meeting only if he has no other options, and only then under cover of darkness. However, just as with his secret meetings with Katherine Soyval, such a meeting could be witnessed or even eavesdropped upon by stealthy PCs.

Creatures: Holpan Seamander, 4 bodyguards (treat as veteran Kingdom Guards). During Truce meetings, Maxxen Juthe and Ombrosian Hannant are also here, along with an honor guard of 6 Kingdom Guard sergeants.

Katherine Soyval and Ildwin Porey are here during truce meetings, as well as making two covert visits after dark. During official meetings, they are accompanied by 10 rebels; during their covert visits, they come alone (unless the heroes somehow persuade Katherine to bring them along).

Treasure: In addition to the silk tents (which are worth 100 gp per small tent, and 1,000 gp for the large tent) and his personal money, Seamander has hidden a purse containing 500 gp nearby in order to place any bribes he might feel are required. Heroes who reveal Seamander's duplicity to either the rebels or Borati or both will most likely be rewarded with this sum (assuming it is located; Search DC 22, or DC 10 after observing Seamander for a few days) as thanks for their efforts.

5. Guard Encampment

After their retreat out of Copperdell, Gann Chovett led his men to the summit of this nearby hill, where they established a fortified strongpoint by digging ditches and using the earth they'd dug up to form breastworks. The camp is well situated to overlook the main road into the town, allowing the guards to block entrance to anyone who approaches. So far, only Holpan Seamander has been allowed through the cordon, and even his admission was granted only reluctantly: Seamander's position as an official Maladoran envoy was the only thing that prevented him from being turned away.

With the arrival of newly appointed King's Marshall Maxxen Juthe and his men, this temporary stronghold has grown to a full-scale military encampment of some 300 troops, approximately one third of whom are alert and ready for action at any time. Should the heroes spend any time here, they quickly register the air of calm preparedness and professionalism about the Kingdom Guards: the reinforcements from Borat have restored the somewhat dented morale of Chovett's troops, and the soldiers clearly expect that the rebels will either surrender or be utterly overthrown in the first assault.

Development: Should the PCs manage to get access to this area, they can speak with the common soldiers under more casual circumstances than at the Truce Grounds. At their own campfires, the guards are much more willing to gossip, and especially to share their opinions of their commanders. Those who were stationed in Copperdell before the rebellion are, once their initial reticence is overcome (Diplomacy DC 15), very critical of Ombrosian Hannant. They accuse him of always giving the easiest jobs to his favorites, and of recklessly provoking the miners into this rebellion (Gather

Information DC 15). Those guards who arrived with Juthe are confident of their commander, and also of their own victory if they are required to storm the mines.

If asked their opinion of the rebels, the most common attitude amongst the Kingdom Guards is one of resignation: they expect that the matter will eventually come to battle and, while they are not eager to kill the miners (especially those who were in Copperdell under Hannant's mismanagement), most of them take the view that the rebellion is still treason and must be punished.

Creatures: The full Borati force of over 300 Kingdom Guards, plus Maxxen Juthe, Gann Chovett, and Ombrosian Hannant, can generally be found here. Juthe and Hannant are absent only when they are attending negotiations at the Truce Grounds, while Chovett is present at all times.

6. Town Captain's Residence

This large, stone-clad building is one of Copperdell's few two-storey structures. Prior to the rebellion, it functioned both as Hannant's personal residence and as the center of his municipal government. The lower floor is given over to a kitchen, a dining hall, two offices, and a filing room. On the upper floor are three bedrooms, one for the Town Captain and two for guests, as well as a private study. All the rooms are lushly furnished, with upholstered chairs, oaken tables and desks, and (where appropriate) four-poster beds. The contrast between the opulence here and the stark living conditions of the indentured workers is stark.

Rebels stormed the residence during the opening stages of the uprising, and Hannant only just escaped their clutches. The building still shows signs of the brief struggle that occurred here: a few patches of dried blood, and many damaged or overturned furnishings.

Secret Door: There is a secret panel in the wainscoting of Hannant's study on the upper floor (Spot DC 30, Search DC 20). See *Treasure*, below.

Trap: This secret panel is trapped with a virulent poison.

Poison Trap: CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; gas; never misses; onset delay (1 round); poison (insanity mist, DC 15 Fortitude, initial 1d4 Wis/secondary 2d6 Wis); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20.

Development: The heroes are most likely to come here in search of any evidence of corruption or fraud by Hannant, after rumors of such from either the Kingdom Guards or the rebels. Naturally, the Town Captain was not so foolish as to leave incriminating evidence in an obvious location (see *Treasure*): all documentation in the filing room or in obvious sight within his study reflects the same figures he has been reporting to Borat since his arrival in Copperdell.

However, Hannant knows that once he leaves this appointment, there will still be people in the town who know of the increased quotas he has been enforcing. While he remains in charge, only he has access to the documents: once he leaves, anyone could look at them and realize the discrepancy between what has been mined and what is being reported.

With these facts in mind, Hannant has prepared a second set of documents, which reflect the actual amounts mined. Hannant's plan is to replace the false figures with these records just before he leaves. His gamble is that his successor will see all the documents in order and never think to check that the figures sent to Borat were the same.

Creatures: The Town Captain's Residence was ransacked during the initial uprising, and has been deserted ever since.

Treasure: The secret panel in Hannant's study conceals a small wood-lined compartment within the wall. This compartment contains a leather bag filled with 628 gp and a bundle of documents that show the real mine extraction figures. Should these figures come out while the rebellion is still unresolved, they would be conclusive evidence of Hannant's corruption.

Ombrosian Hannant is well aware of the danger these documents present to him if they are discovered. Had there been any chance to recover them before fleeing the building, he would have done so. However, the rebellion came with such speed and suddenness that he was taken by surprise and did not have time to get them from the compartment.

7. Gospel of the Divine Duty

The only church in Copperdell is dedicated to the Gospel of the Divine Duty. The local priest, Armin Allemanne, is one of the town's few freeborn citizens, having chosen of his own volition to bring the doctrine of divine duty to those whom he felt most needed it: the indentured workers.

The church itself is a single-storey building, made of stone quarried from the mine and assembled by the workers under Allemanne's direction. The result is a somewhat ugly but quite sturdy structure. There are only a few narrow windows, making the interior quite gloomy. Allemanne does his best to brighten the place with torches, but he can light only a few at a time or the church fills with smoke due to the poor ventilation (treat the interior as being shadowy both day and night).

Development: Despite his rather pompous motivation in first coming to the town, Allemanne's 8 years in Copperdell have given him a genuine sympathy and compassion for those in his flock. He was sorely distressed by the harsh conditions in the mines, especially after the increased hours ordered by Hannant. Such measures put great strain on the belief in loyalty and duty that he had instilled in his followers.

Allemanne has heard grumbles from several of the workers that Hannant is corrupt — that they are excavating far more ore than normal but that little (if any) more seems to be going to the capital. If the heroes seem to have some measure of sympathy for the rebels and their struggle (Bluff or Diplomacy DC 15, or through roleplaying), Allemanne mentions these tales to them . . . while making it clear that, as far as he knows, they are no more than tales.

Creatures: Armin Allemanne (use NPC clergy stats). Also, 1d4–2 petitioners may also be here at any time.

8. Crimson Path Stronghold

This small building on the lower southern slopes of Copperdell Hill is most likely to come to the PCs' attention due to suspicions they may form about Ildwin Porey, who returns to this dwelling whenever he is not at the rebel headquarters or the Truce Grounds. Porey makes no attempt to conceal his destination, traveling directly to and from the building, for it is his estimation that attempting to conceal his movements would be more likely to draw suspicion than to protect his stronghold.

A second way the heroes might become curious about the building is if they notice the sheer number of people who seem to live there. Close to a dozen men and women can be observed entering or emerging from the building during the course of a day. Even by the crowded living standards of Copperdell, this is an unusually high number.

Porey chose this building as the cult's base not for its size or defensibility, both of which are limited, but for its location: The Crimson Path needed to tunnel into the side of Copperdell Hill in order to reach the concealed vault that lay beneath. To this end, they stole the necessary tools from the mine — the act that accidentally precipitated the current rebellion — and dug their way into the Masters' vault.

The significant quantities of dirt excavated as part of this process were stored within the house, so as not to attract attention from others in the town. Once they had recovered what they wanted, the cultists filled the tunnel back in and replaced the floorboards over the area they had been digging. This didn't do anything to conceal that digging had occurred since there was still a significant amount of dirt left in the house, as well as all of the mining equipment. However, this process does mean that anyone who wants to find out what they were digging for would have to repeat all their work.

Theoretically, with their job complete, the cultists were supposed to leave the town. However, their doctrine teaches them to exploit any violent situation, so they have remained to incite more hatred, distrust, and bloodshed. They plan to leave only once the Kingdom Guards make a full-scale assault on the town, using the confusion to slip away.

Vault Excavations: Locating the floorboards that were pried up and replaced (and the obviously disturbed earth beneath them) requires a successful DC 20 Spot or DC 15 Search check.

Development: The most likely reason the heroes will have to come here is to investigate what is happening in this building. If they do so, Porey tries to talk them into leaving (while his followers prepare for the battle likely to come), claiming, quite reasonably, that his personal life is his own business. He asks the heroes to wait until he returns to the rebel headquarters to speak with him.

If Porey actually manages to persuade the heroes to leave with these arguments, he orders his followers to depart the town at once: they attempt to sneak out as soon as it becomes dark. Porey himself remains, trusting to his own abilities to continue deferring the heroes' suspicions, intent on bringing the rebellion to a blood-soaked conclusion.

If the heroes refuse to leave, a fight is likely to occur. The map on page 69 shows the stronghold and its surrounding areas. The building itself is built of typical materials for a Copperdell home.

Catching the Cult

There are several hints PCs might observe that suggest Ildwin Porey is not what he appears to be:

- Drammox Rene's vague suspicions of him
- Porey's claims to have been a burglar, despite having little or no knowledge of the craft
- The discrepancy between what Porey has told Katherine Soyval and what he has said about his past to the townsfolk
- Porey's adamant refusal to bargain with the Borati, even though this can lead only to hundreds of deaths
- The great number of battle-scarred (Spot DC 15) young men and women who seem to live in his home
- Porey's remarkably bitter reaction to any attempt to discredit Hannant in the eyes of Maxxen Juthe (see the event "Katherine's Sacrifice" below)

However, it is possible that your players will not pick up on any of these hints. Since learning of the Cult's activities in Copperdell is essential for the continuation of the story in this adventure, you may need to provide more obvious hints regarding Porey's allegiances (both true and false). Anyone who joins the Crimson Path is fundamentally unbalanced, so such hints can readily be explained by an apparently increasing psychosis in Porey's actions.

Creatures: Ildwin Porey is here whenever he is not at the Truce Grounds or the rebel headquarters. He has eleven followers stationed here at all times: 6 ordinary cultists and 5 cult champions, who were the ones to accompany him into the vault. In addition, Porey can call upon the services of 2 dire glooms, guardians of the vault that he has managed to bring under his sway.

Ildwin Porey: hp 51.

Cultists (6): hp 13, 11 (x2), 10 (x2), 7.

Cult champions (5): hp 37, 35, 30, 24, 19.

Dire glooms (2): hp 51, 46.

Note: Dire glooms are detailed in the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*. If you do not have this book, substitute some other appropriate CR 5 creatures from the MM, such as cloaklers.

Tactics: If the cultists are not expecting an attack, there are generally 1d4–1 of them outside the building (likely cooking a meal of some kind) while the rest are inside. If they are alert for an attack, set them up in appropriate defensive positions at your discretion.

Once a fight begins, the cult champions move to engage in melee while the ordinary cultists take up positions behind

cover and snipe at any heroes not in melee with their light crossbows. Porey orders the dire glooms to attack as long as there is no chance of others witnessing the creatures, and then joins the sniping cultists — probably with a great deal more effect.

Condition Zone (rocky ground / bedding): These areas contain loose stones or bedding materials prone to slipping and sliding beneath characters' feet. Anyone moving through this area must make a DC 5 Balance check or come to a halt and lose the rest of that movement action. If a character fails the check by 5 or more, he also falls prone. A character who tumbles through this area does not need to make the Balance check, but suffers a -2 penalty to Tumble checks while in the area due to its being lightly obstructed.

Condition Zone (boulders): These large stones provide total cover against any creature attacking through the square the boulder occupies, provided the target is on the same level as the attacker (i.e., if there is not a contour line between them). The boulders are partially embedded in the ground and are too large to move. They can be scaled with a DC 10 Climb check or a Jump check (DC 16 for a running jump, DC 32 for a standing jump).

Condition Zone (slope): Characters must pay an additional 5 feet of movement to cross any contour line on the map (whether going up the hill or down it). A character may not use a 5-foot step to cross a contour line.

Condition Zone (window): None of the windows have glass in them. A character can enter or leave a building through a window with a DC 5 Climb check or a DC 10 Jump check. Failure means he or she fails to move through the window and loses the rest of that move action.

Option Zone (bedding): Reusable. As a move action, a character can pick up one of the rolls of bedding inside the house. He or she must have two free hands to do so. If a character holding one of these bedrolls makes a bull rush or overrun attack, resolve any attacks of opportunity against the bedroll (which has hardness 0 and 10 hit points) rather than the attacker; excess damage inflicted on the bedroll does not transfer to the character holding it. Only once the bedroll is completely destroyed can the character holding it be targeted by attacks of opportunity provoked by her bull rush or overrun attack.

Option Zone (fireplace): One use. As a standard action, a character standing adjacent to the banked coals of the fire can kick those coals at any single creature who is also adjacent to the fire. The target must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + attacking character's Dexterity modifier) or be effectively nauseated for 1 round by the choking smoke and burning sparks that shower over them.

Option Zone (shutters): Reusable. A character standing next to a window can ready a standard action to slam the shutter on anyone attempting to come through that window. The shutter always strikes its target, since it fills the window, and deals 1d3 points of bludgeoning damage (plus Strength modifier). Additionally, any creature so struck suffers a +5 penalty to the DC of the check to move through the window that round.

Treasure: Porey and his followers have a small collection of valuable items they pilfered from the vault: 3 golden candlesticks (30 gp each), a silver ewer (50 gp), 2 cloaks of cloth-of-gold (100 gp each), and a collection of ancient coins (4 pp, 62 gp, 13 sp; worth at least twice their base value to an antiques dealer).

In addition, inside the building are many sheaves of notes Porey has made during his time in Copperdell. Most of these appear to be the typical less-than-sane rantings of a Crimson Path adherent, but there are a few useful passages that may interest the heroes:

- "The rebellion in Copperdell is not an opportunity to be missed. I will not leave this place until I have ensured the streets will be soaked with blood. Death is the destiny of all that live!"
- "My third of the Great Rite has been recovered and its communication to the Overlords assured. May the fates grant success to the other disciples active in this matter, so that the Rite of the Blood Storm can be completed and the inevitable end of humanity achieved. Those in Borat will face the hardest task, but theirs also will be the greatest glory."
- "Rumors of the second location speak of guardians called Marrowbreakers. Perhaps these creatures can be harnessed just as I have gained control of the dark entities in my own vault."

COPPERDELL ENCOUNTERS

Below is a rough outline of events surrounding the rebellion, which are more or less fixed: that is, they happen as written unless the PCs intervene in some fashion to prevent them. The timing of each action is expressed in terms of its distance from the start of the rebellion. Thus, *R - 1 hour* means "one hour before the rebellion started," and *R + 24 hours* means one day after it began.

These events occur as noted unless the PCs intervene in some fashion. In addition to this charted outline, there are certain

R - 36 hours	Tools go missing from the mine
R - 2 hours	Crimson Path cultists break into the Masters' vault and acquire the information they need
R - 1 hour	Ombrosian Hannant announces his intent to punish a random 10% of the workers for stealing the missing tools
R	Drammoc Rene sparks off the rebellion by attacking the men announcing Hannant's decision
R + 3 hours	Kingdom Guards retreat from Copperdell
R + 6 hours	Gann Chovett sends messengers asking for reinforcements for Borat, despite Hannant's attempts to stop him

R+8 hours	Angry mob ransacks Copperdell Emporium over tripling of prices; Borat gets word of the rebellion
R+10 hours	Katerine Soyval takes charge of the rebels and suppresses further violence in the town; Malador gets word of the rebellion
R+11 hours	The Crimson Path cultists finish filling in the tunnel to the vault
R+16 hours	Rebels begin fortifying the mine entrance and moving supplies into the mine itself
R+20 hours	Seamander, the Maladoran envoy, arrives, beating Maxxen Juthe's forces to Copperdell by 2 hours; Ildwin Porey presents himself to Katerine Soyval and encourages her to resist the Kingdom Guards
R+22 hours	Maxxen Juthe and his troops arrive
R+28 hours	Juthe and Soyval agree to a meeting (at Holpan Seamander's suggestion); Porey accompanies Soyval and Hannant accompanies Juthe
R+36 hours	The truce meeting breaks due to Porey's and Hannant's interference; Porey passes his information on to cult contacts within Juthe's force
R+38 hours	Seamander implies to Soyval that Malador will consider supporting the rebels if they hold firm against Juthe
R+52 hours	Another truce meeting takes place; it is as unsuccessful as the first
R+68 hours	Seamander reaffirms to Soyval that Malador will consider supporting the rebels if they hold firm against Juthe, and also promises her that they will make a public declaration of support "within days, if not hours"
R+76 hours	A third and final attempt is made to negotiate
R+80 hours	Juthe's forces storm Copperdell, beginning a two-day battle through the streets and the mine; the attack ends only after more than 200 rebels and guards have died; Porey and his followers attempt to escape
R+136 hours	All captured rebels are executed

specific incidents, outlined in the following sections, that may occur during the course of the adventure, based on the actions of the heroes. These events each include the circumstances required in order for each incident to occur.

At the Truce Table

Circumstances: The first time the PCs attend any of the truce negotiations

Details: One of the keys to the heroes' understanding the true situation in Copperdell is for one or more of them to attend to the negotiations at the Truce Grounds. Only there can all the key players in the situation be found in one place. Some

of the important events that the heroes can witness at these negotiations are outlined below (these events are discussed in greater detail on page 27):

- Porey having a brief meeting with his contact amongst the Borati forces
- Hannant's aggressive attitude toward the rebels
- Porey's intransigence and his declarations to Soyval that they should resist settling with Juthe
- Seamander's falsely generous "facilitation" of the negotiations, whereby he steps in to ask that people be allowed to speak without interruption — but he only does so when a disruptive speaker such as Hannant or Porey is speaking

Note that the truce meeting scenes can be difficult for you, as a lone DM, to undertake successfully, for you need to find a balance between showing the players what is happening (rather than just telling them) and keeping your depictions of the NPCs sufficiently brief that the attention and focus of the game remains in the players. If in doubt, err on the side of brevity in depicting these events.

Hannant Exposed

Circumstances: If the secret documents hidden in the Town Captain's residence are shown to Maxxen Juthe

Details: If the PCs reveal Hannant's embezzlement to Maxxen Juthe, the Marshall immediately arrests the former Town Captain and makes an open offer to the rebels: if the leaders of the insurrection surrender themselves for trial (and almost inevitable execution), he will grant pardons to all the rank-and-file members on the grounds of the "great and unusual provocation they have suffered."

Ildwin Porey is quick to reject Juthe's offer, loudly denouncing Hannant and claiming that the Town Captain's corruption proves the promises of the Borati authorities are not to be trusted.

If confronted with the charges, Hannant hotly denies them, of course, accusing the heroes of being Maladoran agents and saboteurs out to discredit him. He threatens revenge, and promises even General Juthe that he will "be sorry for believing their lies."

Hannant's Last Gamble

Circumstances: If Hannant is arrested for corruption

Details: After he is arrested, Hannant must find a way to discredit the evidence against him. In his desperation, he rashly decides that his only option is to eliminate Maxxen Juthe. To that end, he attempts to have one of the Guards whom he thinks remains loyal to him poison the King's Marshall.

Unfortunately for Hannant, he is under close watch and his plan is easily discovered. Marshall Juthe makes sure to inform Katerine Soyval of this attempt in an effort to persuade her of his honest intentions toward the rebels.

Katerine's Sacrifice

Circumstances: Once (a) Hannant's corruption has been revealed to the Marshall, (b) Juthe has made his offer of

amnesty to the rebels, and (c) one of the PCs makes a DC 20 Diplomacy check to convince Katherine Soyval to accept the offer (this check represents the difficulty of overcoming the contrary advice Katherine receives from Ildwin Porey)

Details: Once Juthe offers amnesty to the majority of the rebels, Katherine is sorely tempted to accept the terms being offered. She knows her own life and those of her two fellow leaders will be forfeit under the arrangement, but that is just as true if the siege continues, and this way the lives of many others can be saved. If the heroes encourage her to accept the offer, she can be persuaded to do so. If they do not, Ildwin Porey eventually convinces her that Juthe cannot be trusted and that the rebels must hold on and hope for aid from Malador.

Outcomes: Katherine's decision to accept the offer is not the end of the matter, of course. The specific arrangements must be made: how and when the rebel leaders will surrender, how the Borati promises to the rebels will be ensured, and so forth.

Additionally, if Katherine accepts, Porey is unable to accept that the "glorious bloodbath" of the rebellion seems about to be averted, so he takes whatever steps he feels necessary to provoke each side back to hostility. In the end, he is willing to go as far as secretly murdering Katherine and Drammoc, framing the Borati, and trying to wrest control of the rebellion for himself. This is a much more dangerous role than he had intended, especially if the heroes are still alive and interfering in the situation, but his entire system of belief means he must take any risk necessary to see the maximum destruction and bloodshed arise from the rebellion.

Assassination of Maxxen Juthe

Circumstances: If either Ildwin Porey or Holpan Seamander believes Juthe is about to come to terms with the rebels (even if such terms include the surrender and execution of the rebel leaders)

Details: Neither Malador nor the Crimson Path will profit by any peaceful resolution of the rebellion in Copperdell. Both would prefer a long impasse, or at the very least a bloody conflict that costs Borat considerable wealth, life, and prestige. Should either Porey or Seamander come to believe that Juthe is about to agree to terms (for example, if the heroes prevail upon Soyval to offer them once Hannant's corruption has been uncovered), they take steps to eliminate Juthe. The Marshall's death would leave either Hannant or Chovett in charge, depending on whether Hannant has been publicly disgraced: either man is likely to revert to a policy of aggression, especially if Juthe's assassination can be made to seem the work of the rebels.

Whether it is Porey or Seamander who first becomes aware that Juthe is considering terms, it will be the Maladoran envoy's team of assassins that carries out the attempted murder: Porey contrives to inform Seamander of Juthe's intentions, knowing that the Maladoran will need to act. As far as Porey is concerned, the assassination attempt is a win/win situation: either the attack succeeds and Juthe dies, or the attack fails and either the rebels or the Maladorans are implicated — and either outcome is likely to lead to further bloodshed.

Outcomes: Unless the heroes are present when Juthe is attacked, the attempt succeeds. Some opportunity should be given to the PCs to recognize the danger to Juthe: for instance, a hero with the Political Mastermind feat might be aware that a peaceful resolution could have opponents, or one with good Sense Motive might notice either Porey's or Seamander's hostility during negotiations. The fact that Hannant already tried to have Juthe poisoned should also raise the danger flag for the Kingdom Marshall.

Variations: If the PCs are Maladoran employees, Seamander might approach them about killing Juthe. (It is unlikely that Juthe would be willing to accept terms without the heroes' having influenced events against Maladoran interests, but Seamander might not be aware of their role.)

Alternatively, if Seamander believes the heroes to be the principal cause behind Juthe's willingness to deal, he may choose to assassinate them instead. The assassins will not underestimate the heroes' abilities, striking from hiding in as deadly an ambush as they can achieve.

Juthe's Reward

Circumstances: If the player characters expose Hannant's corruption and either (a) save Maxxen Juthe from an assassination attempt or (b) discover and defeat the Crimson Path in Copperdell



Details: If the heroes meet the conditions outlined above, Maxxen Juthe decides to reward them for their efforts during the rebellion. He gives them the choice of “gold, land, or such favor as it is within my power to bequeath.”

Outcomes: The heroes can choose a cash reward of 1,000 gp each, or a reward in property of one acre of land each within the Copperdell region. Alternately, they can make some other request; you will have to judge this last category for yourself, but in general if you feel the reward is commensurate with 1,000 gp per hero, grant it.

One possible request the heroes might make is for clemency on behalf of the rebel leaders. Sadly, this is not something Juthe can grant. He received authority before leaving Borat to spare the rank and file, but not the leaders. He does, however, promise to take the heroes’ appeal to the king for judgment, and asks the PCs to accompany him to the capital to plead their case.

Note: He also asks them to come to Borat to receive their cash or land rewards. These rewards thus serve as a means of getting the heroes to the capital, as required for the events of Chapter 3. (Other means of leading the heroes to Borat are outlined in the Aftermath section, below.)

AFTERMATH

In terms of what happens to the PCs, the aftermath of this chapter depends not only on how events played out, but on what the heroes were hired to do. Generally speaking, the longer and bloodier the conclusion of the rebellion, the happier Malador will be. Conversely, the quicker it is resolved and the fewer the deaths that occur, the more pleased the Borati will be. If the heroes were hired by Malador and then worked to put an end to the rebellion as peacefully as possible, they will not be well received by their employers!

As for the Crimson Path, the cult inevitably gets a copy of the information Porey recovered from the vault in Copperdell. Even if the heroes somehow determine Porey’s allegiance before the first negotiation and slay him at once,

the cult has enough back-up plans, including several “dead letter drops,” that the information will assuredly reach the people who need it.

Rewards

Naturally, the heroes’ reward depends on how they got involved in the Copperdell situation and on how they acted. If they were hired by someone, then a “perfect job” reward should be approximately equal to that offered by Maxxen Juthe, outlined in the previous section. Lesser achievements should be rewarded with commensurately smaller amounts.

If the PCs became involved in the rebellion (on either side) for personal reasons, and if you wish to reward them, then it is possible that they might receive a quiet honorarium from either Borat or Malador, depending on who profited most from their involvement. This reward will be “quiet” only in that it is not publicly acknowledged; whoever pays it will make quite sure the heroes know whom it was from. The amount of this donation is left to your discretion, subject to the guidelines above.

Before the Next Adventure

The events of Chapter 3 are intended to begin within a day or so after this adventure concludes, although you can increase this period to better suit your campaign. You may have an adventure of your own to fit in, or the characters may have other interests they want to pursue for a time.

The most vital thing to ensure as this chapter ends is that the heroes are aware that the Crimson Path were active in Copperdell, and that there are probably at least two more groups of cultists active elsewhere in the kingdom, including one in the capital. If the heroes did not uncover this information for themselves, you should have the Kingdom Guards discover Ildwin Porey’s notes. From there, the PCs can hear the news from their contacts in Malador or Borat, or even as rumors on the street.

Chapter Three: The Gathering Storm

During the course of this chapter, the PCs arrive in the capital just in time to investigate a series of brutal murders that have plunged the city into fear. Several locals are found around Beacon Hill, their bodies mangled and bones shattered. Although the heroes do not know it to begin with, these murders are the results of a pair of marrowbreakers (see Appendix), monstrous guardians loosed from within the vault under Beacon Hill.

When the Cult of the Crimson Path tunneled into the vault, they accidentally awakened these creatures, but managed to contain them long enough to get the information they required and then depart. Since then, the marrowbreakers have managed to find their way out of the vault. Little more intelligent than animals and ferociously hungry, they now emerge each night to hunt.

A party of four heroes of 6th level should earn enough experience to progress to 7th level by the end of this chapter.

Welcome to Borat

There are several reasons why the heroes may come to Borat and become involved in the events of this chapter:

- They may come at the behest of General Maxxen Juthe, pleading for a pardon for Katherine Soyval and the other Copperdell rebel leaders. If this is their reason for coming to the city, it is recommended that you either grant them this request immediately, or use it as a hook to involve them in the tracking the Beacon Hill murderers (“I will grant your request if you assist us in this task ...”)

- If the heroes have a good relationship with Malador, they may be sent to investigate the rumors of Crimson Path activity in the kingdom, as well as to learn as much of Borat's preparations for war as possible. Malador has a vested interest in knowing the cult's plans, for those plans may also be aimed against Malador itself (and any Crimson Path activity here might weaken Borat and thus give Malador an edge in the coming conflict). Naturally, such missions would be given in secret: The PCs would be given a public reason to be in Borat as well, such as guarding a Maladoran envoy. Malador will offer the heroes a set amount to investigate, probably 1,000 gp (i.e., total, not per hero), with promises of more if the information is considered particularly valuable (a further payment of 2,000 gp each, or even more, is not impossible).
- If the heroes have a good relationship with Borat, they may be asked to come to the capital to discuss aiding the kingdom in investigating the Crimson Path's activities. King Darragan is well aware of the possible danger the cult represents, and is eager to ensure that the most capable agents possible are hired to investigate. The Borati are less likely to offer large sums of money for such employment, but will compensate for this by offering land and status. An offer of manors and estates totaling 2 to 3 acres per hero would not be unreasonable.
- The heroes may wish to pursue an investigation into the cult and its plans for their own reasons, with no need to be hired by anyone. This is particularly likely to be true if the PCs have had previous encounters with the Crimson Path in **Dark Harbor**.
- News of the brutal and mysterious murders may also attract the heroes to Borat, either because (i) they fit the condition of the victims found in Porey's notes on "Marrowbreakers" in Chapter 2; or (ii) they realize that any creature(s) capable of inflicting such terrible injuries are worthy opponents.

Rumors of War

From the first day the heroes arrive in Borat, there are rumors on the street about war brewing with Malador. There is a growing sentiment that confrontation cannot be far away. Tales of Malador's interference in the Copperdell rebellion are rife, and there are frequent stories of spies and conspiracies. When the Beacon Hill murders start, there are even some who blame them on saboteurs from Malador.

Several NPCs should mention these tales in their dealings with the heroes, especially if they know the PCs are adventurers. The heroes' opinions on the likelihood of war will be much sought after, and their loyalties questioned. "Will you be fighting for us?" is a common question.

THE BEACON HILL MURDERS

Occurring only during the hours of darkness, beginning at or around the time when the heroes arrive in Borat, the Beacon Hill murders are horrific in their brutality. On the first night, four victims are found; each night thereafter, two or three

more people are killed (the marrowbreakers are nearly starving the first night, which accounts for the extra killings).

The bodies of the slain share several distinguishing characteristics, which soon become common knowledge across the city. The heroes can learn these details either by examining the bodies themselves (in which case each DC below refers to a character's Heal check) or by asking questions around town a few days after the murders begin (in which case each DC refers to a Gather Information check).

- The victims are always alone. All bear multiple large lacerations. (DC 0)
- The bloodiest wound is generally around the head, shoulders, or upper torso, suggesting that this was the first injury suffered. (DC 5)
- The other injuries, usually between two and six, are located all over the bodies, often on arms or legs, as if the victims were attempting to defend themselves or to escape. (DC 10)
- In addition to deep lacerations in the flesh (similar to several blows with a dagger, or a bite from a very large, toothy maw...), the bones around the wounds are often broken or shattered, as if from the blow of a mace. (DC 15)
- There is less blood around the victims than would be expected. (DC 20)
- The combination of injuries suggests that something with sharp teeth clamped down on the victim, evidently with extremely powerful jaws that fractured the bones below. (DC 25)
- There is much less bone marrow in the victims than would be expected. (DC 30)

All of the information above is accurate; you should feel free to embellish each item as appropriate if the heroes are learning the details through rumor. For instance, "there is less blood around the victims than would be expected" could become "there is no blood to be found around the victims . . . because they have been completely drained by some vampiric beast!"

Only by actually attending a crime scene can the heroes be sure of completely objective information.

Investigating the Murders

Initially, all of the murders occur on Beacon Hill itself or in the immediate vicinity. As days pass and fear begins to grip the city, fewer and fewer people are ready to brave the streets after dark and the murders start to occur in a wider and wider area. Stories of hideous monsters begin to circulate, with wild tales of vampires, werewolves, giant spiders, and hideous leech-demons being just a few of the more common examples.

There are any number of means by which the heroes can attempt to track down the murderers, but the two most likely are either to attend one of the murder scenes and try to track the killers back to their lair, or to roam the area around Beacon Hill at night and thus to use themselves as bait. Either option is likely to be successful, provided the heroes have the appropriate skills.

Tracking the Killers: If the heroes attend a murder scene before dawn on the morning after it occurs, a DC 20 Survival check allows the PCs to follow the trail back to the point on the bank of the River Borat where the marrowbreakers tunneled out of the vault. For each hour that passes after dawn, the DC of the check increases by 1. By nightfall of the following day, it is virtually impossible to follow the tracks.

Playing Bait: If the heroes lack the skill to track the marrowbreakers, or if they simply prefer a more direct approach, they may try to lure the killers out by making themselves bait. The marrowbreakers are little more intelligent than animals, but they target only lone victims: a single hero will need to be out alone, with the remainder of the group concealed nearby, in order to coax them into attacking. As long as the heroes choose their ambush spot carefully, however, they should be given plenty of time to take 20 on their Hide checks.

Note: You should ensure that at least one of the marrowbreakers escapes from the heroes if the players choose the “bait” approach so that they can follow it back to the vault. Marrowbreakers move fast enough that the escaped beast will probably outrun them (unless there is a harrier among the party, perhaps), but you can easily have it leave a trail of ichor from its wounds so that even characters with poor tracking skills can follow it to the riverside tunnel (DC 10 Survival).

Creatures: For the marrowbreakers’ hit points and for details regarding their lair, see Area 1 in the Beacon Hill Vault.

THE BEACON HILL VAULT

The marrowbreakers have been entering and leaving the vault through a tunnel they dug from one of the lowest rooms of the complex, where the surrounding earth was softest.

The tunnel emerges just below the water line of the River Borat, about halfway between Beacon Bridge and Stinkwater’s Place. It is approximately 3 feet in diameter, with smooth-sided mud walls. The tunnel is approximately 150 feet long, filled with water for its entire length. As unappetizing as the thought may be, the heroes need to immerse themselves in the murky, foul-smelling water if they wish to explore further.

Medium creatures can move through the tunnel at normal swimming speed with a DC 10 Swim check. (This DC is due to the narrow confines of the tunnel. Reduce the DC to 5 for Small creatures.) Characters within the tunnel lose their active bonus to Defense due to the lack of maneuvering room; however, unless they are very unlucky, the heroes should not need to fight in this area (it is just as confining to the marrowbreakers, which prefer to retreat into the vault itself if pursued into the tunnel).

The tunnel emerges into Area 1 in the vault interior.

The Vault Interior

The remainder of this chapter occurs within the confines of the Beacon Hill vault, a complex built by one of the Masters several decades before the Great War began. The vault was intended as a secure location for conducting new and

untested magical rites and ceremonies as the war approached. By conducting her magical research here, far from the center of the Masters’ lands, the Master of this place made it more difficult for her rivals to spy on her work. As the war drew closer, the area was also used for holding prisoners taken from other Masters. Many of the prisoners ended up as sacrifices in blood rituals during the very first days of the war, before the Master closed the complex and moved to a more defensible location.

During the days when it was operative, the vault was inhabited by approximately forty acolytes who assisted the Master in her rites, keeping prisoners alive until they were needed, and who maintained the physical condition of the vault itself. These acolytes were identified by a magical sigil tattooed on their necks, so individuals with these tattoos could move through the vault in safety. Those without the tattoos trigger the various wards and guardians of the Master.

The *Rite of the Blood Storm* was originally developed here, and then the information regarding the ritual was separated into three parts; the other two-thirds were sent to vaults in Copperdell and Rannemort, respectively.

Standard Vault Features

Unless otherwise stated, ceilings in the vault are 10 feet high. The walls and floors are made of stone, while the doors, including trapdoors, are of iron. All doors are locked unless otherwise noted in their description. Some areas are sealed off by iron bars.

None of the rooms have their own light sources: unless the heroes have brought their own lanterns or torches (and have dried them after their immersion in the entry tunnel from the river), then every room is pitch dark.

Stone Walls: Hardness 8; hp 90; Break DC 35.

Iron Doors: Hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 25.

Trapdoor: Hardness 10; hp 90; Break DC 32; Open Lock DC 25, or not possible if barred from other side.

Iron Bars: Hardness 10; hp 30; Break DC 23 (each); if a bar is broken, a DC 15 Escape Artist check enables a Medium creature to squeeze through the gap. If two or more bars are broken, no check is required.

Vault Guardians

The vault features several guardian statues. These are marrowbreakers, enchanted by the Masters to remain as stone ornaments until certain conditions are met:

- There are living creatures in the room and none of them bear a vault tattoo; or
- If the marrowbreaker statue is attacked or damaged

When either condition is met, the marrowbreaker instantly transforms to flesh. The process is disorienting for the marrowbreaker, which can take only a single move action during the round in which it animates. Thereafter, it can act as normal.

The areas within the vault are described below. (See the vault map on page 72)

1. Flooded Cell [EL 0, 7, or 9]

This small room has plain, undressed stone walls, much of the surface of which have been marked with small scarrings (close inspection indicates these are probably claw marks). A metal trapdoor is set into the ceiling near the southwest corner of the room; it is barred from the other side.

Water fills the room to a depth of 4 feet, making movement difficult. There is a stout iron grate some 3 feet tall set at floor height in the middle of the eastern wall. The bars of the grate are widely spaced, with gaps large enough for a Medium creature to squeeze through with a little effort (Escape Artist DC 10).

A water-filled tunnel beyond this grate leads to Area 2. Medium creatures can move through this tunnel at normal swimming speed with a DC 5 Swim check. Reduce the DC to 0 for Small creatures.

Development: If the heroes spend the time to search this room, they discover that several of the scratch marks on the walls form ragged letters. These spell out names, dates, and short messages, making it clear that this was a prison cell at some point in the distant past.

Creatures: If the heroes used themselves as bait for the marrowbreakers and then pursued (one of) them into the vault, the surviving creature(s) wait here in ambush. They use their climb speed to stay on the walls, out of the water, so that they can move at full speed.

Marrowbreakers (0–2): hp 98, 82 [less any injuries]

Give the heroes a 20% XP bonus for any marrowbreakers they slay here, for the conditions put them at a considerable disadvantage against the creatures.

Condition Zone (waterlogged): This chamber is filled with 4 feet of cold, murky water. Any creature without a swim speed pays double cost for each square moved through the water and cannot take a 5-foot step. Additionally, such creatures suffer a –2 circumstance penalty to Defense due to the difficulty they have in moving.

2. Prisoner's Drop

This 5-foot-wide shaft has smooth stone walls and rises (or descends, depending on which end you're at) 25 feet. The bottom 4 feet of the shaft are filled with water. If anyone falls down the shaft, this water reduces the damage taken to only 1d6 points.

Bones, brittle and ancient, litter the base of the shaft. The remains of at least two humans lie here, both sporting several broken bones.

When the vault was in use during the Masters' War, most prisoners taken for questioning were brought directly to the top of this shaft and then thrown down. A few were killed by the experience: some survived, though, and were able to crawl westward along the tunnel to the now-flooded cell.

Development: Climbing up or down this shaft without the aid of a rope requires a DC 10 Climb check. With a rope, the check required is reduced to DC 0.

3. Eastern Security Block

This plain chamber has stone walls on three sides, but its western edge is bounded by iron bars with an iron door set into the southern end. A metal trapdoor, barred from this side with a thick wooden beam, is set into the floor in the northeastern corner.

There is a considerable amount of dust coating the floor and the cross-beams of the iron bars, suggesting this area has not seen use in a very long time.

From this room, the heroes can see into Areas 4 and 5. The reverse is also true. See those areas for their descriptions.

Condition Zone (dust clouds): Merely walking through this area kicks up knee-high puffs of dust. More violent activity causes clouds of the stuff to billow higher into the air, obscuring vision and making it breathing difficult. This condition lasts until the end of the encounter.

Starting in the second full round of combat, each creature must make a DC 15 Fortitude save at the beginning of its action or become sickened due all the dust it has breathed in. Creatures that do not breathe are immune to this effect. Additionally, any creature in the dust cloud gains concealment from all other creatures not adjacent to it.

4. Gaol [EL 7]

Flanked by two sets of iron bars on the eastern and western sides, this hallway is covered with dust that suggests it has not seen use in a long time. At the northern end of the area is a large statue of a crouching, monstrous abomination, set on a circular, black stone pedestal. Assuming the heroes have already encountered a marrowbreaker, they recognize that this statue depicts one of those hideous creatures.

From this room, the heroes can see into Areas 3 and 5. The reverse is also true. See those areas for their descriptions.

Creatures: The statue is a marrowbreaker guardian statue (see the sidebar on page 35).

Marrowbreaker (1): hp 102

Condition Zone (dust clouds): See the description for this zone type in Area 3.

5. Western Security Block

This plain chamber has stone walls on three sides, but its eastern edge is bounded by iron bars with an iron door set into the southern end. A metal trapdoor, barred from this side with a thick wooden beam, is set into the floor in the northwestern corner.

There is a considerable amount of dust coating the floor and the cross-beams of the iron bars, suggesting this area has not seen use in a very long time.

From this room, the heroes can see into Areas 3 and 4. The reverse is also true. See those areas for their descriptions.

Condition Zone (dust clouds): See the description for this zone type in Area 3.

6. Dry Cell

This small room has plain, undressed stone walls, much of the surface of which have been marked with small scratches

(close inspection indicates these were probably made by a metal nail or spike). A metal trapdoor is set into the ceiling near the southeastern corner of the room, barred from the far side.

Several chunks of stone have been torn from the western end of the room's southern wall, leading into a small, ragged tunnel.

Development: If the heroes spend time searching this room, they discover that several of the scratch marks on the walls form ragged letters. These spell out names, dates, and short messages, making it clear that this was a prison cell at some point in the distant past.

Creatures: While nothing lives in this room, the centipede in the tunnel to the south enters the cell to investigate if any characters remain here for longer than 10 rounds.

7. Failed Escape Tunnel [EL 1]

When the Master who dwelt here ordered the vault abandoned and sealed up, there was still a prisoner in one of the cells. This poor wretch was simply left to starve. Finding a crack in one of the walls, this prisoner made an effort to dig herself free, but made it only about 10 feet before she was too weak from thirst and hunger to continue. Her bones, picked clean of flesh, still lie here, hands curled up from where she was still clawing weakly at the earth as she died.

Creatures: A Medium monstrous centipede (see stats in Appendix) has made this tunnel its home, entering and leaving through a long, narrow hole no more than 12 inches across. The hole is located beneath the ribcage of the skeleton, and the centipede crawls through the bones to enter and exit.

Medium monstrous centipede (1): hp 10.

Condition Zone (narrow tunnel): Bipedal creatures of Medium size or larger in this tunnel lose their active bonus to Defense, for there is no room for them to dodge.

Treasure: The skeleton clutches a bent and battered silver brooch in its right hand. The prisoner used this piece of jewelry to chip away at the wall, and then to help her dig out as much of the tunnel as she managed to excavate. Despite its condition, the ancient brooch is worth 100 gp.

8. Top of the Drop [EL 7]

At the northern end of this narrow room is a grotesque statue set on a black stone pedestal. Set in the floor directly in front of the statue is a shaft that drops out of sight; the shaft has smooth stone walls and is about 5 feet in diameter. Beside the shaft is a metal grate roughly 6 feet across and 1 inch thick.

The walls here are of dressed stone, lined with ancient, fragile tapestries. The latter depict scenes of the glories of the now-dead Master who built the vault — the great cities she ruled, the vast armies she led, and, of course, her own personal majesty.

Creatures: The statue at the northern end of the chamber is a guardian marrowbreaker.

Marrowbreaker (1): hp 86.

Condition/Option Zone (hole): Reusable. The hole in the floor is both a hazard (requiring characters to go around or jump over it) and a possible tool for combat (if characters wish to bull rush an opponent into the hole, for instance).

Option Zone (metal grate): Reusable. Weighing 50 pounds and made of solid iron, the metal grate might be used in several different ways. First, a character can pick it up and use it to gain total cover in the same manner as if he were using a tower shield.

Alternatively, by using a full-round action to make a DC 20 Strength check, a character can hurl the grate up to 15 feet as a ranged touch attack. Any creature struck by the grate must make a Strength check of its own (DC 15 + the attacking character's Strength modifier) or be knocked prone. Regardless of the result of this check, the target also suffers damage equal to 2d6 + double the attacking character's Strength modifier.

Inventive players may come up with further uses for the grate.

Option Zone (tapestries): One use per tapestry. A character standing next to a tapestry can use a standard action to pull it down from the wall, causing it to fall on an opponent with whom he is in melee. The target must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + the attacking character's Intelligence bonus) or be blinded and entangled by the tapestry as it falls. The target can automatically escape from the wall hanging, but must take a standard action to do so.

Treasure: There are 8 tapestries in all, four on each of the eastern and western walls. Five of these are now too worn to be of any value, but the other three can be recovered. Each weighs 10 pounds and is worth 3d20+100 gp.

9. Central Chamber

This large, somewhat irregularly shaped chamber has a ceiling just under 15 feet high, and was the main meeting area and living space of the acolytes who once dwelt here. It is also an area that has obviously been visited recently: the dust on the floor is crisscrossed with many tracks. Most are the booted feet of humans, but some are less easily recognizable, having been left by marrowbreakers (Survival DC 15 to recognize the marrowbreakers' tracks for what they are; no checks are required for any of the other information here, as the tracks are numerous and clear).

Many of the tracks lead from an open door in the southern end of the room to a doorway in the center of the eastern wall. This doorway once had a pair of large iron doors in it, but these have both been ruinously attacked, left scattered in pieces across the floor. The marrowbreakers' tracks enter the room from this point, and then roam around the whole area before returning into the room whence they came.

The floor around the northeastern corner of the room is charred and blackened, and a blistered and horribly burned body lies at the edge of the area. This man looks like he has been engulfed in flame, dying in incredible agony.

The room itself has a thick layer of dust on the stone floor, enough to leave clear tracks but not to kick up the clouds of dust found in other parts of the complex. This dust is also

The Crimson Path's Incursion

When the Crimson Path tunneled into the vault, they broke into the library (Area 11), their target, where they hoped to find the information they needed amongst the books and scrolls. However, this hope proved false. The cultists then moved from the library into the central chamber (Area 9). From there, they opened the doors into the ceremonial hall (Area 10), accidentally activating the two marrowbreakers there.

Fortunately for the cultists, they were able to close and bar the doors to the hall before the marrowbreakers could reach them. They then broke into the secured documents room (Area 12), which led to one of them being killed when a magical glyph on the door was triggered. The body of this man still lies where it fell.

As the marrowbreakers were battering their way through the hall doors, the cultists quickly located the information they needed in the secured documents area and retreated out of the complex. They then collapsed the tunnel by which they had entered and assumed that that would be the end of things. This proved not to be the case, however. The marrowbreakers eventually broke free of the hall; after finding that their prey had escaped, they went down into one of the cells of the complex and tunneled their own way out, which led to the Beacon Hill murders.

The two activated marrowbreakers now make their lair in Areas 9 and 10 of the vault, but there is a good chance that the PCs will already have encountered them in Area 1 by the time they reach those rooms.

Far more damaging to the cult than the marrowbreakers' hunting, however, are the documents still in the vault, documents that will be vital to the heroes in the next chapter of **Blood Storm**.

layered on two of the three tables standing in the room. The last table has been broken in the middle, and most of the dust has slid off to form a pile around the break.

The southern face of the "L"-shaped stone pillar in the northern half of the room has a huge circle, surrounded by arcane runes inlaid in silver. This silver seems almost luminescent, glowing very softly even if there is no light at all in the room.

Trap: The door into the secured documents area was guarded with a magical glyph, but the Crimson Path triggered this trap during their exploration of the complex; it is now inert.

Creatures: The two marrowbreakers that were activated during the Crimson Path's incursion into the vault now make their lair here and in the ceremonial hall (Area 12). If the heroes did not already meet and destroy these creatures, they are either here (50%), or else they enter from the ceremonial hall 2 rounds after the heroes enter this area.

Marrowbreakers (0-2): [See Area 1]

Option Zone (tables): Reusable. Each of the two intact tables in this room can be used for cover (by hiding behind or under them), or to gain the advantage of higher ground (by jumping onto them). Additionally, if two characters cooperate to pick up a table and bull rush an opponent with it, they may both roll their own opposed Strength check, with a +2 circumstance bonus, and then take the higher of the two results. If they still lose the opposed check, the table breaks in half and they must each make a DC 10 Reflex save or fall prone.

Treasure: The charred body in the northeastern corner of the room has a belt pouch containing 14 gp, which have been slightly melted by the fierce heat of the magical trap.

The silver filigree in the "L"-shaped pillar can be gouged free with a dagger or similar tool. There is a total of 4 pounds of pure silver here, worth 200 gold pieces in all.

10. Ceremonial Hall [EL 0, 7, 9 or 12]

This large room has a pair of shattered iron doors at its western end and a large stone altar at the other. The front of the altar is carved like a pair of giant stone fists pressing together and is inlaid with several ritualistic items such as chalices, ewers, and bowls, all of which are fashioned from silver. Also on the altar is a large book with covers of red-tinged iron.

On either side of the altar stands a wide, black stone pedestal. Broad, clean patches amid the thin layer of dust in this room suggest that, until recently, something large stood on each of these pedestals, but whatever it was is now gone.

Unlike most of the chambers in the complex, this room has a soaring, vaulted ceiling some 30 feet high. A stone walkway crosses the room 15 feet above the floor, supported by a single stone column in the middle of its span. There are doors set into the wall at either end of the walkway, which is essentially just a flat piece of stone — it has no railings or banister. The pillar that supports it is carved in the shape of a coldly beautiful woman, hands raised above her as she looks down upon the room with a mocking smile.

There is a door at ground level in the southwest corner of the room, and a huge brass gong rests in the northwest corner.

Creatures: The 2 marrowbreakers that activated during the Crimson Path's incursion into the vault now make their lair in this room and here in the ceremonial hall. If the heroes did not already meet and destroy these creatures, they are

Fighting in Areas 9 and 10

Whenever a fight starts in one of these two rooms, there is a good chance that the action will at some stage move into the other room (this is particularly true if the heroes are fighting a stone golem, for they will likely want to keep clear of its powerful fists and its breath weapon). When you map the first of these two rooms, ensure that you have enough room on your battlemat to draw the other room as well.

either here (50%), or will enter the room from the ceremonial hall 2 rounds after the heroes enter this area.

In addition, the temple has another, far more dangerous guardian. If the heroes interfere with the items on the altar, the altar itself begins to shake and rumble, and then abruptly splits open as a huge, dark steel form rises up, mighty arms swinging a huge iron sword. This is a mighty blade tyrant*, which attempts to kill anyone in the vault who does not bear a vault tattoo.

Marrowbreakers (0–2): [See Area 1]

Blade tyrant (1): hp 140.

* See the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*; if you do not have access to that book, you can simply substitute the stats for a stone golem.

XP Note: Since the blade tyrant lacks followers in this encounter (it was intended that it would be able to lead vault acolytes into any battle), reduce the XP award for this encounter by 10%. (The tyrant's CR does not change.) You do not need to make this adjustment if you use a stone golem instead.

Condition Zone (pillar): This column provides cover against any creature attacking through either of the two squares it occupies, provided the target is fewer squares away from the object than the attacker is. The pillar is also the easiest way to get up to or down from the walkway; the sculpted surface offers many hand-holds, and the Climb DC is only 10.

Condition Zone (pedestals and altar): These objects provide cover against any creature attacking through the squares they occupy, provided the target is fewer squares away from the object than the attacker is. They can also be used to gain a higher ground advantage by leaping on them with a Jump check (running jump, DC 12; standing, DC 24).

Note that the altar ceases to be a condition zone when the blade tyrant animates.

Option Zone (gong): Reusable. If a character uses a standard action to strike the gong with a weapon or some other hard object, it lets out a deafening noise. Any creature within 20 feet of the gong must make a

Fortitude save (DC 10 + the Strength modifier of the creature who struck the gong) or be deafened for 1d4+2 rounds.

Alternatively, with a full-round action and a successful DC 20 Strength check, a character can hurl the gong up to 10 feet as a ranged touch attack. Any creature struck by the gong must make a Strength check of its own (DC 15 + the attacking character's Strength modifier) or be knocked prone. Regardless of the result of this check, the target also suffers bludgeoning damage equal to 3d4 + double the attacking character's Strength modifier.

Option Zone (walkway): Reusable. The walkway can be used in a number of ways. First of all, it provides total cover from the ground for anyone who drops prone on it, provided the prone character makes no attacks.

Second, it can be used as a launching point for various stunts if a players choose to use them.

Finally, it can be attacked: the walkway has hardness 8 and 40 hit points per 5 square feet, while the pillar has hardness 8 and 60 hit points. If a square of the walkway is destroyed, that part of the walkway collapses. Anyone on that square suffers 2d6 points of damage from the fall, and anyone beneath that square suffers 3d6 damage from the falling stones (Reflex DC 15 negates).

If the pillar is somehow destroyed, the entire walkway collapses, and any character on or under the walkway suffers damage as noted above.

Option Zone (large construct): Reusable. Characters can jump or climb onto the blade tyrant with an appropriate DC 20 check (DC 15 if they jump from the walkway). They must make a DC 15 Climb check or a DC 20 Balance check to hold on each round thereafter. While they are on the tyrant, it suffers a –4 penalty to attack them, and they do not lose their active bonus to Defense against its attacks (they do lose their active bonus to Defense against other opponents, unless they take a skill challenge on their Balance or Climb check). Characters on the tyrant can attack it normally with light or one-handed melee weapons.

Additionally, it is recommended that you allow characters to make a "find weak point check" against the blade tyrant (see the Appraise skill for details, but use a Knowledge [arcana] check in place of an Appraise check). A successful check against the tyrant's base attack check reduces



its DR by 1d3 against each of that character's damage rolls for the rest of the encounter.

Note: The large construct option zone, including the find weak point check, can also be used on the stone golem if you substitute that creature instead of the blade tyrant.

Treasure: The altar sports seven silver items: a large bowl (150 gp), a ewer (90 gp), 2 knives (30 gp each), a brazier (75 gp), and 2 small bowls (50 gp each). In addition, there is the iron-bound book, which is written in Ancient Speech. This book is entitled *The Great Rites* and contains descriptions of numerous ancient rituals, including the *Rite of the Blood Storm*. The book provides details of the rite (similar to those found in the sidebar on page 52) and also includes the following passage:

"The Blood Angel is a beast of nightmares made flesh, and like all nightmares, it can be overcome only by those who birthed it. No other mortal power, save that of us Masters, can overcome it, and knowledge of this ritual must never fall into the hands of lesser races."

11. Main Library

This large room is lined on three walls with shelves of books, scrolls, and stacks of parchment . . . or it was until recently. Several shelves have been broken away from the southwestern corner, where a large pile of rubble and dirt marks what appears to be a collapsed tunnel that previously led out of the vault.

Books and papers from many of the other shelves have also been pulled down and strewn across the floor, and several of them appear to have been trodden upon, having dusty footprints on them.

The books in this room cover a multitude of topics such as herbalism, architecture, planar lore, religious beliefs (all dating back to before the Masters' War).

Development: If the heroes dig out the collapsed tunnel, they can eventually follow it up to a small house on the lower western slope of Beacon Hill, whence the Crimson Path first tunneled into the vault. Still occupying the house are 4 Crimson Path cultists (see Appendix). Digging the tunnel out would require a good week or more of work, however; there is a lot of rubble to clear, and the tunnel would need reinforcement to prevent it from collapsing again.

Condition Zone (flammable): The many books and scrolls here are dry and brittle from years of neglect. Open flames in this room could easily light the materials. A fire begins in the square where the open flame was used and doubles in size every 5 rounds unless extinguished, until the entire room is ablaze. Anyone passing through a burning square at any point during her action suffers 1d6 points of fire damage, plus an additional 1d6 fire damage if the character ends her turn in a burning square.

Treasure: The books and scrolls in this room contain a great deal of information that would be valuable to scholars of all kinds. There are 212 such items in the room, each weighing 1 pound on average and being worth 2d6+3 gp.

12. Secured Documents

This small octagonal room is lined with shelves on seven of its walls. The only wall without shelves is the one with the door in it.

Approximately half of the shelves have books or scrolls on them, though very few are fully laden and most have large gaps. The rest of the shelves bear only dust. Several books are scattered across the floor.

The books all seem to cover esoteric and often disturbing topics. Many of them have large locks on their covers (Open Lock DC 25), while others seem to somehow resist being opened by all mundane means (DC 20 Use Magic Device to open).

Development: An inspection of the room reveals that the books on the floor were moved there recently — there are scuff marks in the dust from where they landed, and dust-free patches on the shelves where they were removed. With a careful analysis (Search DC 25), it is possible to confirm that at least one thick book (or possibly two more narrow ones) was removed from this room.

Condition Zone (flammable): See Area 11 for details.

Treasure: There are 34 full volumes in this room, any of which would be extremely valuable to those with an interest in arcane lore. Each weighs 1d3 pounds and would be worth 3d4 x 100 gp to a collector of such knowledge. Of course, such collectors are not always easy to find. Additionally, King Darragan would look dimly on anyone who sold these works on the open market, for in the wrong hands they could be extremely dangerous.

13. Robe Room [EL 6 (trap)]

The walls of this small room are lined with bronze coat hooks. Dark blue robes still hang from four of the hooks, though each is covered with dust and smells somewhat of mildew.

One of the bare hooks on the southern wall is made of steel rather than bronze. If this hook is pulled down, a panel slides open to reveal the secret doorway in the wall beneath it (Spot DC 28, Search DC 20). This door opens upon a flight of stairs that leads up to the entrance hall (Area 17).

Trap: The secret door itself is not trapped, but the stairs in the corridor behind it are. As soon as the first character reaches the middle of the staircase, the trap drops a series of large spiked blocks from the ceiling. Once they have dropped, these blocks remain in place, effectively blocking the passage until they are smashed or the trap is reset.

Spiked Ceiling Block Trap: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; Atk +20 melee (6d6, spikes); multiple targets (all creatures on the stairs); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20.

Development: Clever heroes might try wearing the robes from this room in an attempt to fool the vault's guardians into thinking the heroes are entitled to be here. This is a good idea, but it doesn't work. . .

14. Dormitory Hall

This long, plain hallway leads to a pair of doors. The southern end of the corridor is rounded off and features a mural depicting dozens of robed figures raising their hands in supplication to a regal female Master.

Traps: The doors to both Areas 15 and 16 are trapped. See the descriptions of those areas for details.

15. Western Dormitory [EL 3 (trap)]

This large, plain room has walls of dressed, unadorned stone. The floor is laid with flagstones, while the ceiling is tiled in dark blue. Rows of single beds line the north and south walls, with the empty space between them forming a passageway. An ironbound chest sits on the ground at the foot of each bed.

Trap: The door into this room is trapped with a poisoned arrow trap.

Poisoned Arrow Trap: CR 3; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; lock bypass (Open Lock DC 30); Atk +12 ranged (1d8+2/x3 plus poison, arrow); poison (Large monstrous scorpion venom, DC 14 Fort, initial and secondary 1d4 Con/1d4 Con); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 15. *Note:* This trap uses the same mechanism as the one in Area 16, so any hero trying to disarm this one gains a +2 circumstance bonus if she already disabled the one there (and vice versa).

Treasure: The chests are empty, but lying on the ground under one of the beds is a masterwork tattooing kit, complete with needles, inks, and all the other tools needed for tattooing. This kit grants a +2 bonus to Craft (tattoo) skill checks and is worth 55 gp.

In addition to the needles and inks, the kit contains several color drawings of a rune-like tattoo. One of these drawings is labeled, in First Speech, "Vault tattoo — new acolytes must have before they can be left unaccompanied." Should any of the heroes be tattooed with this design, they can safely enter any room in the vault without triggering the guardians' animation (including both marrowbreakers and the blade tyrant).

16. Eastern Dormitory [EL 3 (trap)]

This large, plain room has walls of dressed but unadorned stone. The floor is laid with flagstones, while the ceiling is covered with dark blue tiles. Rows of single beds line both the eastern and western walls, with an empty space between them forming a passageway. An ironbound chest sits on the ground at the foot of each bed.

Trap: The door into this room is trapped with a poisoned arrow trap.

Poisoned Arrow Trap: CR 3; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; lock bypass (Open Lock DC 30); Atk +12 ranged (1d8+2/x3 plus poison, arrow); poison (Large monstrous scorpion venom, DC 14 Fort, initial and secondary 1d4 Con/1d4 Con); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 15. *Note:* See trap in Area 15.

Treasure: The chests are empty, and this room contains nothing of value.

17. Entrance Hall [EL 9]

This hallway terminates in an iron door at each end. The hall itself is made of dressed stone, with flagstones in the floor and ceiling. A series of graven heads are carved into the walls at about chest height. These depict humans, ogres, lizardfolk, and many other servitor races over whom the Masters ruled. While the walls themselves are of plain grey granite, the heads are carved from white or black marble, with the colors alternating as they run along the wall.

One of the graven heads (depicting a female human) can be twisted, which causes a secret door to slide open in the wall (Search DC 20). This door opens upon a flight of stairs that winds its way up to the robe room (Area 13).

At the southern end of the corridor are a pair of statues of hulking, hideous beasts (guardian marrowbreakers).

Trap: The secret door itself is not trapped, but the stairs behind it are. See Area 13 for details.

Development: The corridor behind the southern door has been deliberately collapsed, blocking entry or exit from the vault. It would take weeks to clear this debris, which has had centuries to compact and settle into place.

Creatures: There are 2 marrowbreaker statues here.

Marrowbreakers (2): hp 95, 81

AFTERMATH

As their exploration of the vault comes to an end, the heroes find themselves at an impasse. They know more about the *Rite of the Blood Storm* than they did before, but they have no further leads regarding the Crimson Path's goals or activities.

Without knowing when, where, or how the cult's plans are unfolding, it is nearly impossible for the heroes to thwart them. However, fortunately, the cult tips its hand at the beginning of the next chapter.

Rewards

If the heroes contact Marlog Trepp, Borat's Town Captain, and convince him they have put an end to the Beacon Hill murders (showing him the head of a marrowbreaker and having no more killings take place for a week should do the trick), he pays them a reward of 1,000 gp (total, not per PC). This payment is in addition to any already agreed upon for investigating the Crimson Path's activities, if the heroes were hired to do so.

Telling Trepp of the vault and of what it contains merits a further reward of 1,000 gp to share. In addition, Trepp offers to purchase all the items from the secured documents area of the vault if the heroes tell him about them. He pays only 400 gp per item, however, which is about half as much as the PCs could get for it on the open market . . . but selling the items this way does not incur the king's displeasure.

The heroes should also receive 500 XP each if they learn the details of the *Rite of the Blood Storm* from the book in the ceremonial hall.

Before the Next Adventure

The events of Chapter 4 can begin anywhere from a few hours to several weeks after the end of this chapter. This provides an excellent opportunity for you to insert an adventure of your own design if you wish, or to give the heroes a chance to rest and recuperate for a few days, or to pursue other agendas.

However, if your players don't have anything else they want to follow up, then it is best to move into the next chapter as

quickly as possible, in terms of playing time: being stuck with no means of making progress is no fun for the players, and should be avoided. The next chapter gives them the leads they need to continue, so launch into it as soon as the players have nothing else on their heroes' plates.

Chapter Four: The Storm Breaks

The heroes have interfered in the Crimson Path's plans yet again (especially if they previously played through **Dark Harbor**), and the cult cannot be sure how much these meddlers now know. Nor can they be sure the PCs won't interfere again — and as a result, in this chapter the Crimson Path is about to make a serious mistake and give the heroes the very thing they lack coming out of Chapter 3 — that is, a lead.

A party of four 7th-level heroes should earn enough experience to progress to 8th level by the end of this chapter.

Welcome to the Chase

The cult's plan is simple: frame the PCs as agents of Malador and allies of the Crimson Path itself (of course, depending on the heroes' agenda in the last two chapters, the first half of this tale might even be true). The cult has Paraz Ghent send warning to Marlog Trepp that he has "discovered" that the heroes' investigation of the cult is "merely a ruse to disguise their true purposes and allegiances." Ghent is one of the king's trusted Town Captains, and his word carries weight.

In case Ghent's word isn't enough, however, the cult takes an extra step. Along with his declaration against the heroes, Ghent also provides details of a "nefarious cult operation within the kingdom." If Wensen Ippalo has not already been dealt with by the PCs, he and his group are given up, sacrificed for the good of the cult. If Ippalo *has* been dealt with, the cult gives up one of its other cells in another town. In either case, the captured cultists implicate the heroes as their Maladoran contacts and allies.

Having thus supplied the Borati with warning from a trusted cult subordinate and with corroborating evidence extracted by torture from confirmed cult members, the Crimson Path is confident that the king will have no option but to move against the heroes. They see little chance of the PCs surviving against the might of Borat, but just in case the heroes do manage to escape, they have stacked the deck still further (!) by unleashing their own monstrous assassins.

The first warning the heroes get of all this is when a group of Kingdom Guards turns up on their doorstep to arrest them.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

Once again, this chapter does not present you with many closely scripted encounters (in fact, there are only two). Instead, it presents an overview of the initial situation, the major plot points the heroes need to uncover in order to reach the last stage of the adventure, and the details of the creatures and characters hunting the heroes.

PCs Not in Borat?

This chapter assumes that the heroes are in Borat: that's one of the reasons the city was detailed in Chapter 1. If your players insist on leaving the city at the end of the last chapter, you may need to shift the action to another location or introduce some reason for them to come back to the capital temporarily — perhaps a reward from the king or something similar.

There are literally hundreds of ways that events can play out in this chapter, depending largely on the actions of the heroes, and no attempt has been made to address them all. As the DM, you must be ready to keep the story moving and to adapt the events as needed to make them interesting and challenging for your players.

In brief, the principal activities taking place in this chapter are as follows:

Throughout the following four sections of this chapter, the heroes (i) learn that they are being hunted; (ii) learn *why* they are being hunted; (iii) escape from the city of Borat; (iv) travel to Rannemort; and (v) learn the location where the *Rite of the Blood Storm* will take place.

- "A Rude Awakening" details the Kingdom Guards' first attempt to arrest the heroes. It includes details of how the guards approach the PCs, as well as the possible outcomes of fight, flight, or capture.
- "On the Run" provides information about the groups that pursue the heroes as they try to escape from the city of Borat, and the security measures taken to prevent that escape.

- “The Hunters” outlines the two groups set on the heroes’ trail after they escape, as well as suggestions for obstacles along the way during the PCs’ journey to the town of Rannemort.
- “The Ruin of Rannemort” reveals the terrible things that have happened to that town throughout the past few days; it also gives the heroes a chance to take revenge on Paraz Ghent and to gain the information they need to thwart the Crimson Path’s mad plan.

A Rude Awakening

While he is not entirely convinced of the heroes’ guilt, despite the evidence presented for it, King Darragan cannot afford to take any chances. He orders the PCs arrested, entrusting this very dangerous task to Ameira Lanslaine.

Political Masterminds

If any of the heroes has the Political Mastermind feat and has cultivated contacts at the palace, check to see if he currently has 5 or more tokens in his manipulation pool. If he does, tell the player to deduct 5 tokens from that pool, and then inform him or her that a contact warns the PC that he and his companions are about to be arrested on suspicion of treason.

This warning arrives a mere 2 hours before the arrest attempt itself takes place, but that’s 2 hours more than the heroes would have otherwise!

Working on short notice, for she does not want the heroes to get wind of what is happening, Lanslaine assembles an elite force of Kingdom Guards to make the arrest. In all, her force consists of 2 Kingdom Guard veterans *and* 1 sergeant *per hero*, all mounted on light warhorses (i.e., if there are four heroes, then she has 8 vets and 4 sergeants); and Lanslaine herself, also mounted on a light warhorse.

Lanslaine’s plan is to have half the veterans enter the heroes’ room(s) at dawn to arrest them while they are still waking up and, presumably, not fully armed. The other half of the veterans are kept in reserve, able to reach the room(s) in 2 rounds if needed.

The veterans have been told to be polite but firm. They tell the PCs that they are needed at the palace immediately “to answer questions”: They may get dressed, but should leave all weapons and armor in their rooms. The veterans have also been told to politely decline answering all other questions (“You’ll have to speak to my superiors at the palace”).

Ideally, in Lanslaine’s plan, the heroes will comply with these instructions and won’t realize that they are in serious trouble until they have left their room and are outnumbered roughly three-to-one.

If the heroes should attack, the veterans are instructed to fall back. The heroes will most likely barricade themselves in, in

which case Lanslaine and her men have them bottled up; or they will try to escape, in which case Lanslaine and the sergeants pursue on horseback. However, this pursuit will last only until one of the following three conditions is met:

- Half of the sergeants or their mounts are slain or incapacitated
- Lanslaine loses half of her hit points or more
- Lanslaine’s horse is killed

Lanslaine may well pick up the pursuit again in “The Hunters,” below, with a greater force. In essence, there are two possible conclusions to this immediate pursuit: the PCs are successfully captured, or they break free.

Captured

The heroes might go along with the Guards long enough to find themselves in an untenable situation. Whether they fight and lose or choose not to fight, they end up in cells under the palace for interrogation by the royal torturers. Each character is kept chained in a separate cell, with 2 veteran Kingdom Guards outside the door of each cell.

Of course, if the PCs can’t escape from a few cells, they aren’t true Iron Heroes! Once they do escape, they’ll have to find a way to avoid being captured once more and then to escape the city. It’s recommended you have the heroes escape as quickly as possible in terms of playing time, for many players would rather see their characters dead than captured.

One advantage of being captured is that the captors tell the heroes why they’ve been arrested and who accused them. That means that when they do break free, they should already have a destination in mind.

Break Free

A more likely outcome is that the heroes are suspicious enough to refuse the Guards’ instructions, and that they either fight their way free or otherwise escape when things turn violent. This means that they are now on the run within the city (see “On the Run”), and need to find a way out. However, they must also be wondering why the king or his agents have turned against them, so finding that out should be another goal of theirs.

On the Run

Once the heroes are at large in the city of Borat, they should have two main objectives: finding out why they’re being hunted, and then getting away (or otherwise putting an end to the hunt).

Finding the Cause

In an attempt to stop the heroes’ escaping the city, the king authorizes a major mobilization of troops. This is not something that can be kept secret, and soon the whole town is abuzz with rumors as to why all the extra soldiers are on duty. The most popular explanation is that war is brewing with Malador, and indeed the rumors that started appearing in the last chapter are getting more and more persistent: it really does seem as if the king is preparing for war.

Amidst all the other rumors, however (some of which are far less plausible than those of war), the heroes can find references to their own situation. A successful DC 20 Gather Information check (or spending 1 manipulation token on a contact in the palace or among the Guard) determines that the mobilization has been ordered to “ensure the capture of several extremely dangerous renegade mercenaries, identified by Town Captain Paraz Ghent of Rannemort as Maladoran spies and saboteurs in league with the Crimson Path.” The same source confirms that several captured cultists have confirmed the story.

It is always possible that the PCs won’t care about the *why* of their pursuit, and that they will simply be spoiling for revenge, or at least escape, at any costs. If so, you might have to make the frame-up a bit more obvious to them — have town criers go through the streets shouting descriptions of the heroes, announcing why they are being sought, and offering a 500 gp reward for information leading to their capture.

Of course, knowing why they’re being hunted is only a small part of the solution.

Evading the Hunters

This section of **Blood Storm** is intended to be rather free-form. It gives the heroes a chance to roam the city of Borat if they have not already done so, sometimes engaging in battles with the various groups of people who are looking for them. It also allows you to sow seeds for future adventures of your own: the heroes may meet and need favors from various people who will later expect to be repaid with the kinds of assistance only Iron Heroes can provide.

Once the heroes know why they’re being chased and who made the charges against them, they should start to realize that their best opportunity for ending the manhunt is to confront their accuser and either make him recant or find

evidence that proves his testimony false. The fact that Ghent knew the identities of several cultists and that those cultists corroborated his story should also signal to the heroes that Ghent is himself a member of the Crimson Path: Not only is he the lead they need to clear their names, he may also be their first step toward stopping the *Rite of the Blood Storm*.

Of course, once they know whom they need to find, the heroes still need to get out of Borat. The “Sealing the City” sidebar (bottom, left) lists the measures the king takes to prevent their escape, while the next section, “The Hunters,” details the groups who are actively attempting to find the heroes and capture or kill them. Both groups pursue the heroes even after they have left the city, chasing them all the way to Rannemort if necessary.

The heroes have many options for escaping from the city, such as forging identity papers, putting on disguises, and trying to walk out; or perhaps trying to sneak out along the river (difficult due to all the extra guards on watch) or over the wall (also difficult, but there are gaps in the patrol patterns if the heroes look hard enough). Generally, the more time the heroes spend doing reconnaissance for their escape, the better their chances, but the more likely it is they will be discovered before they make their move.

As with the Copperdell scenario in Chapter 2, because of the sheer number and diversity of things that might occur, a great deal of the work is being left in the DM’s capable hands: you must decide exactly how and when the hunters come after the heroes, what chance the various ploys for escape might have, and where and when battles will occur on the road.

The key to running this chapter successfully is to maintain a sense of being hunted for the heroes, even after they get out of the city. Although Iron Heroes are more than capable of fighting off a great number of common soldiers, the sheer number of pursuers here should give them pause. They should feel that they are always under pressure, always looking over their shoulders. Is the taciturn barkeep in this small town just unfriendly all the time, or does he know who they are? Did that anxious farmer they passed on the road recognize them?

Sealing the City

The king orders the following steps taken in order to seal the city and prevent the heroes’ escape:

- The heroes’ names (including any known aliases) and descriptions are circulated to all Kingdom Guards.
- Garrisons at all gates (north, south, and both river gates) are tripled.
- The number of patrols on the city walls and in the city streets is doubled.
- Random spot-checks of identity papers are instituted, and anyone without papers is arrested. Naturally, anyone carrying papers with the heroes’ names on them is also arrested.
- Rewards are posted for information leading to the heroes’ capture. (The amount is meager, though, since King Darragan cannot afford to deplete his coffers.)

If the heroes do manage to escape the city (as they should, of course), then their descriptions and details are circulated to every settlement in the kingdom.

The Hunters

Once the heroes go “on the lam,” there are two groups of hunters pursuing them, in addition to the large number of common troops trying to stop their escape from the city:

The Borati Hunters

In addition to all the forces committed to preventing the heroes’ escape from the city, other agents have been detailed with the task of actually finding them.

1. Olan Vesk: Olan “Stinkwater” Vesk (see Location 16L in Chapter 1), whose informants and information-gathering skills are considered the best option for finding the heroes if they have avoided capture, puts his entire operation into hunting the PCs. He has no intention of facing them himself; anything he learns is simply passed on to Lanslaine via mounted messenger.

For every 4 hours the heroes remain in Borat, roll a Gather Information check for Vesk, opposed by a similar check for whichever hero has the highest bonus in this skill. If Vesk wins by 10 or more, he locates the heroes. If the PC wins by 5 or more, she learns that some spymaster is looking for them; by 10 or more, she learns Vesk's identity. Any other result means that neither learns anything conclusive on this subject.

Of course, if the heroes actually contact Vesk for some reason (such as if they hide out at Stinkwater's Place), then he automatically learns their location, or at the very least gains a large circumstance bonus to the opposed Gather Information check.

2. Ameira Lanslaine: The Lieutenant-Colonel leads the Guards responsible for actually capturing the heroes once they are located. She is accompanied by Taddeon Melch (see Appendix), a skilled tracker in the king's employ who is responsible for staying on the heroes' trail once it has been found. He is assisted by 2 hound masters (see Appendix), each with 3 hunting dogs (use riding dog stats), all of whom make aid another checks to assist Taddeon in his tracking.

In addition, Lanslaine is accompanied by 3 elite Kingdom Guards for each hero (treat as sergeants, but also armed with lances). Lanslaine and all the elite guards are mounted on light warhorses.

King Darragan has ordered Lanslaine to take the heroes alive, if possible, so that they can be questioned. However, he's more interested in what they know than in whether they are innocent or not, so Lanslaine tries to take the heroes down as fast as she can — she then patches them up before they die, if possible — rather than pulling her punches.

Lanslaine does call in reinforcements if she has the heroes trapped somewhere and there is a garrison nearby. Possible reinforcements depend largely on where the heroes are when she corners them, and could be anything from a single Guard patrol to several hundred troops (although she is not likely to request more than a platoon of 36 men except in the most extraordinary of circumstances).

Lanslaine continues pursuing the heroes until one of the following conditions is met:

- the PCs are all dead or captured
- she herself is dead or captured (if the heroes capture her, and then release her in exchange for her word not to chase them any more, she keeps her word)
- the heroes produce conclusive evidence that Ghent is working for the Crimson Path (*Note:* The testimony of the few villagers who survived Ghent's rampage of destruction will suffice for this purpose.)

XP Note: The heroes should receive XP for defeating Lanslaine only once during this chapter, not each time they fight her (which may be on several occasions). They should, however, receive full XP for any of her followers that they manage to kill, capture, or otherwise incapacitate when escaping from her, and they should get full XP for defeating her even if they do so by showing her evidence that Ghent was actually in the service of the Crimson Path.

The Cult's Hunters

The Crimson Path relies not on mortal men and women to find the heroes, but on malignant supernatural creatures known as hunting spirits (see Appendix). They send out one hunting spirit per hero; each spirit has a specific hero as the target of its relentless hunter ability.

These creatures automatically find the heroes at midnight on the first night they are at large, and then attack until slain. When the hunting spirits are destroyed, Paraz Ghent begins his murderous rampage through Rannemort (see below), for he realizes that it can be only a short time before the heroes come looking for him, and he wants to cause as much death as he can before that happens.

The Ruin of Rannemort

Here are some short ideas for encounters the heroes could have during their journey from Borat to Rannemort. Of course, any one or more of these ideas could easily be expanded into a much larger scenario if the DM wishes.

Logging Trouble: Lumber from Camp Cloven still comes overland to Borat. The heroes find the way blocked by an overturned cart, with dozens of huge logs strewn across the road. Worse still, one of the guards in the caravan has been trapped under one of the logs, and his comrades are struggling to free him.

Do the heroes agree to help free the man when aid is requested? Will they be recognized if they linger, or remembered if they stay? How will they react when the guards invite them to share a meal as thanks for their help? Do these guards really not know who the PCs are — or is this whole scene an elaborate ploy to catch the heroes?

Maladoran Double-Cross: A man approaches the heroes, calling them by name and offering them a deal: if they swear loyalty to Malador and accompany him immediately, he'll see they get safely to the port city. But is he really an agent of Malador? Is his offer a trap? And if so, who's setting it?

Recognition: A poor, elderly farmer on the road suddenly gasps and goes pale when he sees the heroes approaching. It doesn't take a Sense Motive check to guess that he's heard the latest news and has just realized who the characters are. Do they kill the helpless old man in cold blood? Or might they find some other way to ensure his silence? And is his reaction anything to do with the king's pursuit at all...?

XP Note: Consider awarding XP to the heroes for navigating these encounters on the road even if they do not end in combat. The amount of XP is up to you, but somewhere between 100 and 300 per hero per encounter is fair.

Approaching Rannemort

As they draw close to Rannemort, the heroes see clouds of smoke rising from the village. The clouds diffuse as they rise up, and in the upper reaches of the cloud the sun refracts off the smoke, turning the sky a sullen, blood-red hue. (Actually, the sky really is turning red: a DC 25 Survival check suggests that there is something more sinister going on here than simply an odd optical effect).

The smoke is rising from the buildings of Rannemort, most of which are now ablaze. Even the Town Captain's residence, a sturdy stone structure, is fully ablaze. The air is heavy with the smell of smoke and other less savory aromas.

Drawing closer, the heroes see that there are a great number of bodies lying sprawled in the streets of the town. Someone has sacked the entire place, slaughtering the people and setting everything on fire — everything, that is, except a couple of large wooden barns not far from the Town Captain's residence. Both of these buildings are still intact, although surely with all the sparks flying through the air, they won't stay that way for much longer.

As they draw closer, the heroes hear screams for help from the smaller of the two buildings.

Facing Their Accuser

Realizing that the heroes would probably make their way to him after they slew the hunting spirits he sent, and believing that the Blood Angel would soon devastate the world, Paraz Ghent has succumbed to his most bestial urges. Unleashing a group of demonic minions sent here to assist him, he has slaughtered most of the people in Rannemort. Those who still live do so only because he is spending some time savoring their demise.

The map on page 70 shows the layout of the two barns and the small cornfield near them. Ghent and his demon allies have brought the last few survivors here, toying with them before their deaths.

1. The Grounds

The area around the residence and its barns consists of mostly open ground, though there are some patches of muddy earth. A cart has been left rather carelessly in the middle of this area.

Condition Zone (mud): The muddy patch of ground is slippery and treacherous. Any character trying to move through these squares must make a DC 10 Balance check or come to a halt and lose the rest of his move action. Any

creature trying to make attacks while standing in the mud must make this same Balance check or lose the attack as its feet slip.

Condition Zone (smoky haze): Smoke fills the air. Any creature more than 30 feet away from a character gains concealment against that character.

Option Zone (cart): With a full-round action and a DC 15 Strength check, a character can push this cart either due east or due west. The cart rolls 1 square, +1 additional square for every 5 points the Strength check exceeded 15. Any creature in the path of the cart is subject to an overrun attack by the cart, which is treated as a Large creature with a Strength modifier equal to that of the creature who pushed it.

If they lose the opposed overrun check, they are knocked prone and suffer 1d10 points of damage as the cart rolls over them. If they are also in the mud condition zone, the overrun targets may choose to avoid the cart only if they succeed at a DC 15 Balance check.

2. Bonfire

The doors on the smaller of the two barns have been barricaded shut with a large pile of crates. Surrounding the other three sides of the building are piles of oil-soaked kindling. None of the kindling is yet alight, but drifting sparks from the other fires in town are getting dangerously close.

Screams and shouts for help come from inside this building. It sounds like 15 to 20 people may be trapped, packed like sardines inside this veritable tinder box.

Condition Zone (flammable): Each round, there is a cumulative 10% chance that one of the piles of kindling catches alight (i.e., a 10% chance in the first round, 20% in the second, etc.). Once a pile is lit, the fire doubles in size every 3 rounds unless extinguished, until the entire building is ablaze. (Note that this is a faster rate of spread than normal due to the oil and kindling that has been placed to help it catch quickly.) Anyone passing through a burning square at any point



during her action suffers 1d6 points of fire damage, plus an additional 1d6 fire damage if she *ends* her turn in a burning square.

Option Zone (barricade): Characters can easily climb onto the crates in order to gain a height advantage in combat. They can also move the crates out of the way so the doors can be opened. Moving each crate requires a standard action and a DC 5 Strength check. At least four crates must be moved in order for one of the barn doors to be opened.

3. Cornfield [EL 7]

This small field is filled with corn grown to almost 5 feet in height. The shoulders and pumpkin head (with hat) of a scarecrow jut upward out of the corn, which sways slightly in the breeze. It would be an idyllic scene were it not for the clouds of smoke.

Condition Zone (smoky haze): See Area 1 above.

Condition Zone (corn): Creatures in the cornfield gain a +4 circumstance bonus to Hide checks while they remain still due to the cover offered by the corn. If they move, the waving corn gives away their position and they no longer benefit from this bonus.

Creatures: There are 2 demon warriors hidden in the cornfield. When determining whether or not the heroes can spot the demons, assume the creatures have taken 20 on their Hide checks (base 20, +4 circumstance, –3 skill, for a total result of 21). Also be sure to modify heroes' Spot checks for distractions, if applicable, and for their distance from the demons.

The demon warriors are somewhat froglike in appearance, with strong legs, greenish-gray skin, and bulbous, wicked eyes. Their long black tongues coil in and out of their mouths constantly, as if tasting the very air itself.

Demon warriors (2): hp 81, 75

Tactics: The demons wait until a hero comes close enough that they can move and attack in the same round, or, if the heroes head straight for the main barn, then they come in behind the PCs to catch them by surprise.

4. Residence

The residence is a formidable two-storey stone building that is now a blazing inferno. Flames leap from every window, and the entire roof has already collapsed inward. There's no chance that anyone could still be alive in there.

Condition Zone (heat): The area around the residence is so hot that it literally scorches nearby flesh. Any creature passing through one or more of these squares at any point during its action suffers 1d4 points of fire damage, plus an additional 1d4 fire damage if it ends its turn in such a square.

Should a PC be foolish enough to actually enter the building itself, he suffers 4d6 points of fire damage per round.

5. Main Barn [EL 9+]

The main barn is large and spacious, its ceiling beams just over 20 feet above the ground. Ghent has brought four of the few remaining villagers to this location, and his demonic lieutenant Xagoth has fashioned nooses for them. Ghent's

plan is to push a victim out of the barn's hayloft, then make the others, in turn, watch as that person slowly strangles to death. It is, he says, a fitting metaphor for the inevitability of humanity's own destruction.

Creatures: Ghent and Xagoth are here, in addition to their victims. There are also 2 or more demon warriors — use 2 if there are four or fewer heroes, but add an extra demon warrior for each additional hero after the fourth; if the demon warriors from the cornfield were not spotted and have followed the PCs in, however, count them among the maximum number of demon warriors here.

Paraz Ghent: hp 61

Xagoth: hp 66

Demon warriors (2+): hp 71, 69 (plus those from cornfield?), plus possible extras 68 each

Victims (4): hp 4 each

Tactics: Xagoth begins the fight by pushing a laborer out to hang. He hopes to knock a hero backward with the swinging body, or at least to distract one of the heroes into cutting down the struggling victim. He employs this tactic again if it seems to be working. He also keeps an eye out for flanking opportunities and makes use of them whenever he can.

Ghent starts combat by activating his defense bonus from Overwhelming Presence, and then makes use of his Improved Bull Rush feat to move enemies into flanking situations, or to push them into stalls so they can be locked in. Other than that, he seeks out the toughest-looking hero and takes him or her on in melee. If he cannot reach a hero to attack during any round, he may try to assist an ally with his Inspiring Presence trait.

The demon warriors assault the heroes any way they can, trying to get in as many full-attack actions as possible. They take any flanking opportunities they can.

Condition Zone (hayloft): The hayloft is raised 10 feet off the ground. Creatures under the hayloft have total cover from those upon it, and vice versa. The hayloft can be accessed either by climbing the ladder (no check required) or by climbing the rope to the loading pulley outside (Climb DC 5); the rope ends at a small doorway, through which bales of hay are normally loaded. Characters can also climb the barn walls, but this requires a DC 18 Climb check.

Option Zone (hanging game): Four uses. Each surviving villager has a noose around his neck; the other end of the rope is attached to a beam in the ceiling. As a standard action, any creature in the hayloft can push one of the four laborers out into space. The villager swings forward two squares before coming to a stop, then swings back on the next round. After 3 rounds, the swing is only one square long; after 6 rounds, the swinging comes to an end.

A swinging victim effectively bull rushes any creature in the squares through which he moves during his swing, with an effective Strength modifier equal to that of the creature who pushed him. (Treat the hanging victim as a Medium creature, even if the pushing creature is larger or smaller.)

After being pushed out, the victim starts to choke: if he is not cut down within 8 rounds, he suffocates to death (this is

quicker than normal suffocation due to the extra pressure on the victim's throat). Saving a victim requires either untying the noose (DC 25 Use Rope, or 2 extended DC 20 checks; in either case, a check requires a full-round action) or simply cutting the rope (hardness 0, 2 hp, and Break DC 23).

Option Zone (stall doors): Reusable. A character standing next to stall doors can use a full-round action to swing them shut. If the character is outside the stall, he can also slot the lock into place as part of this action. Any character on the other side of the doors must open them to get at the character, which is a standard action, or (if the doors are locked) must climb out of the stall (Climb DC 5, full-round action) or bash down the doors (hardness 5, 8 hp, Break DC 21).

Option Zone (tools): Reusable. The barn holds many farming implements that can be used as improvised weapons. By using a move action anywhere in the barn, a character can pick up a one-handed improvised weapon that inflicts 1d6 damage.

Treasure: Though the heroes might not realize it at first, the most valuable things left in Rannemort are the survivors. Ghent fully expected to kill them all, regardless of the heroes' possible interference, so he did not worry about speaking openly in front of them.

Any surviving villager can tell the heroes that Ghent and his demonic allies talked at length about "the Great Ritual" and discussed possible routes for traveling to "the Temple" in the Cloven Lands, where this ritual was being held. The survivors do not simply volunteer this information, though, for they are in shock after what has occurred to them and their families. The heroes need to spend some time talking to them in order to get sense out of them (either a DC 25 Diplomacy check or through roleplaying, or some combination of both).

The villagers have never been to the temple themselves, but Ghent's conversation made mention of several landmarks that ought to be recognizable and would allow his route to be traced. These include "the medusa tree," a tree with branches that look like snakes swaying in the wind; "the backwards creek," a stream which looks like it is flowing uphill (a trick of the eye caused by the layout of the terrain);

and "the weeping stone," a smooth, time-worn boulder that constantly discharges a thin trickle of water from the spring beneath it.

Based on these and other landmarks, the heroes should be able to pick their way to the temple and a final showdown with the Crimson Path.

AFTERMATH

The heroes have presumably taken vengeance on Paraz Ghent for his attempt to frame them, and have learned the location at which the Crimson Path will perform the *Rite of the Blood Storm*.

The only thing left for them to do now is merely to stop the Blood Angel and prevent the destruction of every living creature on the New Coast....

Rewards

Award each hero 400 XP as a story award for each of the following goals they achieved:

- discovering who accused them of conspiring against Borat (without your needing to use the "town crier" option)
- escaping from Borat
- discovering the location of the *Rite of the Blood Storm*

Before the Next Adventure

It is expected that the next chapter follows immediately upon the end of this one, for the cult is well on its way to completing its plans, and the heroes have no time to waste if they want to stop the *Rite of the Blood Storm* from being completed.

If the heroes are particularly badly wounded by the end of this chapter, you might want to allow them up to 8 hours to rest before continuing (simply assume that the cult's plans are all put back a similar length of time as well), but allowing any more than this would undercut the sense of urgency and is not at all recommended.

Chapter Five: Eye of the Storm

By now the heroes should know the location of the Crimson Path's foul ritual, and they should be aware of the urgent need to prevent its success. As blood-red storm clouds gather over the kingdom, they must race into the Cloven Lands to put an end to the cult's mad schemes.

A party of four 8th-level heroes should earn enough experience to progress to 9th level by the end of this chapter.

Crossing the Cloven Lands

The ancient, half-ruined temple, in which the Crimson Path will attempt to free the Blood Angel, is approximately 15 miles south-by-southwest of Rannemort. There are no tracks in the Cloven Lands, making travel there very slow (a character with a base speed of 30 feet should average 1.5

miles per hour, assuming she does not hustle), a problem compounded by the frequent cliffs and sheer escarpments that crisscross the area.

For every hour of travel in the Cloven Lands, have the hero with the highest Survival skill bonus make a DC 20 Survival check to avoid hazards; he may not take 10 or take 20 on this check. (The other PCs may use the aid another action with their own Survival checks, if they wish; see "Combining Skill Attempts" in Chapter 4 of the *Iron Heroes* core book.)

If the primary character fails the Survival check, the group makes no progress for that hour, being forced to retrace its steps around some cliff or other or obstacle.

No Wilderness Characters?

It's possible that your player character group may have no members who have developed the Survival skill, in which case needing to make a DC 20 check every hour is likely to delay them far too long, allowing the Blood Angel to be freed and begin its rampage while they are still lost in the wilderness.

In this case, you should probably allow the heroes to find a guide who can lead them: While most people in the town have been killed, a few survive, and perhaps one of them has some experience of the Cloven Lands.

Statistics for a wilderness guide are provided in the Appendix.

Cloven Lands Encounters

No specific encounters have been included for the journey between Rannemort and the Temple of the Blood Angel. For many groups, incidental encounters at this time would simply be a distraction from the main task (and the heroes may well be considerably weakened already from battling Ghent and his minions). Such encounters might fatally weaken the heroes right before the climactic battle. It is left to your discretion whether you wish to add such encounters: you know your players best, and you can best judge what they are equipped to handle.

If you do decide to include a random encounter, some possibilities might include a few cliff ogres, or if you feel your group needs a more formidable challenge, perhaps a gossamer wyrm. (You may substitute normal ogres or an yrrhak, respectively, if you do not have the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*.)

Racing the Blood Storm

From the moment they learn of the rite's location, the heroes are in a race against time — one that they cannot wholly win, but neither is it one that they need wholly lose. The *Rite of the Blood Storm* is a long and arduous magical ceremony that will inevitably lead to the death of every cultist involved, but the longer it is allowed to progress before

those deaths occur, the more powerful the Blood Angel will be when it emerges into the Swordlands.

The timetable below shows the progress of time (in hours) of the rite from the moment it begins. Make sure that your PCs have at least some solid hints regarding the urgency with which they must act — if they pause to rest on their journey, they will almost certainly doom themselves, and likely the entire New Coast.

Mounted Heroes?

If the heroes have mounts, then, as the adventure is written, one would think that they will be able to make it to the temple very quickly. You have a few options to surmount this obstacle: Perhaps the easiest is simply to have their horses be slain by the demon warriors at Rannemort, so that the PCs are forced to proceed throughout this chapter on foot.

However, looking at the numbers, a light warhorse with a heavily armored rider (assuming tack and saddle, plus a 180-pound rider with 75 pounds of armor and gear) moves 3 miles per hour, or 6 miles per hour hustling. That is, the horse moves no faster than a typical *unencumbered* PC (i.e., speed 30 feet) afoot. (Realistically, a rider would be stopping to walk the horse regularly, keeping it from tiring, so that the total pace is not noticeably increased.)

The real advantage, then, of the heroes' having mounts is that the horses take any damage from hustling, thus becoming fatigued and leaving the PCs uninjured and reasonably well rested for the confrontation at the temple. *Thus, if the PCs are sorely hurt at this point in the game, letting them find mounts at Rannemort might actually be a good option!* Be sure to use this option to good effect, building the dramatic tension as the horses begin to collapse, heavily lathered, just a few miles from the temple, leaving the PCs to journey only a short distance and fight at no further disadvantage.

Time	Rite's Progress	HD
0 hours	The <i>Rite of the Blood Storm</i> begins. Blood-red storm clouds begin to gather above the temple.	N/A
3 hours	The PCs learn of the location of the temple from the survivors at Rannemort. The storm clouds begin to expand outward from the temple.	N/A
4 hours	The blood-red clouds now cover much of the region.	N/A
6 hours	The Blood Angel is summoned, but for now remains within the ritual circle to gain strength. The entire sky in every direction is now filled with blood-red storm clouds.	12
7 hours	<i>This is the earliest the heroes can possibly reach the temple assuming everyone in the group has a base speed of at least 40 feet and they hustle the entire way.</i>	12
8 hours	<i>This is the earliest the heroes can possibly reach the temple assuming everyone in the group has a base speed of at least 30 feet and they hustle the entire way.</i>	12
10 hours	The Blood Angel's power increases. Sickly blue-green lightning begins to crash down around the temple.	16

...chart continues on next page

Time	Rite's Progress	HD
11 hours	<i>This is the earliest the heroes can possibly reach the temple assuming everyone in the group has a base speed of at least 40 feet and moves at normal speed, or if they all have a speed of at least 20 feet and they hustle the entire way.</i>	16
13 hours	<i>This is the earliest the heroes can possibly reach the temple assuming everyone in the group has a base speed of 30 feet and moves at a normal pace.</i>	16
14 hours	The Blood Angel's power increases.	20
16 hours	<i>This is the earliest the heroes can possibly reach the temple assuming everyone in the group has a base speed of 20 feet and moves at normal speed.</i>	20
18 hours	The Blood Angel reaches full strength. The rite is complete; every cultist at the temple is now dead, and the New Coast is all but doomed.	24

Time: This timeline represents the number of hours that have passed since the cult's ritual began. The heroes are assumed to have discovered its location at "hour 2." *Remember that characters can lose hours of travel time by failing Survival checks, as noted under "Crossing the Cloven Lands."*

HD: This column gives the current Hit Dice of the Blood Angel if the cultists are all slain at this point in the ceremony.

Note: An enterprising DM who does not mind altering monster stats might consider making the HD increases more gradual than those noted in the chart above: For every hour after the Blood Angel is summoned, not including the first, it gains 1 HD until it reaches its maximum of 24 HD. this way, then, in the 9th hour of the ritual, between 3 and 4 hours after the summoning has occurred, the Blood Angel has $12 + 3 = 15$ HD.

Don't forget to inform your players of the increasingly strange phenomena in the sky (as outlined on the table) as they work their way through the Cloven Lands. This should help build a sense of tension and urgency for the final battle.

See pages 215–16 of *Monte Cook Presents: Iron Heroes* for information about overland movement (particularly regarding the dangers of hustling for extended periods).

The Temple of the Blood Angel

From the time they arrive at the temple, the PCs are engaged in one long, sprawling combat, with little time to rest or plan, and with absolutely no opportunity to withdraw and recuperate. Make sure you have read over all of the following text thoroughly before beginning the battle: Once combat begins, you will not want to have to interrupt the players while you read about what is supposed to happen next!

1. Temple Courtyard [EL 6+]

Bounded by a crumbling old wall that varies between 5 and 10 feet in height for most of its length, and that has collapsed completely in some places, the vast courtyard is strewn with rubble and cracked flagstones. The place exudes a sinister air under the blood-red sky. Frequent flashes of lightning crash down around the temple, sometimes blasting chunks of rocks into the air as they strike.

Creatures: There is a cult champion at each of the two locations noted "C" on the map and a dretch at each place marked "D." All of these creatures move to engage the heroes as soon as the latter enter the courtyard, as do the champions located in Area 2.

Cult champions (2): hp 46, 40

Dretches (4): hp 15, 11, 9, 8

Condition Zone (Blood Storm): A powerful blood-magic ceremony is being performed in the temple, and some of the magic is bleeding out into the world around it: Spilling blood within the temple grounds triggers a manifestation of that magic. Across the top and the side of the courtyard on the temple map (page 71) are listed numbers from 1 to 20. Any time a hero inflicts or suffers an injury during the battle, both you and the player whose hero was involved should roll 1d20. Find the point where your roll (reading across the top) and the player's roll (reading down the side) intersect. A bolt of lightning smashes down from the sky onto this point. Any creature in any of the four squares adjacent to this point suffers 2d6 points of electricity damage (Reflex DC 14 half).

Condition Zone (boulders): Certain gaps in the wall have been plugged with piles of large boulders. A character can scramble up onto these rocks without a skill check, though unless he succeeds at a DC 10 Balance check he suffers a –2 penalty to Defense while there due to the uneven footing. A character on the boulders gains a higher ground advantage against opponents on the courtyard floor.

Condition Zone (crates): These objects provide cover against any creature attacking through the squares they occupy, provided the target is fewer squares away from the object than the attacker is. The crates can also be used to gain a higher ground advantage by leaping on them (running Jump DC 15, standing DC 30).

Condition Zone (rubble): This uneven, pebble-strewn area makes for treacherous footing. A character cannot run or charge through this square.

Condition Zone (tents): The tents provide total concealment against any creature attacking through the squares they occupy, provided the target is fewer squares away from the object than the attacker is. They do not provide cover, however, for weapons can easily punch through their canvas sides.



Option Zone (boulders): One use per pile. A character who climbs onto a pile of boulders can attempt to cause a small rockslide. As a full-round action, the character must make a DC 20 Strength check. If this check succeeds, the pile collapses and boulders roll outward, hitting every character within 15 feet of any part of the pile. Affected characters suffer 4d6 points of damage each (Reflex DC 17 half).

Option Zone (crates): Four uses. With a full-round action and a successful DC 15 Strength check, a character can pick up one of these crates and hurl it up to a number of squares equal to 3 + his Strength modifier. Make a ranged touch attack against the target. Any creature struck by the crate must make a Strength check (DC 10 + the attacking character's Strength modifier) or be knocked prone. Regardless of the result of this check, the target also suffers damage equal to 1d6 + double the attacking character's Strength modifier. The crate is destroyed after it is thrown.

Option Zone (rubble): Reusable. As a full-round action, a character can scoop up a handful of dust and pebbles from any rubble-filled square and hurl it into her opponent's eyes. Make opposed base attack checks. If the attacking character beats his target's check by more than 5, the target is blinded by the dust, and must take a standard action to get the grit out its eyes before it will be able to see again.

Treasure: The tents contain two ironbound chests of cult treasure: in total, 4,092 gp; 3,363 sp; and 11,287 cp. The chests are locked (Open Lock DC 30) but not trapped. Tzaglina (see Area 4) has the key.

2. Temple Pavilion [EL 0 or 8]

The temple is surrounded by a broad, marble-tiled pavilion with a stone awning supported by columns. The columns are made of some kind of red stone with a glossy finish. Most of the rest of the stonework is white, though the floor is a checkerboard of white and red marble tiles.

A huge pair of closed bronze doors lead into the temple proper. The temple doors are closed but not locked.

Creatures: Four cult champions start here, in the positions marked, but they move forward to engage any intruders in

the courtyard. (See Area 1.) It is possible that a combat that begins in the courtyard may work its way up to this area; otherwise, there is unlikely to be an encounter here.

Cult champions (4): hp 44, 43, 34, 33

Condition Zone (statues and columns): These objects provide cover against any creature attacking through the squares they occupy, provided the target is fewer squares away from the object than the attacker is.

Option Zone (statues): One use per statue. With a full-round action and a successful DC 20 Strength check, a character can push over a statue, choosing any two squares adjacent to the statue: It falls in these squares, inflicting 4d6 points of damage upon any creatures there (Reflex DC 15 half).

3. Antechamber

This bare stone chamber has a white marble floor. The north and south walls each feature a mural 10 to 12 feet wide. The northern mural depicts a lush paradise of streams, fields, and beautiful airy cities under a bright blue sky. The southern one shows the same landscape, but the streams are dry, the fields barren, and the cities in ruins, while the sky overhead is blood red, shot through with greenish lightning.

There are large bronze doors in both the east and west walls. The droning sound of chanting voices can be faintly heard through the metal doors to the east.

4. Hall of the Blood Storm

This large, spacious hall has a ceiling 20 feet high. Balconies, set about 10 feet above the ground, overlook its northern and southern sides, a pair of mighty stone columns supporting each. Black metal hooks set into each column have thick chains attached to them. These chains run up to the ceiling, through another set of hooks, and then down to a vast chandelier that is easily 15 feet across. Despite its size, the chandelier gives off no light, for none of its candles are lit.

Instead, the dim light in the room is provided by several free-standing candelabras here and there around the hall, and by the murky red light that streams in through a huge window in the far eastern wall.

The Rite of the Blood Storm

This magical ceremony requires those performing it to stand at the sixteen cardinal points around a magical summoning circle. They must then begin an unbroken litany of invocations while ritualistically cutting themselves upon the face and arms with sacrificial daggers. As they do so, the blood drips down into runnels in the floor, and thence down into the center of the summoning circle.

As the ceremony progresses, the blood in the circle begins to roil and heave, as if boiling over an open flame. Small geysers shoot up; eddies and currents seem to swirl within it; great bubbles form and then pop in soft, wet explosions.

If continued to completion, the rite lasts 18 hours, but not every participant will survive that long: blood loss and exhaustion will cause many to collapse before the ceremony is finished. This is expected and does not disrupt the rite in any way. Instead, the blood from these casualties continues to drain into the circle for as long as anyone is alive to maintain the rite. Thus, until all the participants die (or are slain), the rite continues and the power of the Blood Angel continues to grow with it. (See “Racing the Blood Storm” earlier in this chapter for details regarding the rate of growth of the Blood Angel.)

Just below the window, a circle of figures stands, one hand of each outstretched, slashing at their own arms with curved knives as they maintain a thick, guttural chant. Blood streams down their bodies and runs into the center of the circle, where a spreading pool of the stuff boils and heaves.

Another robed figure stands about three-quarters of the way to the circle. This figure turns as the heroes enter, revealing the features of an imperious woman in her mid-50s. The woman scowls when she sees the heroes, and then suddenly smiles . . . her mouth stretching far too wide and her teeth looking far too long for her to be human.

Development: This is it — the final confrontation with the Crimson Path. Seconds after the heroes enter, the chanting figures give one last shout, then collapse to the ground, stone dead. The boiling blood in the circle now fountains upwards like a geyser. After 2 rounds, this geyser forms itself into the Blood Angel (HD as appropriate given the amount of time that has passed in the ritual), and the fate of the New Coast lies in the heroes’ capable hands.

Creatures: The Crimson Path ritualists cannot fight or defend themselves, being wholly involved in the ritual until it ends and they perish. The fanged woman is Tzaglina, a powerful fiend allied with the Crimson Path; while at first she appears human, she is nothing of the sort. Her human appearance is simply a disguise she adopts. As soon as combat begins, her mouth distends and fills with needle sharp teeth, while her hands and nails lengthen and harden into bird-like talons. Her skin becomes mottled in color, with scales forming on her neck and forearms.

Tzaglina: hp 52

Dretches (2): hp 18, 15

Blood Angel: hp varies by HD (see Appendix)

Tactics: Tzaglina orders the dretches to attack and retreats back and to the side so that the Blood Angel can move forward to attack once it forms; she casts *shield* on herself as her first action and then *mage armor* the following round. After that, she bombards the heroes with *magic missile*, *scorching ray*, and *summon monster III* spells. Tzaglina always keeps at least one 2nd-level spell slot unused; if she is reduced to 20 hit points or less, she casts *invisibility* with that final slot and attempts to flee.

The Blood Angel and the dretches fight to the death. Wherever possible, the Blood Angel uses its absorption power to consume the life energies of any creature that dies after it has formed.

Condition Zone (balconies): Creatures under a balcony gain total cover from creatures on the balcony they are under, and vice versa. The Blood Angel can go under a balcony if it wishes, but it must squeeze to do so.

Condition Zone (pillars): These objects provide cover against any creature attacking through the squares they occupy, provided the target is fewer squares away from the object than the attacker is.

Option Zone (candelabra): Reusable. A candelabra can be picked up and used as an improvised weapon. This is a two-handed weapon dealing 1d6 damage, plus 1d3 points of fire damage with the first three successful attacks (after that, assume that its candles have been broken or extinguished).

Option Zone (chandelier): One use. If all four chains on the chandelier are released from the columns, or if the hook in the ceiling is broken, the chandelier plunges to the ground. Anything under it takes 12d6 points of damage (Reflex DC 21 half). The hook holding up the chandelier has hardness 10 and 15 hit points, while the chains each have hardness 10 and 10 hit points. Both the chains and the hook have a Defense of 12.

Option Zone (chains): The chains holding up the chandelier are strong enough for a person to move along them. It requires a Balance or Climb check (DC 20 for either) in order to do so. A character who falls from the chains suffers 1d6 points of damage.

Option Zone (window): One use. If a creature successfully uses the “throw” action (see *Iron Heroes*, page 198) on another creature, it can throw its victim through the giant window rather than at another creature. The victim takes the normal damage for being thrown, plus 6d6 points of slashing damage; a Reflex save (DC 10 + the throwing character’s Strength modifier) reduces this slashing damage by half.

Treasure: As the legends say, the Blood Angel “can be harmed only by those who birthed it”: The 16 daggers used by the cultists in the ceremony to summon the Blood Angel are stained with the blood of those who summoned it. The creature takes full normal damage from these daggers (i.e., none of its othermatter abilities apply against wounds inflicted by these weapons).

What Is Tzaglina?

Before they created or enslaved the servitor races, such as humans, ogres, and the First, the Masters magically summoned and bound a race of demonic entities known as the Agakaza. Tzaglina was one of this race, forced to work against her will for creatures she privately loathed.

The Agakaza proved unreliable and fractious slaves, and they were soon banished back to their own plane once the Masters had better labor available. But Tzaglina never forgave the slight of her servitude. She lacked the power to destroy the Masters, but since their disappearance she has worked to destroy the world they left behind. Should any of them ever return, she intends that they will find only death and horror. To that end, she has aided the Cult of the Crimson Path, fanning the insanity already planted in their minds by the Blood Angel.

GM's Note: The Agakaza use rakshasa stats with a revised physical description, modified damage reduction, and faster shapechanging abilities. Use rakshasa to design any future Agakaza opponents you desire.

AFTERMATH

With the Blood Angel destroyed, the heroes have only to clear their names with King Darragan to be free to pursue

their own agendas once more. Of course, there are still many troubles on the horizon — the Blood Storm may have been averted, but war still looms between Borat and Malador, and there are many other dangers to be faced in the Swordlands.

Rewards

Assuming that the heroes can demonstrate to King Darragan that the charges against them were false, he issues a full public pardon and offers each hero 500 gp as compensation for the hardships they suffered at his hands.

If the heroes can convince the king that they also thwarted the Blood Angel (a more difficult proposition since there is only their word for it, but a DC 25 Diplomacy check should do it), he is likely to lavish gifts of titles and land upon them. Each PC is made a "Hero of Borat," forever excused from paying taxes, and granted at least 10 acres of arable land within the kingdom. Such largesse is not without good cause: he knows the service the heroes have done the New Coast . . . and he also knows that they must be very powerful to have achieved it.

The Council of Malador is less generous in the provision of rewards. Unless the heroes have been acting as agents for Malador throughout the adventure, the Council limits their rewards to meaningless gestures such as a public statement of thanks and goodwill; if the heroes actually are Maladoran agents, the Council will also give them a reward of about 500 gp each.

Chapter Six: After the Storm

Although your players may have completed **Blood Storm**, this certainly doesn't mean that they have exhausted the opportunities for adventure in the New Coast. This chapter offers ideas for continuing your campaign once the events of this module come to their conclusion.

Your options for using this book after the end of the **Blood Storm** story are many, and they can be as complex or straightforward as you desire. The ideas below generally focus on large, multi-session campaign ideas that you can use to develop several months of gaming, but there is also plenty of scope for stand-alone adventures as a change of pace.

For instance, the Drowning Towers are a ready-made dungeon just waiting to be explored. These ancient, half-sunken buildings are filled with monsters, treasures, and traps. An adventuring group could easily have many enjoyable sessions exploring these dangerous halls, quite possibly without much more motivation than the danger and the rewards.

Similarly, the Cloven Lands, the Gray Steppe, and the Bleakwater offer many opportunities for wilderness adventuring. The heroes could find further ancient ruins in the Cloven Lands, explore the marshes in search of hidden treasures, or launch an expedition into the Ghostlands

themselves. Many adventure modules for other OGL games can easily be adapted to fit into these settings, giving you a host of options to work with.

However, **Blood Storm** deliberately leaves open several issues as the module comes to a close. By now, the heroes should have some idea of how powerful they are in relation to the average person in the world. What will they do with this power? What will others do to gain control of or to ally with the heroes (possibly for their own unspoken ends)? Will the death of the Blood Angel and the destruction of the Crimson Path be enough to avert war between Borat and Malador? If not, which side will the heroes choose, and what difference will their decision make?

Below are some further developments you might use to continue your campaign.

The Agakaza

Tzaglina's scheme has been thwarted, and she will want revenge. Even if she was slain, there may well be others of the Agakaza who bear ill will toward the Swordlands, or who would seek revenge on those mortals who slew one of their people. The Agakaza can make a formidable ongoing enemy due to their magical abilities and strong resistance to harm.

The War

Although **Blood Storm** presumably ends with the death of the Blood Angel, the difficulty between Borat and Malador need not be over. Can the heroes avert war by negotiating or enforcing some kind of settlement? If not, will they side with the autocratic king or the corrupt councilors, or will they attempt to seize power for themselves?

The New Cleaving

The destructive energies released by the heroes' final battle with the Crimson Path lead to a new upheaval in the Cloven Lands. Volcanoes rise, vast lakes of magma appear, and strange creatures boil out from beneath the earth in search of conquest or prey on the surface. Some are mere ravening beasts, but others are organized into primitive societies.

An army of troglodytes, ogres, or trolls might threaten the entire New Coast, or a sleeping dragon might be awakened by the upheaval, bursting forth to wreak havoc on those who have disturbed its rest. Or perhaps the strange dust of the Cloven Lands is a sign that hundreds of trondar (see the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*) sleep beneath the surface of this area, and these now-awakened elementals will seek to transform the New Coast into a desolate copy of their original home.

Crimson Inheritance

The death of the Blood Angel and of large numbers of senior cultists is a devastating blow to the Crimson Path, a blow that the organization cannot survive unchanged. But what if this evolution included a switch of loyalty to the very heroes who devastated their cult? After all, the PCs have proven themselves an even greater power than the Blood Angel.

What atrocities will these new disciples commit in order to prove their loyalty to their new god-heroes, and how will the "deified" PCs cope with being responsible for the actions of deranged madmen?

New Frontiers

The New Coast is hemmed in on all sides by difficult and treacherous terrain that makes travel into or out of the area both dangerous and slow. But if peace and security has been won for this region, then perhaps it is time for the heroes to brave those barriers and seek out new lands to explore and new adversaries to overcome. Such an expedition might be undertaken purely at the heroes' own decision, or they might be asked by the rulers of the New Coast to go forth as emissaries to contact other lost nations in the Swordlands.

APPENDIX I: CREATURES AND CHARACTERS

New Monsters

BLOOD ANGEL

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 12d8+48 (102 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Defense: 16 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +8 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 16

DR: 15/blood (see text)

Base Attack/Grapple: +12/+21

Attack: Slam +17 melee (2d4+9 plus blood drain)

Full Attack: 4 slams +17 melee (2d4+9 plus blood drain)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Blood drain

Special Qualities: Absorption, blindsight 60 ft., limited telepathy, regeneration 5, ooze traits, othermatter

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +11

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 9, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 16

Skills: Climb +20, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Listen +18, Spot +18, Swim +20

Feats: Improved Overrun (3, 5), Power Attack (1), Weapon Focus (slam) (1, 2)

Environment: Outer planes

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: None

Advancement: 13–15 HD (Large); 16–22 HD (Huge); 23–24 HD (Gargantuan)

This vast creature appears like nothing so much as a bloated, viscous coagulation of seething blood. The monstrosity stains everything it touches and leaves puddles of sticky red fluid everywhere it moves, yet it never seems to get smaller.

The Blood Angel is a potent force of destruction from the outer planes, a creature so alien that it cannot comprehend, nor be comprehended by, humanity. Philosophers have argued whether the creature is evil or not for generations, but in truth that hardly matters: the Blood Angel exists to destroy, and knows no other purpose. Its only reaction to life other than its own is to kill and consume it.

The Blood Angel is never encountered naturally on the Material Plane. This world is completely unlike its own, and it can manifest here only if someone on this plane creates a conduit for it to use. By spilling their own blood in a long and arduous ritual, powerful arcanists can conjure the Blood Angel into this reality, though only those whose sanity had



left them would want to do so, for the creature cannot be controlled, and would simply set out upon an orgy of destruction.

COMBAT

The Blood Angel is an unimaginative combatant, advancing relentlessly on its enemies to crush and consume them.

Blood Drain (Ex): Whenever the Blood Angel hits with a slam attack, it attempts to draw the life force directly out of its target. If the victim of the attack is a living creature, it must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or suffer 1 point of Strength drain and 1 point of Constitution drain (see “States and Conditions” in *Iron Heroes*, Chapter 8). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Absorption (Su): When the Blood Angel touches a dead body, it absorbs the remains inside itself as a free action. Normally, this has no effect other than to destroy the body. However, if the creature died within the last 3 rounds, enough life force lingers in the body for the Blood Angel to make use of it: Each time the Blood Angel absorbs such a life force, it heals 10 hit points. If this would take the Blood Angel over its normal maximum hit points, it gains the extra points as temporary hit points that last for one hour.

Limited Telepathy (Su): The Blood Angel can transmit images and sensations into the minds of other creatures. Such images and feelings are almost always disturbing and unsettling, though they are not generally powerful enough to have an adverse effect on a creature unless it is constantly exposed for months or even years.

Regeneration: Weapons coated in the blood of one of the Blood Angel’s summoners deal normal damage to the angel (see its othermatter ability, below). If the Blood Angel loses a limb or body part, the lost portion regrows in 1d4 minutes. The Blood Angel can reattach the severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

Ooze Traits: Although the Blood Angel is an outsider, it has all the standard traits of an ooze.

Othermatter (Ex): The Blood Angel is a creature completely unlike any that live in the Swordlands. Although it has been summoned into this world, its substance is that of another world entirely, and is almost impervious to harm from the mundane matter it encounters here. The Blood Angel is immune to all forms of energy damage, to critical hits, and to sneak attacks. Additionally, it has damage reduction 15/blood (see below).

The Blood Angel does have one connection to this world, one way in which it is vulnerable. In order for it to appear on the Material Plane, a conduit must be formed by the spilling of mortal blood. This same blood becomes a part of the creature, and thus blood from the creatures who summoned it can affect the Blood Angel. In fact, weapons stained in the blood of any of the angel’s summoners affect it normally: it gains none of the benefits of its ooze traits or othermatter ability against such attacks (i.e., the attack bypasses its DR and it gains no immunity to critical hits or sneak attacks using said weapons); moreover, it cannot regenerate damage from such attacks.

MARROWBREAKER

Medium Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 10d10+40 (95 hp)

Initiative: +9

Speed: 50 ft. (10 squares), climb 30 ft.

Defense: 21 (+5 Dex, +6 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 16

DR: —

Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+18

Attack: Bite +14 melee (2d6+6)

Full Attack: Bite +14 melee (2d6+6)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved grab, marrowbreaking

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft.

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +3

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11

Skills: Climb +12, Hide +18, Jump +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +18, Spot +7, Swim +8

Feats: Improved Initiative, Skill Talent* (Hide, Move Silently), Superior Grab* (1, 4)

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary, pair, pack (3–5), or horde (6–24)

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: Standard

Advancement: 11–15 HD (Medium); 16–20 HD (Large)

* If you do not have access to the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*, replace the marrowbreaker's Superior Grab feats with Improved Grapple (so its Grapple modifier does not change), and Improved Trip (1). The benefits of the Skill Talent feat, also from the *Bestiary*, are included in the creature's statistics above and need not be replaced.

This hideous creature has a bulbous body from which four long, spider-like legs project. Both body and legs are covered with loose, leathery skin and tufts of thick, spiky black hair. The beast's head seems almost vestigial, partially sunken into the bloated trunk; were it not for the thick, bony, jutting jaws that thrust out from the flattened snout, it would be hard to tell where the beast's head was at all.

Marrowbreakers stand nearly 5 feet tall on average, but their bodies are only about 3 feet across. They are very solidly built, a typical adult weighing between 150 and 200 pounds. They look something like four-legged spiders, though with a more compact body and jaws that are more like those of a canine than an arachnid's mandibles.

Marrowbreakers are haemovores, living off the blood and marrow of the creatures they kill. They were favored guardians among the Masters because of their intimidating appearance, physical power, and susceptibility to the Masters' enchantments.

Marrowbreakers do not speak, but can understand simple command phrases spoken in First Speech.

COMBAT

Marrowbreakers like to make use of all three dimensions in combat: They often cling to walls to attack or make leaping charges, using leaping strikes and vertical strikes (see the Jump skill in Chapter 4 of *Iron Heroes* for details). They are also adept at striking from ambush, for they can curl up into a surprisingly small, innocuous-seeming lump and thus conceal themselves in surprisingly small places.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a marrowbreaker must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Marrowbreaking (Ex): A marrowbreaker that wins a grapple check after a successful bite attack establishes a hold, clamping hard onto the opponent's body to tear flesh and shatter bones. This attack automatically deals 2d6+6 points of damage. Additionally, the victim must make a DC 19 Fortitude save or be sickened with the pain of her broken bones until she receives medical treatment (a successful DC 20 Heal check removes this condition). The save DC is Strength-based.



Skills: A marrowbreaker gets a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks, a +4 racial bonus on Swim checks, and a +2 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. A marrowbreaker can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks even if rushed or threatened. It retains its Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and opponents get no special bonus on their attacks against a climbing marrowbreaker.

Important Non-Player Characters

Entries are organized alphabetically by first name for ease of reference.

Where applicable, skill groups are listed under "Skills" in SMALL CAPITALS, followed by the number of ranks in that group. Each individual skill is listed thereafter, however, since they may have different bonuses due to key ability modifiers and trait or feat selections.

Ameira Lanslaine, Kingdom Guard Lieutenant-Colonel, female armiger 7: CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 7d4+42+14; hp 73; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. in armor; BDB +5; Defense 16 (+1 Dex), touch 16, flat-footed 10; DR 1d8+2/magic; BAB +7; Grap +10; Atk +11 melee (2d6+4/x3, masterwork maul) or +10 melee (1d8+4, flail) or +10 melee (1d4+3/x3, punching dagger); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (2d6+4/x3, masterwork maul) or +10/+5 melee (1d8+4, flail) or +10/+5 melee (1d4+3/x3, punching dagger); SQ armor abilities (armored trap, defensive stance), armor mastery, armor pool, armored redoubt, immune to fear, master armorer, tough as nails, uncanny dodge; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Traits: Brave, Resilient Toughness.

Skills: ATHLETICS 10 ranks; Climb +8, Craft (armor) +12, Handle Animal +6, Knowledge (local) +5, Intimidate +11, Jump +2, Ride +13, Survival +1 (+3 in the city), Swim +3.

Languages: Common, Ferrish, Sea Speech.

Feats: Armor Mastery (1, 2, 3), Mounted Combat (1), Vorpall Hurricane (3).

Possessions: Masterwork full plate, masterwork maul, flail, punching dagger, 100 gp.

Bannelan Kyte, Town Captain of Grayward, male warrior 4/aristocrat 2: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+4 plus 1d6+1+6; hp 34; Init -1; Spd 20 ft. in armor; BDB +4; Defense 16 (-1 Dex, +1 natural, +2 shield), touch 13, flat-footed 12; DR 1d5/magic; BAB +5; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword) or +7 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger); SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 11.

Traits: Perceptive, Stout.

Skills: ACADEMIA 3 ranks, ATHLETICS 5 ranks, SOCIAL 5 ranks; Appraise +4, Bluff +5, Climb +2, Concentration +4, Decipher Script +4, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +5, Handle Animal +5, Heal +4, Intimidate +9, Jump -4, Knowledge (local, nobility and royalty) +3, Listen +4, Ride +5, Sense Motive +5, Swim -3.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, Ferrish, Sea Speech.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Intimidate, Sense Motive), Toughness [x2].

Possessions: Chainmail, light steel shield, longsword, dagger, 6d6+50 gp. As a Town Captain, Kyte can acquire almost any item he needs, given a little time.

Darragan, King of Borat, male hunter 12: CR 12; Medium humanoid; HD 12d4+48+24; hp 112; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +10; Defense 27 (+2 Dex, +5 Int), touch 27, flat-footed 10; BAB +12; Grap +13; Atk +18 melee (1d8+1/19-20, masterwork longsword); Full Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+1/19-20, masterwork longsword); SA improvised attack, wolf pack tactics; SQ assess opponent, fortuitous insight, hunter's eye, improved terrain advantage, tactical insight, tactical pool, terrain advantage, woodsman's senses; SV Fort +14, Ref +14, Will +15; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 21, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Traits: High Born (title), Inspiring Presence.

Skills: ATHLETICS 15 ranks, PERCEPTION 15 ranks, STEALTH 15 ranks, WILDERNESS LORE 15 ranks; Appraise +17, Bluff +8,

Climb +16, Diplomacy +19 (+21 among nobility), Handle Animal +18, Hide +17, Intimidate +20, Jump +16, Knowledge (all) +20, Listen +18, Move Silently +17, Perform (oratory) +15, Ride +19, Search +20, Sense Motive +18, Spot +18, Survival +18 (+20 tracking), Swim +16, Use Magic Device +15, Use Rope +17.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, Draconic, First Speech, Kolorean, Sea Speech.

Feats: Beast Lore (1, 3), Tactics of the Mind (1, 3, 5), War Leader (1, 2, 7).

Possessions: Royal outfit, masterwork longsword, royal jewelry (1,000 gp total), 6d6+100 gp. (Note: This represents only what the King usually carries on his person; he can acquire almost any item he wants simply by calling for it.)

Drammoc Rene, Copperdell Rebel leader, male berserker 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d4+24+9; hp 40; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; DR 1d4/magic; BAB +3; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d10+6, greatclub); SA furious strike; SQ berserk mind, berserk strength, fury pool; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 12.

Traits: Tough as Iron [x2].

Skills: ATHLETICS 6 ranks; Climb +10, Intimidate +7, Jump +10, Knowledge (architecture and engineering, local) +4, Listen +5, Sense Motive +3, Survival +2, Swim +10.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Cleave (1), Endurance, Foe Hammer (1).

Possessions: Peasant's outfit, greatclub, 2d6 gp.

Holpan Seamander, Maladoran Envoy, male expert 2/aristocrat 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6-1 plus 1d6-1; hp 6; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 11 (-1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 9; BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger); SV Fort -1, Ref -1, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 9, Con 9, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Traits: Charismatic [x2].

Skills: ACADEMIA 1 ranks, SOCIAL 7 ranks, THEATRICALS 5 ranks; Appraise +3, Bluff +9, Concentration +0, Decipher Script +1, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +7 (+9 acting), Gather Information +9, Heal +2, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (geography, nobility and royalty) +3, Perform (acting, comedy, percussion, singing) +7, Profession (merchant) +5, Profession (sailor) +5, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Use Rope +2.

Languages: Common, Sea Speech.

Feats: Devious Manipulator (1)^B, Overwhelming Presence (1), Simple Weapon Proficiency.

Possessions: Courtier's outfit, dagger, 3d10+30 gp.

Ildwin Porey, Copperdell Rebel/Crimson Path leader, male archer 3/man-at-arms 3: CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 3d4+12+3 plus 3d4+18+3; hp 51; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +5; Defense 18 (+3 Dex), touch 18, flat-footed 10; BAB +5/+6 (melee/ranged); Grap +6; Atk +10 ranged (1d10/17-20/x3, masterwork heavy crossbow) or +9 melee (1d10/17-20/x3, masterwork heavy crossbow) or +6 melee (1d4+1/19-20,

dagger); Full Atk +8/+8/+3 ranged (1d10/17–20/x3, masterwork heavy crossbow) or +7/+7 melee (1d10/17–20/x3, masterwork heavy crossbow) or +6 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger); SA armor-piercing shot, unerring shot; SQ aim pool; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Traits: Child of Faith (fanatic), Dexterous.

Skills: AGILITY 8 ranks, ATHLETICS 6 ranks, PERCEPTION 8 ranks, SOCIAL 5 ranks, STEALTH 6 ranks, WILDERNESS LORE 5 ranks; Balance +11, Bluff +8, Climb +7, Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +11 (+13 from rope bonds), Handle Animal +7, Hide +9, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +10, Jump +9, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Knowledge (religion) +4, Ride +10, Search +8, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Survival +6 (+8 tracking), Swim +7, Tumble +13, Use Rope +8 (+10 tying bonds).

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, First Speech, Sea Speech.

Feats: Improved Critical (heavy crossbow) (4)^B, Point Blank Shot (1, 2^B, 3), Precise Shot (2, 4), Rapid Reload (1)^B, Rapid Shot (2).

Possessions: Peasant's outfit, masterwork heavy crossbow, 24 bolts, dagger, 3d10 gp.

Katerine Soyval, Copperdell Rebel leader, female expert 2: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 12 (+1 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +0; Atk –4 melee (1d4–1/19–20, dagger); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Traits: Eidetic Memory, Intelligent.

Skills: ACADEMIA 5 ranks; Appraise +7, Bluff +6, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +8, Forgery +9, Gather Information +6, Heal +6, Knowledge (history, local, nature, religion) +5, Profession (lawyer) +6, Profession (scribe) +9, Sense Motive +6.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, Ferrish, Kolorean, Sea Speech, plus up to three others.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Forgery, Profession [scribe]).

Possessions: Peasant's outfit, dagger, 1d10 gp.

Marlog Trepp, Town Captain of Borat, male aristocrat 8: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d6; hp 10; Init –1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +4; Defense 13 (–1 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 9; BAB +4; Grap +3; Atk –1 melee (1d4–1/19–20, dagger); SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +9; Str 9, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Traits: High Born (title), Master of Lore.

Skills: ACADEMIA 8 ranks, SOCIAL 11 ranks; Appraise +11, Bluff +13, Concentration +8, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +17 (+19 among nobility), Forgery +11, Gather Information +16, Heal +11, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (architecture and engineering, geography, history, local, nobility and royalty) +14, Listen +14, Profession (lawyer) +11, Sense Motive +14, Spot +8.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, Ferrish, Kolorean, Sea Speech, plus up to six others.

Feats: Overwhelming Presence (1^B, 2^B), Political Mastermind (1, 2, 3).

Possessions: Noble's outfit, masterwork dagger, documents, 200 gp. As a Town Captain, Trepp can acquire almost any item he needs, given a little time.

Maxxen Juthe, Guard General and King's Marshall, male warrior 3/aristocrat 3: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 1d6+1+3; hp 19; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. in armor; BDB +3; Defense 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; DR 1d5/magic; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword); SQ immune to fear; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Traits: Brave, World Traveler.

Skills: ATHLETICS 6 ranks, SOCIAL 6 ranks; Bluff +7, Climb +8, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +3, Diplomacy +13, Gather Information +7, Heal +2, Intimidate +9, Jump –3, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +3, Listen +2, Ride +6, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +3, Spot +2, Swim –2.

Languages: Common, Ferrish, First Speech, Sea Speech.

Feats: Endurance, Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot), Toughness.

Possessions: Chainmail, masterwork longsword, 50 gp.

Olan Vesk, Borati spy, male thief 5: CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 5d4+20+10; hp 42; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +5; Defense 16 (+1 Dex), touch 16, flat-footed 10; BAB +3; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger); SA honor of thieves, sneak attack +2d6; SQ alias (x2), beguiling flattery, skill expertise; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Traits: Charismatic (x2).

Skills: AGILITY 5 ranks, ATHLETICS 5 ranks, ROBBERY 10 ranks, SOCIAL 10 ranks, STEALTH 10 ranks, THEATRICS 10 ranks; Appraise +13, Balance +8, Bluff +12, Climb +6, Decipher Script +8, Diplomacy +16, Disable Device +13, Disguise +12 (+16 acting), Escape Artist +6, Forgery +13, Gather Information +14, Handle Animal +7, Hide +11, Intimidate +14, Jump +8, Knowledge (geography, history, local, nobility and royalty) +13, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +11, Perform (acting, comedy, dance, oratory) +12, Profession (gambler) +10, Profession (merchant, sailor) +6, Ride +13, Sleight of Hand +13, Sense Motive +10, Swim +6, Tumble +8.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, First Speech, Ferrish, Kolorean, Sea Speech.

Feats: Devious Manipulator (1, 2), Overwhelming Presence (1), Political Mastermind (1).

Possessions: Courtier's outfit, dagger (concealed), 1d6+20 gp.

Paraz Ghent, Town Captain and cult leader, male aristocrat 2/weapon master 6: CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1 plus 6d4+36+6; hp 61; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +6; Defense 21 (+1 Dex, +3 passive shield, +1 active shield), touch 18, flat-footed 13; DR 1d3/magic; BAB +7/+6 (favored/base); Grap +9; Atk +11 melee (1d8+3/19–20/x3, masterwork battleaxe) or +9 melee (1d4+3/19–20, dagger); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+3/19–20/x3, masterwork battleaxe) or +9/+4 melee

(1d4+3/19–20, dagger); SA weapon style (critical strike, expert strike); SQ favored defense, favored weapon (battleaxe), weapon pool; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 16, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 18.

Traits: Child of Faith (fanatic), Inspiring Presence.

Skills: ACADEMIA 5 ranks, ATHLETICS 11 ranks, SOCIAL 11 ranks; Appraise +6, Bluff +15, Climb +11, Concentration +6, Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +19, Gather Information +15, Heal +6, Intimidate +17, Jump +11, Knowledge (arcana, nobility and royalty) +6, Listen +12, Sense Motive +12, Spot +6, Swim +8.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, Draconic, First Speech, Ferrish, Kolorean, Sea Speech.

Feats: Improved Bull Rush (1), Improved Critical (battleaxe) (4), Overwhelming Presence (1, 2), Shield Mastery (1).

Possessions: Noble's outfit, studded leather armor, heavy wooden shield, masterwork battleaxe, dagger, 150 gp. (As a Town Captain, Ghent can acquire almost any item he needs, given a little time.)

Taddeon Melch, Borati tracker, male man-at-arms 6: CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 6d4+36+12; hp 63; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +5; Defense 20 (+1 Dex, +1 natural, +3 shield), touch 16, flat-footed 14; DR 1d3/magic; BAB +6; Grap +7; Atk +8 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork shortsword) or +7 ranged (1d6+1/x3, 70 ft., mighty composite shortbow); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork shortsword) and +5 melee (1d4, shield bash), or +7/+2 ranged (1d6+1/x3, 70 ft., mighty composite shortbow); SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Traits: Stout, World Traveler.

Skills: ATHLETICS 9 ranks, PERCEPTION 9 ranks, WILDERNESS LORE 9 ranks; Climb +8, Diplomacy +13, Handle Animal +9, Intimidate +9, Jump +8, Knowledge (geography) +9, Listen +11, Ride +12, Search +9, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11, Survival +11 (+13 tracking or avoiding hazards/getting lost), Swim +6, Use Rope +10.

Languages: Common, Ferrish, Sea Speech.

Feats: Combat Expertise (1, 2), Dodge (1), Improved Shield Bash (1), Two-Weapon Fighting (1).

Possessions: Explorer's outfit, masterwork studded leather armor, heavy wooden shield, masterwork shortsword, mighty (+1) composite shortbow, 12 arrows, 4d6 gp.

Trei Nollis, Town Captain of Willowslow, female aristocrat 6: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6; hp 7; Init –2; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +3; Defense 11 (–2 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 8; BAB +3; Grap +1; Atk –3 melee (1d4–2/19–20, dagger); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +7; Str 7, Dex 7, Con 8, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Traits: High Born (title), Perceptive.

Skills: ACADEMIA 9 ranks, SOCIAL 9 ranks; Appraise +11, Bluff +11, Concentration +8, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +15 (+17 among nobility), Gather Information +13, Heal +11, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (architecture and engineering, geography, history, local, nobility and royalty) +11, Listen +11, Profession (lawyer) +9, Sense Motive +11.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, Draconic, Ferrish, First Speech, Kolorean, Sea Speech, plus up to four others.

Feats: Overwhelming Presence (1^B, 2^B), Political Mastermind (1, 2, 3).

Possessions: Noble's outfit, dagger, documents, 6d6+50gp. (As a Town Captain, Nollis can acquire almost any item she needs, given a little time.)

Tzaglina, female Agakaza: CR 10; Medium outsider (native); HD 7d8+21; hp 52; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 21 (+2 Dex, +9 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 19; DR 15/good and piercing; BAB +7; Grap +8; Atk +8 melee (1d4+1, talon) or +9 ranged; Full Atk +8/+8 melee (1d4+1, 2 talons) and +3 melee (1d6, bite); SA detect thoughts, spells; SQ change shape, darkvision 60 ft., spell resistance 27; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 17.

Skills: Bluff +17 (+21 reading mind), Concentration +16, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +17 (+19 acting, +21 reading mind, +33 shapechanged), Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Listen +13, Move Silently +13, Perform (oratory) +13, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +11, Spot +11.

Languages: Common, First Speech, Infernal.

Feats: Dodge (1), Skill Affinity (Listen, Spot), Skill Focus (Concentration).

Detect thoughts (Su): Tzaglina can continuously use detect thoughts as the spell (CL 18th; Will DC 15 negates). She can suppress or resume this ability as a free action. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Sorcerer spells known (6/7/7/5; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, light, mage hand, message, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*charm person, mage armor, magic missile, shield, silent image*; 2nd—*cat's grace, invisibility, scorching ray*; 3rd—*summon monster III* (usually a dretch), *suggestion*.

Change shape (Su): Tzaglina can assume any humanoid form, or revert to her own form, as a free action. In humanoid form, she loses her talon and bite attacks (although she is fully able to defend herself with spells). She remains in one form until she chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be dispelled, but Tzaglina reverts to her natural form when killed.

Wensen Ippalo, Covenant preacher/Crimson Path cultist, male harrier 4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d4+16; hp 26; Init +5; Spd 40 ft.; BDB +4; Defense 19 (+5 Dex), touch 19, flat-footed 10; BAB +4; Grap +4; Atk +9 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger); SQ combat mobility, mobile assault; SV Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Traits: Dexterous [x2].

Skills: AGILITY 7 ranks, ATHLETICS 7 ranks; Balance +14, Bluff +8, Climb +7, Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +12, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +10, Jump +13, Knowledge (religion) +7, Sense Motive +8, Swim +7, Tumble +19.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Dodge (1, 2), Mobility (1), Weapon Finesse (1).

Possessions: Scholar's outfit, dagger, 6d6 gp.

Xagoth, babau demon: CR 6; Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar); HD 7d8+35; hp 66; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 19 (+1 Dex, +8 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 18; DR 10/cold iron or good; BAB +7; Grap +12; Atk +12 melee (1d6+5, claw); Full Atk +12/+12 melee (1d6+5, 2 claws) and +7 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA sneak attack +2d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, protective slime, resistance to acid, cold, and fire 10, spell resistance 14, telepathy 100 ft.; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 21, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +15, Disable Device +12, Disguise +13, Escape Artist +11, Hide +19, Listen +19, Move Silently +19, Open Lock +11, Search +20, Sleight of Hand +11, Survival +1 (+3 tracking), Use Rope +1 (+3 with bindings).

Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic.

Feats: Cleave (1), Multiattack, Power Attack (1).

Spell-like abilities: At will—*darkness*, *dispel magic*, *see invisibility*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only). CL 7th.

Protective slime (Su): A slimy red jelly coats the babau's skin. Any weapon that touches it takes 1d8 points of acid damage from the corrosive goo, and the weapon's hardness does not reduce this damage. A magic weapon may attempt a DC 18 Reflex save to avoid taking this damage. A creature who strikes the babau with an unarmed attack, unarmed strike, touch spell, or natural weapon takes this damage as well, but can negate the damage with a DC 18 Reflex save. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Summon Demon: Demons encountered in **Blood Storm** cannot summon other demons.

Generic NPCs

Note that the NPCs listed here represent skilled or otherwise noteworthy citizens; aside from these, most common folk are beneath the PCs' notice — in most cases, they are simply 1st-level commoners.

Artisan, commoner 2: CR 1/4; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Traits: Artisan (merchant's eye), Nondescript.

Skills: Appraise +7 (+9 involving Craft products), Disable Device +5, Craft (any one) +8, Craft (any one other) +5, Profession (merchant) +5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Focus (Craft [any one]).

Possessions: Artisan's outfit, artisan's tools, 3d6 sp.

Assassin, executioner 4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d4+16; hp 26; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +4; Defense 16 (+2 Dex), touch 16, flat-footed 10; DR 1d3/magic; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +8 melee (1d6+4/19–20, masterwork shortsword) or +7 melee (1d4+2/19–20, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d4, 50 ft., sling); SA armor-piercing strike, hindering cut, sneak attack +2d6; SQ execution pool, executioner's eye, immunity to fear;

SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Traits: Bloodthirsty, Brave.

Skills: ATHLETICS 7 ranks, PERCEPTION 7 ranks, STEALTH 7 ranks; Balance +4, Climb +9, Escape Artist +9, Hide +9, Jump +11, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Search +7, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +9, Spot +9, Swim +9, Tumble +11.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (shortsword) (1, 2).

Possessions: Leather armor, masterwork shortsword, dagger, sling, 10 bullets, 3d6 gp.

Clergy, commoner 2: CR 1/4; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Traits: Child of Faith (ordination), Faithful Friend.

Skills: Concentration +3, Craft (any one) +4, Gather Information +2, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perform (oratory, any one other) +5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion]).

Possessions: Scholar's outfit, 3d6 sp.

Courtier, aristocrat 2: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk –3 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Traits: High Born (well educated), Charismatic.

Skills: ACADEMIA 5 ranks, SOCIAL 5 ranks; Appraise +5, Bluff +6, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +5, Diplomacy +9, Gather Information +7, Heal +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (geography, local, nobility and royalty) +5, Listen +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +2.

Languages: Common, Ferrish, Kolorean, Sea Speech, plus two others.

Feats: Devious Manipulator (1)^B, Political Mastermind (1).

Possessions: Courtier's outfit, 3d6 gp.

Crimson Path cultist, commoner 1 / warrior 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6 plus 1d8+3; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 10; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d8+1/x3, spear) or +2 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger) or +1 melee (1d8/19–20, 80 ft., light crossbow); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Traits: Bloodthirsty, Child of Faith (fanatic).

Skills: ATHLETICS 2 ranks; Climb +5, Craft or Profession (any one) +4, Hide +4, Jump +5, Move Silently +4, Swim +2.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Leather armor, spear, dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, 3d6 sp.

Cult Champion* (Copperdell): CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 3d12+9; hp 29; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +3; Defense 16 (+1 Dex, +2 shield), touch 14, flat-footed 12; DR 1d3/magic; BAB +3; Grap +6; Atk +7 melee (1d8+3/x3, masterwork warhammer); SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +9, Intimidate +6, Jump +9, Swim +9.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Cleave (1), Power Attack (1, 2).

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork light steel shield, masterwork warhammer, 2d6 gp.

* The champion villain class is detailed in the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*, but there is enough information presented here to use this cult champion without that book.

Cult Champion* (Temple of the Blood Angel): CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d12+12; hp 38; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +4; Defense 18 (+1 Dex, +3 shield), touch 15, flat-footed 13; DR 1d6+2/magic; BAB +5; Grap +8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+3/19–20, masterwork longsword) or +6 ranged (1d8+3/x3, 110 ft., mighty composite longbow); SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +6, Intimidate +7, Jump +6, Swim +2.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Armor Mastery (1, 2, 3, 4).

Possessions: Masterwork banded mail, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork longsword, mighty (+3) composite longbow, 20 arrows, 3d6 gp.

* The champion villain class is detailed in the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*, but there is enough information presented here to use this cult champion without that book.

Healer, commoner 2: CR 1/4; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Traits: Wise [x2].

Skills: Craft (herbs/trinkets) +5, Diplomacy +5, Heal +9, Knowledge (nature) +5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Focus (Heal).

Possessions: Scholar's outfit, 3d6 sp.

Hound master, commoner 2: CR 1/4; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d6, club); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Traits: Tough as Iron [x2].

Skills: Climb +5, Handle Animal +8, Survival +5, Swim +5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Focus (Handle Animal).

Possessions: Peasant's outfit, club, 2d6 cp.

Kingdom Guard (captain), warrior 4: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+4+3; hp 25; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. in armor; BDB +3; Defense 17 (+1 natural, +3 shield), touch 13, flat-footed 14; DR 1d5/magic; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2/19–20, longsword) or +6 melee (1d4+2/19–20, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d6/x3, 60 ft., shortbow); SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Perceptive, Stout.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Climb +1, Jump –5, Listen +3, Ride +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +2, Swim –5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Ride, Sense Motive), Toughness.

Possessions: Chainmail, heavy steel shield, longsword, dagger, shortbow, 12 arrows, 6d6 gp.

Note: Kingdom Guard captains are always mounted on light warhorses.

Kingdom Guard (colonel), warrior 5: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 5d8+5+3; hp 30; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. in armor; BDB +3; Defense 17 (+1 natural, +3 shield), touch 13, flat-footed 14; DR 1d5/magic; BAB +5; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/19–20, longsword) or +7 melee (1d4+2/19–20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d6/x3, 60 ft., shortbow); SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Perceptive, Stout.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Climb +1, Jump –5, Listen +3, Ride +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +3, Swim –5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Ride, Sense Motive), Toughness.

Possessions: Chainmail, heavy steel shield, longsword, dagger, shortbow, 12 arrows, 6d6 gp.

Note: Kingdom Guard colonels are always mounted on light warhorses.

Kingdom Guard (sergeant), warrior 3: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+3+3; hp 19; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. in armor; BDB +2; Defense 16 (+1 natural, +3 shield), touch 12, flat-footed 14; DR 1d5/magic; BAB +3; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d8+1/19–20, longsword) or +4 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger) or +3 ranged (1d6/x3, 60 ft., shortbow); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Perceptive, Stout.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Climb +0, Jump –6, Listen +2, Ride +3, Sense Motive +4, Spot +2, Swim –6.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Ride, Sense Motive), Toughness.

Possessions: Chainmail, heavy wooden shield, longsword, dagger, shortbow, 12 arrows, 3d6 gp.

Note: Most Kingdom Guard sergeants are mounted on light warhorses.

Kingdom Guard (soldier), warrior 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1+3; hp 8; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. in armor; BDB +0; Defense 14 (+1 natural, +3 shield), touch 10, flat-footed 14; DR 1d4/magic; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d8+1/19–20, longsword) or +2 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger) or +1 ranged (1d6/x3, 60 ft., shortbow); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Perceptive, Stout.

Skills: ATHLETICS 4 ranks; Climb –1, Jump –7, Listen +1, Ride +1, Sense Motive +1, Spot +1, Swim –7.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Scale mail, heavy wooden shield, longsword, dagger, shortbow, 12 arrows, 1d6 gp.

Note: Some units of Kingdom Guards are mounted on light warhorses.

Kingdom Guard (veteran), warrior 2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2+3; hp 14; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. in armor; BDB +1; Defense 15 (+1 natural, +3 shield), touch 11, flat-footed 14; DR 1d4/magic; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/19–20, longsword) or +3 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger) or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, 60 ft., shortbow); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Perceptive, Stout.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks; Climb +0, Jump –6, Listen +1, Ride +1, Sense Motive +2, Spot +1, Swim –6.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Scale mail, heavy wooden shield, longsword, dagger, shortbow, 12 arrows, 2d6 gp.

Note: Some units of Kingdom Guards are mounted on light warhorses.

Merchant, commoner 2: CR 1/4; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Traits: Wise [x2].

Skills: Appraise +5, Profession (merchant) +9, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5.

Languages: Common, plus two others.

Feats: Skill Focus (Profession [merchant]).

Possessions: Scholar's outfit, dagger, 4d6 gp.

Pickpocket, commoner 2: CR 1/4; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 12 (+1 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger); SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Traits: City Rat (burglar), Nondescript.

Skills: Escape Artist +6, Hide +10, Move Silently +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Survival +0 (+2 in cities), Use Rope +1 (+3 tying bonds).

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Hide, Sleight of Hand).

Possessions: Peasant's outfit, dagger, 3d6 cp.

Rebel (Copperdell), commoner 2: CR 1/4; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +1; Defense 12 (+1 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 11; BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+3, club) or +3 melee (1d3+2 nonlethal, unarmed); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Nondescript, Stout.

Skills: Climb +6, Handle Animal +1, Jump +4, Knowledge (architecture and engineering, dungeoneering) +1, Profession (any one) +4.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Endurance.

Possessions: Peasant's outfit, club, 1d6 cp.

Street thug, commoner 1 / warrior 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1 plus 1d8+1+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 11 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10; DR 1/magic; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, club) or +2 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed); SA sneak attack +1d6; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will –1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Traits: City Rat (bravo), Nondescript.

Skills: ATHLETICS 1 rank; Climb +4, Craft or Profession (any one) +1, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Swim +1, Survival +1 (+3 in cities).

Languages: Common.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Padded armor, club, 3d6+20 cp.

Town Captain (Appointee), aristocrat 4: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +2; Defense 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk –3 melee (1d4–1/19–20, masterwork dagger); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Traits: High Born (title), Charismatic.

Skills: ACADEMIA 7 ranks, SOCIAL 7 ranks; Appraise +8, Bluff +9, Concentration +7, Decipher Script +8, Diplomacy +13 (+15 among nobles), Gather Information +11, Heal +7, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (architecture and engineering, geography, history, local, nobility and royalty) +8, Listen +4, Profession (lawyer) +6, Sense Motive +7.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, Draconic, Ferrish, First Speech, Kolorean, Sea Speech, plus two others.

Feats: Devious Manipulator (1, 2)^B, Political Mastermind (1, 2).

Possessions: Noble's outfit, masterwork dagger, documents, 150 gp. A Town Captain can acquire almost any item he or she needs, given a little time.

Town Captain (Kingdom Guard), warrior 4 / aristocrat 1: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+4 plus 1d6+1+3; hp 29;

Init +0; Spd 20 ft. in armor; BDB +3; Defense 17 (+1 natural, +3 shield), touch 13, flat-footed 14; DR 1d5/magic; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2/19–20, longsword) or +6 melee (1d4+2/19–20, dagger); SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Traits: Perceptive, Stout.

Skills: ATHLETICS 5 ranks, SOCIAL 4 ranks; Bluff +3, Climb +1, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +3, Intimidate +3, Jump –5, Listen +3, Ride +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +2, Swim –5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Skill Affinity (Ride, Sense Motive), Toughness.

Possessions: Chainmail, heavy steel shield, longsword, dagger, 6d6+50 gp. A Town Captain can acquire almost any item he or she needs, given a little time.

Wilderness guide, expert 1 / warrior 1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1 plus 1d8+1; hp 10; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; BDB +0; Defense 11 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10; DR 1d2/magic; BAB +1; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d8/x3, spear) or +1 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger) or +2 ranged (1d4, 50 ft., sling); SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Traits: Tough as Iron [x2].

Skills: ATHLETICS 1 rank, WILDERNESS LORE 4 ranks; Climb +5, Gather Information +1, Handle Animal +3, Knowledge (geography, local) +5, Jump +1, Listen +5, Ride +3, Spot +5, Swim +5, Survival +6 (+8 to avoid hazards/getting lost), Use Rope +5.

Languages: Common.

Feats: Beast Lore (1).

Possessions: Leather armor, spear, dagger, sling, 12 bullets, 2d6 cp.

Other Creatures

Blade tyrant: CR 12; Large construct; HD 20d10+30; hp 140; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; BDB +10; Defense 26 (–1 size, –1 Dex, +8 natural), touch 18, flat-footed 16; DR 10/adamantine; BAB +15; Grap +26; Atk +24 melee (2d6+14/19–20, masterwork greatsword); Full Atk +24/+19/+14 melee (2d6+14/19–20, masterwork greatsword); SQ construct traits, master tactician, recruitment; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 24, Dex 8, Con –, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +27, Intimidate +27, Knowledge (history) +25, Sense Motive +24.

Languages: Ancient Speech, Common, First Speech.

Feats: Improved Initiative, War Leader (1, 2), Weapon Focus (greatsword) (1, 2, 4, 7).

Master tactician (Ex): A blade tyrant excels at directing the efforts of others. Each round of combat, it gains a number of tyrant tokens equal to 1 + its current Charisma bonus. It can spend these during the course of the round to improve its followers' and allies' efforts. For each token the tyrant spends, its target ally gains a +1 bonus on a single attack, check, save, or damage roll. The tyrant spends these tokens

immediately before the ally makes the roll. The target of this effect must be within 60 feet of the tyrant.

Recruitment (Ex): Having just awakened, the blade tyrant in **Blood Storm** does not yet have its allotment of followers. This does not affect its CR.

Blood Angel* [12 HD]: CR 10; Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 12d8+48; hp 102; Init –1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 16 (–1 size, –1 Dex, +8 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 16; DR 15/blood; BAB +12; Grap +21; Atk +17 melee (2d4+9 plus blood drain, slam); Full Atk +17/+17/+17/+17 melee (2d4+9 plus blood drain, 4 slams); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA blood drain; SQ absorption, blindsight 60 ft., limited telepathy, regeneration 5, ooze traits, othermatter; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 20, Dex 9, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +20, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Listen +18, Spot +18, Swim +20.

Feats: Improved Overrun (3, 5), Power Attack (1), Weapon Focus (slam) (1, 2).

* See the full Blood Angel stats under “New Monsters” (earlier in the Appendix) for details regarding its special abilities.

Blood Angel [16 HD]: CR 12; Huge outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 16d8+96; hp 168; Init –2; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 17 (–2 size, –2 Dex, +11 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 17; DR 15/blood; BAB +16; Grap +33; Atk +23 melee (2d6+15 plus blood drain, slam); Full Atk +23/+23/+23/+23 melee (2d6+15 plus blood drain, 4 slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA blood drain; SQ absorption, blindsight 60 ft., limited telepathy, regeneration 5, ooze traits, othermatter; SV Fort +16, Ref +8, Will +13; Str 29, Dex 7, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +28, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (the planes) +17, Listen +22, Spot +22, Swim +28.

Feats: Improved Overrun (3, 5), Power Attack (1, 3), Weapon Focus (slam) (1, 2).

Blood drain (Ex): The Fortitude DC for this ability is 24.

Blood Angel [20 HD]: CR 14; Huge outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 20d8+120; hp 210; Init –2; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 17 (–2 size, –2 Dex, +11 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 17; DR 15/blood; BAB +20; Grap +38; Atk +28 melee (2d6+17 plus blood drain, slam); Full Atk +28/+28/+28/+28 melee (2d6+17 plus blood drain, 4 slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA blood drain; SQ absorption, blindsight 60 ft., limited telepathy, regeneration 5, ooze traits, othermatter; SV Fort +18, Ref +10, Will +15; Str 30, Dex 7, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +33, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (the planes) +21, Listen +26, Spot +26, Swim +33.

Feats: Improved Overrun (3, 5), Power Attack (1, 3, 5), Weapon Focus (slam) (1, 2).

Blood drain (Ex): The Fortitude DC for this ability is 26.

Blood Angel [24 HD]: CR 16; Gargantuan outsider (chaotic, extraplanar); HD 24d8+192; hp 300; Init –2; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 19 (–4 size, –2 Dex, +15 natural), touch 4, flat-footed

19; DR 15/blood; BAB +24; Grap +50; Atk +35 melee (3d6+23 plus blood drain, slam); Full Atk +35/+35/+35/+35 melee (3d6+23 plus blood drain, 4 slams); Space/Reach 20 ft./20 ft.; SA blood drain; SQ absorption, blindsight 60 ft., limited telepathy, regeneration 5, ooze traits, othermatter; SV Fort +22, Ref +12, Will +17; Str 39, Dex 7, Con 26, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +41, Intimidate +30, Knowledge (the planes) +25, Listen +30, Spot +30, Swim +41.

Feats: Improved Overrun (3, 5, 7), Power Attack (1, 3, 5, 7), Weapon Focus (slam) (1, 2).

Blood drain (Ex): The Fortitude DC for this ability is 30.

Demon warrior*: CR 5; Large outsider; HD 8d10+24; hp 68; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; BDB +4; Defense 17 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 12; BAB +6; Grap +15; Atk +10 melee (1d8+5, bite); Full Atk +10 melee (1d8+5, bite) and +8/+8 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +10, Jump +20, Spot +12, Swim +15.

Languages: Abyssal, Common.

Feats: Cleave (1), Multiattack^B, Power Attack (1, 2).

* The demonic brute villain class (used to design this creature) is detailed in *Mastering Iron Heroes*, but there is enough information presented here to run the demon warriors without that book.

Dire gloom*: CR 5; Medium undead; HD 8d12; hp 52; Init +8; Spd 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect); Defense 18 (+4 Dex, +4 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 14; DR 5/piercing; BAB +4; Grap +15; Atk +6 melee (1d6+3, slam); SA choking darkness, improved grab; SQ corpse animator, darkvision 60 ft., natural grappler, undead traits; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 18, Con –, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Escape Artist +15, Hide +15, Listen +12, Move Silently +15.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative.

Choking darkness (Ex): A dire gloom can attempt to force its way down the throat of an opponent it has grappled. While grappling a foe, the dire gloom may attempt a grapple check to seize the opponent's body. If this check succeeds, it partially forces its way into the victim's mouth. The target still can breathe through his or her nose, but is unable to speak or use spells with a verbal component. In addition, the victim suffers 1d4 points of Charisma damage per round. The victim can use a full-round action to attempt to cough out the dire gloom by making a Fortitude save (DC 15). This is a Charisma-based saving throw.

If a target's Charisma drops to 0 before he can cough out the invader, the dire gloom has forced its way completely into his body. The target suffers 1d6 points of Constitution damage per round as the dire gloom tears apart his innards and drains his life. If the target dies, the dire gloom seizes control of the body according to the corpse animator ability

described below.

Corpse animator (Ex): The dire gloom can animate the corpse of an opponent it has killed using its choking darkness ability. This creature must be between size Small and Huge, inclusive. Smaller or larger creatures, respectively, either lack the space to host a dire gloom or are too bulky for the creature to handle.

Corpse Size	Hit Points
Small	5
Medium	10
Large	20
Huge	40

While inside a body, the dire gloom gains a number of benefits and drawbacks. It can walk at a speed of 10 feet, its Dexterity score becomes 3, its natural bonus to Defense equals the victim's bonus, and it has hit points determined by the size of the corpse. It cannot make attacks, as it lacks the fine control needed for an accurate, powerful strike.

The dire gloom can escape from an animated corpse by billowing from its mouth as a full-round action. If the corpse's hit points drop to 0 or lower, the body collapses, leaving the dire gloom in its space. Attacks can injure only the corpse; as long as the body has any hit points remaining, it takes all damage that would be dealt to the dire gloom.

Natural grappler (Ex): The dire gloom gains a +4 racial bonus to all grapple checks.

* The dire gloom is detailed in the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*, but there is enough information presented here to use it without that book.

Dretch: CR 2; Small outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar); HD 2d8+4; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; Defense 16 (+1 size, +5 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 16; DR 5/cold iron or good; BAB +2; Grap –1; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, claw); Full Atk +4/+4 melee (1d6+1, 2 claws) and +2 melee (1d4, bite); SA spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, telepathy 100 ft.; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Hide +9, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Search +2, Survival +0 (+2 tracking).

Feats: Multiattack.

Spell-like abilities: 1/day—*scare* (DC 12), *stinking cloud* (DC 13). CL 2nd. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Telepathy (Su): Dretches can communicate telepathically with creatures within 100 feet as long as those creatures speak Abyssal.

Summon Demon: Demons encountered in **Blood Storm** cannot summon other demons.

Hunting spirit*: CR 5; Medium undead; HD 6d12; hp 39; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 13 (+3 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 10; BAB +3; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d6+3, bite); Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+3, bite) and +1/+1 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws); SA

focused hunter; SQ darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal[†], relentless hunter, undead traits; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 16, Dex 16, Con –, Int 5, Wis 18, Cha 10.

Skills: Survival +13.

Feats: Swarm Tactics (1, 2, 3).

Focused hunter (Ex): When a hunting spirit finally corners its foe, it attacks with a ferocious abandon fueled by supernatural fury. The spirit's attacks tear into its victim's body and soul. In addition to its normal damage, the spirit bestows one negative level with each bite, with a Fortitude save (DC 13) needed to remove this drain. (Remember that negative levels work differently in *Iron Heroes* than in the core rules. See *Iron Heroes*, Chapter Eight: Combat.)

Incorporeal (Su): Note, incorporeal creatures in *Iron Heroes* have a 50% chance to ignore all corporeal attacks against them. Their attacks ignore all passive defense bonuses and bypass armor's damage reduction. However, magic weapons are *not* required to damage incorporeal creatures.

Relentless hunter (Su): The hunting spirit always knows the location of its chosen prey. As a free action once per round, it can determine the relative direction and distance to its quarry. Its target loses the benefits of concealment and any other effect that obscures it from view. Even if the target becomes invisible, the spirit sees it as normal. The hunting spirit automatically succeeds at any Spot and Listen checks to detect its quarry.

* The hunting spirit is detailed in the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*, but there is enough information presented here, along with that in the accompanying sidebar, to use the creature without that book.

Marrowbreaker: CR 7; Medium magical beast; HD 10d10+40; hp 95; Init +9; Spd 50 ft., climb 30 ft.; Defense 21 (+5 Dex, +6 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 16; BAB +10; Grap +18; Atk +14 melee (2d6+6, bite); SA improved grab, marrowbreaking; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; SV Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +3; Str 19, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +12, Hide +18, Jump +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +18, Spot +7, Swim +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Skill Talent (Hide, Move Silently), Superior Grab (1, 4).

Monstrous centipede, Medium [advanced to 2 HD]: CR 1; Medium vermin; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., climb 40 ft.; Defense 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12; BAB +1; Grap +0; Atk +3 melee (1d6–1 plus poison, bite); SA poison; SQ darkvision 60 ft., vermin traits; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 9, Dex 15, Con 10, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +10, Hide +10, Spot +4.

Feats: Weapon Finesse^B.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fort DC 11, initial and secondary 1d3 Dex. The save DC is Constitution-based.

The Swarm Tactics feat is detailed in the *Iron Heroes Bestiary*, and is reprinted here in part to be used with the hunting spirit.

SWARM TACTICS [MONSTER]

Some monsters work best in large groups. For example, a horde of orcs might surround the characters in an attempt to overwhelm them with sheer numbers. This feat represents the benefits and bonuses a large group of well-trained warriors can gain against a smaller number of foes.

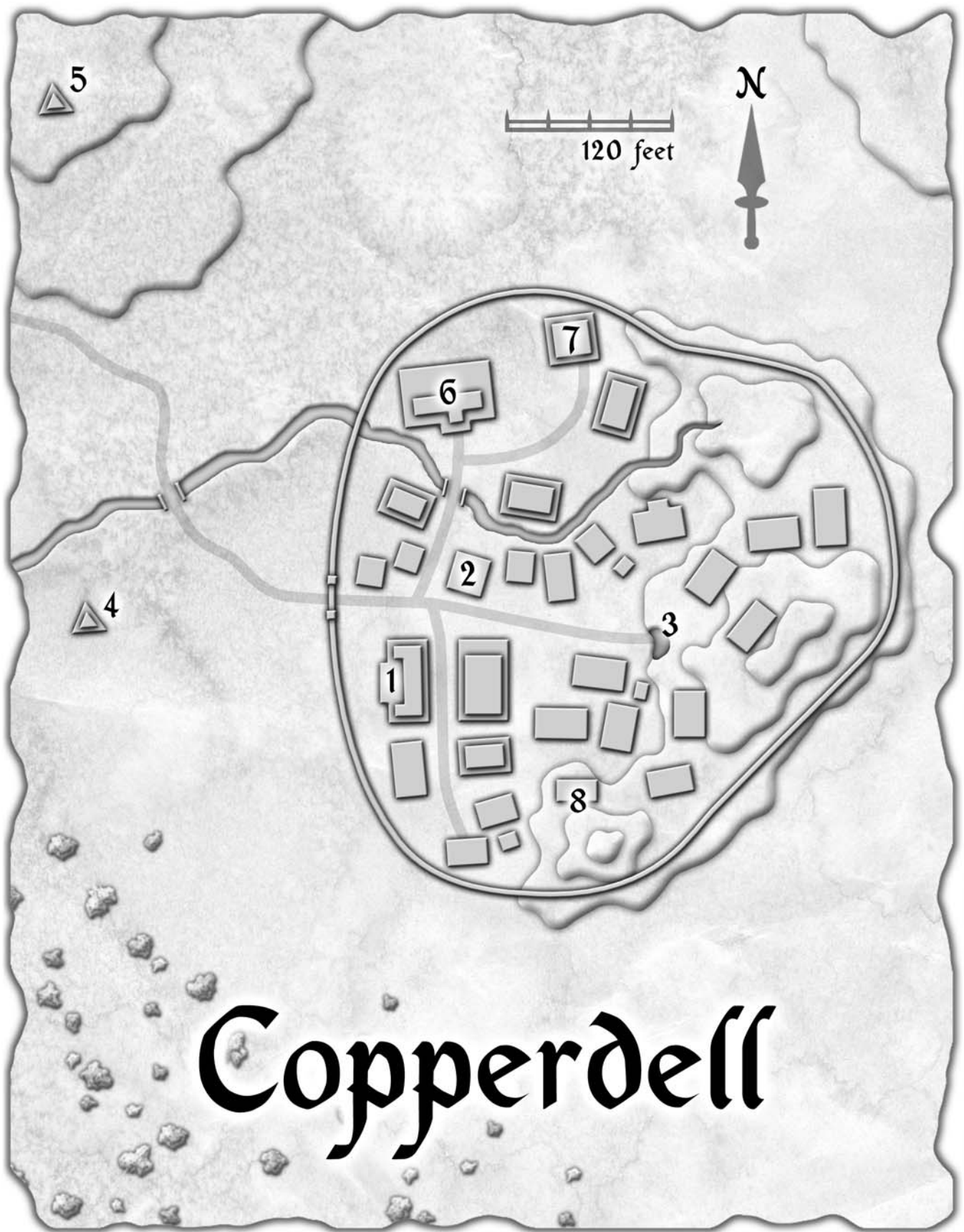
Base Mastery: 1

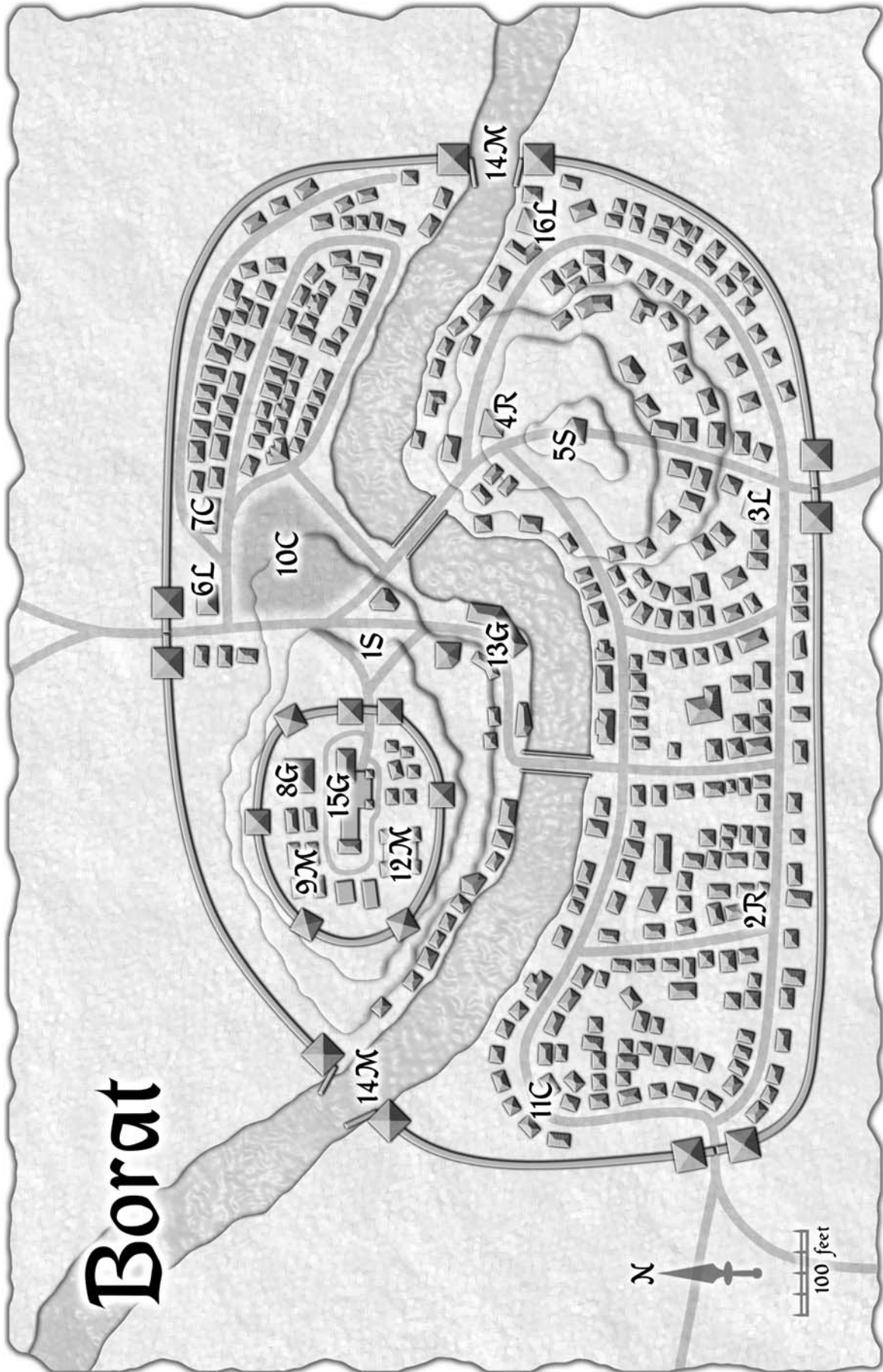
Benefit: A creature with this feat gains a +1 bonus on attacks for each ally that threatens its target and possesses this same feat.

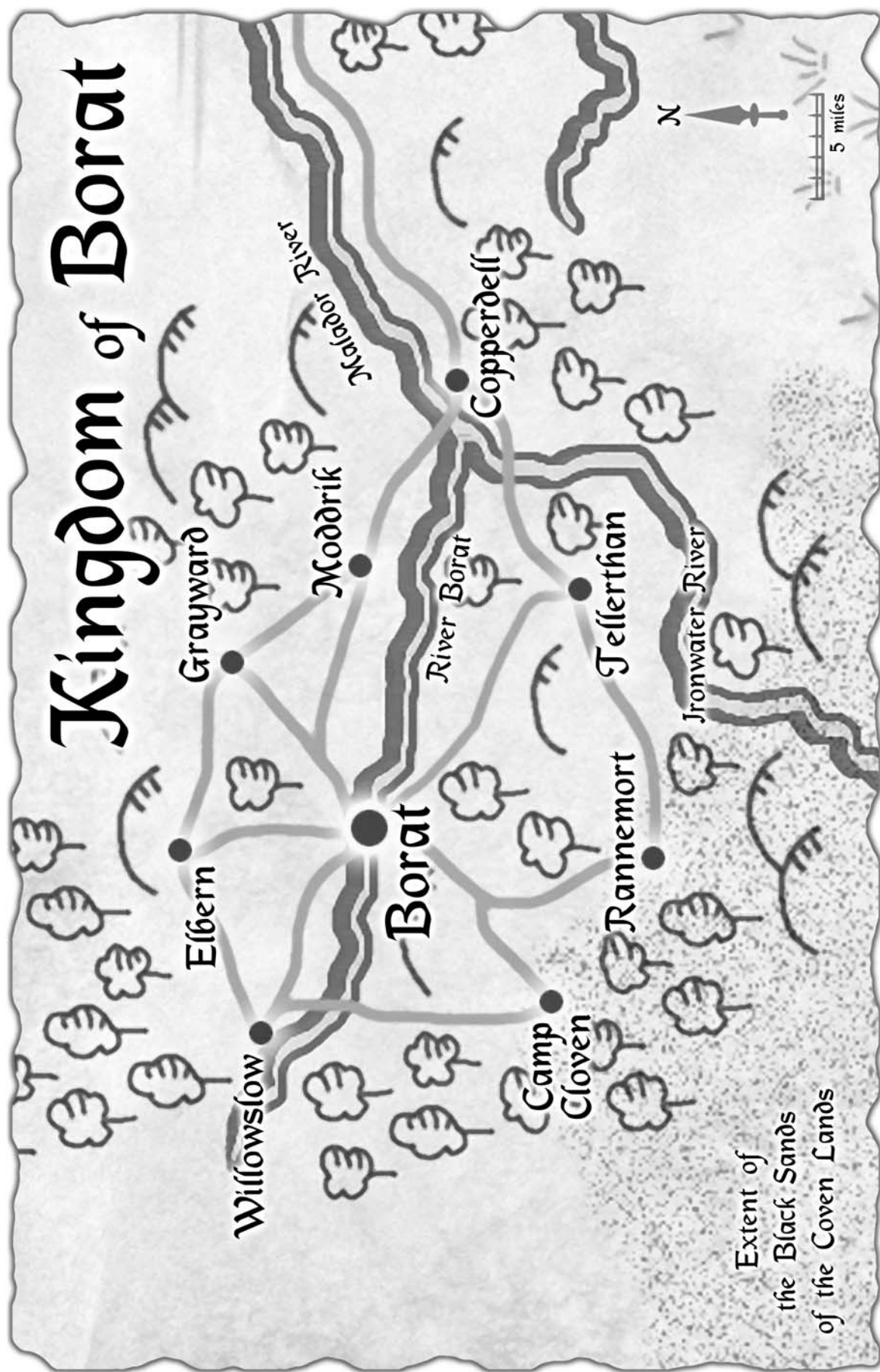
Special: The Swarm Tactics base feat and expanded mastery abilities offer benefits according to the number of creatures in an encounter that have this feat. A creature doesn't need a certain level of mastery to qualify—just the base feat. For example, a monster with Swarm Tactics (expanded mastery 3) gains the bonus to defense even if its allies have only Swarm Tactics (mastery 1).

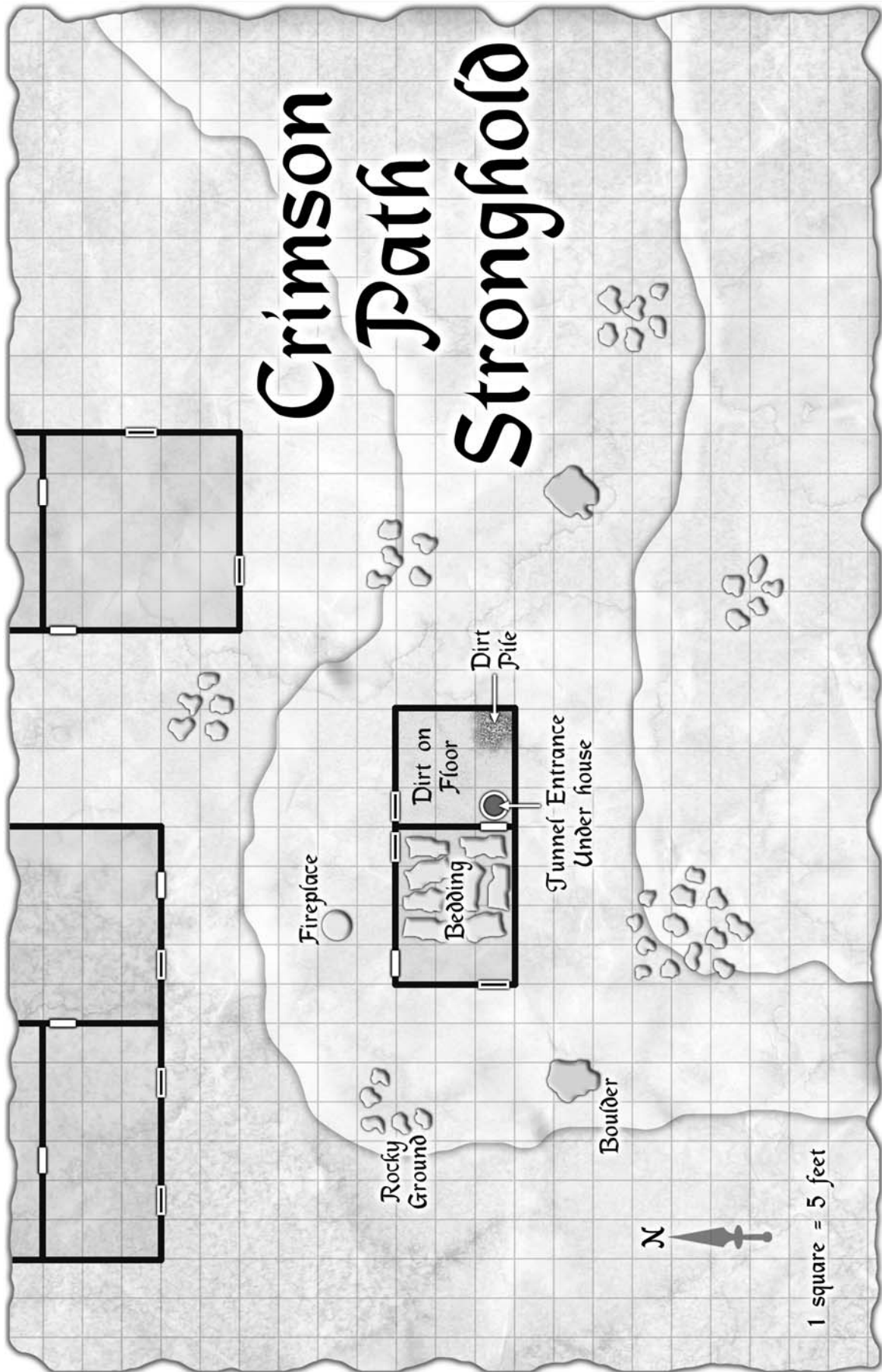
Expanded Mastery: 2. The swarm presses together, filling its losses as quickly as their enemies chop them down. A creature with this level of mastery may immediately move one square to occupy the position vacated by an ally felled by an enemy attack if that ally has the Swarm Tactics feat. There is no limit to the number of times a creature can use this movement during the course of a round, and this move does not provoke an attack of opportunity. However, the creature can't use this feat during its own turn.

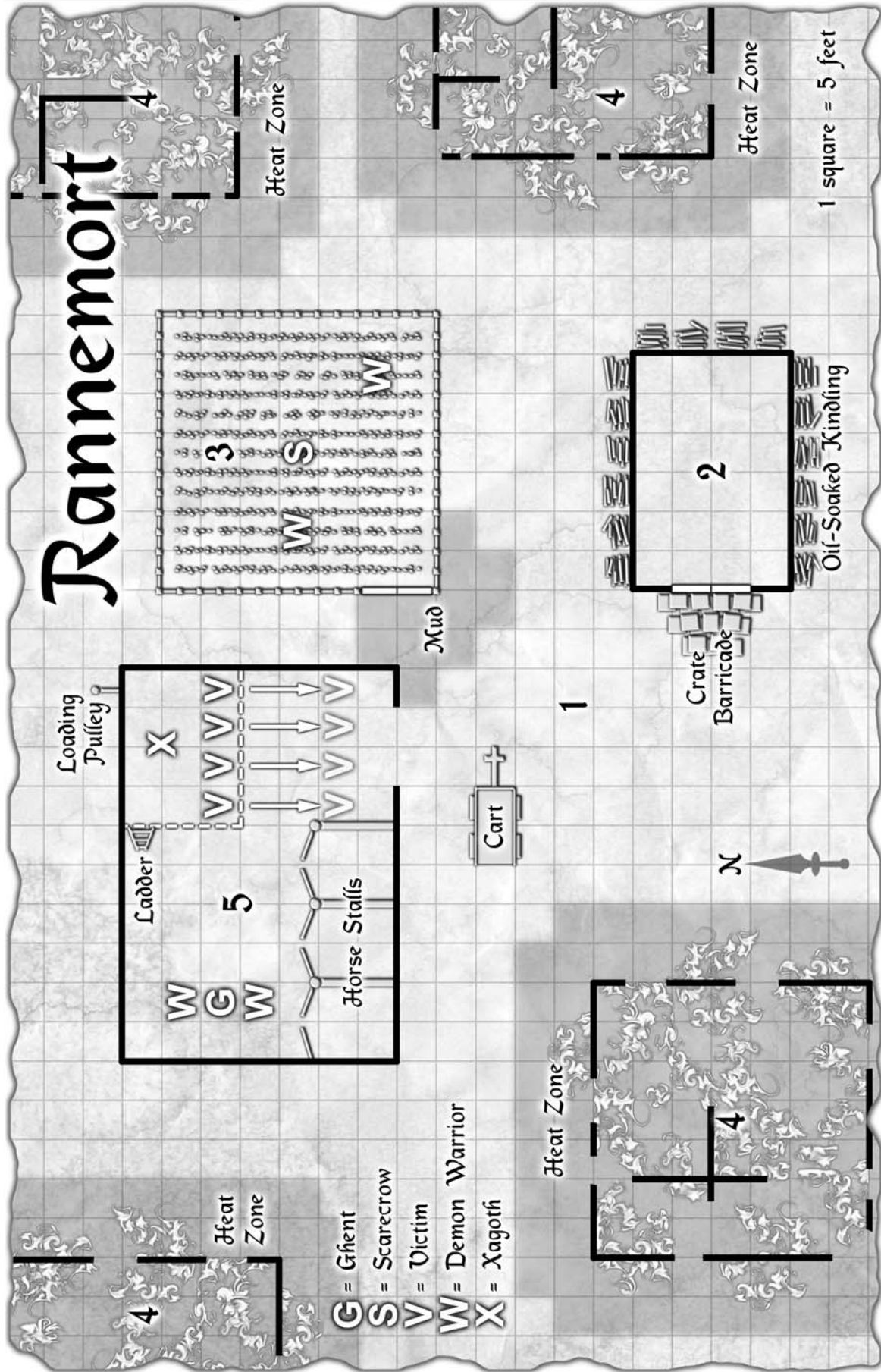
Expanded Mastery: 3. The great mass of creatures crowds together, making it difficult to hit any single one. A creature with this level of mastery gains a +1 passive bonus to defense for every two allies that stand adjacent to it and that possess the Swarm Tactics feat.

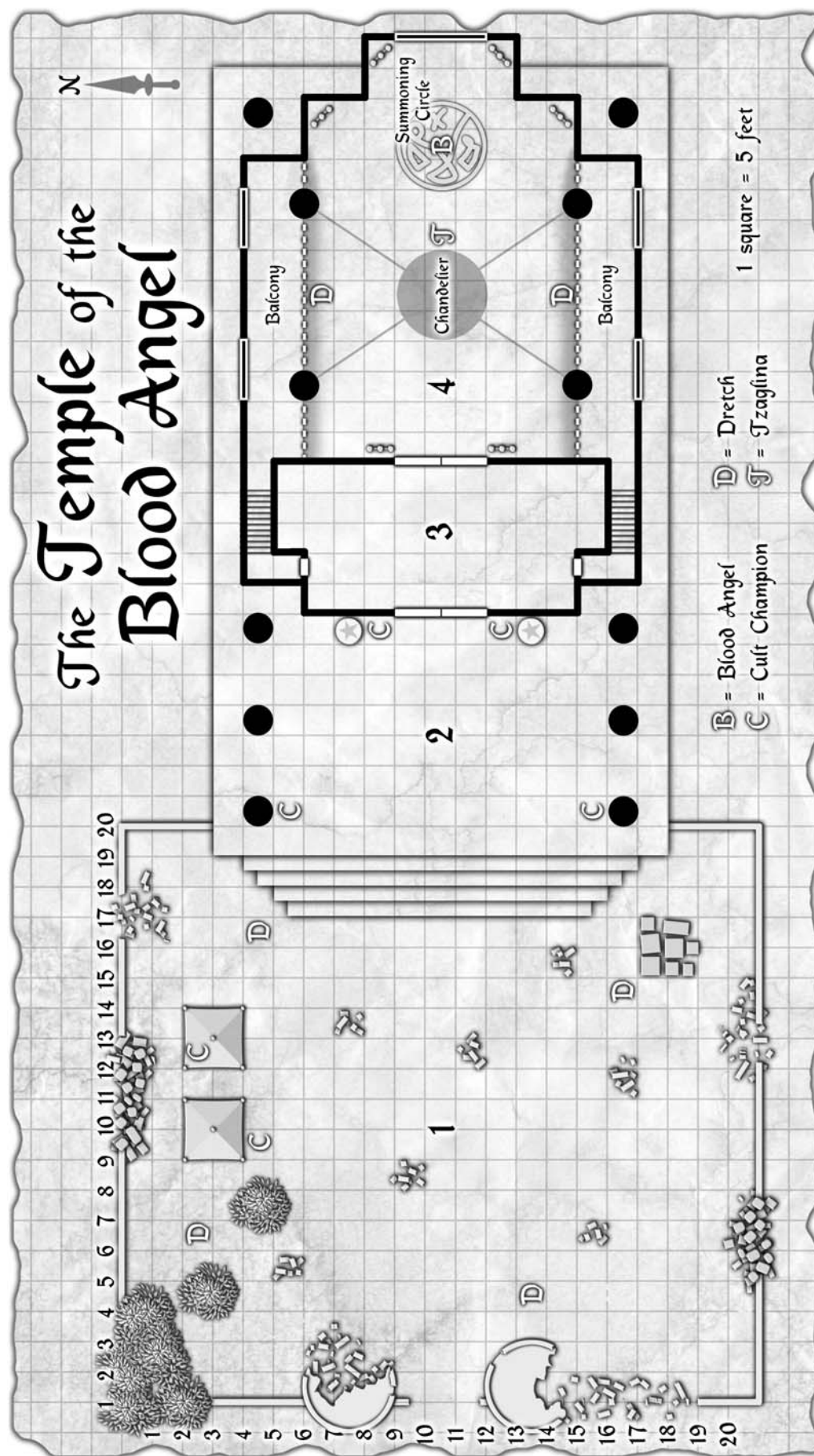


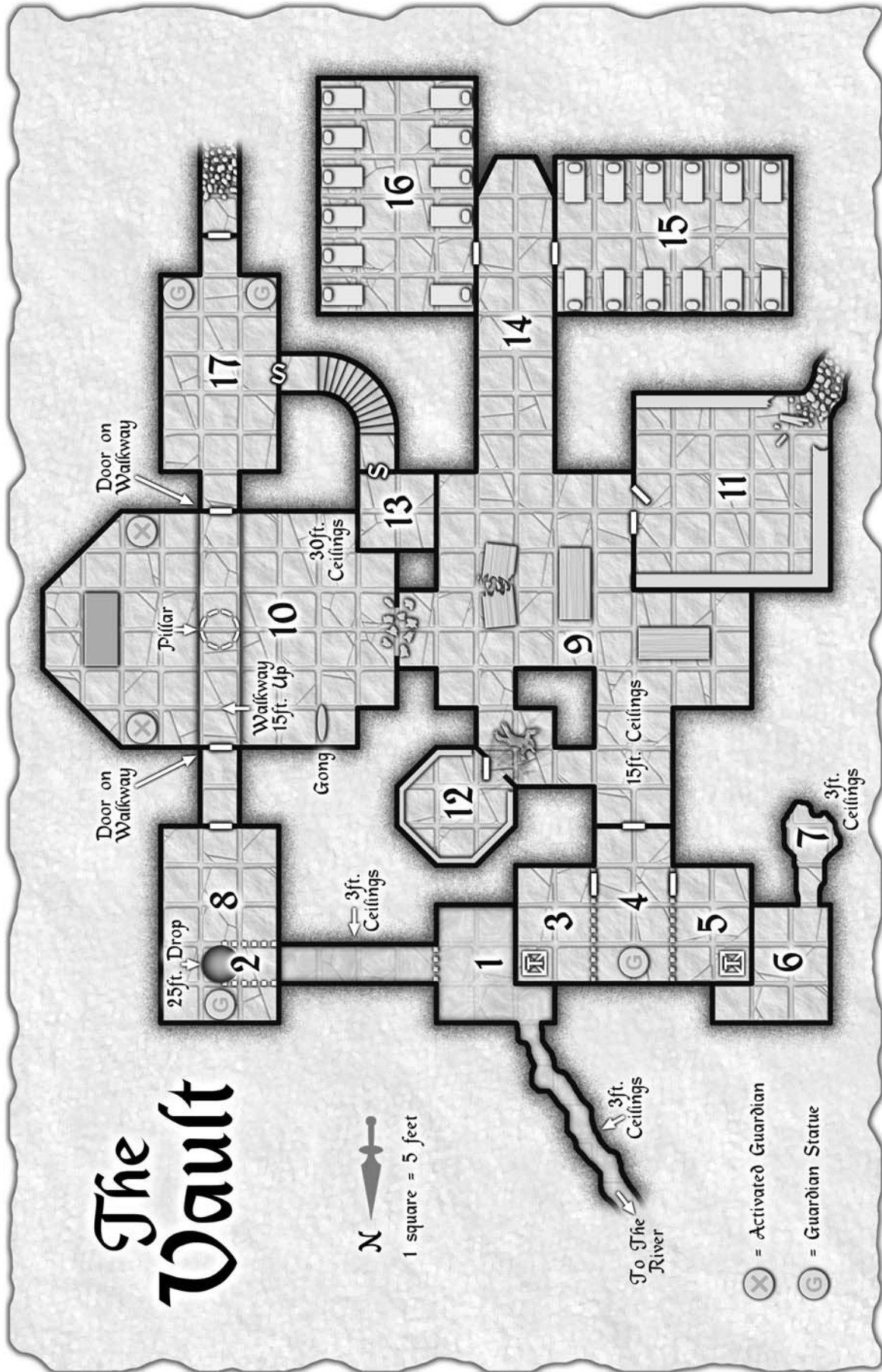












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