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GM'S MONTHLY MISCELLANY: NOVEMBER 2014



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GM'S MONTHLY MISCELLANY: NOVEMBER 2014

Featuring material from some of Raging Swan Press's newest products as well as classic releases of yesteryear, advice articles and material from Creighton's own Borderland of Adventure campaign, the GM's Monthly Miscellany series is a terrific free resource for the busy, time-crunched GM.

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SOURCES

As well as new, never seen before material from my own Borderland of Adventure campaign, this instalment of GM's Monthly Miscellany presents information from several Raging Swan Press products and advice articles including:

- **Urban Dressing: Plague Town** Josh Vogt.
- **Town Backdrop: Deksport** Creighton Broadhurst.
- **Village Backdrop: Starspun Hollow** Nicholas Wasko.



FOREWORD

It's been a year since Raging Swan Press started releasing GM's Monthly Miscellanies and this is the last normal release of the year. Next month, I'm releasing a compilation for the year, which gathers together all the material available to date. It will be available in print for those collectors out there, and as a Pay What You Want PDF where that sales option is available.

In this, the last new instalment of 2014, you'll find excerpts from some of Raging Swan's newest products – *Village Backdrop: Starspun Hollow* and *Urban Dressing: Plague Town*. I didn't have room last month for *Town Backdrop: Deksport* and so I've also included material from that recent publication. It doesn't really count as a golden oldie, but I hope you enjoy it anyway! I've also included a selection of advice articles from those posted weekly at creightonbroadhurst.com; hopefully they'll help you to run a better game.

The image below is by Matt Morrow, and one of my favourites of the pictures he has create for Raging Swan Press

over the last several years. I think it would make a great handout for an encounter area set deep in a dungeon. It depicts a scene any adventurers would surely want to investigate (carefully). What killed these explorers? Is the well itself dangerous or does something (or someone) else lurk nearby. Given the state of the bodies and the copious cobwebs, whatever happened it surely occurred a long time ago.

In any event, I hope you enjoy the material in this GM's Monthly Miscellany, but more importantly I hope you find it useful and that it enhances your campaign. If you haven't yet collected all 11 instalments this year, you can grab any you are missing from wherever you snagged this copy. If you've got any comments or questions about Raging Swan Press, I'd love to hear from you. You can contact me at creighton@ragingswan.com.



GM ADVICE: 6 LESSONS IN ADVENTURE DESIGN FROM THE BOND FILMS

SHOCKINGLY, I LOVE ACTION AND ADVENTURE FILMS. UNSURPRISINGLY, I'VE SEEN ALL THE BOND FILMS (REPEATEDLY) BUT UNTIL RECENTLY I'D NEVER REALLY REALISED WHAT A GOOD MODEL THEY CAN MAKE FOR AN ADVENTURE.

The Bond films have been spectacularly successful over the last four decades. This is no accident. The producers have crafted an excellent formula for a successful film. Luckily for us, the components of an exciting film are nearly identical to those of a good adventure.

So, according to the Bond films, what are the components of a good adventure?

- **Sinister Villains:** Every Bond villain has a unique appearance, scheme and personality. Even a villain's main henchmen have unique appearances, weapons and personalities that set them apart from normal minions. Bond villains are larger than life and wholly intent on completing their evil schemes. Unless Bond stops them in a final showdown, there is every chance they will succeed.
- **Diabolical Schemes:** Villains have diabolical schemes. More importantly, each villain's evil plan makes sense when viewed through the villain's eyes. These villains aren't just being evil because they liked being evil. Their schemes made perfect sense to the villain.
- **Unique Lairs:** Whether it was a secret underground lair, an orbiting space station or an isolated island, each villain had a personal lair. A villain's lair suited his personality and was built with the intention of helping him achieve his goals. Bond almost always has to invade that lair to stymie the villain's schemes.

- **Exotic Locations:** Bond adventures in amazing places ripe with flavour. In many cases, the location is a real part of the adventure and not just some humdrum backdrop. Of course, not all locations are amazing. During a typical adventure, though, Bond quickly moves through a variety of different locales, and many of them are exotic and different.
- **Exciting Chases:** Every Bond film I can recall has at least one set-piece chase. During the chase, Bond interacts with the environment, bystanders, various vehicles and more. They rarely end with a single fight. The villain might escape, or Bond has to defeat various minions before finally reaching his nemesis. Whatever the outcome, Bond has to use both his guile and physical skills to catch his quarry.
- **Amazing Gadgets:** Before he goes off on a mission, Bond almost always gets given some new, cool gadgets he invariably uses at some critical moment. In fact, many times these gadgets are the difference between life and death. Heroes clearly need the right equipment to defeat their enemies. These gadgets are often special in some way and are things the average person is extremely unlikely to possess.

Of course, you still need to craft an exciting adventure but if you add in the above components you should be well on your way!



STARSPUN HOLLOW AT A GLANCE

When human conquerors expanded into halfling lands, several families fled the invaders and built a camp on the edge of a wooded fen. The refugees eked out a meagre existence fishing and foraging while trying to fend off the vermin plaguing their new home. The halflings' luck turned around, however, when the druid Mayli Nightwillow happened upon a unique discovery. Mayli studied a local arachnid, known as a starweaver spider, which attracted prey by reflecting moonlight off its mirror-like webs, and soon learned how to harvest and process the spiders' silk. This "star silk" could be woven into fabrics that shimmered and sparkled even in dim light. Furthermore, star silk showed an affinity for colours derived from the surrounding wildlife, which led to the development of several vibrant dyes.

It wasn't long before star silk became popular among foreign aristocrats, and the halflings found themselves in possession of a valuable commodity. Starweaver spiders were quickly integrated into the village's culture, used to protect crops from pests, decorate buildings and even serve as pets. The burgeoning community took the name Starspun Hollow in honour of the spiders that brought about its fortune. Before long human traders started building houses nearby, which contributed to the village's prosperity but concerned the halfling refugees, who still remembered being driven from their homes. The result is a patchwork of differently sized buildings floating on the fens, alive with riotous colour day and night.

Though seemingly peaceful, Starspun Hollow is rife with whispers of conflict. Milni Nightwillow, Mayli's daughter and the village reeve, insists on sustainable but low-yield production of star silk and dyes, much to the chagrin of Markku Olent, owner of the community's primary dye works. Their increasingly heated arguments stir up old racial animosity among the citizens, leaving everyone on edge. To make matters worse, the village's most popular dye is derived from a dragonfly considered sacred by a large tribe of boggards, who grow more outraged every day by the audacity of the "bite-sized" spider catchers.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Ruler Milni Nightwillow

Government Magical

Population 188 (79 humans, 78 halflings, 19 gnomes, 7 elves, 3 half-elves, 2 half-orcs)

Alignments NG

Languages Common, Halfling

Corruption -3; **Crime** -1; **Economy** +0; **Law** -1; **Lore** +3; **Society** -3

Qualities Prosperous, rumourmongering citizens

Danger 0; **Disadvantages** None

NOTABLE FOLK

Most of the population are nothing more than hardworking peasants. A few, however, are of interest to adventurers:

Aiwin Elestien (location 6; CG male elf bard 3/expert 2) Aiwin is patriarch of an elven family of tailors and musicians known for their borderline-debaucherous revelries.

Bekka Murray (location 2; NG female halfling druid 2) Milni Nightwillow's protégé is eager to please everyone.

Berno Dewberry (location 3; N male halfling expert 2) The Dream Weaver's owner is anxious and constantly apologizes.

Kyler Sylbane (location 7; N male human ranger 5) A fen explorer, Kyler worries about the rising boggard aggression.

Markku Olent (location 5; LN male human aristocrat 2) Owner of the village's largest dye works, he believes he can expand production by using the fens to replace lost resources.

Milni Nightwillow (location 4; NG female halfling druid 7) Starspun Hollow's reeve wearies of politics, but steadfastly defends maintaining renewable silk and dye production.

Ricola Aulburn (location 8; CN female halfling rogue 4) The owner of the general store leads the anti-human radicals.

Willina Capleaf (location 1; NG female halfling expert 3) Willina is overseer of the village's crops and star silk cultivation.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Most of the village comprises peasant homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Berry Fields Main Office:** Agricultural centre and home of the starweaver spiders.
2. **Commons:** This dry hillock serves as the village centre, festival grounds and open-air market.
3. **Dream Weaver Inn:** The local inn and tavern.
4. **Nightwillow Manor:** Milni's home and the de facto town hall.
5. **Olent Dye Works:** Starspun Hollow's largest producer of dyes.
6. **Silks & Songs:** Home and workplace of the Elestien elves.
7. **Sylbane's Sojourns:** A fishing, hunting and ranging lodge.
8. **Wanderer's Wares:** General store and meeting place for anti-human mavericks.

MARKETPLACE

Resources & Industry Dyes, farming, fishing and silks

Base Value 650 gp; **Purchase Limit** 3,750 gp; **Spellcasting** 4th; **Minor Items** 2d4; **Medium Items** 1d4; **Major Items** –

The following items are for sale:

- **Ring improved swimming** (10,000 gp)
- **Scrolls (Divine) control water** (700 gp), **wood shape** (150 gp)
- **Wand spider climb** (34 chgs., 3,060 gp)
- **Wondrous Item gloves of arrow snaring** (4,000 gp)

VILLAGE LORE

A PC making a Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check may know something about Starspun Hollow. A successful check reveals all the information revealed by a lesser check.

DC 10: Starspun Hollow is known as the sole producer of a fabric called star silk, as well as numerous clothing dyes.

DC 15: The villagers derive several dyes from the surrounding wildlife, and are always looking for people to brave the fens in search of raw materials.

DC 20: The village was built by halflings fleeing human invaders. Even though many humans now live there, the small folk don't fully trust them and racial tensions run deep.

VILLAGERS

Appearance Villagers tend toward fair skin and brown hair, usually bound in braids or buns that fit beneath their shawls.

Dress Villagers wear layers of nets, shawls and veils to keep pests off their skin. Clothing is usually made of star silk dyed magnificent colours. Leather does not take local dyes well, so it is only worn by labourers and seen as improper for social events.

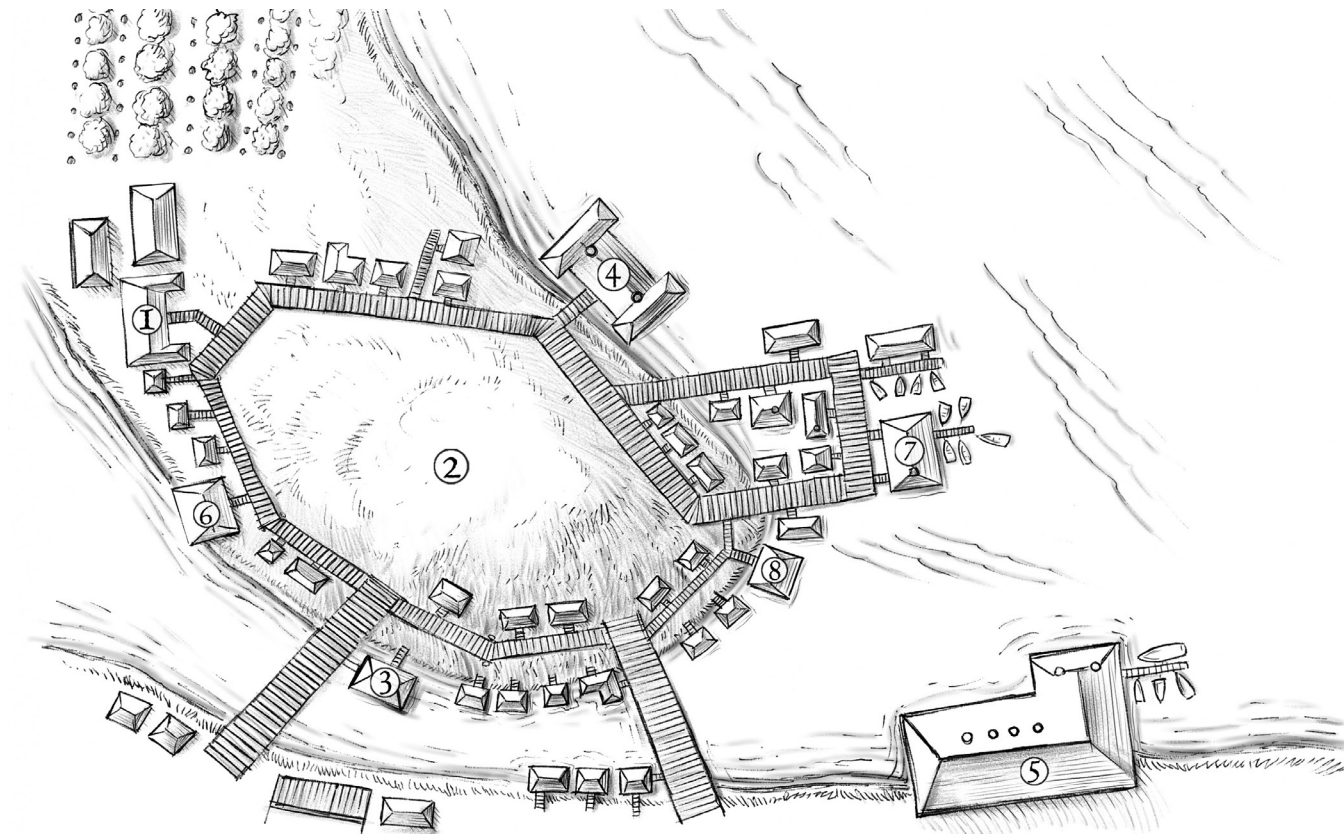
Nomenclature *male:* Collyn, Daven, Olivir, Timmett, Rolth; *female:* Brenna, Fayli, Liria, Misty, Penni; *family:* Bryony, Hoplee, Kermen, Olmadder, Safflin.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

A PC can use Diplomacy to gather information about the village and its surroundings. This takes 1d4 hours and requires a DC 10 check. A PC exceeding this check gains one additional rumour for each 5 points by which he exceeded DC 10. Use the table below to determine which rumour(s) the PC learns.

D6	RUMOUR
1*	Human merchants are trying to smuggle out some starweaver spiders and undercut prices abroad.
2	Ricola Aulburn has been sabotaging the dye works to show Markku Olent and the other humans they're not welcome.
3	Fewer folks are returning from forays into the fens, and locals are hearing croaking sounds in the dead of night.
4	Markku is trying to undermine Milni's resolve by buttering up to her pupil, Bekka Murray.
5	Someone, or something, damaged the webs along the far end of the Berry Fields. Willina Capleaf is offering a bounty to find the culprit.
6*	The Elestien elves are actually evil fey trying to draw the whole village into lascivious vice.

*False rumour



PLAGUE TOWN: SIGHTS & SOUNDS

Use this table to generate the sights and sounds the PCs experience as they move about the plague town. Some details listed here may not be appropriate for the particular adventure or campaign you are running. Ignore such results and simply re-roll.

D%	
1	A cart trundles by, driven by a man in black robes. The cart is laden with at least twenty bloated and stiff corpses.
2	A group of purple-and-red robed priests stride through the town, calling upon all to worship an obscure goddess of disease.
3	A wooden pyre has numerous bodies stacked upon it. Oil is being poured over the mound while a man stands nearby with a torch.
4	Bodies lie in the street, arms and legs skewed, joints swollen, eyes eaten by the crows.
5	A pack of mangy dogs races by, snapping and snarling at anyone who gets too close.
6	A wailing child sits at a windowsill, apparently abandoned.
7	A woman stumbles down the street, ragged clothing revealing countless open, weeping sores on her skin.
8	Several columns of thick, black smoke writhe above the town, showing where bodies are being burnt.
9	Every hour on the hour, day and night, the temple bells clang, tolling for the dead.
10	Guards hack at an infected citizen trying to scramble over the barricades around the quarantined quarter.
11	Beggars shuffle around you, forming a circle that blocks your path as they reach for food.
12	Soldier use longswords to drive infected people to one of the quarantine warehouses.
13	A pair of dead lovers lie in the street, stiff limbs locked in a final embrace.
14	Through a window, a family are visible slumped around a table, dead to the last.
15	One of the guards on the street corner starts hacking and coughing uncontrollably.
16	A normal-looking person suddenly keels over and begins vomiting copious amounts of blood.
17	Several women wrapped in filthy rags hobble by, making disturbingly squishing noises.
18	All doors and windows here are boarded up; a few are chained shut as well.
19	Screams of the dying soar over the town at all hours, and nothing can drown them out.
20	A surgeon has a patient on a stone slab and is sawing off an infected limb as the subject shrieks in agony.

21	A cart delivering fresh food and water is mobbed by people who fight over the smallest scraps.
22	The water in the well is foul and greasy. A nearby bucketful appears to be full of wriggling worms.
23	Hundreds of crows and ravens perch on the rooftops, eerily silent as they survey the town.
24	Dozens of feral cats roam the streets, gnawing on corpses of people and other animals alike.
25	Every other step splashes into puddles of reeking filth, making the ground slick and treacherous.
26	Patches of bloody mud dot the street.
27	Someone has drawn crude graffiti on numerous walls, proclaiming the end of the world.
28	A priest in a gaudy robe meanders through town, laying pudgy hands on anyone showing signs of illness.
29	Guards huddle around the main gates, inspecting anyone and anything passing by.
30	A young man leans out of a window, froth flecking his lips.
31	A crowd gathers in the town square as a supposed witch is tied to stake to be burned for cursing the land.
32	The criminal chained to the stocks in the centre of town looks like he died several days ago.
33	The death rattle of infected folk sounds through the town.
34	Evil eye wards are painted in bright colours on all available surfaces, and even on some people's skin.
35	Mummified bodies are laid out on stretchers, like strips of leather left to dry in the sun.
36	Dead beggars have been left to rot on the very mats they once huddled on to cry for a few alms.
37	A few prostitutes loiter about, their faces heavily caked with makeup to hide their sores.
38	Dark clouds hang heavy over the town, swirling with odd, almost arcane, patterns no matter which way the wind blows.
39	The stink of rot hangs over the town.
40	Bony cows low from the stockyard pens, their eyes glistening with mucus.
41	The fields of crops surrounding the town are wilting and rotting away.
42	Every torch and lantern lit around town blazes with unnatural green flames.
43	Mad laughter rattles through the air.
44	From a nearby house, cries tear through the air, begging for the release of death.
45	A man kneels in the street, weeping and wailing prayers for mercy and healing.
46	The town temple is packed from wall to wall with the sick and dying.
47	Amidst the muck and mess of the dying, a single clean, smiling person skips along without a care.

48	A mob has gathered in front of the town hall, shouting for the mayor to come and face them.
49	Wardens stride by, going door-to-door as they take a town census.
50	A pair of foreign-looking folk wanders around town, taking cryptic notes on all they observe.
51	As night falls, a shadowy person tips a vial of unknown contents into a well.
52	The evening shadows appear to writhe in a way that has nothing to do with the setting sun.
53	A handful of humanoid figures shamble around the graveyard.
54	A tent camp stands without the gates; ill people are transported there on a daily basis.
55	A painted wagon sits in the middle of a square, fully ablaze as its owner looks on mournfully.
56	A woman sits on a stoop, rocking back and forth as she tries to nurse her dead child.
57	Beggars clamber over pile of rotting food, grabbing fistfuls of mouldy onions, black potatoes and crumbling gourds.
58	The temple priest staggers by, his robes torn to shreds and his gaze distant, unfocused.
59	The body slumped in the street looks like the flesh has literally melted from its bones.
60	A child runs by, looking perfectly healthy except for one blackened, withered hand.
61	Bloody footprints chart a clear path from one side of the town to the other before vanishing.
62	A stream of giant squirming maggots roils across the path, devouring all dead flesh in their path.
63	A body swollen beyond recognition and covered in red pustules lies in the street.
64	A group of drunks stagger down the street, calling for others to join them in a last revel.
65	A band of men in yellow masks skulk around town, silently watching everything.
66	A row of bodies has been dipped in tar to stop the disease that claimed them from spreading.
67	Every other person is weeping bloody tears, which track crimson down their cheeks.
68	The houses here have been broken into and looted, leaving not a scrap behind.
69	Enormous clouds of black, buzzing flies swarm the area, trying to crawl into any open orifice.
70	The town mayor pauses in his speech and begins retching and clutching his stomach.
71	Bloated bodies hang from the gallows, guts spilling to the ground beneath.
72	Those showing plague symptoms have their foreheads branded with a hot iron.
73	A group of chained slaves rush by, chased by their master who has boils all over his body.
74	A slick merchant has set up a cart where he sells bottles of supposed cures and preventatives.
75	White-robed nuns move quietly through the town, saying prayers and comforting the sick.

76	Several people sit together, singing, their voices growing weaker.
77	A line for food and water distribution winds down the block and around the corner.
78	Those residents who've fallen too ill to move are dragged into a series of large tents on the edge of town and never seen again.
79	Soldiers march down the street, calling out a decree that condemns the town to destruction.
80	An army sits outside the town, killing anyone who attempts to escape the plague boundaries.
81	Vividly coloured serpents slither throughout the town, emerging from every crack and cranny.
82	Strange. It seems when a person contracts the disease their shadow suddenly starts pointing in the wrong direction.
83	Green-and-blue blobs of animate slime glop their way through town and onto random people.
84	A row of skulls sits in a window, teeth chattering as if they're talking to each other.
85	Rows of charred bodies are laid out and stacked like corded wood.
86	A woman thrashes in the middle of the street, writhing in the grip of a ferocious fever.
87	Despite the crowded streets and homes, a haunting silence lies over the town.
88	A beggar raises a hand, and countless tiny insects skitter across his skin like black grains of rice.
89	Starving citizens have gathered up mounds of dead rats, which they now roast.
90	Piles of dead birds lie clumped along the ground, frail bodies smashed and rotting.
91	A pack of rabid wolves lope along, howling as they attack anyone who reacts in fear.
92	People scamper away as a sickly herd of sheep moseys through the town, bleating pathetically.
93	A healthy citizen races by, pursued by several diseased people wielding swords and axes.
94	A person lifts their head, revealing they've chewed their lips off.
95	A dozen sickly folks have cast off their clothes and now dance naked in the street.
96	Practically every wall and post has a set of royal orders nailed to it, commanding everyone to remain indoors until further notice.
97	Everywhere, painful moans and whimpers assault the PCs' ears.
98	Echoes of rattling chains come from the barred windows of the nearby prison
99	The baker opens his door and flings rolls of mouldy bread into the street.
100	A particularly tall, thin figure makes its way down the street, clothed in a thick black robe and carrying a massive scythe.

DEKSPORT AT A GLANCE

A pirate enclave surrounded by dense woods on three sides and the ocean's tumultuous waters to the east, Deksport is a perfect base from which to raid nearby shipping lanes. Built at the mouth of a valley opening into a sheltered bay the town possesses a deep, safe natural anchorage. Protected by a slippery, seaweed-fringed breakwater of decrepit construct at any time up to a dozen ocean-going ships and scores of smaller craft rest at anchor in the harbour.

While predominantly a human town, Deksport has a sizeable contingent of orcs and goblins among its populace. Each of the three main races represented in the town has their own self-centred, despotic leader who constantly vies with their rivals for wealth, prestige and power.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Rulers Aune (NE female human fighter 2/rogue 3/assassin 4), Olmi (LE male greater barghest rogue [thug] 2/fighter 1) and Nargor (LE male half-orc fighter [weapon master] 12)

Government Council (The Admirals' Council)

Population 4,628 (2,145 humans, 956 goblins, 734 orcs, 475 half-orcs, 136 half-elves, 127 others, 19 dwarves, 17 elves, 12 gnomes, 7 halflings)

Alignments CE, NE, LE, CN

Languages Common, Orc, Goblin

Corruption +1; **Crime** +2; **Economy** +1; **Law** -3; **Lore** -1; **Society** +3

Qualities Notorious, rumourmongering citizens, strategic location

Danger 15; **Disadvantages** None

TOWN LORE

A PC making a Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check may know some information about Deksport. A successful check reveals all the information revealed by a lesser check.

DC 10: Deksport is a pirate stronghold. It is a dangerous place and possesses a deep, natural anchorage.

DC 15: Evil humanoids openly walk Deksport's streets and many serve on the pirate vessels operating from the port.

DC 20: Deksport's three rulers plot against one another, but none of the three is powerful enough to rule without the others.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Most of the town comprises homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Spire of the Beacon Eternal:** This temple-fortress stands on a rocky island linked to the mainland by Dorn's Breakwater; its beacon guides vessels to Deksport at night and its clergy-shipwrights make an excellent living repairing pirate vessels.

2. **Dorn's Breakwater:** This slippery, seaweed-fringed breakwater is of ancient and unknown construction.
3. **The Docks:** This confused jumble of wharves, jetties and ramshackle warehouse is always busy.
4. **The Scorched Anchor:** This busy inn standing hard against the docks is surprisingly free from brawls and murders; the reputation of its owner keeps all but the foolhardiest of pirates in line.
5. **The Welcome Mermaid:** Almost entirely underground, this tavern is popular with orcs, half-orcs and goblins.
6. **The Pens:** One of the most odorous and shunned places in town, the Pens are home to Deksport's pernicious (and profitable) slave trade.
7. **Dead Man's Bluff:** On this windswept bluff, the pirates execute those guilty of serious crimes.
8. **Hall of the Creator:** One of the largest buildings in Deksport, a stout stone curtain wall protects the priests and alchemists hard at work within.
9. **The Shrieking Sailor:** The best and safest tavern in town.
10. **Ovlon's:** Run by a bad-tempered duergar weaponsmith, the best weapons in the town are to be found here.
11. **The Wailing Tower:** In this stout donjon the pirates keep those prisoners worthy of ransom.
12. **The Mottled Palace:** From this grim fortification Nargor rules Deksport. Behind its stout walls he is (mostly) safe from his rivals' machinations.
13. **All That Glitters:** The dwarf Morild Ovlag runs this jewellers and moneychangers. She hires out space in her secure vault to those with valuables to store.
14. **Anything & Everything:** A pawnbrokers and general store, this large shop has an incredible and diverse range of stock.
15. **House of Whispers:** Here dwells Dunn, the Whisper Master. He lives in a secret suite of luxurious rooms and is guarded by a cadre of well-paid mercenaries.
16. **The Pit:** Dug outside Deksport's walls, this huge refuse pit is teeming with gigantic, ravenous rats and feral goblins.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS BY CATEGORY

Inns & Taverns the Rusty Anchor, the Shrieking Sailor, the Welcome Mermaid

Personal Residences House of Whispers (Dunn's home), Mottled Palace (Nargor's home)

Businesses All That Glitters (jeweller & moneychanger), Anything & Everything (pawnbroker and general store), Ovlon's (weaponsmith), the Pens (slaves), Spire of the Beacon Eternal (shipbuilding and repair), the Wailing Tower (prisoners)

Fortifications Dorn's Breakwater, Mottled Palace,

Temples Hall of the Creator, Spire of the Beacon Eternal



INHABITANTS

Appearance The dirty and unkempt inhabitants of Deksport pay little attention to their cleanliness or appearance. Clothing is serviceable and hardwearing while their weapons and armour are normally in good condition (and well used).

Dress Most folk dress in shabby, well-used clothes. As the result of looting, drunken shopping trips and limited funds, styles and fashions are “eclectic.”

Nomenclature Each of Deksport’s major races have their own nomenclature:

- **Goblin:** *male* Fug, Hek, Kror, Thag; *female* Bori, Igne, Ova, Vol; *family* goblins don’t bother with family names.
- **Human:** *male* Aaro, Ilari, Panu, Valto, Viljo; *female* Asta, Helmi, Kaija, Satu, Viivi; *family* Erola, Keto, Outila, Purho, Varala.
- **Orc:** *male* Davor, Keth, Oggor, Sog; *female* Davga, Igga, Ogan, Uzlen; *family* orcs often use epithets such as Destroyer, Mighty, Throat-Cutter and the like.

NOTABLE FOLK

Most of the population are normal pirates and sailors or their families. A few, however, are of interest to adventurers:

Aaro Laitnen (location 14; LN male human expert 2/warrior 1) runs Anything & Everything. A pragmatist he knows many of the things he sells are likely stolen.

Amzir (location 5; LE female orc fighter 2/monk 3/bard 2) The landlady of the Welcome Mermaid is a skilled pugilist.

Ariquis Pyloninn (location 3; NE male elf fighter 5/rogue 2/duellist 1) The quick-to-anger captain of the *Crimson Gorgon* is a skilled warrior.

Aune (location 3b; NE female human fighter 2/rogue 3/assassin 4) Clever, cunning and as ruthless as a shark, Aune is a skilled assassin who loathes her co-rulers.

Bral (location 3; NE male goblin rogue [sniper] 7) The *Screaming Chimera’s* captain is an amazing shot with his crossbow.

Cullen Baire (location 3; N male human wizard [evoker] 5) Captain of the *Black Fury*; beloved by his crew.

Cyanae Malninrae (location 3; CN female elf sorcerer [draconic {red}] 8) The *Sea Jackal’s* captain will soon suffer a mutiny if she doesn’t stop destroying ships with her magical fire.

Dunn the “Many Ear” (location 15; NE human rogue [charlatan] 9) One of the most powerful people in Deksport, Dunn has many spies who report to him on all manner of goings on. He uses this information for his own gain.

Elnar Burca (location 3; CE male half-orc fighter 5) Captain of the *Howl of the Sea* and a savage warrior renown for cruelty.

Fardulf Nantua (location 4; N male human wizard [evoker] 7) Fardulf is widely believed to be a powerful wizard. He runs the (comparatively peaceful) Scorched Anchor inn.

Jar-zit (location 3; CE male sahuagin fighter 7) The captain of the *Sea Devil* is reviled (and feared) throughout Deksport. Five sahuagin serve among his crew.

Joray Farlink (location 6; CE male middle-aged human fighter 3/rogue 5) The slave master deals in suffering and misery, and is widely hated and feared by the populace.

Morild Ovlag (location 13; LN female dwarf rogue 6) is the town’s preeminent jeweller and moneychanger. She is an honest, shrewd businesswoman.

Naillae Natityrr (location 11; LE female half-elf fighter 3/rogue 2) Warden of the Wailing Tower, Naillae is ferociously loyal to Nargor (with whom she is desperately in love).

Nargor (location 12; LE male half-orc fighter [weapon master] 12) Nargor leads the orcs of Deksport and openly courts the half-orcs (who he sees as the balance of power in the chaotic power struggles besetting the town).

Olmi (location 3c; LE male greater barghest rogue [thug] 2/fighter 1) Evil beyond mortal reckoning, Olmi chafes at his goblin followers’ lowly position in Deksport.

Ovlon (location 10; NE male duergar fighter 3/expert 2) This famed weaponsmith is as bad tempered as he is skilled.

Sakari (location 8; NE male human cleric [Abarin] 7) Leading Abarin’s flock, Sakari receives gifts and payment from all the pirate captains to keep their vessels stocked with alchemist’s fire and other weapons of war.

Sor Gart (location 1; CN male human cleric [Serat] 7/expert 3) Sor leads Serat’s faithful in Deksport

Tarl (location 3; CE male orc fighter 3/barbarian 5) The ferocious captain of the *Tireless* is famed for going into battle drunk.

Ulp Longshanks (location 3; CE male orc barbarian 5) The captain of the *Furious* is renown for charging into battle and slaying all who stand before him. He hates goblins.

Urmis Murmi (location 1; CN female half-orc fighter 4/cleric [Serat] 3) Urmis is loud, pious and an excellent warrior.

Vazror (location 12; CE male orc barbarian 1/fighter 6) A relative newcomer to Deksport, Vazror possesses a trained wyvern mount and a burning hatred for the adventurers who all but wiped out his tribe.

Yorg (location 3; NE male half-orc fighter 8) Many whisper the *Blood Shadow’s* captain is particularly favoured by Nargor.

MARKETPLACE

Resources & Industry Piracy, shipbuilding

Base Value 2,000 gp; **Purchase Limit** 10,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 5th; **Minor Items** 3d4; **Medium Items** 2d4; **Major Items** 1d4

When the PCs arrive in Deksport, the following items are for sale:

- **Armour** +1 breastplate (1,700 gp), +1 leather (1,160 gp), +1 studded leather (1,175 gp)
- **Potions & Oils** bear’s endurance (300 gp), grease (50 gp)
- **Rings** force shield (8,500 gp), sustenance (2,500 gp)
- **Scrolls (Divine)** doom and sanctuary (50 gp), inflict moderate wounds (150 gp), speak with animals (25 gp)
- **Wand** ghoul touch (37 chgs.; 3,300 gp)
- **Weapons** +1 greataxe (2,320 gp), +1 shock short sword (8,310 gp), +3 heavy flail (18,315 gp)
- **Wondrous Items** harp of charming (7,500 gp)

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

A PC can use Diplomacy to gather information about Deksport and its surroundings. This takes 1d4 hours and requires a DC 10 check. A PC exceeding this check gains one additional rumour for each 5 points by which he exceeded DC 10. Use the table below to determine which rumour(s) the PC learns.

D%*	
01-02	A secret hoard of gold is hidden beneath the docks, buried deep in the silt.
03-04	The captain of the <i>Sea Jackal</i> needs new crew, and she is not above press ganging likely recruits.
05-06	When mist rolls in from the east, people die.
07-08	The <i>Black Fury</i> made port last night with dozens of barrels of brandy taken in a raid. Unfortunately, it turns out some of the brandy was being used to preserve several strange corpses.
09-10	Strange ripples have been seen in the harbour. Something odd is living in those murky waters.
11-12	Several pirates have been murdered recently. Each had their eyes gouged out and replaced with worn silver coins of unknown origin.
13-14	Ghosts of long-dead sailors haunt the breakwater and seek to entice the living to a watery grave.
15-16	The <i>Sea Devil</i> is always on the lookout for new recruits; new crewmen do not last long!
17-18	The crew of the <i>Ebon Wind</i> are cannibals. Detestable folk, they eat all who fall into their clutches – sometimes the captives are still alive!
19-20	All the ships' captains are to meet in council; a big score is in the wind!
21-22	Brawling is rife; 23 people died last night as a result of arguments.
23-24	The air smells of storm; something big is going to make landfall soon.
25-26	A reward has been posted for Derk Hilgar, after he was caught in the arms of his captain's mistress.
27-28	Some of the waterfront buildings are so badly built, they'll likely collapse during the next storm.
29-30	Someone stole the <i>Tireless'</i> figurehead last night. When it's found, there'll be hell to pay.
31-32	The crew of the <i>Blood Shadow</i> captured a powerful cleric on their last foray. They are selling her spellcasting services to the highest bidder.
33-34	Gert Tralstar possesses a magic sword that floats on water. It's impossible for its owner to drown.
35-36	Deksport is built on a pre-human burial ground.
37-38	Five years ago, the <i>Scanty Maid</i> was reported lost with all hands after a fierce battle. Why, then, has the ship's first mate been skulking about town?
39-40	Aune is a skilled assassin. She came to Deksport after her last job garnered too much attention. Aune is not her real name.
41-42	Dunn the "Many Ear" knows everything of importance occurring in Deksport and shares his knowledge in return for gold or secrets.

43-44	Something is living in Dorn's Breakwater. Strange ripples have been seen in the water and several vessels have lost crewmen.
45-46	Something terrible lives in the surrounding woodlands. People who go in don't come out.
47-48	Someone or something has been stealing the bodies of those killed on Dead Man's Bluff.
49-50	The rats endemic in the town are getting increasingly aggressive.
51-52	A small band of feral goblins dwells in tunnels they've excavated at the bottom of the Pit (location 16) and hunt the endemic giant rats.
53-54	The orc and goblin tribes of the woods are forging an alliance against Deksport.
55-56	Demonic elves and hideous cyclops dwell in the Forest of Grey Spires.
57-58	Dorn's Breakwater is built upon the bones of sea serpents.
59-60	Serat's followers hoard great wealth in sunken caverns below the Beacon Eternal.
61-62	Fardulf Nantua (owner of the Scorched Anchor [location 4]) is a powerful wizard.
63-64	A vampire lurks in one of the ruined warehouses.
65-66	Shadowy figures have been skulking about the town walls.
67-68	Someone has removed the corpses of the last unfortunates executed at Dead Man's Bluff.
69-70	Several of the ruined buildings in the town are ready to collapse.
71-72	The shadows about the docks seem deeper and longer than they should.
73-74	Someone tried to break into Olmi's warehouse last night. The thief's screams lasted for some time.
75-76	Dead Man's Bluff is haunted.
77-78	The Wailing Tower is so named for the lamentations of those incarcerated within.
79-80	The Shrieking Sailor is a safe place to stay.
81-82	Avoid the docks at night; they are not safe.
83-84	A sea dragon has been seen swimming near Dorn's Breakwater.
85-86	Olmi is plotting against Nargor.
87-88	The spirits of those slain during the town's fall yet lurk in some of the more damaged areas.
89-90	The folk of Black Wyvern commune with ancient nature spirits.
91-92	Five corpses washed up on the Breakwater yesterday.
93-94	Agents of several powerful merchants work to destroy Deksport by inciting the pirate's rivalries.
95-96	Loggers recently killed a treant and are auctioning its trunk to serve as a ship's mast. Several captains have sworn it will be theirs.
97-98	The folk of Red Talon are devil-worshippers.
99-100	Roll again; wildly exaggerate the indicated rumour using fantastical elements.

*The GM determines the veracity of any rumour as he desires

GM ADVICE: REOCCURRING ALLIES

IN A SIMILAR FASHION TO REOCCURRING VILLAINS, REOCCURRING FRIENDS AND ALLIES ARE THE HALLMARK OF A GREAT CAMPAIGN.

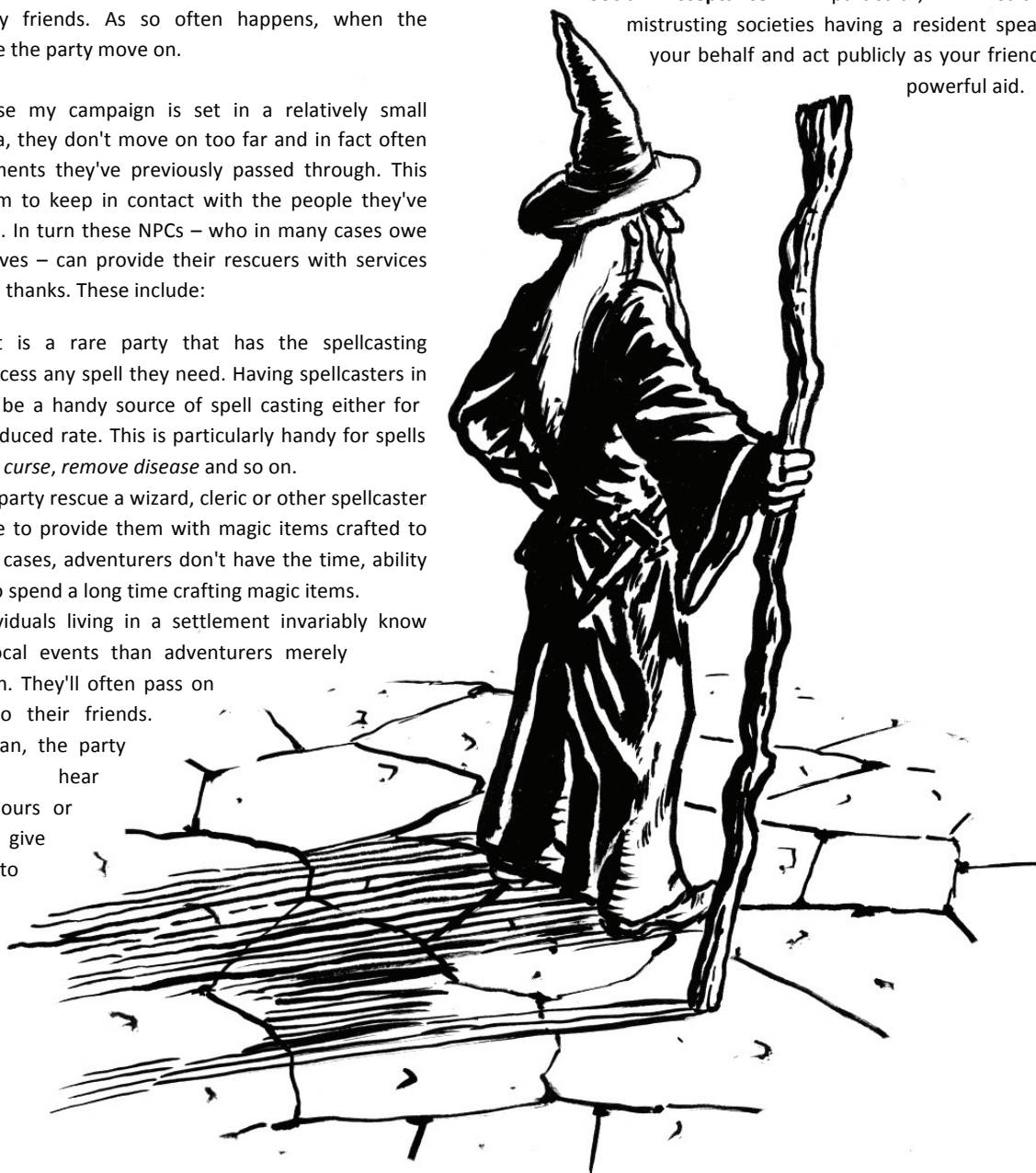
In my Borderland of Adventure campaign, the party have been on many adventures. During the course of those adventures, they've slain countless enemies and saved many folk from terrible fates. They've even made some reoccurring enemies. From the captives rescued from the bowels of the Shadowed Keep on the Borderlands to the clergy of an isolated monastery they saved from the ravages of an undead monstrosity, they've also made many friends. As so often happens, when the adventure is done the party move on.

However, because my campaign is set in a relatively small geographical area, they don't move on too far and in fact often return to settlements they've previously passed through. This has enabled them to keep in contact with the people they've saved in the past. In turn these NPCs – who in many cases owe the party their lives – can provide their rescuers with services large and small in thanks. These include:

- **Spellcasting:** It is a rare party that has the spellcasting resources to access any spell they need. Having spellcasters in their debt can be a handy source of spell casting either for free or for a reduced rate. This is particularly handy for spells such as *remove curse*, *remove disease* and so on.
- **Crafting:** If the party rescue a wizard, cleric or other spellcaster he may be able to provide them with magic items crafted to order. In many cases, adventurers don't have the time, ability or inclination to spend a long time crafting magic items.
- **Rumours:** Individuals living in a settlement invariably know more about local events than adventurers merely passing through. They'll often pass on such stories to their friends. This might mean, the party automatically hear important rumours or the GM may give them a bonus to gather information checks.

- **Safe Haven:** Having a place to rest and recuperate is always handy. If a settlement doesn't have an inn – or the inn has no rooms available – having a local offer to take you in and feed you is an attractive option for road weary adventurers. Free food and drink – while not representing a huge saving is also nice, particularly in areas where food is scarce.

- **Social Acceptance:** In particular, in insular or mistrusting societies having a resident speak on your behalf and act publicly as your friend is a powerful aid.



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