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URBAN DRESSING: BORDERLAND TOWN





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URBAN DRESSING: BORDERLAND TOWN

Tired of your towns and cities lacking verisimilitude? Want to add cool details to your creations but don't have the time? Want to make your towns and cities feel more realistic? Then Urban Dressing is for you! Each instalment focuses on a different type of urban area. Within, find 100 sights and sounds, 50 businesses, 50 NPCs and 20 adventure hooks ready for your campaign.

Designed for easy use during game prep or actual play.

CREDITS

Design: Josh Vogt

Development: Creighton Broadhurst

Art: Rick Hershey and William McAusland. Some artwork copyright William McAusland, used with permission. Publisher's Choice Quality Stock Art © Rick Hershey / Fat Goblin Games.

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BORDERLAND TOWN: SIGHTS & SOUNDS

Use this table, to generate the sights and sounds the characters experience as they move about the town.

D%	SIGHTS & SOUNDS
01	The town's curtain walls are scorched by fire and pitted with age.
02	Lewd graffiti covers the town's main gate.
03	Watchmen patrol the guard towers set along the walls.
04	Several tarred heads decorate the iron spikes above every gate.
05	The bell tower at the centre of town looks so tall and spindly it might topple at any second.
06	The raging river flowing by the town is full of churned mud and debris.
07	Everywhere the characters go, there's a babble of foreign languages that tickles the ear.
08	A band of foreigners stride along, seemingly at ease despite the odd looks the townsfolk give them.
09	A series of inns entices prospective customer with brightly painted shingles and gaudy signs.
10	A gaggle of laughing, shoeless street urchins dart through the crowd.
11	A guard patrol shuffles down the street, eyeing every house and alley they pass with suspicion.
12	Soldiers on horseback trot out through the open gate toward the border.
13	A strange and dilapidated tiny shrine dedicated to a foreign god huddles in the shadow of a larger, more orthodox church.
14	Wild dogs scrounge in the gutters and alleys. They growl at anyone who gets too close.
15	A trader walks down the street selling tepid meat pies from a wheelbarrow.
16	Several soldiers work at maintaining a ballista set atop a watchtower.
17	Off-duty guards laugh and shove each other around as they head for the nearest tavern.
18	A small herd of pigs grunts and roots around the rubbish strewn along the street.
19	A man in chains hollers his innocence as he's prodded along at the end of a guard's spear.
20	The grizzled man lounging in the nearby doorway has the look of a veteran soldier.
21	A squad of fresh recruits tromp into town, looking barely old enough to shave.
22	The party pass by a tidy row of gardens that look vibrant and healthy.
23	While the fields butt up against the town wall, several farmsteads are barely visible in the distance.

24	The road winding away from the gate, leads off into dense fog.
25	Drab foreign flags hang off the eaves of this large, ornately decorated building.
26	This bar has numerous painted signs indicating "No Foreigners Allowed."
27	A beggar follows the party for several streets, constantly asking for alms.
28	This body has hung so long on the gallows nothing is left but the skeleton.
29	The street is cleared so a visiting dignitary, and their armed escorts can pass by easily.
30	A mounted hunting party, their voices loud and cheerful in anticipation of fresh game, sets off from town. Hunting dogs dart about the horses' legs.
31	A fur trader has opened up his cart to display his expansive and expensive wares.
32	These guards are harassing a foreign beggar who is shouting at them in his native language.
33	This young man stands on the corner all day, crying for war and dreaming of glory.
34	Enemy armour and weapons are strapped to this wall as trophies...and warnings.
35	The party catch a whiff of rot wafting through the air from the town's graveyard.
36	The stones of this wall are painted with the sigil of a god of death.
37	The stone and wood walls of a nearby building have hundreds of names carved into them.
38	A handful of figures lurk in the shadows of a nearby shadowy alley.
39	Sailors call out for news from a barge passing along the river that marks the nearby border.
40	A bloodstained robe lies on the ground, and everyone is taking care to walk far away from it.
41	The clothes sold in a nearby shop look to be of a foreign fashion.
42	This little booth sells a variety of idols crafted in all manner of precious metals (and many base metals doctored to appear more valuable).
43	Thousands of winged insects litter the streets. Most townsfolk just crush underfoot, and pay them no heed.
44	Strong winds kick up a riotous dust storm that blasts the town and obscures vision.
45	All night long, pounding drums sound in the distance.
46	The rain has not let up for several days now, turning the muddy streets into miniature rivers.
47	Along this street, every window and door is shuttered and barred.
48	Odd fetishes of hair and bone dangle off the doorway of this grim, old-style building.

49	A pair of grimy men skulk along behind the party for several minutes before deciding to seek easier prey.
50	These bones have been lying in the road long enough to have been trampled and shattered.
51	Graffiti scrawled on a wall is a political slogan, decrying the current mayor.
52	Nobody bothers to stoop and pick up a handful of copper coins scattered in the mud.
53	The field beyond the main gate has been burnt and the trees chopped to stumps.
54	A large flock of black carrion birds soars overhead, circling near the town's centre.
55	The stripped and mutilated body in the gutter looks like it has been there for several days.
56	Bodies littered the town's approaches.
57	The party hear the shrieks and roars of wild animals in the nearby woods.
58	The stench of smoke emanates from the structure the party are standing nearby.
59	This booth sells an array of exotic foods, some of which may still be alive.
60	A band of drunken mercenaries stagger down the street. They seem happy and good-natured.
61	The foreign dignitary everyone is chattering about appears to be a child in fine robes.
62	A warrior stomps past the party, clad in strange gear and bearing a weapon unlike anything the characters have seen before.
63	Several guards have stopped a wagon and are inspecting the goods under its leather tarp.
64	Unnerving stone statues of slightly humanoid fish-like creatures line the streets.
65	The shadows in this portion of town seem longer and darker than normal.
66	The howling of dogs fills the air.
67	Every house has antlers strapped to their eaves.
68	This house is designed to reflect the exotic architecture of a neighbouring kingdom.
69	This portion of town looks like it caught fire recently; at least a dozen homes have burnt down.
70	The party see the same person around town several times, always making notes on a scrap of paper.
71	Exotic dancers in shimmering veils and robes have drawn a large crowd.
72	The fight that broke out in the street has now expanded to include at least a dozen people.
73	A shrill scream trails off into a weeping babble.
74	Horses whinny in the stables, made restless by an unidentified disturbance.
75	A constant pounding sound on one of the town gates can be heard from a good distance.

76	Animal hides of all sorts are stretched out on tanning frames along the street. A foul stench hangs in the air.
77	The town well is covered with a locked wood panel.
78	The whack of wood on wood fills the air as men-at-arms strike at rows of sparring dummies.
79	Townfolk cast glares at the foreign warriors marching down the street. They seem to be escorting a noble of some sort.
80	The flags of the kingdom of which the town is part wave proudly from every parapet.
81	The pamphlets nailed to this post are all written in a foreign language.
82	A foreign priest rambles on in an unknown tongue as he makes mystic signs with his hands.
83	The caravan wagons are brightly painted, but each wagon remains locked tight.
84	A band of dusty and riders clops along the street.
85	A tent camp stands outside one of the gates; dozens of refugees wait to be let into the town.
86	Smoke from a large fire mars the horizon.
87	A child stands by the road, crying.
88	Suddenly from above, the contents of a chamber pot are emptied into the road at the party's feet.
89	Cracked, dry earth surrounds the town.
90	The road detours around a huge, centuries-old oak.
91	The night is speckled with distant campfires.
92	A nomad camp has been arrayed outside the town wall for weeks, and people are muttering, wondering when the visitors will move on.
93	Every door in town has been engraved with the same rune or sigil.
94	A cart rumbles down the street. Small boys alongside it shovel excrement into the cart.
95	A ramshackle fence surrounds an area of overgrown gardens. Amid the weeds, the remnants of a tumbled stone building are visible.
96	As the party pass by, a small sinkhole opens in the ground. The sinkhole is about 20 ft. deep and intersects with a small cave.
97	A carter moves down the street. Every now and then he stops to make a delivery. A mercenary guard accompanies the carter and keeps an eye on the cart.
98	Thanks to the gaps in the walls, a desolate wind cuts through the town. At dusk, the wind picks up and the townsfolk securely shutter their windows to guard against the chill.
99	Haunting music follows the party around town all day, but they can't tell from where it comes.
100	In the black of night, a fiery arrow is suddenly loosed from the northern wall's guard post.

BORDERLAND TOWN: BUSINESSES

Use this table, to generate the basic details of businesses the characters come across as they explore the town.

D%	BUSINESS
01-02	McMorrow's Hearth (inn) is the main stop in town, where most travellers stay before crossing the border. The food is good, though the rooms can be draughty.
03-04	Stitch in Time (tailor) sees to the townsfolk's clothing, mending and patching to extend their lives
05-06	Tolley's Tongs (blacksmith) has kept the forge burning through war and peace. Both are profitable for a good blacksmith, though the latter is preferable.
07-08	Eyeholes (shoemaker) keeps the townsfolk from having to wander the dusty streets barefoot. Most of the guards wear boots made by this elderly craftsman.
09-10	Stalls (stables) has a lone, grubby stableboy who, despite his surly nature, loves horses and tends them with a careful eye and hand.
11-12	The Den (garrison) is where the guard live and train, ever ready in case of attack. A walled courtyard serves as their parade and practise ground.
13-14	Father's Flame (church) is the demesne of priest Arors, who preaches the necessity of cleansing both the body and the soul.
15-16	Buckets o' Luck (fire brigade) keep the wood and hay-roofed buildings from going up in flames. They've saved the town at least half-a-dozen times.
17-18	Squire's Square (training ground) is where the local guards go to keep their martial skills fresh, though most hope they'll never need them.
19-20	The Square (market) is a daily market where townsfolk get their groceries and other essential supplies. Many townsfolk—as well as several minor merchants—have pitches here.
21-22	Bubbling Brews (alchemist) works with tinctures most mysterious. Its patrons are often adventurers or hunters passing through town.
23-24	The Help (adventuring supplies) has a wide range of equipment and tools suitable for groups of mercenaries or adventurers seeking fame and fortune. Given time, they can secure almost any kind of mundane equipment—no matter how expensive.
25-26	Weary Rested (convalescence) is where wounded townsfolk or soldiers are taken to be healed and given time to recuperate.
27-28	The Flock (carrier pigeons) provides swift communication with surrounding communities.
29-30	Teamster's (coach house) provides swift travel from the town in either direction across the border. It does not guarantee the safety of any travellers at any time.
31-32	The Majestic (fancy inn) is an oddly gaudy affair in the middle of town. It serves as the waystation for visiting nobles or foreign dignitaries. Skilled mercenaries keep locals away.
33-34	Bite Back (wild game) brings in shipments of salted or iced meat from over the border, giving townsfolk the chance to sample exotic meats, for a hefty price.
35-36	Thunter's Trophies (taxidermist) works with local hunters to tan hides and mount heads as exhibits of their prowess. The air around this shop smells terrible.
37-38	Take it For You (refuse collector) is a team of beggars who have banded together to keep the streets clean of rubbish for a copper a week each. They sell what they can salvage from the rubbish and dump the remaining garbage outside town.
39-40	The Clomps (town watch) is a civilian night patrol nicknamed for their penchant for clomping over rooftops in the dead of night while watching the streets below.
41-42	Durgan's Band (mercenaries) owns a small room behind a weaponsmith's shop where they try to recruit adventurers to join their mercenary band.
43-44	Be Seen (torchlighters) is a small guild of old gentlemen who keep the lamps and torches around town blazing through the night.
45-46	Walls A'Mighty (masons) is a family business that is almost constantly at work repairing the town walls as well as shoring up other stone and brick constructions. They are available for large commissions.
47-48	Sheathed (weaponsmith) claims to sell the finest weapons this side of the border. As far as what's sold on the other side, if you want to know so much, go over and ask them yourselves.
49-50	O'Mead's (armoursmith) is a retired soldier who keeps the local guards in shipshape gear while dreaming of his glory days. He has many friends among the watch.
51-52	Papersnatch (government office) is the nickname for the mayor's office, which any foreigner must visit to register their presence in town.
53-54	Horizon (surveyor) works to expand the town but also plots out further settlements in the area. The shop holds maps of many of the town's important buildings.
55-56	Cantry's (magic) is run by a youthful and bumbling wizard who has, on occasion, almost been run out of town by angry mobs.
57-58	Bunkhole (prison) always seems to have at least one drunken malcontent rattling its iron bars, yelling to be released. The watch is based here.
59-60	Tidy's (moneychanger) helps travellers exchange coins for the currency of choice in whatever kingdom they're heading into, and provides small loans in exchange for securities.

61-62	Lead a Horse to Water (alehouse) gives its patrons what they want—cheap beer, cheap wine and a semi-clean floor to sprawl on until they’ve sobered up.
63-64	Easy Does It (outhouse) is a public bathroom near several drinking houses, offering more hygienic relief than an alley for a few copper a use.
65-66	On the Path (maps) sells detailed sketches of both kingdoms for travellers, though the veracity of these maps is up for debate. Occasionally, the owner has treasure maps for sale.
67-68	There and Back (guides) offers to guide travellers over the border and back, promising to lead them along only the safest roads and help them get along with strange foreign customs and laws.
69-70	Sly Wink (drug den) is a squalid smoke pit beneath one of the town’s drinking houses. A secret entrance lies in the alley behind the tavern.
71-72	Rumble’s (gambling den) is overseen by the self-named Lady Luck, a lovely woman who wears fluffy dresses and who is believed to be an effeminate man in drag, hiding from an unknown past crime.
73-74	Read and Weep (books) offers a slim collection of books, mostly histories and a few story books. Occasionally, the shop has minor a spellbook or scroll for sale.
75-76	The Sheriff’s Office (sheriff) handles local legal matters the militia doesn’t want to be bothered with (or can’t handle), such as horse thieves or murders.
77-78	White Hands (baker) is run by a plump matron who sends her children around town with trays of fresh bread and pastries to entice customers to her shop.
79-80	All Accounted (general goods) is run by a jolly man who loves to haggle, but who throws out customers if he thinks they are trying to cheat him.
81-82	The Gulls (docks) monitors all ships passing by on the river next to the town, watching for smugglers, pirates and taxing any goods put ashore. Small warehouses nearby are available for hire for both short- and long-term contracts.
83-84	Swift and True (fletcher) is run by a retired hunter who, despite her fading eyesight, can still craft marvellous bows and arrows.
85-86	Next of Skin (cloth) believes life is short, so why bother with anything but the best clothes? More frugal townsfolk tend to just take their worn clothes to the tailor for mending.
87-88	Fresh Daily (fishers) brings in nets full of fish from the nearby lake, which has become one of the staples of the townsfolk’s diet. Busy early in the day, but closes before dusk. The stench of fish hangs in the air.
89-90	The Tenders (spies) seems a common paraphernalia shop, but is actually a front for a pair of foreign spies posing as a married couple.

91-92	Lucky Strike (miners) has been sending forays into the nearby hills for years, searching for deeper, richer veins of ore.
93-94	Lamplight (brothel) has dozens of glass-panelled windows where candles and lanterns burn at all hours of the night.
95-96	Sleep Cheap (hostel) offers little more than rickety cots and thin blankets for patrons, but only charges a few coppers a night.
97-98	Dust and Ashes (brawl house) celebrates the ethereal nature of the soul by pounding combatants into the nothingness from which they came.
99-100	Burnin’ Throat (distillery) creates and sells an array of fine whiskeys and moonshine, of which the locals are quite fond. The heady smell of fermentation hangs in the air around this low, rambling building.



BORDERLAND TOWN: FOLK OF INTEREST

Use this table, to generate the basic details of folk the characters encounter as they explore the town.

D%	NPC
01-02	Tassy Radtsi (N female half-elf) is famed for her ability to drink anyone under the table.
03-04	Cinnina Edhon (N male gnome cleric 3) patrols the town, trying to sniff out any enemy magic at work.
05-06	Skelyn Dena (CN female human) is a winsome sort, untroubled by rumours she killed her last husband in cold blood.
07-08	Gajitas Oacho (LG male human cleric 1) eyes everyone, even old friends, with a perpetually distrusting glare.
09-10	Lyever Enthald (CG male half-elf fighter 1) never goes anywhere without a bow and arrows strapped to his slim back.
11-12	Kelath Ackburo (LG male human) is the town greeter, making sure all visitors are welcome.
13-14	Fyom Essr (CN male halfling fighter 2) is always late for his night watch patrols, though he never offers an explanation for his tardiness.
15-16	Urnod Kelkel (NE female half-orc fighter 3) is a bald warrior who loves to defeat enemies by getting her fingers twined in their hair and threatening to yank their scalp off.
17-18	Cremas Awingt (CN female dwarf fighter 2) is a stout smith who can turn around even the most complicated repair in a day or two.
19-20	Maden Ratent (LG male dwarf) has memorised all foreign relations regulations and chides any fellow townsfolk who make a misstep.
21-22	Akima Sydyn (LG female gnome illusionist 2) looks at folk from under thick eyelashes, and speaks so softly she is often misunderstood.
23-24	Olsva Gusseck (CE female dwarf fighter 3) never seems to have fully washed off the dried blood from her scarred face.
25-26	Whop Olril (LE female half-orc fighter 1) wears gorgeous dresses wherever she goes, complete with a string of teeth necklaces around her throat.
27-28	Shesmor Wori (CE male gnome thief 1) is a wizened pickpocket who leads a small band of thieves. They make life hell for every shopkeeper in town.
29-30	Ardyld Tairt (NE male human fighter 2) is a blustering, broad-shouldered man who is said to have at least half the townsfolk in his pocket.
31-32	Oadu Danund (CG male human cleric 3) is a thin and taciturn young man who often disappears from town for days at a time.

33-34	Bitha Mosynt (N female halfling thief 1) always appears sick, with a greenish pallor, pockmarked skin and bleeding gums.
35-36	Gadja Bandel (LN female human fighter 1) follows her orders to the letter, often ignoring the spirit of the law.
37-38	Naris Kurukel (NG female human fighter 1) lives in town in-between being hired for mercenary work. She prefers a trusty sword over anything else.
39-40	Vesimara Tinotin (CN female human fighter 3) demands payment for her mercenary jobs upfront, and then it's anyone's guess whether she'll actually serve her employer.
41-42	Esta Eendo (LG female half-orc fighter 2) has arrested more hooligans around town than all the other guards put together.
43-44	Ghaen Oughel (LE male dwarf fighter 3) haunts the town graveyard, rusty battleaxe always in hand.
45-46	Agece Vuruen (N male elf fighter 1) bemoans being stationed in town for his father's business, and makes everyone feel they're beneath him.
47-48	Draon Lemi (LE female half-elf fighter 2) keeps the town in a steady supply of finely crafted bows and arrows. She is as willowy as the weapons she makes.
49-50	Issiv Luffle (NG female human cleric 3) is the local healer, a tired-looking woman with sad brown eyes but an easy smile.
51-52	Rother Elmint (CG male dwarf fighter 2) is a mute fighter who makes his living by tracking down bounties across the border.
53-54	Gule Sust (N male human) shuffles around town at all hours, looking half-asleep and fully drunk.
55-56	Onkin Burer (N male half-elf druid 2) is part of the woodcutters group in town. They keep the surrounding land clear of trees for defensive purposes.
57-58	Ovuirt Upole (CE male halfling thief 1) likes tickling unwary townsfolk. And by tickling, he means stabbing with his needle-thin dagger.
59-60	Liastria Hineim (LE female gnome cleric 1) is a local licensed witch whose prophecies have a way of coming true in the worst possible manner.
61-62	Etyl Vesis (NG male elf fighter 1) spends most of his days lounging in a tavern, complaining about the lack of quality wine in town.
63-64	Miq Woro (NE male human thief 1) is a rough-faced beggar who either possesses one leg or two, depending on what time of day you catch him.
65-66	Aughima Irine (CG female dwarf fighter 3) joined the town guard in the hopes of being called off to war, but has so far been disappointed.
67-68	Hach Ledero (LE male human fighter 3) has a sagging gut and a penchant for getting promotions by framing his fellow soldiers for crimes and selflessly bringing them to "justice."

69-70	Isa Nadum (CN male gnome illusionist 2) is a youthful gnome known about town for his magical, and mostly harmless, pranks.
71-72	Cheyar Swair (LG male human) is a slate-eyed man who has risen up the town's social hierarchy through hard work and determination.
73-74	Kelita Danity (CN female human) swans about town, forever dainty and delicate despite wearing a tattered old dress.
75-76	Kalf Thruckson (NE male dwarf fighter 1) has purchased several nearby mines, and ensures the wealth they produce stays out of the townsfolk's hands.
77-78	Uyera Loat (LE female half-orc fighter 2) owns the fighting den in town and make good money by having a lackey bet on rigged brawls.
79-80	Enysi Hateld (N male half-elf wizard 1) sells spells and potions, so long as the buyer signs a paper stating they won't hold Enysi liable for the consequences if the item should not be "completely effective".
81-82	Maem Dreik (CE male dwarf fighter 1) has a wicked scar across his throat, under his beard. He exposes this before every fight and calls it his "Second Grin" to unnerve opponents.
83-84	Yehil Lovil (NG female gnome cleric 1) is an ageing priestess who spends her fading days giving food and medicine to the poorer townsfolk.
85-86	Orer Poyet (LN male human) oversees tax calculations and collections in the town and, as such, is one of the most despised citizens despite his courteous and honest nature. His unpopularity baffles him—he's only doing his job, after all.
87-88	Listin Radilor (CG male half-elf ranger 1) is a wiry local hunter, dressed all in greens and browns. His hound is forever at his side.
89-90	Mosra Aemo (NG female elf fighter 1) is a guard with the loveliest voice, and her musical strains often waft down from the tower she keeps watches from.
91-92	Dadin Dleck (NE male halfling thief 3) tries to manipulate people into fights so he can loot the body of the loser.
93-94	Etira Rilan (CE female half-elf thief 2) is suspected of being a spy who sells secrets to the highest bidder.
95-96	Rynmor Errod (CN male human fighter 2) is a brooding sort who loves to start fights (and enjoys a celebratory drink afterwards).
97-98	Negh Soints (LN male half-orc fighter 1) has been one of the most efficient and inflexible gate guards for as long as anyone can recall.
99-100	Elmorm Coale (LG male dwarf) runs the town with a quiet humility, though no one can quite remember how he came to power.



BORDERLAND TOWN: ADVENTURE HOOKS

Canny adventurers can find opportunities almost anywhere.
Unlucky adventurers can find complications almost anywhere.

D%	ADVENTURE HOOK
01-05	Alarm bells toll over the town, signalling the need to prepare for invaders or marauders. The marauders will probably not attack the town, but might instead fall on and slay a small merchant caravan trying to reach the safety of the town's walls.
06-10	A man in a dingy robe approaches the characters and claims to be a foreign noble in disguise who has fallen on hard times. He needs money to return home, but won't forget the characters' generosity.
11-15	The characters are offered a good deal of money to gather details about the town militia and provide the information to a merchant who will be passing through town in a few days.
16-20	The land on the other side of the border hasn't been well-mapped yet, and the characters are offered the scouting job. At first, the recruiter appeals to their patriotic instincts before resorting to promising them gold and silver.
21-25	The characters wake in the morning to find the town under siege by a large band of desperate bandits. All able-bodied folk are called to defend the walls.
26-30	In the dead of night, a character glimpses someone climbing over the town's outer walls.
31-35	The characters round a corner to find the unconscious members of a watch patrol sprawled about the street. Of their attackers, there is no sign.
36-40	The town well has been poisoned, resulting in ten deaths. As newcomers to town, the characters are the prime suspects and receive baleful looks wherever they go.
41-45	The latest shipment of goods and food the town needs to survive has not arrived. Rumours swirl of bandits, marauding orcs and worse.
46-50	Several dead townsfolk have been found just within the town's precincts, apparently mauled to death by a wild animal.
51-55	A unit of foreign soldiers have been found massacred just a mile the other side of the border.
56-60	A scouting squad has not returned to town after leaving the week before. They're now well overdue. The local authorities ask the characters to find out what happened to the soldiers.
61-65	All the horses in town have somehow been stolen, cutting off quick travel or communication. Magic is suspected, of course.

66-70	A royal courier is found dead on the road outside town. The man's horse is missing and his message satchel is empty.
71-75	A foreigner runs at a random character, sword drawn, screaming in an unknown language.
76-80	The mayor has been found dead in his office, a foreign blade sticking out of his back.
81-85	Smoke rises from the nearby farmlands, which supply the town with much of its necessary produce.
86-90	A rat infestation is spreading a nasty disease through town, and one of the party just got bit by a rodent.
91-95	An invasion of the nearby kingdom has begun, and the characters are approached by a recruitment sergeant to sign up and defend the kingdom.
96-100	A government agent tells the characters a foreign spy is believed to be in the town and they need the party's help to track him down.



OGL V1.0A

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