

# LANKHMAR

SAVAGE TALES OF THE THIEVES' GUILD



SAVAGE  
WORLDS

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## SAVAGE TALES OF THE THIEVES' GUILD

**Written by:** Darrell Hardy, Michael Ysker  
**Additional Material by:** Thomas M. Reid

**Developed by:** Timothy Brown, Clint Black,  
Jodi Black, Thomas Shook

**Art Direction, Graphic Design, and Layout:**  
Aaron Acevedo, Jason Engle, Thomas Shook

**Editing and Proofing:** Jodi Black, Thomas Shook

**Illustrations:** Aaron Acevedo, Chris Bivins,  
Bartłomiej Fedyczak, Ross Grams, Chris Malidore,  
Aaron Riley, Jon Taylor, Mike Wolmarans

**Cartography:** Ben Acevedo, Emma Beltran, Jason Engle

*Savage Worlds* by Shane Lacy Hensley

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WELL



# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Lankhmar, the jewel of all Nehwon, the center of the world. The City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes, a shadow-shrouded maze of twisting, grimy, smog-filled streets and alleys teeming with merchants and marauders, pickpockets and profiteers, courtesans and cutthroats. The City of the Black Toga, a beacon of trade and treachery, where coin changes hands for every conceivable reason and life can be rich, fulfilling, and cheap all at once.

Welcome to Lankhmar, home to the infamous and inimitable Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser, two stalwart companions and sometimes-heroes who have made a name for themselves in the city and beyond as blademasters, thieves, and foes of dark magic and darker purposes. Where the Twain's hearty appetites for food and drink, song and companionship, clinking coin and sparkling jewel, are assuaged in a thousand and one ways. It is a city of lusts, a city of wealth, of countless delights and sorrows.

Welcome to Lankhmar! Fame and fortune are sure to be yours, but watch your purse and your back.

## WHAT IS THIS BOOK?

You hold in your hands a companion volume to *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*, a *Savage Worlds* rule set and campaign setting based

on Fritz Leiber's beloved tales of Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser.

But, what is *Lankhmar: Savage Tales of the Thieves' Guild*? To be sure, it is a collection of quick, clever adventures designed to grab the attention of your players and hold it unwaveringly through to each tense, exciting conclusion. But it is also much more than that. The daring exploits that make up the contents of this tome provide you, the Game Master, with a number of tools to help bring the city of Lankhmar alive, to create a sense of dynamic subterfuge rippling through every street and alley, to deftly illustrate the countless machinations at work between and betwixt all the various scheming factions at play.

## WHY THE THIEVES' GUILD?

In Lankhmar, the Thieves' Guild is perhaps the most powerful faction in existence. Though ostensibly operating outside the bounds of the laws of the city, it is as much a mainstay of life in Lankhmar as the proverbial death and taxes. Indeed, the Thieves' Guild perhaps most embodies both those inevitabilities! Vying for power with both the corrupt government of the Overlord and rival guilds (such

as the Grain Merchants and the Slayers' Brotherhood), the Thieves' Guild, in its own bizarre way, provides as much if not more stability and certainty to the majority of the citizenry as any other group. It has its fingers in countless pies; it controls the flow of ill-gotten goods and services at every level of society within Lankhmar, and it brooks no dissenters or renegades. Thieves who try to work outside the bounds of the guild must do so with the utmost care and skill or find themselves caught, punished, and often dead.

Little in the way of commerce takes place in Lankhmar that the Thieves' Guild is not at least aware of, if not in some way outright involved with. From protection rackets to acquisitions, from sanctioned redistribution of wealth to revenge, the leadership of the Thieves' Guild organizes and orchestrates it all. If it's not done on orders from or at the behest of the guild, it's typically known about and likely on the verge of being forcibly shut down.

## HOW DO I USE THIS BOOK?

The adventures contained within the pages of this book can make the Thieves' Guild (as well as numerous other organizations) much more real within your own particular game. How? Characters in a *Savage Worlds* Lankhmar campaign based in the city proper are going to cross paths with the Thieves' Guild sooner or later. There is no getting around it. With that faction controlling such a labyrinthine and pervasive power structure, anyone the heroes have dealings with can—and probably does—have some kind of tie to

the guild. You can take advantage of this expectation by assuming that most jobs, no matter how seemingly innocuous, wind up tied to the Thieves' Guild in some manner.

Not all the *Savage Tales* in this book provide a direct connection to the Thieves' Guild, but many do. The remaining scenes include threads, however tenuous, that you can use to draw your players' characters into deeper plots that do have, at some level, guild participation. Work things out behind the scenes so that these connections exist, even if the characters don't discover the ties right away. A simple delivery might appear innocent and separate from the workings of the guild, but if a guild member was originally promised that job and the fee that went with it, the adventurers might have made a new enemy. Conversely, if a guild member is either delivering or receiving the commodity, the characters have (however inadvertently) made a new ally.

Don't be afraid to weave complex ties with the guild that take several sessions to uncover. Come at them from several angles. Make those connections work at cross-purposes to one another. Soon enough, you'll have your group of would-be heroes squirming as they owe favors to multiple factions, all of whom have their own agendas and few of whom get along well. If you can use these adventure snippets to establish relationships to such an extent that any move the characters make puts them at odds with some interested party or another, then you've put this book to its best use.

That is when the characters truly feel they are someone noteworthy in Lankhmar.

*"The white glare striking ahead imprinted one vision indelibly on Fafhrd's brain: the giant spider in the inmost cage pressed against the bloodred bars to gaze down at them. It had pale legs and a velvet red body and a mask of sleek thick golden hair from which eight jet eyes peered, while its fanged jaws hanging down in the manner of the wide blades of a pair of golden scissors rattled together in a wild staccato rhythm like castanets."*

— Bazaar of the Bizarre

# ATOP THE CRYSTAL TOWER

The characters are tasked with sneaking into a newly founded temple, stealing its prize crystalline relic, and replacing it with a glass forgery.

## BACKGROUND

When a band of charlatans came upon a mysterious glowing crystal orb, they declared it the “Eye of the Universe” and set up a temple for its worship in an old stone tower on the cheap end of the Street of the Gods. The glow faded, but the temple’s reputation grew as the charlatans worked miracles and spoke of mysterious visions the Eye had showed them.

The miracles are fake, but the visions are real. The skull-sized orb is from another world, and can communicate telepathically with those who touch it. Now the Church of the Eye has come to the attention of a hooded wizard with an interest in other worlds, who wants to study the crystal orb. To this end, he has hired the services of the Thieves’ Guild who have agreed to acquire the orb on his behalf.

## CRYSTAL COMMISSION

Karm, a liaison from the Thieves’ Guild, approaches the characters with an opportunity to make an easy hundred

silver smerduks (or perhaps clear a debt or ignore an earlier offense to the guild) by stealing the Eye of the Universe. The Guild has an inside man posing as a priest of the Church of the Eye, with orders to leave the tower skylights unlocked at night. All the characters have to do is sneak in through the roof, replace the crystal orb with a glass replica (supplied by the guild, of course) and bring the Eye back to the Thieves’ House.

If asked why members of the Thieves’ Guild aren’t handling the theft, Karm looks over the characters carefully then explains, “By word of the guildmaster himself, all our men are in the midst of other jobs, and I’ll swear on my own blood that’s all I told you. But...you are known to me and such lies would put you off the mission in search of the true reason. The priests pay the Beggars’ Guild to spread word of their faith and occasionally seem to be healed by their miracles. Should you be caught or identified, the Guild could deny any involvement with freelancers and continue to collect the revenue from the church.”

If the heroes want more money, Karm is willing to negotiate with one person. The chosen character makes an opposed Persuasion roll against Karm. On a success, he adds 10 silver smerduks to the offer or 25 on a raise. On a critical failure, Karm

agrees to not find another group for the job in exchange for a future favor from the negotiator (open for any hook the Game Master wishes).

✧ **Karm:** Use the Spy profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*. Karm is a Wild Card.

## THE TOWER OF THE EYE

The Church has taken as its temple an ancient stone tower which is drafty and crumbling around the edges, but still structurally sound. Roughly three stories tall, it's short for a tower but still some 10 feet taller than the buildings around it. The lone official entrance is a double wooden door at ground level which is locked at night. The entrance the characters are expected to use is not an entrance at all, but a pair of large trapdoors at the top of the tower. The priests open the trapdoors during the day with a series of ropes and pulleys to let light into the tower.

The tower has three floors:

**Basement:** Accessible by a staircase from the ground level, the basement is where the priests store their supplies and the money collected from their flock. At night, 2d6 priests can be found here sleeping, drinking, or gambling.

• **Priests (2d6):** Use the Priest profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

**Ground Floor:** This is where worshipers gather to worship the Eye and hear the words of its prophet. The floor is bare except for a wooden altar with a carved eye on it in the center of the room directly beneath the crystal orb. At night, there are 1d4 priests sleeping on mats on this floor. It's their job to raise the alarm if there are intruders, and have been known to drive away beggars at swordpoint upon occasion.

**Second Floor:** A worn stone staircase protrudes from the wall leading up from the ground floor to what used to be the second story. Where the second floor used to be is now just a pair of perpendicular rafters intersecting at the center of the tower. The Eye of the Universe hangs from a net woven of silk, like a round cocoon, at

the point of the intersection. The orb is clearly visible through the strands of the net. Also hanging from the rafters are four weird, five-foot tall crystalline sculptures. The sculptures literally grew out of the crystal orb; where they are rooted to the rafters, thin strands of crystal connect them to the Eye in its silken hammock.

## PLUCKING THE EYE

The characters can reach the roof of the tower from the next door roof with a Climbing roll (at +2 if they use a rope). All the roofs in the area are close enough together so the characters can easily jump from one to another, but reaching the higher roof of the tower requires a successful Strength check.

As promised, the trapdoors in the flat roof of the tower are unlocked. However, it's 20 feet down from the roof to the second floor where the Eye is hanging, there is no ladder or stairs, and the only light comes from the stars above and a handful of flickering candles below. Characters can climb down the rough stone walls with a Climbing roll at -2, but must be quiet (make successful Stealth rolls) lest they wake the priests sleeping on the ground floor.

To retrieve the Eye, a character must go out on the rafters and untie the silk net. This requires a successful Stealth roll and an Agility roll. Failure may mean the character falls, or drops the Eye to the floor, where it doesn't shatter, but awakens the priests.

## CRYSTAL CHASE

When a character breaks the orb free of the crystalline vines connecting it to the sculptures, the orb begins to glow. A voice speaks clearly in the mind of the one holding the orb.

"Run," it says. "Run now!"

The crystalline sculptures also begin to glow. Bits of them twist and warp, unfolding and stretching, until they resemble something like man-sized crystal spiders. These are the crystal guardians, and they will stop at nothing to bring the orb back to its resting place in the temple.

What follows is a chase across the rooftops of Lankhmar, with the crystal guardians snapping at the characters' heels and the orb pulsing words and images into their minds.

"Not safe!" the orb warns, if the characters set out towards the Thieves' House, and fills their heads with images of the crystal guardians killing them and the other thieves in the den.

"This way!" the orb says, and pulses the image of a dilapidated hovel in the Marsh District slums. (Though the characters don't know it, this is where the priests of the Eye first discovered the crystal orb.) The Eye glows brighter as the characters grow closer to the hovel, and mentally complains "No no no," if they change course away from it.

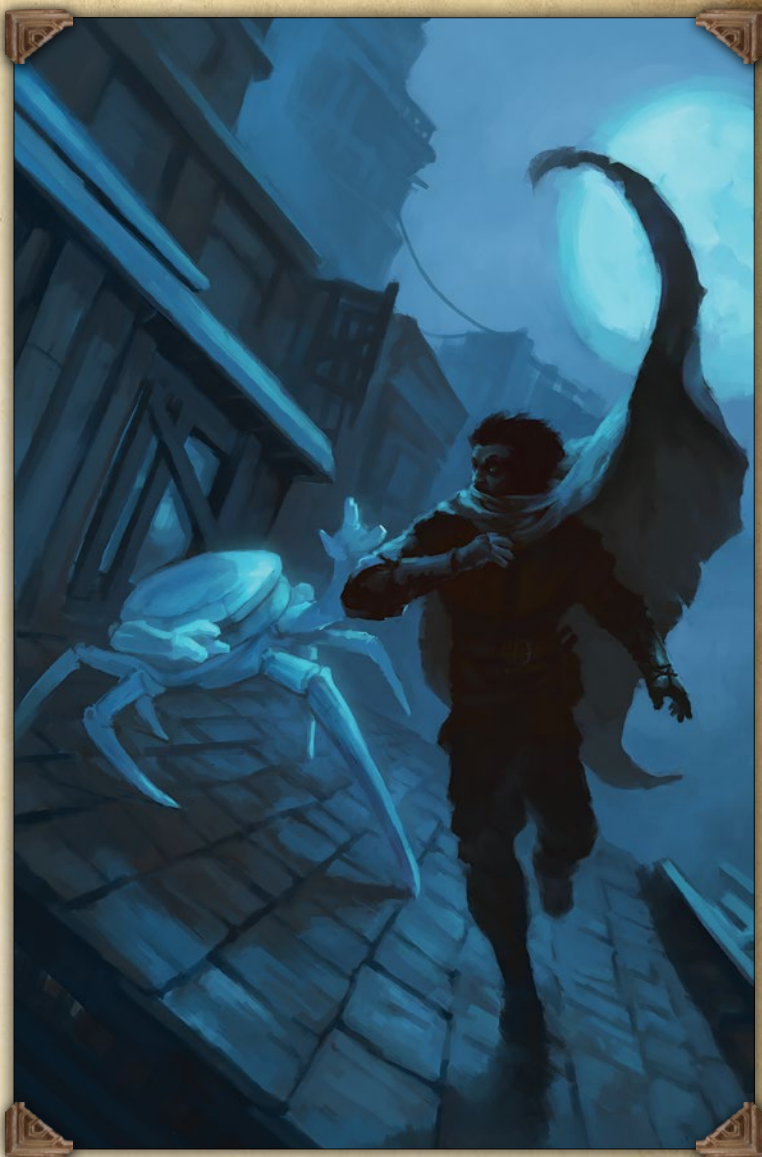
If the characters bring up the reward they are to receive from the Thieves' Guild for delivering the orb, the crystal projects an image of them in the hovel, opening a large chest of gold coins.

"Big reward," the orb says in their minds. "This way. Home."

- **Crystal Guardians (4):** See page 8.

## HOME HOLE HOVEL

By the time the characters reach the hovel, the Eye is glowing brighter than a lantern. The single-story, single-room building is occupied by a gang of muggers who might put up a fight, but more likely flee at the sight of the arcane ball of light.



One wall of the shack is covered in graffiti. As the characters come closer, some markings on the wall glow with the same light that shines from the Eye. They almost look like writing, though unlike any writing the characters have seen before. At the center of this writing is a glowing circle of the same circumference as the crystal orb.

"Here!" pulses the Eye. "Home! Big reward! Safe! Now!"

The characters must decide what to do with the orb, but mustn't take too long deciding, for the crystal guardians are almost upon them.

If they put the orb into the circle on the wall, there is a blinding flash of light, a

momentary sensation of painful cold, and a solid "clunk" sound. When the characters' visions clear a minute later, they can see the crystal guardians are gone, and the wall of markings is now covered in scorch marks emanating from a round hole in it. The crystal orb is on the far side of the hole, lying on the ground next to the hovel. It no longer glows or communicates in any way.

While there is no chest of gold (the orb lied), the Thieves' Guild does pay as promised for the delivery of the Eye of the Universe. When leaving the Guild House, a Notice roll at -2 catches sight of a man entering who is clearly a wizard. If any character waits outside, ten minutes later they see the man leave with a box the size of the orb. If the orb is no longer empowered, he has an extremely unhappy expression on his face. While the Guild does not renege on its payment, any good will garnered is lost although depending on how events played with Karm, he could remain an ally within the Guild.

- **Muggers (2 plus 1 per Hero):** Use the Thug profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### CRYSTAL GUARDIANS

These alien entities scuttle on six legs and have a pair of small arms with three-finger hands thrust out in front of them. They have no obvious heads, eyes, or faces; "front" is merely the direction they are crawling. The crystal guardians are single-minded in their purpose of securing the orb and bringing it back to the temple.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10 (4)

### Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** Made of pure crystal.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from called shots; Immune to poison and disease.
- **Crystal Blade:** Str+d6. They can stab and slice with any of their six legs.
- **Fast Regeneration:** The crystal of the crystal guardians is self-repairing. Crystal guardians may attempt a natural healing roll every round. +2 to recover from Shaken (+4 total with Construct).
- **Fearless:** Crystal guardians are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Leap:** Crystal guardians can leap 1d6" to gain extra distance and +4 to its attack and damage. Their Parry is reduced by -2 until their next action when performing the maneuver, however.
- **Wall Walker:** They move at their normal speed up walls and across ceilings by stabbing into stone and wood.
- **Weakness (Shattering):** Each creature has a unique fracture point in its crystalline body. A successful Notice roll at -2 discovers the weak point. Called Shots to this location ignore the creature's Armor and if a wound is caused, the creature shatters into small pieces from which it cannot regenerate. Other forms of damage may shatter a crystal guardian at the Game Master's discretion (high-pitched noise, severe temperature change, etc.).

The Mouser said dryly, "I already smell dead fish, burnt fat, horse dung, tickly lint, Lankhmar sausage gone stale, cheap temple incense burnt by the ten-pound cake, rancid oil, moldy grain, slaves' barracks, embalmers' tanks crowded to the black brim, and the stink of a cathedral full of unwashed carters and trulls celebrating orgiastic rites-and now you tell me of a taint!"

—The Cloud of Hate

# BLOODBEBARD

When a thief begins to suffer a mysterious ailment that turns his own hair against him, it's up to the characters to figure out what's going on and how to stop it.

## BACKGROUND

Whether they call it revenge, justice, or merely a parting gift, jilted lovers in Lankhmar have a way of making those who spurn them pay dearly for their actions. When Varla was betrayed by her lover, she turned to the witch Tabika to curse him. Tabika took her money and called down the curse, but gave Varla an ornate green ball which, she said, could be used to lift the curse when her anger cooled.

This adventure is written with several assumptions in mind. Specifically, the adventure assumes Varla's now-cursed former lover is one of the characters and he truly did do something she considers curse-worthy (cheated on her, dumped her for another woman, left her to die when the Overlord's guards closed in during a theft gone awry, etc.). In order for this to be true, the Game Master should introduce Varla earlier in the campaign and the character must somehow hurt her.

However, these assumptions need not be true at all. The adventure works just as

well if the cursed one is an ally, or if the offended party is not a spurned lover but some other person with whom the cursed one has broken faith. As such, the specifics of the offense that lead to the curse are vague, and left to be tailored to fit the characters themselves. Likewise feel free to modify the adventure to fit the existing story; where it says "Varla" fill in the name of another jilted curse-bringer, and where it says "the cursed character" this may or may not be a player character.

## HAIR APPARENT

When a companion's hair starts acting funny, the characters grow concerned.

The curse goes in three stages. The first stage occurs over the course of 1d8 days, the second 1d6 days, and the last 1d4 days. Once in the final stage, the curse stabilizes and doesn't get worse. In the first two stages only, the Charisma penalty is negated for a day if the victim shaves, cuts, and cleans the hair for one hour.

**Stage One:** The cursed character's hair grows a little faster than normal, but it takes a Notice roll to realize it. Hair also grows where normally thin or absent, such as on the face of a woman or the palms of one's hands, inflicting a -1 to Charisma.

**Stage Two:** At this stage, the character's hair grows 1d4 inches overnight every night, and begins to smell faintly of rotting meat, no matter how clean it may actually be. The hair doesn't grow indefinitely, but stops when the character has about a (normal) three year's growth of hair on his body. It looks messy and unkempt, but not obviously supernatural. The Charisma penalty increases to -2.

**Stage Three:** The character's hair grows 1d6 inches every night, and now smells so foul (like rotted meat and clotted blood) others have a hard time being around him (which results in an additional -2 Charisma, total -4). Furthermore, the hair snags on things and gets in the character's way in combat and other dangerous situations, inflicting a -1 penalty to all Strength, Agility, and linked skill Trait rolls.

Tabika's curse is a trapping of her *drain life* power, but instead of inflicting Fatigue it reduces Charisma and if "Incapacitated" (Stage Three), the victim suffers the physical penalty as well.

## CURSED!

At first, the character may not realize he's under a curse. But investigating his condition with an Investigation or Healing roll reveals there's nothing medically wrong with him, and his symptoms don't match any known disease. An appropriate Knowledge roll, however, suggests he's definitely been cursed.

Once the character realizes he's afflicted with a curse, he has two clear courses of action: either find the person who cast the curse, or find the one who asked it to be cast.

## THE WITCH

Asking around for someone capable of casting such a curse requires a Streetwise roll at -2 and a full day of slinking through incense-filled back rooms, peering into sewers, and generally poking about in places better left unvisited. A successful roll reveals the name Tabika, a witch who specializes in revenge spells of

this sort. Tabika can be found near the Marsh Gate, selling tinctures and baubles to jealous noblewomen looking for a taste of danger.

*Tabika is amused at the character's plight. "Oh yes, that's my handiwork," she cackles when she sees his hair's condition. "Done up 'specially for you, since I hear you're so vain."*

Even in the face of threats or intimidation, Tabika refuses to consider removing the spell without Varla's approval.

*"I couldn't if I wanted to," she says. "Your lady friend. She's got the final ingredient. You want me to lift the curse? Bring her here, let me see that she forgives you."*

If the character doesn't know who he offended or how, Tabika sighs wearily, shakes her head, and tells him.

- **Tabika:** See page 11.

## FINDING FORGIVENESS

The character must go to Varla and somehow get her to forgive him. This could be as simple as begging for forgiveness (perhaps with a Persuasion roll -4), or it could entail a wild quest sending him all over Lankhmar to prove his repentance.

Once he's convinced Varla he's truly sorry, she agrees to forgive him. She goes with him to see Tabika, who agrees to lift the curse, once Varla gives her what she needs.

*"A green glass ball? About the size of a grape?" she says. "I gave it to you, as part of your purchase," she said. "What did you do with it?"*

*Varla smiles weakly. She admits she thought she'd never need the ball, so she gave it to a beggar dressed in red she passed on the street.*

*"You'd better find that beggar," says Tabika. "Or get used to living with blood-beard."*

## AFTER THE RED BEGGAR

Finding a beggar on the streets of Lankhmar is no simple task. Even with the

"dressed in red" description, the characters must complete a Dramatic Task where the five actions take place over a full day. The skill used is Streetwise at the standard -2 difficulty. Once they have a combined total of five successes and raises, they find the beggar. If not, they must start anew on the following day.

If at any time the hero fails a roll with a complication (from drawing a Club), an enemy of the Game Master's choosing finds out about the search, the curse, and the glass ball. The foe gets the glass sphere from the beggar which leads into another adventure of the Game Master's choosing to recover it.

Presuming the characters do not fail and find the beggar, whose name is Lan, he's heard they are coming after him and holed up in a safehouse with a dozen of the toughest members of the Beggars' Guild. When the characters explain what they want from him, he admits he has the glass ball—he even shows it to them if they ask—but demands they pay him 10 gold rilks for it (Game Masters should adjust the price based on the hero's apparent worth). A successful Persuasion or Intimidation roll, opposed by Lan's Spirit (who gains a +2 for his back up), reduces the price by half.

If the characters pay, Lan is true to his word and hands over the ball, smirking and joking as he does so.

If the characters refuse to pay, Lan stays with the Beggars' Guild, suspecting they will try to take the ball by force. If they do make such an attempt, the Guild fights to protect their man, though not to the death. After half their numbers are taken out, the rest of them break and flee, leaving Lan on his own.

- **Lan:** Use the Beggar Toughs profile, see page 11. Lan is a Wild Card and has Persuasion d4 and Streetwise d6.
- **Beggar Toughs (2 per Hero):** See page 11.

## BREAKING THE CURSE

With the ball in hand, the characters can ask Tabika to remove the curse once more. As long as Varla agrees, Tabika mutters a few words and smashes the glass ball on the ground. It shatters, releasing a blood-red smoke, and the cursed character can feel his hair give up its writhing and fall back into its usual lifelessness.

*"Let this be a lesson to you," says Tabika.  
"Be careful who you cross. You never know  
who they know."*

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### BEGGAR TOUGHS

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

**Hindrances:** —

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Club (Str+d6), leather armor (+1).

### ✶ TABIKA

The withered crone in the tattered shawl looks every bit the wise old witch she claims to be. But while she is wise, she's neither so old nor so powerful as she makes out. The customers pay better if she keeps up appearances, so she has no incentive to drop the act.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Knowledge (Arcana) d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Spellcasting d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d6

**Cha:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 4

**Hindrances:** Small, Stubborn, Ugly

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Black Magic), Create Talisman

**Powers:** Detect/conceal arcana, divination, drain life, fear, lower Trait.

**Gear:** Knife (Str+d4), components.

# THE BOUNTY OF BLACK SKULL

The heroes are hired by the Thieves' Guild to collect their take, but tracking down the notorious Captain Black Skull proves more difficult than at first glance.

## BACKGROUND

With all the thievery and criminal acts running rampant in the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes, there's always a need to bring these vile thieves to justice. Bounty hunting is a lucrative trade in Lankhmar. It takes a quick recovery and a whole lot of courage to boot, as this profession is extremely dangerous.

The Thieves' Guild has put a bounty on the notorious head of Captain Black Skull, a frightening and dastardly rogue of a pirate who docks from time to time in Lankhmar for supplies. Black Skull is accused of cheating the Thieves' Guild out of a substantial amount of loot in a high-stakes game of One Eyed Death, escaping in the end unscathed.

Everyone on the docks knows Captain Black Skull as a power-hungry ogre of a man whose temper gets the best of him, especially after drinking pitchers of ale at the gambling table. What they don't know, is the real Captain Black Skull is the finely attractive woman and devious first mate Marran. Being a female captain

doesn't bestow the level of respect and prestige most male captains enjoy. Marran compensates for this fact by switching places with her first mate Boulo, who dresses up and plays the part of Captain Black Skull while in port. While out at sea, Marran, the true Captain Black Skull, rules with an iron fist.

The one unique characteristic or distinction the infamous Captain Black Skull possesses is a dark birthmark in the shape of a skull and bones. Marran bears this mark on the palm of her right hand. She hides this detail by wearing a pair of leather gloves which she says aids in reducing rope burns while at sea. Boulo has a replica birthmark firmly marked with black dye on his forearm for all to see, thus completing the guise and her ruse while in port.

Boulo is accustomed to all the power which comes with being captain and plans to mutiny against Marran after resupplying in Lankhmar. After making berth in Lankhmar's docks and Boulo's leave of the ship to keep up appearances, one of Marran's crew breaks down and informs her of Boulo's mutinous intent. Infuriated by the news, she vows to get her revenge. If Boulo wants to be a captain, then a captain he shall be, and the best part is she doesn't have to do any of the dirty work.

## HELPING HANDS

The heroes are summoned to the Thieves' Guild in the northern Tenderloin District of Lankhmar in the late evening hours. Read the following as one of its members introduces himself and conveys the purpose of their summons to the guild.

*"The Thieves' Guild has a proposition I know you'll not pass up the chance to fulfill. We require your services in locating and bringing back here before us, the notorious Captain Black Skull who has stolen a large sum of money from our house. We wish to squeeze the very life from his body as penance for his cheating ways from our last meeting. We've heard tales his ship made port this very morn in the city docks.*

*"Be forewarned. Not much is known of him, but our sources say he prides himself on terrorizing others with his stout stature, all the while leaving gambling and drinking debts in his wake. He bears a darkened birthmark in the shape of a skull and bones, hence his namesake. Bring him preferably back alive, but under no certain circumstance should you return without his scraggly thieving carcass. Your payment is 100 gold rilks each. Do not let us down."*

The guild member ends the meeting and bids them farewell. On a successful Common Knowledge roll at -2, the heroes recall having heard the name of Captain Black Skull from various rumors and stories. All tales seem to end in describing his ruthlessness and cruelty as a professional pirate.

With a successful Streetwise roll, the newly employed bounty hunters learn Captain Black Skull usually wanders the various taverns and gambling houses in Lankhmar before settling in one for the night to drink his fill and gamble the night away. It takes 2d4 hours of randomly searching the streets of Lankhmar to come upon news of his whereabouts somewhere on the docks. With a raise, they catch wind he may be at the Pixie Leg Tavern at the north end of the docks and may immediately proceed there.

## THE PIXIE LEG TAVERN

The heroes traverse their way through the smoke-flooded streets of Lankhmar to the Pixie Leg Tavern located on the north end of the dock region. All manner of seafaring folk are pushing and shoving their way around like a school of fish. Entering the not-so-clean establishment, the heroes see several tables filled with Lankhmar's finest sea urchins and a long wooden bar which looks as if it were made from the hull of a shipwreck. A salty, seaworthy barkeep eyes them over and tells them to sit wherever they like.

Looking around the tavern at the many different people and wrinkled faces, no amount of searching for Captain Black Skull provides any leads. If the heroes inquire about him, no one coughs up any information to his whereabouts. Just before the characters are about to leave, Marran glances at them from one of the far corner tables and nods for them to come sit with her. Read the following as the heroes engage in conversation with Marran.

*"I hear ye be looking for that tyrant of a sea dog Captain Black Skull. Oh what I wouldn't do to see him swinging from the gallows, every bit of life draining from his miserable wretched body. He's done nothing but made us slaves to his power-hungry ambitions and gambling afflictions. We've hardly eaten anything not spoiled in days.*

*"My name is Marran. I am first mate to that loathsome ale-sucking creature. He stuffs his face while we, his loyal crew, scratch for the crumbs from his plate and nearly starve. I know exactly where he'll be this night, drinking away our hard earned profits while sitting about a gambling table like the ruler of all the seas.*

*"I'll make a deal with ye. I'll tell ye where ye and your bounty hunting friends can find that worthless dog if ye do a favor for the crew and me. Do we have an accord?"*

Marran lays out her terms to the heroes. She wants them to break into Gabhlens Fine Foods, a high-priced upscale storehouse located on Cheap Street. Gabhlens Fine Foods buys and sells some of the finest

foods in Lankhmar. She tells them she and the crew only want to eat and why not eat from those what can spare it. Marran lays out a list of items she wants the heroes to collect for her.

- One basket of honey oat grain bread
- One barrel of Mitokin's finest ale
- One cask of Red Rosa wine
- Half dozen live royal crested roasting hens
- One wheel of Strogenburgh goat cheese
- One bushel of Rupol Periwinkle apples

The only real treasure is the royal crested roasting hens. They are by far the rarest and most valuable of food commodities within the storehouse. Each hen can easily fetch 5 or more gold rilks apiece. The other items she requests are just there to make her request seem less suspicious. Marran conveys that upon receiving the food here in the back alley of the Pixie Leg Tavern, she'll divulge the whereabouts of Captain Black Skull to them; otherwise they'll probably never locate him in time before setting sail tomorrow morning.

✦ **Marran:** See page 17.

## SHOPPING SPREE

Arriving at Gabhlens Fine Foods, the heroes make their way to the back alley shipping door which is the best way into the storehouse without being seen. The door is locked. With a successful Lockpicking roll, the heroes gain entrance into the dark storehouse. A successful Notice roll reveals the sounds of heavy snoring from a sleeping guard some thirty feet away.

The characters may try to collect the mundane items without waking the slumbering watchman. This requires a successful Stealth roll for each barrel, basket, cask, wheel, or bushel of food taken. Approaching the individually-caged royal crested roasting hens panics the birds to the point their cries wake the guard from his deep sleep. The guard stands his ground with only two intruders, but any more and he tries to parley with the heroes. He suggests they pay him 10 gold rilks for his silence towards the burglary along

with a nice bump on the head to convince his employer of his heroic attempt in trying to thwart the thieves. With the guard in check, the heroes load their wares on a conveniently placed covered shipping cart and make their way back to the back alley of the Pixie Leg Tavern.

- **Storehouse Guard:** See page 17.

## A PROMISE FULFILLED

Living up to their end of the bargain, the heroes relinquish the cart full of food to Marran and her crew. Keeping her word, she tells the heroes Captain Black Skull is at the Crooked Dagger, a loathsome and treacherous gambling house located on Murder Alley and surprisingly close to the Thieves' Guild.

Marran thanks them for the food and wishes them good luck in capturing the old scallywag of a captain. She even conveys her delight in the possibility of using excessive force during the seizure, which brings a wry smile to her face.

A storm begins to swell over the city as the characters make ready for the Crooked Dagger. Raindrops resonate off the various metals, woods, and stone slabs throughout the city. It's very late at night when the heroes traverse through the dark and stormy streets to the gambling house.

## DEALER'S CHOICE

Arriving at their final destination, the characters spy an old wooden door with a rusty and severely bent dagger hanging from a set of iron chains. A small slide door, used for viewing visitors, is notched into the top of the locked door. Making their presence known, the slide door quickly thrusts open to reveal a nasty looking eyeball seated next to a crimson-red eye patch, both above a long beaklike warty nose. The man asks the nature of this late night interruption.

The doorman doesn't let anyone in unless the characters either drop the name of or somehow associates themselves with Captain Black Skull or announce their

intentions of spending an exuberant amount of money gambling the night away here at the Crooked Dagger.

Read the following as the heroes finally gain passage into the decrepit looking old dwelling.

*Rats scurry about the floor. The smell of soot and filth linger in the air as the old man navigates you through a large gambling room filled with miscreants and thieves playing all manner of games.*

*Knocking on the lone door of a private gambling chamber, the door creaks open to reveal several unsavory and vile men sitting around a heavy oaken table. Thick smoke from various smoking pipes billows and swirls above the table like a miniature city of Lankhmar itself.*

*At the far end of the table sits a very robust and commanding looking man wearing a black captain's hat. Ale drips from his food-speckled beard, almost splashing on his right forearm where a birthmark in the shape of a skull and bones resides. It doesn't*

*take long to determine you've finally found your prize in locating one Captain Black Skull.*

The gamblers look over the heroes. Boulo, acting as Captain Black Skull, believes the characters to be ripe for the picking in swindling their money away. Not wanting to pass up the chance to line his pockets full of gold, especially when it's at the expense of those less ruthless and cunning than he is, Boulo encourages the heroes to a friendly game of cards.

If the characters participate, read the following as they are shown a chair around the large table and brought a draft of ale while Boulo lays out the terms of the card game, ending his speech with a hearty laugh.

*"Glad ye decided to join us. I be Captain Black Skull, scourge of the high seas, commander of the four winds, and ruler of all creatures beneath the deep. If ye seek fame and fortune, ye have certainly come to the right place tonight.*



*"The game be one eyed death! With one hand shall the lowest player lose their coin and nothing more. If ye be at the bottom of the heap for a second go-round, ye not only loses ye loot, but we pops out one of ye pretty looking eyes as a prize. Oh, and we do have a fine selection of eye patches if ye be worried about looking proper while out in public."*

One Eyed Death uses the Gambling skill rules in *Savage Worlds*. The stakes for each half hour of gambling are decided by the winner of the previous round. Boulo sets the stakes for the first round at five gold rilks. Anyone not able to satisfy the current stakes amount must leave the game or be forcefully removed.

Any player who rolls the lowest Gambling roll twice during the game not only pays the winner but is expected to let him remove an eye of his choice from the loser, in turn incurring the One Eye Hindrance.

Boulo is a thieving cheat at heart and almost never plays fair. If caught cheating or after a couple of rounds of losing, Boulo accuses the winning hero of cheating and escalates words into a fight to the finish. If none in the group decides to participate in the game of One Eyed Death, Boulo grows angry by their intrusion and has them removed from the Crooked Dagger...which results in an all-out bar fight.

✂ **Boulo:** See page 16.

- **Gamblers (1 per every 2 Heroes):** See page 17.

## SKULL AND DOUBLE CROSS BONES

The heroes finally capture Boulo and lead him outside to the Thieves' Guild during the now-torrential rainstorm. They are met by a group of guild members who take Boulo into custody. As Boulo is being led away, just before the heroes are to receive their compensation, one of the escorts cries out he's an impostor while pointing to Boulo's now running and watery skull and bones birthmark due to the rain.

Sending them away with no bounty, the Thieves' Guild instructs the heroes to complete their job and bring back the real Captain Black Skull. The group is greeted by a courier outside the guild who delivers them a piece of parchment. Read the following as the heroes open the message to reveal the true magnitude and nature of their double cross.

*To ye renowned Lankhmar bounty hunters who have captured and brought that scallywag, loathsome, and mutinous seadog of a devil to justice, I, the true Captain Black Skull thank ye.*

*The fraud who be rotting in the dungeon of the Thieves' Guild this eve be a vile demon for sure as I truthfully spoke prior. A watery tear need not be shed over me mutinous first mate's recent departure as his acts of betrayal and tyranny have finally come to an end. Twas his own hand what stole the money from the Guild, hoping to pin the deed upon me.*

*Until our paths cross once again in the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes, I bid ye farewell. Oh, and me crew thanks ye for the delectable treats ye so graciously provided for our late night departure, especially the highly prized and expensive royal fowl. They ought to fetch a handsome sum.*

The message is signed "Captain Marran Black Skull."

Although Boulo is not the real Captain Black Skull, his debt to the Thieves' Guild is real. If the heroes persuade their employer of this, they are paid grudgingly. The true name of Captain Black Skull, however, nets them an additional 20 gold rilks each.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### ✂ BOULO

The first mate of Marran—the *real* Captain Black Skull—he's a mighty robust and power hungry pirate. Playing the role of Captain Black Skull while in port, he's grown accustomed to his role and plans to take it on permanently by mutinying against Marran.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Boating d8, Fighting d8, Gambling d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Streetwise d8

**Cha:** -2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

**Hindrances:** Greedy (Major), Mean, Obese

**Edges:** Iron Jaw

**Gear:** Cutlass (Str+d6), dagger (Str+d4), leather armor (+1).

## GAMBLERS

Greedy to the core and just as ruthless, they spend their wages hoping for one big score at the gambling table to make them rich.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Notice d6, Streetwise d6

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Greedy (Minor)

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Dagger (Str+d4).

## MARRAN

The true Captain Black Skull's beauty is as deadly as her dominating and persuasive presence. She rules her crew with an iron fist, holding their loyalty in check by caring for their overall wellbeing and safety. A cunning privateer and pirate at times, Marran has fabricated the mystic and infamous persona of Captain Black Skull.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Boating d10, Fighting d8, Gambling d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d8

**Cha:** +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

**Hindrances:** Vengeful (Major)

**Edges:** Ace, Attractive, Block, Charismatic, Command, Named Weapon (Cutlass "Lover"), Wall of Steel

**Gear:** Leather Armor (+1), Lover (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4).

## STOREHOUSE GUARD

A highly paid mercenary and sentry who is well versed in combat and the art of fighting with two weapons, he isn't your average run of the mill security guard... but being caught sleeping on the job means he sees a way to profit on his good name. This fellow might be a good contact for the heroes later.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

**Hindrances:** Greedy (Minor)

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes

**Gear:** Chain mail (+2), short sword (Str+d6), dagger (Str+d4).

The seven eyes of Ningauble the Wizard floated back to his hood as he reported to Fafhrd: "I have seen much, yet cannot explain all. The Gray Mouser is exactly twenty-five feet below the deepest cellar in the palace of Gilpkerio Kistomerces. Even though twenty-four parts in twenty-five of him are dead, he is alive.

"Now about Lankhmar. She's been invaded, her walls breached everywhere and desperate fighting is going on in the streets, by a fierce host which outnumbered Lankhmar's inhabitants by fifty to one—and equipped with all modern weapons. Yet you can save the city."

"How?" demanded Fafhrd.

Ningauble shrugged. "You're a hero. You should know."

—The Swords of Lankhmar

# THE CRIMSON BARGE

The Thieves' Guild has declared the pleasure barge *Crimson Triumph* to be "fair game" for any thieves—even those outside the Guild—looking to loot its rich merchants, gullible nobles, and exotic treasures.

## BACKGROUND

Until recently, the merchant Torvil has been a minor trader of foreign goods, sailing his ship across the Inner Sea, exchanging Lakhmartian grain for items of a more exotic bent. Until recently, the Thieves' Guild has been more than happy to ignore Torvil's business, as its cash was tied up in bulky commodities and wooden ships, which make poor payments for extortionists. But now that Torvil has found riches by trading with Klesh, his ship has expanded to a small fleet, his coffers are full to bursting, and the Thieves' Guild has decided it's time to start collecting their protection money.

Torvil has spurned the Guild's offers of "protection." His holdings in Lankhmar are small and easily defended, he says, and his many guards are well-paid for their loyalty and skill. Unfortunately for the Guild, he's right. But now an opportunity to show how valuable such protection can be has just arisen.

To celebrate his new-found wealth, Torvil has purchased a pleasure barge, the *Crimson Triumph*. He has invited a number of nobles and rich merchants to join him on the ship's maiden voyage on the River Hlal tonight. With this show of wealth, Torvil hopes to secure both his place amongst Lankhmar's elite, and an eligible suitor for his daughter Ranya. Ranya is a lovely young woman, but has a reputation for being quarrelsome, spiteful, and wild from too many trips across the Inner Sea.

The Thieves' Guild cares nothing for Torvil's social standing or his daughter's prospects. The guild sees this pleasure cruise as a chance to demonstrate how valuable Guild protection truly is. To that end, the Guild has put the word out on the street that the *Crimson Triumph* is fair game. Any thief may ply his trade aboard the barge without fear of guild repercussions, and even guild thieves may work the ship without giving the guild its usual cut of the loot. Furthermore (if this were not incentive enough), the fence known as Yorin the Collector has expressed an interest in acquiring Torvil's golden serpent statue said to be aboard the pleasure barge; she has a buyer lined up, she says, and will pay handsomely the one who brings her the snake.

## A SANDBOX OF RICHES

This adventure is designed as a “sandbox” in which the players may play and explore as they wish. There are few preordained events in the adventure. Rather, what follows is a description of the barge, its people, and its treasures. It’s up to the players to decide how to approach Torvil’s boat and wring as much loot from it as they can. What happens over the course of the adventure is determined by what they do, and how everyone else reacts to those actions.

### THIEVES ON BOARD

The heroes can sneak on board the *Crimson Triumph* a number of different ways. Below are a few ideas, but any sufficiently clever plan has a good chance of succeeding.

**Pose as Guests:** Each party of guests has its own personalized invitation, but the heroes can either replace one such a party, or forge an invitation for themselves. (The Thieves’ Guild can provide a forgery, but charges 5

gold rilks for the service.) Of course, if the heroes are posing as guests, they must have attire to match their disguise.

**Pose as Workers:** The barge is manned with numerous sailors, oar-slaves, uniformed guards, entertainers, and household servants. Enterprising heroes can pretend to be one of these to get on board, but should have a change of clothing nearby or be prepared to spend the voyage serving drinks, trying to play music, or stuck below decks with oars in their hands.

**Bribe a Worker:** With a successful Persuasion roll and a few silver coins, a hero can bribe any slave or servant to help get them on board. Torvil’s guards are, as he brags, too well-paid to be bribed, and may respond to such attempts with laughter or violence.

**Sneak on at the Dock:** Security is never tighter than at the docks. Torvil has enemies beyond the Thieves’ Guild, and he knows this pleasure cruise makes his barge a target. Guards are stationed around the boat, keeping a keen eye out for swimmers trying to climb up from the river, or leapers



trying to jump the ten-foot gap between the docks and the barge's rail. Still, they're only human, and able to be distracted.

**Boarding Party:** If the heroes approach the pleasure barge in another boat while it's on the water, the guards warn them away. ("This is a private party. Please move along.") But they might get close enough to make a jump or swim across without being seen. (Or they might decide to do a pirate-style boarding, in which case the adventure takes a much more violent turn.)

**Swim on Board:** Once the ship leaves the docks, the guards remain vigilant, but are less concerned about party crashers sneaking over the rails. Still, those who sneak aboard this way must find some dry clothing quickly, or find a way to explain their sodden condition.

- **Guards (15):** Use the Guard profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

## THE CRIMSON TRIUMPH

The *Crimson Triumph* was originally designed to carry cargo on its wide, flat deck. After its conversion, it can still hold 30 guests on the main deck easily, and features a raised forecastle and poop deck at either end. Musicians play on the poop deck and their music can be heard throughout the barge. A gold-painted masthead of a beautiful woman thrusts out from the front of the ship, a golden jeweled goblet held out in her hand.

Beneath the raised decks are cabins: The forecastle cabin is for guests, but is currently being used to showcase the Golden Serpent of Klesh, and is watched by two guards just inside the door. The aft cabin is Torvil's private quarters, which is unguarded, but locked, and only Torvil and Ranya have the keys.

The barge has a single mast in the center of the deck, from which hangs a great white sail decorated with the red goblet that is Torvil's family seal. Midway between the mast and the poop deck is a temporary pavilion, where the servants collect food and wine to bring to the guests. A second such pavilion is erected between the

mast and the forecastle deck, covering the stairs leading to below decks.

The benches of the oar-slaves line the sides below decks, with a wide walkway between them. Aft of the benches is a large storage space, which can be locked (the captain has the key) but usually isn't. Fore of the benches is the crew quarters, which is cramped but dry, unlocked, and empty as the adventure begins (since the crew is manning the ship).

The ship's deck is packed with revelers. While it can easily fit 30, there are twice that number on board, so a certain amount of jostling and bumping into people can't be avoided. Some of the crew are apprehensive about the number of guests on board. The characters may hear them muttering to each other that this is the boat's first time on the water since its conversion, and they're nervous about having so much weight on board.

## TORVIL, RANYA, AND THE CREW

Torvil spends the evening playing the gracious host, constantly circulating amongst his guests, introducing them to each other and making sure they're having a good time. Because his guests have brought their own guests, he isn't surprised to see many faces he doesn't know, but makes a point to learn their names for future reference. At the beginning of the evening, he's accompanied by Ranya, who he makes a special effort to introduce to eligible young men, especially those of noble birth.

After an hour or so of politely following her father around the party, Ranya excuses herself and explores the barge on her own. She spends much of her time in the company of Avendosh, the ship's captain, and various members of the crew. She does allow herself to be approached by would-be suitors and other guests (she tries valiantly not to be rude), but anyone trying to get too close may find themselves intimately familiar with the business end of her jewel-handled dagger.

Avendosh has been the captain of the *Crimson Triumph* since before its conversion

from a cargo barge. He spends most of his time atop the poop deck with the helmsmen at the tiller, but occasionally walks the boat to check in on the crew. The rest of the small crew are sailors from Torvil's fleet who are unaccustomed to having passengers at all, much less the upper crust of Lankhmar, aboard their ships.

✧ **Captain Avendosh:** See page 26.

✧ **Torvil:** See page 27.

✧ **Ranya:** See page 27.

• **Sailors (4):** Use the Sailor profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

## TORVIL'S GUESTS

The guests aboard the pleasure barge consist of nobles, wealthy merchants, and the various servants and bodyguards which make up their entourages. Many guests are armed (it is still Lankhmar, after all), but none of them are spoiling for a fight or expecting trouble. They are here to see and be seen, to advance their own schemes, and to have a good time. As such, they make good targets for thieves looking to pick a pocket or swindle a sucker.

Below are a few of the people the characters may run into on board, each with a fat purse and a desire to meet new people. All it takes is an introduction (or a successful Persuasion roll) to get them talking. Some of them might not even need that, and may approach the characters on their own.

**Botrix, the lonely widow:** Her hair may be more gray than black, but she's still a woman who wants to be loved for who she is, not for the fortune her late husband Bors left her.

**Dwynion Dar, the minor noble:** The Dar family has secretly fallen on hard times, and Dwynion is looking for a rich merchant to discretely float him a loan long enough to keep the family going until his latest investment (a temple complex under construction on the Street of Gods) pays off. He'll do anything to secure such a loan. Anything.

**Fangris, the gambler:** He plays the part of the disgraced third son of a once-great family, but Fangris is a commoner who supports his lifestyle by cheating at cards

and dice. He's always smiling, but has nothing but contempt for the rich people around him.

**Hondur, the belligerent drunk:** Hondur is a sportsman and a hunter who prefers stalking game to attending these parties, and drinks to get through the boredom. Unfortunately, it's when he's drunk that he starts "looking for a real challenge" and offering to duel with strangers.

**Jilorra, the dabbler:** This fresh-faced maiden is officially a scholar studying history, but has taught herself just enough magic to be dangerous. She used her family's invitation to get into the party tonight in hopes of losing in the crowd a certain unclean spirit she called up but has been unable to put down. It's been killing members of the Moox family through crazy coincidences, but is now bored and hunting the one who summoned it.

**Leedan, the entrepreneur:** Leedan loves to tell people about his amazing investment opportunities, such as a caravan to the Eastern Lands, a new temple complex on the Street of Gods, or an experimental strain of grain guaranteed to double its output each year. He's not a swindler per se, but not all his investments are as good as he makes them out to be.

**Naavaani Moox, the paranoid noble:** The last living member of his noble house, Naavaani believes someone has been killing his family, and he's next. He's here looking to gather gossip on who hates his family enough to wipe them out.

**Phontis, the rival merchant:** Phontis once had her own merchant fleet between Lankhmar and Klesh. Then Torvil undercut her business, forcing her to sell most of her ships and scrape by with trades with Kvach Nar. She knows she was invited here just so Torvil can gloat. She will do anything to see the man ruined and shamed.

**Rovarra, the haughty noble:** Duchess Rovarra normally wouldn't be caught dead at a party thrown by a mere merchant, but she has recently acquired the famous and incredibly valuable Sapphire of Flame, and she simply *must* show it off. The Sapphire shimmers with red and green sparks

## NEED MORE GUESTS?

If the players want to interact with people beyond the ten guests already listed, the Game Master can create a new party-goer quickly by drawing a random card and checking the chart below. Use a full starting deck of cards, reshuffling only if a Joker is drawn. See **Heroes and Villains** for Guest and Servant templates.

**Red:** The guest is a noble.

**Black:** The guest is a merchant.

**Clubs:** The guest is a scholar or expert in an esoteric subject.

**Diamonds:** The guest is focused on wealth or business.

**Hearts:** The guest is charismatic and socially adept.

**Spades:** The guest is a warrior or schemer.

**2-4:** The guest has a light purse.

**5-7:** The guest has a medium purse.

**8-10:** The guest has a fat purse.

**Jack:** The guest has a fat purse and one servant in attendance.

**Queen:** The guest has a fat purse and an entourage of one guard and one servant.

**King:** The guest has a fat purse and an entourage of two guards.

**Ace:** The guest is a Wild Card with a fat purse and an entourage of two guards and two servants.

**Joker:** The guest is actually another thief in disguise. Draw again for their cover.

Roll 1d6 to determine the guest's attitude: 1-2 Uncooperative, 3-4 Neutral, 5-6 Friendly.

**Note:** those with "light purses" are carrying 1d10 gold rilks, those with "medium purses" have 1d10 × 5 gold rilks, and those with "fat purses" are carrying 1d10 × 10 gold rilks.

where it lies against her throat and under the watchful eye of three highly-trained bodyguards.

**Vondax, the suitor:** The youngest son of a fallen house, Vondax fears Ranya's reputation less than he lusts after her father's fortune. He's studied the "wild woman of the seas" and knows she won't be impressed by his family name or noble blood, so he's studied sailing and fencing in hopes of tricking his way into her heart.

- **Guests (10):** See page 27.

## TREASURES OF THE TRIUMPH

Beyond the valuables the guests carry on their persons, there are several other treasures aboard the *Crimson Triumph*, each with its own particular challenges to overcome. Each item lists its value but selling price will depend on a Streetwise roll except for the Golden Serpent. If the players sell to Yorin, he will pay half its value, no roll necessary.

**Golden Serpent of Klesh (500 gold rilks):** This statue of a coiled snake is roughly the size of a human head and made of pure gold. Torvil picked up the statue during his last trip to Klesh, purchasing it from a brigand who stole it from an unknown jungle temple. It is a well known rumor the statue is cursed (Common Knowledge or Streetwise at a +2 bonus). It's well known because Torvil spread it himself to deter thieves. The statue in fact is not cursed or enchanted in any way. It's on display on a pedestal, beneath a case of glass, in the forward cabin, where it is watched by four uniformed guards: two outside the door, and two just inside. The cabin is small, and can only hold two people in addition to the guards. There are glass windows overlooking the water which are locked from the inside, but can be unlocked with the simple turns of a knob. The windows can be reached by someone rappelling down the front of the ship, or climbing up from the bottom but at a -2 to Climbing, -4 if they are wet. The door can be locked (the guards and Torvil have the key) but is generally open so people can see the statue. If the statue is stolen, Torvil makes

the guards aware, but tries to avoid making a scene if at all possible. The point of this excursion is to prove he belongs in the upper echelons of Lankhmar's elite, not that he's too incompetent to prevent thefts on his own boat.

**Sapphire of Flame (200 gold rilks):** This brilliant, egg-sized sapphire is attached to a broad chain and worn around the neck of Duchess Rovarra, a noblewoman who came to Torvil's party specifically to show it off. Rovarra is always accompanied by at least one of her three bodyguards who are very loyal to the noblewoman—or at least, to the gold she pays them. Rovarra is susceptible to flattery, and those who appeal to her vanity may be able to convince her to do things otherwise considered unwise. She can't however, be convinced to take off her necklace.

- **Duchess Rovarra:** See page 26.
- **Guards (3):** Use the Guard profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

**Jeweled Goblet (100 gold rilks):** The masthead for the Crimson Triumph is a gold-painted figure of a woman stretching her arm out in front of the boat. In her outstretched hand is a goblet apparently made of gold and inset with six rubies. From the ship, it requires a successful Notice roll at -6 to determine the goblet is a fake made of gold-plated lead with red glass "gems." Reaching the goblet from the deck requires a Climbing roll (at -2

if the boat is in motion) as the would-be thief shimmies out onto the masthead and tries to avoid falling into the water. Anyone doing so runs the risk of being seen by others on deck as well, and any Stealth rolls are at -2 because of the precariousness of the perch. Once within reach of the goblet, it only requires a successful Notice roll to determine it is fake though the gold plating does have some value. The goblet is attached to the hand by a set of hidden screws that take a full minute and a set of tools to unscrew. Alternatively, the thief can make a Strength roll at -2 to simply break it free.

**Torvil's Chest (see description):** Torvil's quarters are locked with a heavy lock (-2 to Lockpicking) unless he is inside, and only he and Ranya have the key. Inside Torvil's quarters is a bed, a desk, and a chest of drawers full of clothing. The bottom drawer of the desk is locked (though it can be opened with a Lockpicking roll), and inside it is a small locked chest full of coins worth 100 gold rilks. This is Torvil's personal cash box, which he uses to pay the barge's crew and bribe officials as necessary. Characters picking the large lock on the chest have a -4 to their roll. Like the other cabin, there are windows locked from the inside which can be accessed by those swinging (Agility -2) or Climbing (-2) from the deck above.



**Compass Skull (250 gold rilks):** Beside the tiller above the poop deck is a human skull that, according to Torvil, was enchanted by the great wizards of the Eastern Lands to always know the way home. A large compass is inset into the top of the skull. Four rubies are set into the compass, one at each of the ordinal directions.

The skull actually is enchanted. To set a way point, the user whispers the phrase "This is home" into where the skull's ear would be. The user whispers "Take us home" to make the needle point toward the way point rather than north, then "We are home" to reset the skull's function again. Its current home point is Lankhmar. If the thief discovers how to use the skull, its value increases to 500 gold rilks. Torvil, Ranya, and Captain Avendosh know how the skull works.

**Ranya (see description):** Some particularly ambitious thieves may realize that more than gold and jewels, Torvil values his

daughter's safety. They would be right. If the characters succeed in kidnapping Ranya, Torvil agrees to pay handsomely for her safe return—then dedicates the rest of his life and his fortune to seeing the kidnappers hang. Ranya's value depends on whatever the kidnappers request. Torvil can come up with 1,000 gold rilks fairly quickly, but any more will take time to liquidate assets. Kidnapping Ranya ruins any chances of gaining her as an ally which may be worth more to the characters over time.

**The Crimson Triumph (750 gold rilks):** Characters who succeed, through cunning or violence, in stealing the entire barge, must be prepared to pilot the craft either on their own (with Boating rolls) or by convincing the ship's crew to join them via bribes (at least 5 gold rilks apiece) and Persuasion or Intimidation rolls with a -2 penalty. They must also address where to go with the boat once they have it.



It's too small and ill-stocked to leave the immediate area, and it's hard to put it into any dock but the one it left without raising questions. The rotted boards have reduced the barge's value, if repaired (costing 500 gold rilks), it's worth 1,500 gold rilks.

✂ **Torvil:** See page 27.

• **Ranya:** See page 27.

• **Guards (10):** Use the Guard profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

## ANOTHER HAND IN THE JAR

The characters are not the only thieves at the party. On the one hand, there is enough loot on board for everyone to share. On the other, thieves *hate* sharing, and the greedy fumbling of the other thieves may likely throw off whatever subtle plans the characters are hatching.

These thieves and the characters know each other by face and reputation. They aren't technically enemies, but aren't allies either.

**Corvis the Many-Fingered:** This experienced cutpurse is here, dressed as a guest, to pick as many pockets as he can as quickly as he can. He has an accomplice in a small skiff following the party barge; as soon as Corvis' pockets are full (or he gets caught), he intends to slip into the water at the back of the ship and swim to his accomplice. Of course, when he gets caught (for he is too greedy to leave before he is) and makes a break for it, it puts the rest of the passengers on alert, making it that much harder for the characters to work their own schemes. The guests gain a +2 bonus to Notice any thievery after the alarm is sounded.

**Erisa the Knife:** Erisa is dressed as a serving girl, with her namesake dagger hidden in her long skirts. She's here for the Golden Serpent. Her plan is to sneak into the cabin where it's being displayed, lock the door behind her, murder everyone else in the room, then leap with the statue out the window. Unfortunately for her, the disguise is fantastic, and she's being kept busy running around the ship delivering food and drink, and hasn't been allowed into the statue's cabin.

**Galt the Brain:** Below decks, rowing with the slaves, is the idiot man-mountain known ironically as "the brain." With his hulking frame, he certainly fits the image of an oar-slave. But when the time is right (and he's not sure when that is), he intends to leave his post, stride to the upper deck, kill Rovarra (and anyone else in the way), and take the Sapphire of Flame. For Galt, this is an elaborate plan. He hasn't figured out how to get off the barge because he literally didn't think that far ahead. Like all the oar-slaves, he isn't actually chained to the oars, but will need to get past the slave-master in order to leave his post.

✂ **Corvis the Many-Fingered:** See page 26.

✂ **Erisa the Knife:** See page 26.

✂ **Galt the Brain:** See page 26.

• **Slave-Master:** Use the Thug profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*. He has Intimidation d8 and Swimming d4.

• **Slaves (15):** Use the Servant profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

## TRIUMPH GOING DOWN

At some point during the night (whenever it's dramatically appropriate), the pleasure barge begins to sink.

There are clues something is wrong. Someone may notice the barge is moving sluggishly. Crew members whisper to Torvil, who blanches and follows them below decks. Eventually, a guest rushes up from below decks and shouts, "The boat is sinking!"

Panic bursts out among the guests. Duchess Rovarra's immediate theory is this is a result of the curse on the Gold Serpent, and the statue should be thrown overboard. (Torvil is very opposed to this idea but avoids revealing he created the rumor until he sees someone is about to throw it.)

In reality, a number of planks on the underside of the boat were replaced when it was converted from a grain ship, but those planks had hidden rot which has caused the whole section of hull to start taking on water. It's a grievous mistake, but one

that could have been quickly noted and fixed if Torvil had allowed the barge to have a test float instead of insisting on a dramatic maiden voyage.

Once the word goes out the boat's taking on water, it starts to sink quickly. In five minutes, the below-deck area is mostly filled with water and the boat begins to list dangerously to the port side. Five minutes later, the boat has sunk halfway beneath the water, with the starboard half of the ship above the waves. Ten minutes after that, a large portion of the hull cracks and the boat quickly vanishes into the water.

Assuming the *Crimson Triumph* is on its assigned course when it begins to sink, it is in the middle of the River Hlal, about half a mile from shore. It's the middle of the night, so there are few boats on the river, but those nearby can be summoned to help take on passengers. Characters with Swimming can swim to shore, but must make four Swimming rolls, one every five minutes. If they fail the roll, they gain a Fatigue level. If they are carrying something (such as a golden goblet) or are heavy-laden (with gold coins or a fine dress, perhaps), this roll is at -2 (or even -4 if they are carrying a huge amount of loot).

Any nobles or merchants the characters help save are grateful, and consider giving the characters monetary rewards, job prospects, or inside information to show their gratitude—though not until they're safe, warm, and dry.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### ✧ CAPTAIN AVENDOSH

An experienced seaman, Avendosh is nervous about piloting a boat he no longer knows full of people he doesn't know at all through a midnight river full of dangers no one knows. But it's his job, and he's very good at it.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Boating d8, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Navigation) d8, Notice d8, Swimming d6

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Cautious

**Edges:** Ace, Command

**Gear:** Heavy Rapier (Str+d6, Parry +1).

### ✧ CORVIS THE MANY-FINGERED

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Lockpicking d8, Stealth d10, Swimming d4

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Enemy (Minor), Greedy (Major), Wanted (Minor)

**Edges:** Alertness, Thief

**Gear:** Lockpicks, hidden knife (Str+d4).

### ✧ DUCHESS ROVARRA

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8

**Cha:** +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Amorous, Quirk (Flaunts her wealth)

**Edges:** Attractive, Command, Connections (Nobles), Noble, Quick

**Gear:** Sapphire of Flame, knife (Str+d4), tailored clothes, guards.

### ✧ ERISA THE KNIFE

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

**Cha:** -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty

**Edges:** First Strike, Named Weapon (Knife "Needle"), Thief

**Gear:** Needle (Str+d6).

### ✧ GALT THE BRAIN

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

**Hindrances:** Clueless, Greedy (Minor), Wanted (Minor)

**Edges:** Brawler, Brawny

**Gear:** None.

## GUEST

The average guest at Torvil's party is smarter than he is strong, but not terribly observant, and not much of a fighter at all. (Feel free to adjust stats as necessary for a particular encounter.) Every guest is carrying some money (see **Need More Guests?** for amounts).

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Knowledge (Varies) d8, Notice d6

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Various

**Edges:** Various

**Gear:** Dagger (Str+d4) or short sword (Str+d6).

## RANYA

Ranya's mother died in childbirth, and the girl literally grew up on her father's trading ships. Her nursery was the captain's quarters, her classroom the upper decks. Along with business and history, she learned sailing, sword fighting, drinking, and cursing. She had assumed she would follow in her father's footsteps with a ship or two of her own under her command, but now that he's rich, that seems less likely. He wants a different life for her: a life of luxury and ease. Or as Ranya sees it, a life of stifling boredom. Ranya loves her father, and wants to respect his wishes, but it's hard to accept his new vision of her future. A persuasive character might gain her aid as long as it doesn't unduly hurt her father's business.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Boating d6, Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Business) d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Taunt d6

**Cha:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** Big Mouth, Curious, Stubborn

**Edges:** Attractive, Strong Willed

**Gear:** Concealed knife (Str+d4), rapier (Str+d4, Parry +1, in captain's quarters).

## TORVIL

While he puts on airs of being a gentleman merchant, Torvil knows in his heart he's a tumped-up trader and only a few steps removed from his piratical roots. When Torvil is pushed hard enough, those roots show through as he draws his sword and mercilessly cuts down anyone who threatens him.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

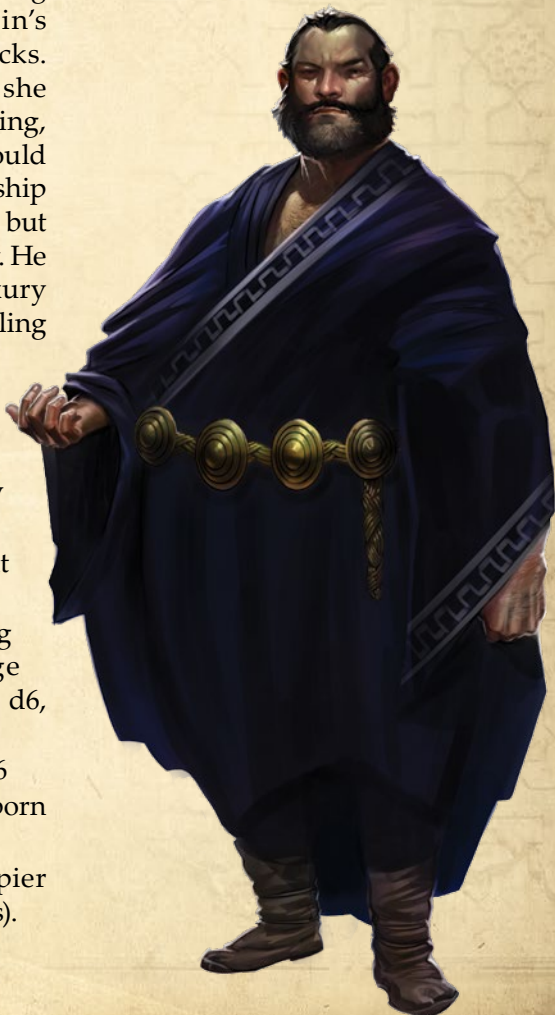
**Skills:** Boating d10, Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Knowledge (Business) d10, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Swimming d6

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** Curious, Greedy (Minor)

**Edges:** Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Filthy Rich, Level Headed

**Gear:** Rapier (Str+d4, Parry +1).



# FINAL NAIL IN THE COFFIN

A rare agreement between the Assassins' Guild and the Thieves' Guild means a third party—the heroes—are needed to carry out a sentence of death.

## BACKGROUND

One of the simplest forms of work at times in the City of Black Togas is being a messenger of death. There's always a plethora of everyday thieves roaming the shadowy smoke-filled streets performing minor acts of skulduggery. Then there are mercenary master assassins who wreak havoc on all living souls, be it warranted or not, but working with the Assassins' Guild and under their authority. Falling between the two are villainous murderous bandits who claim no allegiance to any save themselves, and need to be put down from time to time; bringing balance back to the underbelly of Lankhmar's criminal subculture.

A small rogue group of deadly cutthroats, known as the Coffin Masters, recently moved into the city and is causing quite a stir. The group's "strike first, ask questions later" approach of extorting money from various small proprietors throughout Lankhmar has raised several eyebrows, one being that of the Thieves' Guild. After consulting the Assassins' Guild, the

two guilds want to control the balanced methodology of Lankhmar's criminal underworld, and eliminate this new rogue faction before they can do any more damage. It is not unheard of for two guilds to work together, but it is uncommon. An outside group like the heroes is needed, to ensure neither guild claims the political upper hand.

The Coffin Masters is run by Draxhdor, a ruthless and murderous butcher who goes by the alias of the Gravedigger when squeezing money from Lankhmar's community. He commands a half dozen or more soldiers who follow his every order, no matter how ruthless or coldblooded it may be. Their secret hideout is underneath the Buttered Loaf bakery, located just a block west of the Thieves' Guild. Draxhdor has threatened the widowed baker into keeping their presence there a secret for fear of harm befalling her children.

## TEST OF METTLE

The heroes find themselves discretely approached by a representative of each guild together (an ally from the guilds, if the heroes have made any). They invite the group to another location. Read the following as the characters stand just

outside the guild's door, waiting to be greeted.

*Looking at the wooden door, you knock on the weathered timber with a dull thud. A member of the guild answers and looks you over. Recognizing your faces, he opens the door ever so slightly to reveal a masked man in black sackcloth, wielding a lit candle in one hand and a dagger in the other. The cloaked man turns eerily away and nods for you to follow him into one of the nearby doorways. Gathering in a dimly lit room, the master thief welcomes you by placing the dagger on the table alongside a lit red candle, and pulls out a scroll. The walls of the room are lined with several people, all silently cloaked and hooded.*

*The hooded man unravels the parchment paper and begins speaking. "You have been summoned here for a special assignment only the bravest of souls dare take. A great unbalance is occurring within Lankhmar which is washing up on our very doorstep. A new enemy is preying upon our very existence going by the name of the Coffin Masters. Their leader, known only as the Gravedigger, recently committed numerous unspeakable acts of violence and brutality towards Lankhmar's townsfolk and businesses which we, the Thieves' Guild, have sworn to protect against such atrocities. The Coffin Masters have besmirched the good name of the Assassins' Guild, ending the lives of the people of Lankhmar without sanction. This bloodthirsty scourge and his hired thugs must be stopped immediately.*

*"Your task is twofold. First, find the lair of the Coffin Masters. The second is much easier. After locating the Gravedigger and his brood, you must dispatch them forthright. Leave no one alive to walk the streets of our city. Return here with the head of the Gravedigger as proof of fulfilling your obligation, and payment to you shall be bountiful."*

The mysterious man rests the parchment across the table for all to see. The solemn oath of carrying out the assassination of the members of the Coffin Masters is penned in black ink and signed both by the Thieves' Guild and Assassins' Guild, and even a few

notable names of Lankhmart officials. No recourse towards the heroes shall befall them in successfully fulfilling the contract. The cloaked thief requires each hero to sign the agreement in blood via the sharp dagger on the table as a sign of bravery, loyalty, and mettle.

With the contract signed, he rolls the parchment up, pulls out a signet stamp and drips hot red wax on the paper to stamp the contract shut. The symbol of death stares back at the heroes in the crimson royal wax. The hooded man congratulates the heroes in becoming messengers of death.

## BLIND MAN'S BLUFF

The characters venture out into the smoky streets of Lankhmar in search of the Coffin Masters. They are met by unwilling, uncooperative, and very scared citizens at practically every turn. With a successful Streetwise roll at -4 taking 1d4 hours, the heroes finally come across a lonely and ragged beggar who is willing to help them. The only problem is, he's blind.

The beggar's name is Karax, a kind old man who's seen better days. Blinded after being stricken with a severe fever some years ago, Karax feels he has nothing to lose by aiding the heroes. Hunger grows in his bottomless belly and a free hot meal for relaying any kind of information, be it true or not, is worth the risk. Read the following as Karax relays to them what he knows.

*"I know for whom you seek. What I lack in sight, I make up with other talents. My sense of smell and hearing are much like that of a hunting dog chasing down wild game through a field of tall thickets.*

*"It was here outside this butcher shop that I overheard the one who calls himself the Gravedigger and his horde of vile brutes. I'll never forget that ever-lingering faint smell of evergreen mint oozing all over them. And that buzzard-like cackling voice hideously laughing in the background. I could pick that vile creature out of a crowd, no question."*

Karax continues to tell the heroes the evergreen mint smell can only come

from one place, the Mutton Shank, which serves a rather effervescent evergreen mint jelly slathered on a tenderized fire-roasted shank of smoked mutton. He offers to accompany the heroes to the Mutton Shank to aid in singling out the cackling brute for the low price of a jelly slathered mutton dinner.

Karax is only telling a half truth to the heroes. He did hear the high pitched cackling voice from one of the Coffin Masters, but smelling the evergreen mint jelly is all a fabrication. He claims no foul in using the heroes to obtain a free meal while aiding them as best he can.

- **Karax:** See page 33.

## A BOWL FULL OF JELLY

The heroes escort Karax to the Mutton Shank tavern, which is located in the middle of the Tenderloin District on Cheap Street. The smell of roasted meat floats through the air as they approach. A sizable tavern, the long-established diner can host up to 75 patrons at any given time and usually reaches this threshold during dinner time.

Only a few tables are open when they enter. Taking one they sit and place their order as Karax begins growing ever impatient over his mint jelly mutton order. The volume within the establishment is rather loud. With a successful Notice roll, the heroes hear a couple of possibilities of who may be the origin of the cackling voice. The food arrives and Karax digs in with both hands. Pushing the roast mutton through waves of mint jelly, customers begin to take notice of the old man's eager and abrupt table manners.

Stares, finger pointing, and giggles begin to escalate when the laughter of one patron cuts through the sea of humanity like a hot knife through jelly. Karax freezes in mid bite. Swallowing the remainder of food in his mouth, he alerts the group with some surprise that the person who bellowed the high-shrieking cry of amusement is the one they seek. He also comes clean of his deception towards acquiring a free meal from them and he never actually

expected the man to be here. If threatened, he adds the suspect would not have been revealed if not for his blinded table manners.

The man in question is a lanky and gaunt-looking pole of a weasel. His Adam's apple juts out of his throat as if he swallowed a rock and it remained lodged in his pipe. With a successful Notice roll, the heroes hone in on the skinny man's conversation and merriment with the other two at his table, and discern he's the leader of this little trio of Coffin Masters scum.

While they watch, a tavern maid walks past the Coffin Master's table. The gangling commander reaches out and begins to harass the young woman. Requests for more money and payments not being received on time are whispered amongst the two, when he finally thrusts her to the ground and begins to unsheathe his sword while announcing her traitorous demise.

- **Commander:** See page 32.
- **Mercenary (2):** See page 33.

## HOT CROSSED BUNS

If any of the Coffin Master's members are left alive after the scuffle, they are very tight-lipped when confronted or interrogated. Heroes suffer a -4 to Persuasion against the thugs who only agree to divulge the general location (within a city block) of their hideout if their attitudes change from Hostile to Neutral.

An opposed Intimidation roll versus Spirit scares the information out of them, they let slip the general location on a success and give up the exact location of secret hideout in the Buttered Loaf bakery across from the Thieves' Guild on a raise. No other condemning evidence is obtained from the riffraff, no matter what the circumstances may be. What the heroes do with them afterwards is up to them.

Saying goodbye to Karax, the heroes make their way back to the northern Tenderloin District from whence they started. If they have uncovered the exact location of the Coffin Master's lair, they leave straight for the Buttered Loaf bakery. If they

only know the general location of the hideout, the characters must canvass the area for additional clues, which takes another successful Streetwise roll and 1d4 hours until they come across the Buttered Loaf bakery. Either way, the widowed baker stands out front waiting on any customers to purchase her day's goods.

When the characters approach, she quickly scurries inside the shop and stands behind the counter like a scared rat being chased by a ferocious feline. Upon entering the establishment, the smell of fresh baked bread fills the air. The sweet scent of caramelized creams and delectable chocolates invade the heroes' senses as they greet the woman behind the counter.

With a successful Notice roll, the characters sense something is definitely wrong with the baker. Her blank expression appears to be forced, while underneath, her jittery demeanor is prevalent. With a raise, the heroes catch a glimpse of perspiration beginning to run down her face just before she nonchalantly wipes the sweat away.

Time goes by as the baker tries in vain to accommodate the adventurers in all the day to day retail endeavors. The widowed baker makes frequent Spirit rolls as the heroes continue investigating her. On a failure, she finally cracks under pressure, points back to the baking room, and mouths to them, *"Don't let them hurt my children."*

- **Widowed Baker:** See page 33.



## DROP THE HAMMER

Walking into the baking room, the heroes see a large stone oven cooling down from the day's work. Next to the oven rests a wooden work table with a thin layer of leftover flour covering its surface. With a successful Notice roll, the characters see faint tracks in the leftover flour on the floor which seem to be centered on a heavy wooden cabinet. With a raise, they surmise the footprints to be too large to be the widowed baker and must have been made by the Coffin Masters.

A secret trap door lies underneath a heavy wooden cabinet filled with baking supplies on the far side of the room. It was used as a cold storage cellar years ago. With a success on a cooperative Strength roll at

-2, the heroes manage to push the massive cabinet off the trap door. Unbeknownst to the baker, the Coffin Masters have been busy underneath her store. They have managed to dig their way through the cold cellar walls of the bakery and into the two adjoining cellars, enlarging their underground hideout.

A ladder extending down to the cellar awaits anyone opening the hidden entrance. Faint voices are heard below. With a successful Stealth roll, the heroes are able to climb down the ladder without alerting the inactive killers below. Failure alerts the members of their presence in which case they become active guards. Read the following once the characters make their way down.

*Making your way down into the dark musty cellar, voices begin resonating off the stone walls. A maniacal loathsome and bellowing laugh thunders forth from the right passageway as retorting banter follows suit from the left.*

Draxhdor and two mercenaries are in a high-stakes dice game in the right cellar. Three other mercenaries are in the left cellar drinking ale and trying to relax. In the corner of the bakery cellar, three frightened young children are tied up. They can't give away the heroes' arrival as Draxhdor gagged them to silence their crying. It takes one round and a Stealth roll at +1 for Dim lighting to get each child up and out of the cellar. If the heroes' presence has gone unnoticed, they get The Drop on Draxhdor and his band of mercenaries.

Once engaged, the Coffin Masters battle to the bitter end, never surrendering under any circumstance. Draxhdor takes no prisoners during the fight and tries to gain the edge by threatening any children remaining in the cellar or using Tests of Will on the heroes, shaking their confidence enough to let his minions finish them off. This is an all or nothing challenge. If the heroes retreat or let Draxhdor escape, they receive no reward from the Thieves' Guild and their reputation suffers a notch or two.

✧ **Draxhdor:** See page 32.

• **Mercenary (5):** See page 33.

## REST IN PEACE

Cleaning up the mess at the Buttered Loaf bakery, the widowed baker thanks the heroes for freeing her children and herself from the callous grip of the Gravedigger and his band. Word quickly spreads throughout Lankhmar's underground of the group's winning exploits over the Coffin Master as their reputation increases. Returning back to the Thieves' Guild, the messengers of death are welcomed and given wine, cheese, and ironically enough, fresh baked goods while the guild representatives assemble. During their wait, the heroes' story is also secretly verified.

Both of the two guilds pays each hero the enormous sum of 50 gold rilks along with any treasure or weapons they may have collected while fulfilling their contract. Such is the life of a hero in the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes—where the death of others brings joy to those who live.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### ✧ COMMANDER

The second in command of the Coffin Masters, this vile man's cruelty knows no bound. His buzzard-like appearance and cackling laugh only cement his notorious perspective towards those he preys upon on behalf of the Gravedigger.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d8

**Cha:** -2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

**Hindrances:** Ugly

**Edges:** Fleet-Footed, Frenzy, No Mercy

**Gear:** Chain mail (+2), long sword (Str+d8), medium shield (Parry +1).

### ✧ DRAXHDOR

A vile and ruthless man who goes by the pseudonym of the Gravedigger, Draxhdor preys on those weak-minded and easily manipulated. He's employed the services of some of the fiercest of mercenaries to do his bidding. Wanting to take over Lankhmar's

thieving underworld, he's begun extorting several of the local businesses in the northern Tenderloin District while using the local bakery as a secret hideout.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d10, Taunt d10

**Cha:** -6; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty, Mean, Greedy (Major)

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Command, Fervor, No Mercy, Strong Willed

**Gear:** Battle axe (Str+d8), chain mail (+2).

## KARAX

An elderly blind beggar who can be seen camped out along Cheap Street. His kindness towards others is his only saving grace from those who would ridicule and heckle him due to his impoverished lifestyle.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d10 (Hearing and smelling)

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Blind, Elderly

**Edges:** Alertness

**Gear:** Walking stick (Str+d4).

## MERCENARY

These brute mercenaries sell their services to the highest bidder. Their lack of ethics towards humanity makes them very dangerous in the wrong hands.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

**Hindrances:** —

**Edges:** Brawny, No Mercy

**Gear:** Battle axe or long sword (Str+d8), chain mail (+2), medium shield (Parry +1).

## WIDOWED BAKER

Widowed a few years ago, she owns and runs the Buttered Loaf bakery while taking care of her three young children. Her goods are a staple commodity in Lankhmar's northern Tenderloin District and her normally amiable personality makes her popular in the area.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Knowledge (Baking) d8, Notice d6

**Cha:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Obligation (Major—Children)

**Edges:** Charismatic, Guild Member (Bakers' Guild)

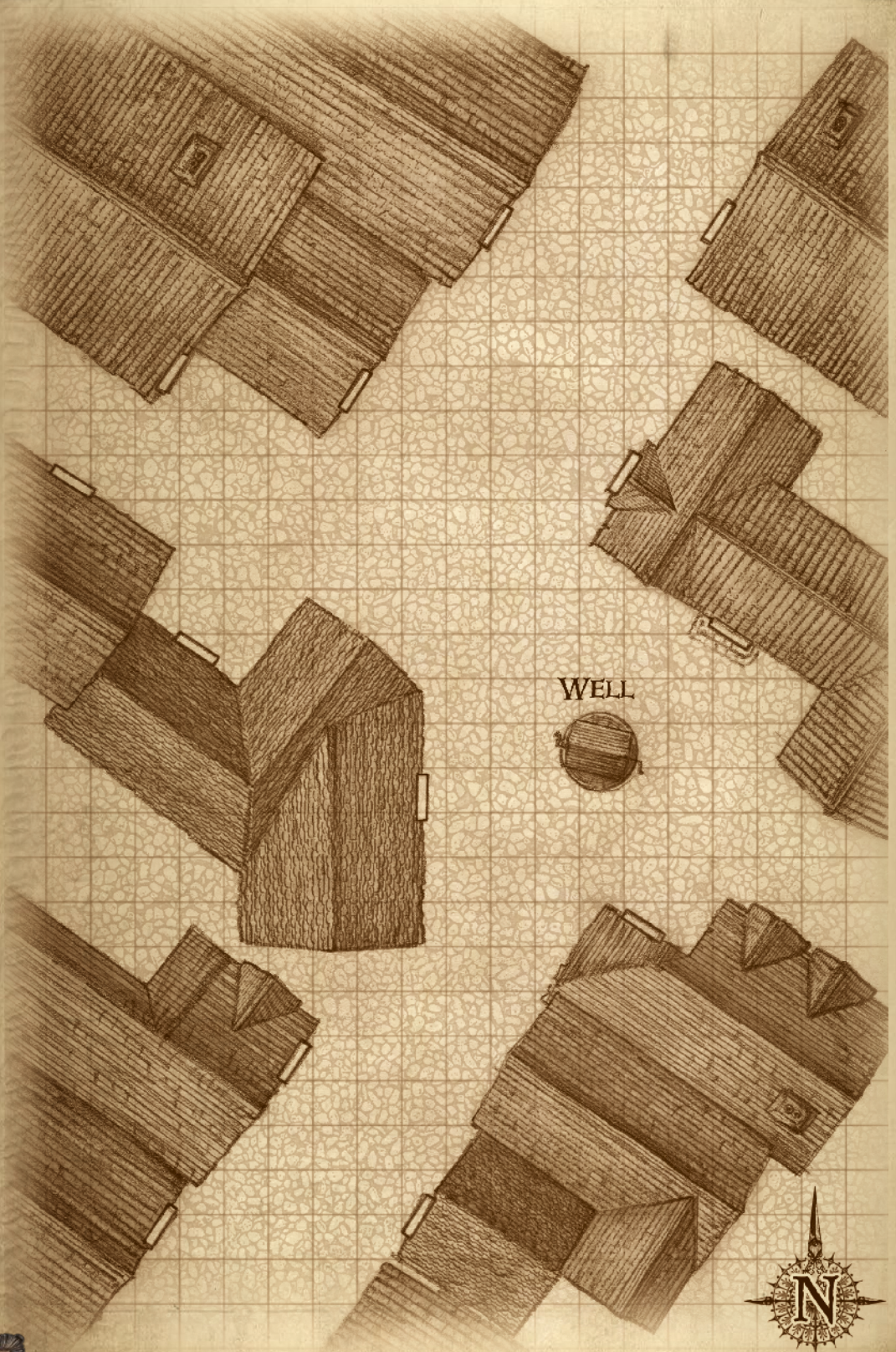
**Gear:** Rolling pin (Str+d4, improvised weapon).

*"Death no longer stood at his side. Death had stepped inside him. It was Death's feet that were lashed to the skis. It was Death who felt the White Spider's trap to be home.*

*Hrey turned, just in convenient time for Fafhrd's blade to open the side of his neck in a deep, slicing thrust that slit gullet as well as jugular. His sword came away almost before the gushing blood, black in the moonlight, had wet it, and certainly before Hrey had lifted his great hands in a futile effort to stop the great choking flow. It all happened very easily. His skis had thrust, Fafhrd told himself, not he. His skis, that had their own life, Death's life, and were carrying him on a most doomful journey."*

*—The Snow Women*

# STREET MAP



# HAMMON HEIST

Amongst the worldly and jaded nobles of Lankhmar, owning the truly unique and remarkable is a mark of true prestige. Lord Gral Hammon has the honor of owning an enormous white songbird unlike any ever seen before. The characters have the honor of stealing it.

## BACKGROUND

To prove his wealth, Lord Gral Hammon has purchased the most expensive, extravagant thing he could find: a four foot-tall white bird with the most captivating singing voice he has ever heard. The bird, known as the Golden Throat, is a hit at parties, where it establishes Hammon's place at the top of the social pecking order. Hammon claims a traveler from the Eight Cities sold him the bird several months ago, assuring him it was the only one of its kind on the Lankhmar continent.

Lady Promitex, a visiting noble from the city of Horborixen in the Eastern Land, wants the Golden Throat for her own, and will stop at nothing to get it. Hammon has made it clear the bird isn't for sale, so she has no choice but to steal it. She has made inquiries as to who would be best qualified for such an endeavor, which has led her to contacting the characters.

The Golden Throat is indeed the only one of its kind on the continent. It may be the only one of its kind in the world. For it is not truly a bird at all, but a woman who has been transformed into a bird by an enchanted collar. Her name is Havda, and she was one of the Snow Women of Cold Waste. When she spurned the advances of a wizard traveling through the north, the wizard tricked her into the collar, then took her (in bird form) to Kvarch Nar, where he sold her to a dealer in exotic goods.

Lord Hammon suspects there may be more to the Golden Throat than the dealer told him. He can see intelligence in the bird's eyes. He can also see its hate and disdain. He has a sense of foreboding regarding the creature, but feels safe so long as he keeps it on its chain inside its cage.

## SET SAIL FOR LARCENY

The adventure begins when the characters receive an invitation to visit the *Queen of Storms*, a luxury ship from the Eastern Land currently docked in port. They're told the owner of the ship, one Lady Promitex, has a business proposition for them.

The ship is a showcase of opulent wealth. Gold, silver, and jewels decorate the interior. Fine statues and artwork adorn the living quarters. Armed guards accompany the

characters while aboard the ship, making it clear any pilfering will result in losing not only this money-making opportunity, but their fingers and possibly their lives as well.

Lady Promitex herself is a middle-aged woman of grace and beauty. When she receives the characters, she's draped in colorful silks and waited on by a dozen nubile young slaves. The rest of the room is filled with armed guards who, it would seem, are opposed to their mistress having ruffians such as the characters on board.

"I have a most challenging task to put before you," says Lady Promitex. "I need you to break into a fortress and retrieve for me a bird the size of a child."

She explains about the Golden Throat, and how it's kept in Lord Hammon's manor, which is well-protected by guards, locks, and traps. Hammon has been robbed before, she says, which is why he is so paranoid about security now. Any attempt to break in must be well-planned and executed, or it will surely fail.

*"Robbing such a powerful, arrogant man of such a famous item would be foolish, except I am setting sail for Horborixen in six days. By the time he realizes I am the one with the bird, I shall be long gone."*

*"You have six days. If you deliver the bird to me tomorrow, I shall pay your group 100 gold rilks for it. On the following day, 90. The day after that, 80, and so on. The sooner you deliver, the more you get paid. But don't get too greedy: I remind you, breaking into Hammon Manor is no simple task. Take the time you need to plan properly. For if you're caught and survive capture, I shall do my best to have you killed. For my own protection, of course."*

✧ **Lady Promitex:** See page 41.

- **Guards (4 plus 1 per Hero):** Use the Guards profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.
- **Slaves (12):** Use the Servant profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

## BUILDING THE PERFECT HEIST

Hammon Manor is a veritable fortress. It's protected by guards, walls, heavy locks, and the occasional tripwire. Robbing the place via a straightforward smash-and-grab isn't likely to end well for the characters. Instead, they should spend some of the six days they've been given to properly plan their operation.

This adventure is designed to be played like a heist story. The players gather as much information as they can about the target, put together a plan, then execute the plan in hopes of a smooth, efficient operation. Things never go smoothly, of course, but that's part of the fun of a heist story: watching how the protagonists overcome unexpected obstacles.

The adventure includes a mini-system to help simulate planning and executing a professional heist. Each day, a character may make a "planning action," which requires a skill roll. Other players may take their own actions or assist someone else with a cooperative roll, describing how they use their skill to aid the primary that day. For each success and raise on the planning action roll, the character learns one piece of information about the manor house, its people, and its security. At the end of each day when the characters regroup to share their information, one character makes a Smarts roll at -2 aided by the others with cooperative rolls to plan contingencies for the heist. On a success, the group gains one Heist Benny or two on a raise. Heist Bennies can be spent only during the heist itself, by any member of the group, to overcome unexpected obstacles.

Here are examples of planning actions:

**Reconnoiter:** By making a Stealth roll at -2, the characters can subtly study the manor house, looking for entrances and monitoring the people moving in and out of it.

**Check the Streets:** By making a Streetwise roll at -2, the characters can get the word on the street about the Hammon family's security, activities, and habits.

**Gossip:** By making a Persuasion roll at -2, the characters can get the inside scoop on life in the manor by talking with the family's staff and associates.

The characters can perform their research as long as they wish, knowing their pay decreases with each passing day. Eventually, they should have a plan for how to get into the manor, steal the bird, and get out again.

## LAY OF THE LAND

Through their investigations, the characters can learn a lot about Hammon Manor, its inhabitants, and its security. After resolving their planning actions, the players may gain their information in the following categories: Layout, Guards, Staff, or Family.

For each success or raise, give them the first piece of information in a chosen category they don't already have. (If the players are looking for a specific piece of information which isn't on the list, they may use a success to learn it. If the Game Master judges the information to be particularly hard to get, it may require two or more successes.)

**Layout:** The manor is three stories tall, with glass windows on every level. It's surrounded by a smooth (Climbing -2) stone wall 15 feet tall. There is a double metal gate in the front and a thick double wooden door at the back which opens onto an alley.

Inside the wall is a small yard, then the manor house itself. The house has wooden doors on four sides which are often propped open during the day to catch the breeze. While the wall gates have great locks (-4 Lockpicking), the locks on the house doors are only average (successful Lockpicking).

At the center of the manor house is an open courtyard. It contains a garden, patio furniture, and a large cage where the Golden Throat is kept. At night, two small lanterns keep the courtyard lit enough for a person to walk through without tripping. When Lord Hammon wants to move the

bird, he has the cage put onto a cart and wheeled out through the front gate.

The first floor of the manor house is given over to cooking, dining, and (at the back of the house) sleeping quarters for the household staff and house guards.

The second floor houses Lord and Lady Hammon's offices and private receiving parlors.

The third floor contains the bedrooms for the family, as well as an open area used for the children's education and recreation.

**Guards:** The manor is under constant guard. The guards wear light armor under their house uniforms, and are armed with short swords. A pair of guards is stationed just inside the front gate.

There are normally six guards on duty during the day: two at the gate, two patrolling the yard, and two on the roof of the house.

There are 10 guards on duty at night: Four patrolling the yard, four on the roof, and two patrolling the first floor and courtyard.

There are 18 guards in total. The guards rotate their positions every three hours, starting at midnight. Those not on duty are usually in their barracks, gambling or sleeping.

Guards sometimes accompany Lord or Lady Hammon when they leave the house. Guards get one night a week off, and usually spend it in a local tavern called the Royal Harvest, where nobles mingle with the lower classes.

There are bows and quivers of arrows on the roof and in the guards' quarters. At night, the guards run tripwires through the courtyard and outer yards. The wires are hard to see (Notice at -4) and run up to bells on the roof of the house. Anyone tripping the wire sets off the bells and calls down the guards.

**Staff:** The house employs seven full-time staff who live on-site. These include a head cook, a scullery maid, a nurse for the children, Lady Hammon's handmaiden, Lord Hammon's valet, and two other household servants.

The house also employs a rotating roster of general household servants brought in as needed from one day to the next. These servants typically arrive at dawn and leave after supper.

The cook receives food deliveries from the market at the back gate at dawn. The scullery maid dumps the day's trash out that gate into the alley at dusk. She is usually accompanied by a guard as she does so; she's scared of the trash-pickers since an incident last year.

The nurse, handmaiden, and valet sleep on the third floor to better serve their charges.

The cook and the Golden Throat hate each other. The bird screams and tries to attack her whenever she comes near.

The servants are well-treated and generally loyal to Lord Hammon. Each of the on-site staff has one day a week off.

**Family:** Lord Gral and Lady Ren Hammon have two children: a daughter, Anya (age 15), and a son, Gron (age 8).

The two children have a tutor who visits every other day to give them private instruction. He's an old bald-headed scholar who used to be a librarian priest for a temple on the Street of the Gods until the temple shut down for lack of worshippers.

Lady Hammon often hosts small gatherings of charity-minded nobles, mostly noblewomen, to discuss charity projects for the city.

Anya and Gron sometimes go on field trips into the city with their tutor and at least one guard.

Lord Hammon has a mistress he visits at least twice a week. His wife knows but doesn't seem to care.

- **Household Guards:** See page 40.
- **Lord Gral Hammon:** See page 40.
- **Lady Ren Hammon:** See page 41.

## THINGS GO WRONG

Every heist has its difficulties. But while the *players* may be surprised at the unexpected obstacles that pop up, their *characters* have spent days studying the manor house and its inhabitants. They're prepared for the

unexpected, and have a contingency plan for just such occasions.

Below are a number of such obstacles the Game Master can put before the characters. The players can either deal with them normally or they can spend one of their Heist Bennies to say they were ready for the obstacle all along, and have a plan to overcome it. Any dice rolls made in conjunction with this "plan" are made at +2, and it's assumed the characters are carrying on their persons whatever equipment the plan requires.

For example, if the characters run into a guard dog, they may spend a Heist Benny to say they are carrying raw meat to throw into the dog's kennel. When the dog chases the meat, they can lock him in the kennel. Not only do the characters have the meat (it was in one of their pockets all along!), but they get a +2 on their Throwing roll to get it into the kennel.

These are just examples, of course. Feel free to make up other obstacles to throw at the characters. In general, the heroes should face one unexpected obstacle plus an additional obstacle for each day of planning. The Game Master should adjust the number based on the players' tactics, roleplaying, and dice rolls. A critical failure on a planning action for instance would certainly mean an additional obstacle to face during the heist.

**Gron Comes Wandering:** Eight year-old Gron wanders toward the characters. If he sees them, he's not afraid, but is curious who they are and what they're doing here. If it's the middle of the night, he may be sleepwalking.

**Extra Guards:** Lord Hammon has heard rumors of an impending robbery, and he's increased the number of guards. There are 2d4 extra guards on duty.

**Lovestruck:** Boornibash, a teenage boy from a neighboring family, has been smitten by Anya. The two have been secretly meeting each other for some time, and he has sneaked into the manor the same time as the characters.

**More Light:** Instead of the usual two dim lanterns, the courtyard is flooded by six

brightly-burning lanterns, making it much harder to move and hide without being seen.

**Patrol Dogs:** The guards have two dogs with them. The dogs are good at tracking and knowing when intruders are near.

**Drunken Servant:** One of the servants has returned from his day off, and he's thoroughly drunk. He staggers through where the characters are or need to be, possibly seeing them and definitely throwing off their plans.

**Trapped Cage:** There is a trap on the lock for the birdcage door. It requires a Lockpicking roll at -2 to disarm, and those who fail the roll are struck by a needle and paralyzed, unable to act or move, for 2d6 rounds.

## THE CAGED BIRD

Eventually, the characters reach the Golden Throat. It is an enormous bird, over four feet tall, with white plumage. It wears a gold-colored brass collar around its neck (giving the name "Golden Throat" a secondary meaning). A heavy iron chain

(Toughness 12) connects the collar to a ring on the bottom of the cage. The collar is locked around the bird's neck with its own keyed lock needing to be picked. The bird is trapped inside a round cage 10 feet in diameter and 10 feet tall. The door on the cage is locked with a padlock with 10 Toughness and inflicts a -2 penalty to Lockpicking rolls.

The bird watches the characters intelligently as they approach and poke around the cage. When she realizes they are here to take her away, she tries to help as best she can, such as warning them of incoming guards and pointing out the lock is booby-trapped.

- **The Golden Throat:** See page 41.

## COLLARS AND CONSEQUENCES

The Golden Throat does her best to convince the characters to unlock the collar from around her neck. If she feels they won't do so, she waits until they're least expecting it, then attacks them and tries to fly away.



If the characters do unlock the collar, the bird immediately changes into a beautiful woman in a long white fur cloak. The heroes may realize she is one of the snow women from beyond the Cold Wastes.

"Thank you," she says. "I was tricked by a vile wizard years ago, and have been stuck in this form ever since. If you can show me the way to the port, I will find a boat home and you shall have my thanks and my blessing."

If the characters deliver Havda to the port, she is true to her word. She gives each character a snow serpent fang pendant on a leather thong, and to the group as whole, she hands them what looks to be four palm-sized snowflakes.

"Should you travel to my lands or meet another of my people, these pendants shall prove you showed aid to a snow woman and you shall be granted the same in kind...once." She shrugs and smiles for the first time. "Perhaps not the most useful of blessings. But with it, my thanks in the form of these crystals. When you crush one, your skin will be as hard as ice for hours, though no more than half a day."

The pendant acts as a one time use of the Connections (Snow Women) Edge with a single success. The user must give the necklace to the snow woman asked for aid. The snowflake crystals are talismans of *armor* +4 with the normal 2d6 hour duration.

If the characters try to put the collar back onto the snow woman, she fights back viciously. She would rather die than be trapped again and tries to curse at least one of the characters using her *drain life* power, then threatens she will only end it if released.

The characters can put the collar on anyone. When they do, that person turns into a four-foot-tall bird with white plumage, identical to the bird known as the Golden Throat. The transformed person may try to talk, but all that comes out is beautiful birdsong.

If the characters deliver the Golden Throat (or a Golden Throat) to Lady Promitex on her ship or give her the collar and

explain how it works, she pays them as she promised. If they go to her boat, explain the bird was actually a person, and the person is gone without giving her the collar, she is momentarily enraged then resigns herself to not having the songbird.

"At least Hammon doesn't have it either," she says.

- **Havda:** See page 41.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### HOUSEHOLD GUARDS

Lord Hammon's guards are no mere thugs. He hires only veteran soldiers who have known the heat of battle, then pays them and treats them well enough to earn their loyalty. While they typically don't carry their bows with them, there are bows and quivers of arrows stored in the barracks and atop the roof.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

**Hindrances:** Loyal

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes

**Gear:** Leather armor (+1), long sword (Str+d8), long bow (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6).

### LORD GRAL HAMMON

A high-ranking noble from a long line of Lankhmart nobility, Gral is obnoxiously proud of his heritage. Since his youth he has been told he is superior to those around him and destined for greatness. He has achieved greatness, but made plenty of enemies in the process. Gral doesn't mind the enemies (he sees them as a mark of success) but is concerned for the safety of his family. He carries a sword, but hasn't practiced with it in years, and has only actually used it in battle once. He prefers to let his guards do what fighting needs to be done.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Knowledge (Business) d8, Knowledge (Politics) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Riding d6, Streetwise d6  
**Cha:** +2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6  
**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Obese  
**Edges:** Connections (Nobles), Noble  
**Gear:** Short sword (Str+d6), black toga.

### LADY REN HAMMON

Ren puts up with her husband's arrogance because she shares his ambition and lust for power. Unlike Gral, however, Ren grew up in a merchant family and had to fight her way up the social ladder rung by bloody rung. She knows how to be both charming and terrifying, and knows when threats and even blackmail are better tools than flattery and eloquence.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Business) d8, Knowledge (Politics) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d6  
**Cha:** +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5  
**Hindrances:** Anemic  
**Edges:** Charismatic, Noble  
**Gear:** Noble's robes.

### THE GOLDEN THROAT

The giant bird known as the Golden Throat is quite dangerous if removed from its chains and cage. Even while chained, it can still lash out with its beak and claws (albeit at -2).

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d10, Stealth d8  
**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5  
**Special Abilities:**

- **Beak:** Str+d6.
- **Claws:** Str+d8.
- **Flying:** Pace 10" and Climb 0.
- **Stunning Song:** All who aren't expecting to hear her voice must make a Spirit roll or be Shaken as they are momentarily stunned by its beauty.

### HAYDA THE SNOW SORCERESS

Amongst her own people of the Snow Tribes, Hayda was a young up-and-coming Snow Woman, gifted in the ways of subtle

ice magic and the manipulation of fools. But she was a bit of a fool herself when she fell for the charms of Vingtang, a traveling wizard from Sarheenmar who claimed he was on a world-wide quest for arcane wisdom. They became lovers. When spring came, she and Vingtang had a falling out. Words were exchanged. Then blows. Then spells. Finally, Vingtang caught her in an enchanted collar and sold her to a merchant. That was years ago, but Havda's need for vengeance still burns hot. She will find Vingtang. And this time she will show him no mercy.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Arcana) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Spellcasting d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d6  
**Cha:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5  
**Hindrances:** Clueless, Vengeful (Minor)  
**Edges:** Arcane Background (Elemental—Ice/Snow), Attractive, Create Talisman, New Power, Strong Caster  
**Powers:** *Armor, curse, drain life, invisibility.*  
**Gear:** Components.  
**Talismans:** Snowflake crystals (Armor +4, lasting 2d6 hours) × 4.

### LADY PROMITEX

This noblewoman from the Eastern Lands loves to surround herself with luxury. She especially appreciates luxury no one else can have. She prides herself on being able to speak with anyone, regardless of their background or social class. By concealing her arrogance and paying well she ensures the loyalty of her ship's crew.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Boating d6, Fighting d4, Knowledge (Politics) d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Taunt d8  
**Cha:** +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5  
**Hindrances:** Greedy (Minor)  
**Edges:** Attractive, Noble  
**Gear:** Silk robes, jewelry, the ship *Queen of Storms*.

# THE HUNGRY MISTS

The wealthy merchant Quarben is celebrating his birthday party in grand style. He's rented out the Park of Pleasures and hires the characters to help keep thieves and troublemakers away from the festivities.

## BACKGROUND

Hosting large celebrations in public is always risky in Lankhmar. Such festivities draw pickpockets, drunks, beggars, and violent hoodlums like flies to a day-old gutter corpse. That's part of the reason wealthy merchants and nobles insist on doing it; successfully hosting a public party is a mark of true power.

Quarben the wine merchant has every reason to celebrate. His business has doubled again for the sixth year in a row, he's a regular in the Overlord's court, and this week marks his 50th birthday.

To ensure his celebration is free from thieves and their ilk, Quarben has paid the Thieves' Guild a hefty sum to keep their people away from the park. As added insurance, he has hired individual troubleshooters (the players' characters) for 10 gold rilk each to supplement his own guards in watching the perimeter of the park and keeping the riff-raff out.

However, the true danger is not from pickpockets or muggers. Rather, one of Quarben's rivals has planted seeds of chaos in the party itself. Hidden in the braziers is a potion of transformation destined to turn this celebration into a nightmare.

## THE PARTY PARK

The Park of Pleasures is situated near enough to the Rich Men's Quarter to give it a certain amount of class and prestige. It's also close enough to the Plaza of Dark Delights to draw its share of unsavory types when the sun goes down.

The park itself is a grassy square 250 yards on each side with walkways paved with large smooth stones, and open on each side to the adjacent buildings, most of which are shops with apartments on their second stories. Quarben has erected a temporary wooden gazebo in the center of the park. It's big enough for his immediately family, his young wife, Laandra, and their twin children plus ten or so of their closest friends. It has a strong roof to keep the sun and rain off their heads. Beyond the gazebo, the merchant has set up dozens of tables laden with food and drink for his guests. Hundreds of guests mill around, filling the area between the tables and the borders of the park.

The day of the party passes without serious incident. (The Game Master may improvise a run-in with some would-be pickpockets if desired, otherwise the day is mostly uneventful.) As the sun begins to set, torches are lit all around the gazebo and tables, and a band begins to play at the foot of the gazebo, encouraging everyone to dance. Near the four corners of the park, 15 foot-tall braziers on temporary scaffolding are lit; their elevated bonfires illuminate the darkest corners of the park.

## BEAST ATTACK

An hour after sundown, the characters hear a commotion coming from the edge of the park.

When the characters investigate, they hear guttural snarls, then see a fearsome, hairy beast attacking one of Quarben's guests. The creature looks like an enormous gorilla, but with a bony, shark-like head. It has vicious fangs in its oversized mouth and talons at the end of its three-fingered paws. It's also dressed in the tattered finery of a party-goer.

With a successful Notice roll, the characters recognize the clothing on the beast as belonging to a guest they saw previously in the day. While it's conceivable the beast stole the man's clothing, it's far more likely (no matter how bizarre to consider) the man somehow changed into this monster (which is exactly what happened).

Even though the beast was once Quarben's guest, the characters can't reason with it; it's immune to Persuasion or Intimidation attempts. It is merely a beast, and it inflicts much violence upon the celebration if the characters don't stop it. The heroes may choose to use nonlethal damage in which case, if Incapacitated, the guest will revert to human before awakening since the transformation only lasts one hour, and he will be unconscious for 1d6 hours.

- **Smoke Monster:** See page 46.



## THEN THERE WERE MORE

Just as the characters stop the beast (whether fatally or not), they look up to see four more such creatures making their snarling way towards the center of the party. Again, based on their tattered clothing, they seem to be transformed guests.

Characters who think to look (or make Notice rolls) see the new beasts are coming from the same general area as the first one: the southeast corner of the park. Looking closer at that area, they see a thick green fog rolling down from the brazier there and covering the ground. Even as they look, they see a guest collapse, coughing, into the fog, then rise, transformed into a beast with murder in his eyes.

The fog is spreading, slowly crawling in a four foot-tall wall along the

park towards the gazebo. Rather than dissipating, it remains thick on the ground, transforming people as it goes. A successful Notice roll at -2 reveals the beasts are also making their way towards the center and, while they attack people in their way, their goal seems to be the gazebo rather than wanton slaughter.

Unfortunately for Quarben and his guests, the music and revelry has now reached a fever pitch, drowning out the occasional screams of those slain by the beasts. The army of monsters is growing as the fog spreads, and the host has no idea fanged death is surely coming for him.

The characters are faced with two obvious choices: head to the gazebo and protect their employer, or head for the brazier exuding the fog and extinguish its flames. The brazier is much closer, but Quarben hasn't paid them yet.

## THE DEADLY GAZEBO

Any characters who head for the gazebo easily outrun the fog, but must still deal with the beasts. Run this as a five round Chase on foot to reach the gazebo (see **Chases** in *Savage Worlds*). Five monsters currently head for the gazebo but each round 1d6+1 join them unless someone attempts to put out the brazier (see below).

Minor obstacles are guests and servants who can be avoided with an Agility roll to weave around them or a Strength roll to push them out of the way. Major obstacles are the heavy tables full of food and drinks which can be evaded with an Agility roll to roll under them or a Strength roll to leap over them.

Presuming both sides still have living participants in the chase, on the last round each character arrives at the gazebo in order of their Action Card (the Game Master should advise players of this additional rule in case they want to save Bennies to spend on the final roll). Any hero with a higher Action Card than the monsters reaches the gazebo before the monsters surround it but

## GETTING HELP

The heroes have been hired as troubleshooters but Quarben does have his own guards working the party as well. The guards primarily work on the perimeter of the park to keep out the uninvited and unwanted though two are assigned by the gazebo.

A character can attempt call in help from the guards but this requires a Vigor roll as an action to be heard or seen over the sounds of the party. On a success, 1d4 guards arrive to help on the next round or 2d4 on a raise (up to the 20 guards there of which two will not leave Quarben at the gazebo unless ordered by him personally). Any character who prepared ahead of time a way to call on the guards (a whistle, three beats on a shield, etc.) gains a +2 bonus to the roll.

- **Guards (20):** Use the Guard profile from *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

any character with a lower card finds the creatures between him and his destination.

By the time the characters reach the gazebo, Quarben and his family have realized somethings gone horribly wrong. They thought to flee the park to the north, but the beasts have already surrounded the gazebo, and Quarben doesn't want to risk moving his family. Instead, he has them climb up onto the roof of the gazebo, where the monsters can't get them. If the characters can't hold the monsters off, one of the beasts eventually gets close enough to climb up and follow them.

Luckily for the characters, the transformation smoke only lasts an hour.

## EXTINGUISH THE FLAME

In order to stop the magical fog from changing more guests into monsters, someone must make their way to the brazier and put it out. The characters are 15" (30 yards) from the brazier. Each round, 1d6+1 monsters rise from the fog, and half

of them (round down) head straight for the characters to protect the brazier while the others join the Chase.

Once the characters reach the oversized brazier, they can either try to pull it down (with a Strength roll at -4) or climb to its fiery top (with a Climbing roll). The metal at the top of the brazier is of course burning hot, and any character in contact with it takes 2d6 damage (AP 1 vs. metal armor) immediately and again at the beginning of each round.

Once the fire is within reach, putting it out requires two gallons of water (or some other nonflammable liquid), a heavy material to smother the flames, scattering the fuel, or a combination of strategies. Regardless of the tactics used, it takes four actions combined to put out the fire (so two characters could put it out in two rounds) and the actions normally need no Trait roll but cannot be duplicated with a multiple action penalty. A character may combine a fire extinguishing action with a different action (such as an attack), but it then requires an Agility roll to succeed (at normal multiple action penalties).

Once the fire is out, the characters find strange black stones amongst the fuel giving off wisps of the green smoke if still warm. Once cooled, the stones crack and split, losing their power.

## EATING FOG

Each round the characters are exposed to the fog, they must make a Vigor roll at the beginning of their action (while near the fire such as when putting it out, the roll at -2). If they fail, they inhale some of the weird green smoke and take a level of Fatigue from coughing. When they take enough Fatigue to become Incapacitated, they fall unconscious and begin transforming into monsters.

Transforming into a monster takes one round. At the beginning of their next action, the character returns to consciousness, healed of all Fatigue, but filled with a desire to find and kill Quarben.

While in monster form, the character remains a Wild Card but gains the abilities of a Smoke Monster and their physical Traits (unless the character's Trait is higher). He keeps his Spirit and Smarts die type, but gains Animal (A) level intelligence, losing the ability to speak, use tools, or wield weapons.

Wild Card characters like the heroes can, however, try to keep their wits about them. At the start of each of their actions, they can make a Smarts roll to resist the Quarben-killing urge. If they fail, they spend their action moving towards the merchant and attacking anyone in their way, but can roll again at the start of their next action. On a success, they can take any action they wish. On a raise or if a character succeeds at the Smarts roll twice in a row, he permanently throws off the potion's mind-control, and no longer needs to roll.

## AND BACK AGAIN

The transformation lasts only an hour. Afterwards, anyone who was changed and survived is upset and traumatized as they fully remember everything they did while transformed. No one wants to discuss what occurred, and the city watch is more than willing to clean up the mess and ignore it happened, proving once again Lankhmarts are good at turning blind eyes, even to themselves.

If Quarben survives, he pays the characters the 10 gold rilks each he owes them, plus 10 gold rilks more to never speak of this again. He may give them a sizable bonus (up to 50 gold rilks each) if they were instrumental in keeping his family safe. Should he die, his wife still pays them the agreed upon fee plus 5 gold rilks each for the hazards they faced. The latter payment is more to foster goodwill as Laandra is already looking ahead to hiring the heroes to seek vengeance for the death of her husband.

In the aftermath of the fiasco, Quarben's popularity plummets on the Lankhmar social scene which obviously impacts his business. There is even a brief inquiry from the Overlord's office to see if the merchant could be held accountable.

In the end, Quarben certainly isn't bankrupted, but he is worse off than he's been in years.

As for who planted the strange black stones in the brazier, Quarben has his suspicions, but no proof and no desire to go digging right now. But his wife, Laandra, may feel differently (though she will have to work behind his back if he still lives), and there were dozens of others at the party who suffered due to the green fog. Many of them are rich. And many of them might be willing to hire the characters to help them seek justice, revenge, or absolution.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### LAANDRA

Laandra knows what people say behind her back and she still smiles and greets them warmly, knowing anything they say isn't even close to as harsh as the life she left behind. She does love her husband, but where he's a romantic, she's a realist. Laandra will do whatever it takes to protect her family even if it means going behind her husband's back to do it.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d8, Taunt d6

**Cha:** +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Vow (Protect her family)

**Edges:** Attractive, Charismatic, Connections (Merchants), Filthy Rich, Strong Willed

**Gear:** Dagger (Str+d4), tailored clothing.

### QUARBEN

Most think the success of Quarben as a wine merchant comes from his business skill and excellent knowledge of his product, but it also comes from falling in love. Around eight years ago he met Laandra who was half his age and at best, a courtesan. Between her and the birth of the twins, he found his passion for life which translated to success in business as well.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Knowledge (Wine) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d8

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Loyal (Family)

**Edges:** Filthy Rich, Linguist, Scholar (Business, Wine)

**Gear:** Dagger (Str+d4), tailored clothing.

### SMOKE MONSTER

The green smoke transforms a guest into the form of a hairy, ape-like creature with an angular, shark-like head and clawed, three-fingered paws. It's no natural beast, but a sorcerous creation designed for carnage and mayhem.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +1:** Thick fur.
- **Bite or Claw:** Str+d6.
- **Focused:** When created, the smoke monster is given a single target to destroy and the drive to protect the source of the smoke. It ignores threats not between it and its target unless the source of the smoke is in danger.
- **Size +1:** Smoke monsters burst out of their clothes and armor.

### THE TWINS—KESA/KESEL

Quarben's twin children (Kesa the girl and Kesel the boy) are seven years old and expected, as the children of one of the richest men in Lankhmar, to be spoiled brats. Nothing could be farther from the truth as their mother insists they do chores and learn discipline so they are prepared for the realities of the world (which she knows all too well). The children are surprisingly bright, polite, and capable (they take fencing lessons), but are still children in need of protection.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d4, Taunt d6

**Cha:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 4

**Hindrances:** Small, Young

**Edges:** Charismatic

**Gear:** Tailored clothing.

# THE JADED JOURNEY

A case of mistaken identity sends the heroes to seek riddle-loving Murra of the Cinder Ash before they succumb to a lethal poison.

## BACKGROUND

With the amount of thievery, skulduggery, and double-crossing occurring in the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes, it's a wonder the heroes don't get caught in the unrelated schemes of others more often. One of the least inconspicuous, yet deadlier, methods of doing away with one's adversaries, is with the use of poisons. Most are common poisons, such as venoms and herb mixtures, but not all. There's always the vaporous smell of effervescent formulas and ghostly concoctions brewing in the darkened recesses of Lankhmar's alchemist alleys.

One such poisonous brew goes by the name of the "Jaded Orchid." This nasty arcane concoction is only known by those who travel in very tightlipped circles dealing in the secretive and graceful art of revenge and assassination. Once ingested, the victim has as little as one day to survive the ordeal before perishing as a green rotting corpse of decay.

The first side effect of the poison causes the target's tongue to change in color to a nice shade of green much like a piece of

jade stone. Six hours later, fatigue begins to set in as the body's defenses begin shutting down, incurring one level of Fatigue unless a Vigor roll at -4 succeeds. Another roll at the same penalty must be made every six hours afterwards. The inflicted character cannot recover any Fatigue even through magical means until the poison is neutralized. A second failed roll warrants another level of Fatigue as the victim's extremities begin turning gangrenous from rapid decay. On a third failed roll, the victim becomes Incapacitated, unconscious, with almost half his body turning a green shade of decaying, rotting flesh before finally dying with the next failed roll.

Only one cure is known to combat the Jaded Orchid's effects. It consists of three rather unique ingredients which luckily can be found or bought within the city walls of Lankhmar. The first component is a rare pale-yellow barnacle known as the Lady Slipper which is found attached to seafaring ships from time to time. The second is the medicinal and highly intoxicating Barlooloo root, used to help speed recovery to warriors who battle in the city's underground fighting circuit. The last ingredient, probably the scarcest but most well-known, is the tail feather from a phoenix which is rumored to possess mysterious and magical properties.

## PICKLED PIG'S FEET PIE

The heroes sit down ready to order a decent meal in one of the city's many taverns. The special of the day is pickled pig's feet pie, a very sought-after delicacy throughout Lankhmar. The bar maid comes to their table and takes their order, emphasizing the special of the day. Fifteen minutes later, she brings out their order. The smell of fried pork and bacon grease is almost intoxicating as its luscious aromas loft through the air, begging to be inhaled. If any adventurer does not partake in consuming the meal, the owner of the tavern comes out looking much disrespected and urges them to at least try the dish. The rest of the dinner is relatively uneventful as the heroes' bellies are filled with as much pie as they can handle.

Unbeknownst to the heroes, the fabulously delicious and tasty fare they just finished devouring was inadvertently tainted with the Jaded Orchid poison. The toxic meal

was meant for another band of ruffians thought to be dining at the tavern this very night, but never showed. The heroes were accidentally mistaken for the group and are soon to experience the vile repercussions and bad luck of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

## TONGUE AND CHEEK

A short time after dinner, all heroes who have consumed the poisoned pickled pig's feet pie begin to feel a little queasy as their tongues begin to go numb. It quickly becomes apparent something is afoot when any poisoned hero sticks out their tongue to reveal a green colored, salivating, and numb muscle.

If any adventurer possesses the Healing, Knowledge (Arcana), or Knowledge (Medicine) skill, they may make a roll with a -2 penalty to try and pinpoint the poison afflicting them. With a success, the heroes recall the symptoms and legend of



the Jaded Orchid along with the phoenix feather component of the cure. With a raise, they remember the phoenix feather and barlooloo root components, and some third ingredient is also needed. The last component, the Lady Slipper, is unknown to all the characters.

Knowing the poison afflicting their bodies and the ingredients to aid in curing them is one thing, knowing where to find said components is another. With a successful Streetwise roll, the group quickly learns there's only one alchemist in Lankhmar who probably possesses the intellectual wherewithal of deciphering the Jaded Orchid—Murra of the Cinder Ash.

## A FAVOR FOR A FAVOR

The heroes make their way to find Murra of the Cinder Ash whose shop is nestled deep in the Plaza of Dark Delights neighborhood. The smell of herbs, minerals, and animals are almost overwhelming when the heroes enter the decrepit store. All manner of baskets, buckets, and bags encompassing a plethora of minced and ground materials of who knows what fills almost every inch of space within. A very old looking woman with white frizzled hair occupies a small counter at the far end of the shop. Her skin looks like dried leather pulled tight over creaking bones. If not for her clean and breathtaking black and gold-lined robe adorning her gaunt frame, one could easily mistake her for a penniless beggar.

Murra of the Cinder Ash is quite the eccentric and often talks in riddles and rhymes. Rumors of her age being well over a hundred years old, along with her very peculiar mannerisms and behaviors, are secretly whispered about behind closed doors. Read the following as she welcomes the heroes in and instinctively gets right down to business.

*"Oh dear is me, it looks like death is coming to collect thee.*

*"The jaded orchid blooms inside, soon you'll have no place to hide.*

*"Help is what you seek from me, but a favor for another is the fee.*

*"Four components must ye collect, in order to settle your new-found debt.*

*"The first is a slipper that sails the shores while the second grows underground, hidden past large gambling doors.*

*"The third be it a feather from a fiery bird, while the fourth be a horn from the Ivory herd.*

*"Go forth now and dawdle not—or by tomorrow you'll die of rot."*

Murra of the Cinder Ash has thrown in her fee without the heroes even knowing it. The horn from the ivory herd has nothing to do with the components for the Jaded Orchid's cure. She's always wanted one for her own purposes and sees no harm in using the heroes to get what she wants, especially since she's the only one who can viably save their lives.

✦ **Murra of the Cinder Ash:** See page 53.

## THE HUNT BEGINS

The heroes embark on a scavenger hunt for the four items riddled by Murra of the Cinder Ash. If necessary, a successful Smarts roll helps them figure out Lankhmar's waterfront or docks are the best place to look for the "slipper that sails the shores."

With a successful Streetwise roll, they also surmise there's no bigger gambling door than the one of The Bloody Cockerel, a gambling den for the most unsavory of thieves and others of ill repute. They also deduce the fiery bird is none other than the fabled phoenix. The only spellcaster known to have befriended one is Kalafaxhtor, a reclusive and bitterly vengeful sorcerer who lives alone in a private dwelling on Cheap Street. His apartment is easy to spot as it's the only one in the area with a high tower built atop the third floor.

A Streetwise roll at +2 (or suitable Knowledge skill) reminds them of the whereabouts of the "horn from the ivory herd." Pretty much everyone in Lankhmar knows them to be the exquisite white ivory horns of the fierce and very rare Sarpula rams over hunted some fifty years ago,

almost to extinction. One of these beautiful ivory horns sits atop each of Lankhmar's gate entrances as a warning siren. When blown, these horns produce an ear-shattering sound alerting everyone within the city walls of impending danger or as a cry for aid.

The heroes may go in search of the items to cure their condition in any order they see fit. The following are the encounters and descriptions pertaining to each of the four components. Keep track of the time it takes the characters to collect each component as the poison running through their bodies begins its course of destruction.

### THE LADY SLIPPER

Venturing down to Lankhmar's docks, the smell of the fishy sea invades their senses. Many ships are roped to the wooden piers. Cargo of every sort is being brought aboard and loaded off vessels with block and tackle. Fishmongers line the wharf as their shouts of fresh fish for sale ring out. Being one of the busiest locations in Lankhmar, there's always a vast sea of humanity buzzing about.

With a successful Streetwise roll, the group locates one of the captains who know of the yellow Lady Slipper barnacle. Read the following as the captain fills the heroes in on its location, ending his proposal with a loud hardy laugh.

*"Aye, I know the barnacle ye be talking about. It be hitching fare on me ship from time to time. Not many be found nowadays. Usually when me ship needs a good careening does one show up like a blessed golden coin flashing in the sun. Lucky for ye, me ship be in the dry blocks awaiting its turn to be cleansed of the pests. If manual labor need not bother ye, venture down to me ship the Silverfish, the beauty of these waters. Careen her barnacle-laden hull for yer Lady Slipper, free of charge of course."*

After traveling through the mass of people, the group makes it to the dry blocks where several ships, including the *Silverfish*, have been hoisted out of the water for some much needed attention.

The ship's in pretty rough shape and

is definitely not a beautiful sight to see. Thick layers of hard barnacles are clustered along the ship's hull. A bunch of rusty iron scrapers lie in a wooden bucket nearby. Just as the heroes are about to get to work, a small group of wharf hands commissioned to careen the ship arrive and demand the heroes leave. The wharf hands don't take no for an answer and try to remove the heroes by force if needed. They do however succumb to being bought off, as any good pirate would, if the adventurers offer such a notion. The wharf hands' going price to leave is only 10 silver smerduks, double their commissioned fee.

After sending the wharf hands on their merry way either physically or using bribery, the characters start careening the *Silverfish*. Each yellow Lady Slipper barnacle takes the heroes 1d6 hours of hard manual labor. It's up to the group to determine how many to retrieve but in the end, only one yellow Lady Slipper is required for the cure, no matter how many heroes are ill.

- **Wharf Hands (1 per Hero):** See page 54.

### THE BARLOOLOO ROOT

Named after the fierce and brutal rooster fighting which took place within the subterranean arena long ago, The Bloody Cockerel now features live human competition. Most matches last until one man cannot withstand any more punishment, but rumors abound of death matches being conducted on special occasions. The Barlooloo root is actually a vile fungus which grows only in the dark, damp soil of The Bloody Cockerel's basement fighting pit. Its intoxicating powers are a miracle in rejuvenating combatants past their normal pain thresholds to a point where pain seems nonexistent, at least until the effects wear off.

All manner of vile life is found in the dark and sweaty pits of the gambling house. Many townsfolk have entered through its large iron doors, never to be seen again. The owner of the house is Tibhrous, a

fat, loathsome, and repulsive man. He's always seen eating fire roasted meat off the bone while drinking pints of ale. His table manners are nonexistent as is his compassion towards others. There isn't any level Tibhrous wouldn't stoop to, in order to win and line his pockets even further.

Read the following as the characters make their way through the large iron doors of The Bloody Cockerel gambling house.

*Step by step you walk down the large stone staircase into the belly of the beast. The air quickly becomes stale and almost rancid from the smell of bodily fluids mixed with massive amounts of human perspiration. Barking from tethered dogs mix with the clamor of the crowd. Cheers from the night's spectacle roar up and down. It's not until you round the corner that you see what all the commotion is about.*

*A ring of thieves, cutthroats, and bandits surround a ten foot deep, twenty by twenty foot pit. Their gambling tickets wave fervently in the air with every jab, punch, and kick. Two bloody gladiators dance around each other like raging bulls, pummeling each other as best they can. A final roar is unleashed by the frantic and bloodthirsty mob as the match finally ends with a winner. A plump, greased up mountain of a man by the name of Tibhrous stands up, waives a turkey leg in one hand and announces the winner and final payouts of the event.*

If the heroes start asking around about the Barlooloo root, or just because they seem to stick out from being cleaner than most patrons, Tibhrous orders a meeting with the group. Tibhrous has no patience and asks what the heroes' intentions are as he suspects they are not here to gamble. He quickly becomes very suspicious and demands an answer. If the adventurers inquire about the Barlooloo root, Tibhrous continues the meeting, otherwise he orders the house guards to escort them out.

Tibhrous is a sporting man and agrees to give the characters some Barlooloo root if they agree to enter combat with a select few of his finest warriors. The crowd gets excited to see such an event and urges the

heroes into accepting the wager. Seeing the crowd's ecstatic reaction to the bet and the allure of making a small fortune, Tibhrous doesn't take no for an answer if the heroes try to refuse.

The group is led to the lower pit entrance, stripped of their weapons, and pushed into the bareknuckle arena. Tibhrous quickly announces the odds and introduces the heroes' opponents. A single pit brawler per hero enters the pit when the mob suddenly goes quiet. The chant of Boorak begins to swell in volume as a titan of a man enters the pit, clearly the house champion. If the heroes manage to survive and Incapacitate all their adversaries, Tibhrous keeps his word and gives them a tin filled with Barlooloo root. If not, their unconscious bodies are thrown out into the dark alley behind the gambling house without any of their weapons.

✂ **Boorak:** See page 53.

✂ **Tibhrous:** See page 54.

• **Pit Warrior (1 per Hero, minus 1):** See page 54.

## THE PHOENIX FEATHER

Journeying to the Tenderloin District of Lankhmar, the heroes reach Cheap Street. Spying the slender stone tower from one of the residential buildings, they stop in front of a white ash door with the name of Kalafaxhtor meticulously engraved in the frame. Just as the group is about to knock on the door or try and make contact with the spellcaster, they hear a voice from the other side of the door say, "Go away!"

The heroes need to come up with some kind of story or reason why Kalafaxhtor should warrant an audience with them. With a successful Persuasion roll, the characters convince the crotchety spellcaster to converse in private. Kalafaxhtor leads the heroes into his business. The interior is not what one would expect of a wizard. Kalafaxhtor's office is very clean and elegantly decorated. There are no potions brewing or dusty tomes of ancient spells lying about. He offers them a seat and eyes them up and down as if analyzing their poisoned condition. Finally sitting

down in a pink and red plush wingback chair, he lights his white ash pipe, takes a puff and waits for the heroes to initiate talks.

If the heroes converse about needing a phoenix feather, Kalafaxhtor's demeanor turns bitterly serious. He dramatically pulls the cuffs of his robe back in disgust.

*Long ago in my more adventurous years, I came upon a phoenix imprisoned by an evil and wretched sorcerer with no name. I released the poor creature who returned the favor by bestowing upon me two magical tail feathers from its flaming and beautifully majestic frame. With my guard down, that vile spellcaster returned and vanquished my newly freed friend, but not before exploding in a wall of smoldering fire and ash, forever scorching that wicked sorcerer's body black as pitch.*

Kalafaxhtor is willing to give the heroes one of his two phoenix feathers in exchange for their uncontested assistance to the Sorcerers' Guild in the near future.

✂ **Kalafaxhtor:** See page 53.

## THE HORN OF THE IVORY HERD

Each one of Lankhmar's gated entrances has a white ivory Sarpula ram's horn affixed atop in case of emergencies. The guards stationed at each entrance need only take the three foot horn in hand and blow with all their might. Each gate has 2-5 guards posted at all times. No local citizens are allowed on the gate's upper tower platforms so it may be tricky to snatch the horn without anyone seeing the theft.

The characters need to come up with some sort of plan to either distract the guards or create some type of useful diversion

so as to lift the horn from its mounted rack on the upper gate tower. The tower is twelve feet high and made of large stone blocks. No benefit from handholds is granted to anyone brave enough to scale the vertical wall. A single interior stairway within the tower is the only physical means of accessing the upper tower platform and the ivory horn itself. There's always one guard on duty outside the tower's lower door which leads to the stairway. This is a critical point in the story as Murra of the Cinder Ash does not aid the heroes if they are unsuccessful in acquiring the ivory horn.

- **Tower Guard (1d4+1):**  
See City Watch profile in *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

## AT DEATH'S DOOR

By this time the heroes are surely feeling the effects of the Jaded Orchid as they return to the shop of Murra of the Cinder Ash. She's



surprised to see they actually made it back alive with all the components. Collecting all four items, she begins brewing a cure for the characters. One by one she adds the three key components into a cauldron and begins brewing her alchemic craft.

It's quite obvious the ivory horn is not part of the cure. Murra of the Cinder Ash throws a shady smile the heroes' way and informs them their fee for the cure is paid in full, all the while caressing her new ivory horn. The cure takes an hour to complete (she takes plenty of time to make sure it casts perfectly) after which she pours each infected member a small vial of the cure. Drinking the foul tasting elixir is horrifying. Each character's body begins convulsing severely until finally going unconscious. Within minutes, the color of each victim's skin begins returning to its natural shade. Each hero regains consciousness fifteen minutes later, fully cured of the Jaded Orchid poison, but with one massive headache.

Eying her new-found trophy, Murra of the Cinder Ash says goodbye to the heroes while accidentally bumping something off her counter. With a successful Notice roll as the old woman bends down to pick it up, the heroes catch a quick glimpse of her arm sticking out from the sleeve of her robes. The skin is burnt to the color of a blackened cinder ash. Standing back up and waving goodbye, she tells the heroes her shop is now closed.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### ✦ BOORAK

The undisputed champion in Lankhmar's underground pit fighting world, he is overly proud of the fact no man has defeated him. He's looked upon as a celebrity and makes a comfortable living being employed by Tinhrous and his gambling house The Bloody Cockerel.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Throwing d8

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 9

**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Quirk ("No man has defeated me!")

**Edges:** Block, Brawler, Brawny, Counterattack, Two-Fisted

**Gear:** None

**Special Abilities:**

- **Size +1:** Boorak stands almost 7' tall and weighs an estimated 300 pounds.

### ✦ KALAFAXHTOR

Kalafaxhtor is one of the elderly sorcerers in Lankhmar who's ventured far and wide for many years. He has seen many unusual creatures, places, and persons which most townsfolk could only dream of witnessing. In his later years, he retired to his home in Lankhmar where he grew into an old and bitter spellcaster. Black Magic has twisted his soul until he is not liked by many. He's perceived as a crotchety old miser who never smiles or knows what happiness feels like. Kalafaxhtor easily holds a lifetime grudge against those he deems warrant his wrath.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d12, Knowledge (Arcana) d12, Notice d10, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d12, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9 (4)

**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Elderly, Jingoistic (Minor), Vengeful (Major)

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Black Magic), Create Talisman, Improved Rapid Recovery, Improved Strong Caster, New Powers, No Mercy, Sorcerer

**Powers:** *Armor, bolt, drain life, entangle, lower Trait, speak language, withering curse.*

**Gear:** Dagger (Str+d4), staff (Str+d4, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands), components.

**Talisman:** Ring of greater protection (grants the wearer +4 Armor).

### ✦ MURRA OF THE CINDER ASH

The elderly owner of a small alchemist store in Lankhmar, her mysterious ways and odd behaviors ward off most uninvited guests. Murra of the Cinder Ash is a true master in the field of brewing potions and cures for many deadly afflictions, both

natural and magical. Her age is unknown but her severely wrinkled and timeworn body induces negative reactions upon first contact. Badly burned long ago, her entire body minus extremities has been charred to a blackened ash color. She wears a robe to hide this secret from all of Lankhmar.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d12+1, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Arcana) d12, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Spellcasting d12+2, Stealth d4, Streetwise d12+1, Taunt d8, Throwing d4

**Cha:** -2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 9 (4)

**Hindrances:** Elderly, Ugly

**Edges:** Arcane Background (White Magic), Create Talisman, Hard to Kill, New Powers, Rapid Recovery, Strong Caster

**Powers:** *Accelerate healing, armor, detect/conceal arcana, dispel, divination, intangibility, light, speak language*

**Gear:** Alchemist journal, alchemist lab, components.

**Talismans:** Robe of protection (+4 Armor), potion of intangibility, potion of accelerated healing.

## PIT WARRIOR

Athletic fighters seeking fame and fortune in Lankhmar's underground pit fighting circuit.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** —

**Edges:** Block

**Gear:** Long sword (Str+d8), axe (Str+d6), or halberd (Str+d8, Reach 1, 2 hands).

## TIBHROUS

Tibhrous is the owner of The Bloody Cockerel, one of the gambling houses in Lankhmar specializing in live gladiatorial combat. An incredibly obese and solid mass of a man, he enjoys the splendor and overindulgence of roasted meats and fine ales. Underneath his massive exterior lies a very intellectual man who possesses a gift for statistical analysis and good old fashioned gambling instincts.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Gambling d12, Intimidation d12, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d8, Taunt d8

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9

**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Greedy (Minor), Obese

**Edges:** Brawny, Command, Named Weapon (Cudgel "Beater")

**Gear:** Beater (Str+d8).

## WHARF HANDS

These laborers, who work on the docks of Lankhmar, perform some of the worst jobs imaginable, from careening hardened chunks of barnacles from the hulls of ships to sorting the leftover carcasses of the day's latest catch.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Boating d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Throwing d6

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** —

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Dagger (Str+d4) or club/belaying pin (Str+d4).

"It was becoming clear that under the saintly Radomix Kistomercus, Lankhmar would more than ever be ruled by foolish fantasy and shameless greed. At moments like these it was easy to understand why the Gods of Lankhmar were so furiously exasperated by their city."

—The Swords of Lankhmar

# MOONLIGHT MADNESS

The Moneylenders' Guild hires the heroes to collect from a reclusive cult known to worship the moon.

## BACKGROUND

From time to time, even the most heroic of adventurers takes a side job or two. Moonlighting one's skills and abilities in performing some dastardly deed or the collection of money owed is always needed in the smog-filled streets of Lankhmar. One of the most predominant locales to acquire such work is near the Thieves' Guild on Murder Alley. There's always a parchment or two posted in the dark alley requesting aid from those possessing a specific skill set.

One such employment opportunity was recently posted by the Moneylenders' Guild. The request is for a band of stout personage to collect a debt owed by the Moonlight Brigade, a reclusive cult of believers who worship the moon in all its illuminating glory. Not much is known of this small faction. They avoid any unwanted publicity and accept very few new acolytes into their midst. Even their locations of worship seem to change unannounced. The Moonlight Brigade is holding its annual full moon festival tomorrow night which is the perfect time to collect the debt.

## THE SUMMONS

No one has stepped forward to accept the debt collection side job and time is running out. The Moneylenders' Guild requests an audience with the heroes as their names have surfaced from past deeds performed throughout Lankhmar.

Upon making their way to the Moneylenders' Guild, the heroes are ushered in to one of the many rooms. A table and chairs are the only furnishings within the bleak room. The door closes and five minutes later, a hooded man enters the room. Read the following as the hooded man addresses the characters.

*"We brought you here for a rather unique task. My brothers and I have heard your names being whispered in the streets by those...let's just say less fortunate and not so well-off. We believe you to possess the right skills for this job. From time to time, our guild lends money to people and organizations with the promise of repayment in a timely fashion. Normally, our so called clients make good on their word, but from time to time, one fails to follow through. If this were any regular collection assignment, we'd have scores of miscreants waiting in line to answer our call, but this one's a little different and*

requires a touch of finesse and sleight of hand. This is where you come in.

*"We want you to collect a debt on behalf of the Moneylenders' Guild from the Moonlight Brigade. The amount owed is irrelevant. We need to make an example of them and why you don't renege on debts owed to us. Your objective is simple. Seek out the Moonlight Brigade and steal their prized religious relic, a giant frost-colored moonstone said to grant insight into the future. Casualties should be kept to a minimum—say, under ten if need be. Oh, and one more thing, you mustn't get caught or implicate the Moneylenders' Guild in any way or it'll be your guts hanging out for sure. We'll take care of discreetly releasing our responsibility after the job is done."*

Payment for this pilfering escapade is 25 gold rilks each, not to mention getting in with the guild's good graces, which could lead to greater opportunities down the road.

## INSIDE INFORMATION

The heroes need to come up with a plan on how they're going to steal the moonstone. With a successful Streetwise roll, the characters find out the following information from city locals.

- Their annual moonlight festival is scheduled to take place at midnight tomorrow night on Festival Street.
- The moonstone is kept in a black-iron box, secured by a complex seven tumbler mechanical lock which only the high priestess is said to know the combination.
- The iron box is brought out just before midnight, opened up under the light of the full moon, and rituals performed.

With a raise, the adventurers overhear the following underground information being secretly conversed.

- The Moonlight Brigade is holding a secret induction ceremony for new prospects or acolytes tonight at the Green Leaf Tenements on the north end of Cheap Street.
- Only those who know the password, *journey*, are allowed entrance into the ceremony.

**Game Master Note:** If the characters do not learn of the secret ceremony occurring tonight, their options are limited and they likely must wait for the festival tomorrow night to enact their plan of stealing the sacred moonstone.

## INITIATION RITES

The heroes learn of the private induction ceremony being held tonight on Cheap Street and make their way to the Green Leaf Tenements. Hoping to obtain more information to aid in stealing the moonstone



tomorrow night, they are greeted at the main entrance by an old woman casually sweeping the day's collection of dust off the front stoop.

She welcomes the heroes and asks what their business is at this late hour. If someone reveals the secret password, the old woman clasps her hands in a slow circular motion, bows humbly before them and whispers for them to make their way to the second floor, fifth door on the left.

The smell of varnished and polished hardwood fills the tenements upon entering. Walking upstairs, the characters come eye to eye with their final destination, a bright white wooden door with no visible lock or handle. With a successful Notice roll while at the door, the heroes hear the melodic chanting of the Moonlight Brigade from behind. Before they knock on the door or make any form of contact, the door suddenly opens to reveal a very beautiful woman dressed in pure-white robes and a moonstone-encrusted gold necklace.

She introduces herself as Feherbay, high priestess of the Moonlight Brigade. Feherbay welcomes the heroes in the same manner as the old woman, bows politely, and ushers them towards a cleansing room while instructing them to prepare for their journey. The sparse cleansing room is furnished with an empty table to place their gear on, a water basin, a vessel of water, and a multitude of hanging white robes. Coming out disguised as potential acolytes, the heroes file in with the other aspirants who are kneeling before the high priestess and a black iron box on a pedestal.

Feherbay begins the ceremony by speaking of the Moonlight Brigade's values, morals, and aspirations of delivering their message to all those deemed unclean. Her tone soon turns a darker shade of enthusiastic glee as she continues the ceremony, defending the cult's discretionary actions in past events. Soon, a male acolyte enters the room with a glass decanter filled with a milky-white liquid. The high priestess begins chanting a rhythmic mantra, encouraging all pledges to join in the droning hymn. Read the following as Feherbay begins the selection

process to weed out those not suited to join the order.

*It is time. You have journeyed far and now we will find out how far you are willing to journey. I hold the life blood of Schebahl, the highest deity and mother nurturer of our faith. Each of you here shall drink of her loving embrace as a testament of devotion and willingness to dedicate your life to her and we who serve. If you are found clean and worthy, you shall rejoice in her everlasting life. If not, then death shall welcome you tonight with its cold embrace. Stay or depart; only you can dictate which journey is yours.*

It's up to the heroes if they want to stay or leave at this point in the ritual. If they leave, they must wait until the festival tomorrow night to steal the moonstone, otherwise they are expected to continue the ceremony by drinking Schebahl's life blood. Unbeknownst to them, the white liquid is nothing more than your average run-of-the-mill pitcher of warm goat milk. The ceremony is intended to weed out those not susceptible to the brigade's influence and keep those easiest to manipulate as loyal, serving acolytes.

Passing the ceremonial test, Feherbay welcomes them into the Moonlight Brigade while moving towards the black iron box. Clicking the seven mechanical tumblers in order, she opens the box to reveal an empty black velvet cushion. With a successful Notice roll, the heroes catch a glimpse of four of the tumblers signs as she opens the lock—five with a raise.

If asked about the missing jewel, she says it's being cleansed for tomorrow's ceremony where they shall bear witness to their most cherished and spiritual artifact of the Moonlight Brigade, the eye of Schebahl. Bidding them farewell, Feherbay instructs them to gather their possessions and meet her tomorrow night just before midnight at the moonlight festival dressed in their new white robes.

✧ **Feherbay:** See page 60.

• **Acolytes (1 per Hero):** See page 60.

## THE MOONLIGHT FESTIVAL

The atmosphere is exhilarating on the night of the moonlight festival. Crowds are gathering on Festival Street under the bright light of a rather large and magnificent full moon. White circular orbs and decorations line the street. The smell of fire-roasted meat mixed with exotic perfumes looms through the smoke-filled air of the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes.

A white open-walled canopy is erected in the middle of Festival Street. Members of the Moonlight Brigade begin to gather underneath the structure. A second smaller enclosed tent is located just outside the vaulted spiritual area, guarded by several acolytes. Within the tent rests the locked black iron box with the sacred moonstone inside. Opening the box requires a Lockpicking roll at a -4 penalty.

The heroes arrive at the festival either dressed in white robes and in plain sight or not dressed in robes and hidden, or a mixture of both. It's time to enact the plan for stealing the moonstone from the Moonlight Brigade. Be open to whatever actions the heroes try in stealing the prized gem. If the heroes were at the initiation ceremony the night before and made their Notice roll to see the lock's tumbler signs, they are granted a +1 bonus to Lockpicking the black iron box's mechanical lock, +2 if the Notice roll was made with a raise.

Some useful actions the characters may try are causing some sort of diversion to distract the crowd's attention while others pilfer the moonstone from the small tent. Or the direct route of masquerading as members of the brigade and persuading their way into the tent to snatch the sacred orb. Whatever the plan, the group has only a short time before the festival is to begin and the black iron box brought out and opened.

If the heroes are seen thieving or caught in the act, Feherbay and her acolytes do everything in their power to detain them, and if need be, eliminate them all together.

If they are successful in opening the

black iron box, they find a rather beautiful frost-colored moonstone on a black velvet cushion with a small parchment note behind it reading:

*We foresaw your coming and know who thou are so take this impostor to your master or death shall not be far. Your vile act of thieving shall spark revenge from the Moonlight Brigade.*

✧ **Feherbay:** See page 60.

• **Acolytes (20):** See page 60.

## AFTER MADNESS

Successfully pilfering the fake moonstone, the heroes look on as two white robed acolytes enter the small tent to retrieve the black iron box. Read the following as the two hooded figures carry it to a small pedestal under the bright light of the full moon.

*Feherbay stands before the crowd with a look of peace on her face. She conducts several ritualistic motions and mantras as melodic chanting begins flowing from her flock of acolytes. The hypnotic tones are mesmerizing and altogether beautiful. The stroke of midnight approaches as the high priestess unlocks the black iron box.*

*The chanting immediately stops and silence grips the crowd. Not a single soul stirs under the moon's glowing light. With a final prayer, Feherbay steps aside and opens the lid. Gasps erupt through the crowd as all present view a giant crimson red opal resting delicately atop a black velvet cushion.*

Cries of thievery are shouted from the mass of onlookers as tensions begin to mount. Feherbay tries to calm the crowd and finally brings them somewhat under control. Turning to acknowledge everyone and her acolytes, she announces this desecration towards the Moonlight Brigade is an omen from Schebahl herself. Grasping her moonstone-encrusted necklace which grants her the ability to control her lycanthropic transformation, she starts chanting under her breath. A thick cloud of white mist suddenly surrounds and

engulfs Feherbay as she announces the Moonlight Brigade's right of revenge for the defilement of Schebahl and her servants.

A cry of pain bursts from within the white mist as a large female werewolf suddenly explodes out of the milky veil and into the crowd attacking anyone within reach. Feherbay is in a blood frenzy and knows not what she's doing while under the influence of the full moon. Her acolytes huddle together under the large canopy and perform no actions. The heroes are responsible for Feherbay's ravenous and bloodthirsty slaughtering of innocent townsfolk. Unfortunately, their only option is to eliminate her as no amount of reasoning deters her attacks.

✂ **Feherbay (Werewolf):** See page 60.

## DEBT repaid

After vanquishing Feherbay, her body transforms back into her human form. The Moonlight Brigade quickly takes her body and slithers back into the dark shadows of Lankhmar's streets. The festival is all but ruined. A Notice roll at -4 catches a glint of moonlight on the street reflecting from Feherbay's moonstone necklace. The characters make their way to the Moneylenders' Guild to repay the Moonlight Brigade's debt.

It is up the heroes how to proceed. If they do not divulge the moonstone as a fake to the guild, the guild pays their commissioned 25 gold rilks each plus an extra 25 each for their heroic actions at the festival. If they do reveal the moonstone as a fake, the guild pays only their commissioned rate, takes the moonstone, and tells the heroes to leave. If they reveal the moonstone but offer the necklace as a

replacement, the Guild is thrilled, paying them 100 gold rilks each. On its own, the necklace is worth 500 gold rilks though it can be sold at most for 250. Regardless of the outcome, the Moneylenders' Guild tells the group they are favored by the guild and more side jobs may come their way. Such is the life of a hero in the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes.



# HEROES AND VILLAINS

## ACOLYTES

Faithful followers of the Moonlight Brigade who devote their lives to the order.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d6, Knowledge (Religion) d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d4

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** —

**Edges:** Priest

**Gear:** Dagger (Str+d4).

## FEHERBAY

She is the leader of the Moonlight Brigade and worshiper of Schebahl and is very influential over the weak minded. Blessed by the Wolf God as a child, she hides her affliction from all of Lankhmar. If not for her magical Necklace of Moonlight, holding back her transformations during a full moon, she would have been found out long ago.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Religion) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d12, Spellcasting d8, Streetwise d8

**Cha:** +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Vow (Major—Schebahl)

**Edges:** Arcane Background (White Magic), Arcane Zealot, Attractive, Charismatic, Command, Level Headed, Priestess

**Powers:** *Detect/conceal arcana, mind reading.*

**Gear:** Dagger (Str+d4), Necklace of Moonlight (a werewolf will not transform during a full moon when worn), components.

## FEHERBAY (WEREWOLF)

In Nehwon, humans become werewolves through powerful curses or sometimes “blessings” from the gods. Such creatures remain mortal and often control their bestial form, though with more primal thoughts. They still must change with each full moon and are vulnerable to silver weapons, but cannot infect others with their condition.

Feherbay at one time controlled her beast form but after finding the necklace of moonlight, she kept it restrained for years. She doesn’t realize the other side of her personality has gone insane from imprisonment, and she can never control it again.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d12, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Swimming d10, Stealth d10, Tracking d10

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 7

### Special Abilities:

- **Bloodlust:** Feherbay must Wild Attack every round she is in melee, but ignores all wound modifiers while in the thrall of her bloodlust.
- **Claws:** Str+d8.
- **Fear (-2):** Werewolves chill the blood of all who see them.
- **Improved Frenzy:** Feherbay may make two Fighting attacks each action at no penalty.
- **Infra-vision:** Werewolves can see heat and halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Weakness (Silver):** Werewolves suffer +4 damage from silver weapons.

“So they'll slay us by spells and incantations. Failing which, they'll resort to cudgels and gizzard-cutters.” He shook his head. “So much hate over a little cash. Lankhmarts are ingrates. They don't realize the tone we give their city, the excitement we provide.”

—The Swords of Lankhmar

## NIKHTO'S MISFORTUNES

The group receives complimentary divinations from Nikhto of the Guided Hand from an employer.

### BACKGROUND

Lankhmar is full of magic and mystery, though these are most often found in the dark corners and alleyways of the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes. There are places where both magic and mystery are openly for sale, the fortune teller shops and tents dotted throughout Lankhmar. Their bits, baubles, stones, and powders always seem to be in high demand among Lankhmar's citizens, but none so much as the desire to see the future by getting one's fortune told.

One of the jewels in Lankhmar's fortune telling arena is Nikhto of the Guided Hand. Her small but ornately decorated dwelling is located on the northern end of Cheap Street. A large green sign with a pointing hand emblazoned on both sides hangs from an iron rod just above the entrance to her shop. Nikhto of the Guided Hand is revered by most as an extremely accurate oracle and teller of fortunes who always ends her readings with savory imported fortune cakes.

Not every patron who visits Nikhto of the Guided Hand is a satisfied customer. One

client in particular has a hatred for the old woman and has vowed to get even with her for the painful, yet truthful, clandestine fortune she read to him. To acquire his revenge, he hired an Eastern sorcerer to place a curse on the latest shipment of fortune cakes before they were delivered to the aging woman's shop.

The curse is one of symbolic transformation. The victim eating the cake and reading the fortune transforms bit by bit into the animal the fortune inside is referencing. Only by finding the one who hexed the tasty treats can the plight be undone to any who consumed and befell this devilish spell.

### I GOT TWO TICKETS

The heroes just finished performing guard duty for one of the local merchants, who unfortunately doesn't have the means to pay them. In fine bartering style, the shop keeper offers the heroes an all-inclusive mystical reading by the one and only Nikhto of the Guided Hand. The merchant boasts the value of the fortune telling session to be well over 20 gold rilk for sure. He himself was a poor penniless beggar until he received his reading from the psychic who foretold his upcoming wealth and proprietorship.

The heroes have nothing to lose at this point and with a successful Smarts roll, they remember various stories and good things that have come to those visiting fortune tellers in the past. If the group needs prodding to attend a reading from Nikhto of the Guided Hand, the owner tells them he is able to pay them half their 50 gold rilks owed but it will take time so they may as well have their fortunes read. That is the best he can do at this time.

Making their way to the shop of Nikhto of the Guided Hand, the heroes view a young girl leaving and dancing away from the fortune teller's shop. A big smile runs across her face as if she just received the greatest news in her life. Read the following as the group enters the supernatural and mysterious dwelling. They are greeted by an midaged woman with a multitude of colored shawls draped over and around her lithe frame.

*"Come in, come in. Don't let the flies enter or the soup will get cold. Ah, I see you come for a reading from the great Nikhto of the Guided Hand. You want your fortunes*

*told, your deepest desires unraveled. You want to peer into the future to seek your true love or the past to say farewell to a cherished loved one struck down in their prime. I and I alone can do these miracles of wonderment. Sit, sit around my table. Close your eyes, and open your minds. Be not afraid at what you may see as nothing can hurt while I am here."*

Nikhto of the Guided Hand continues with the magical reading of the heroes. Most things are vague enough that they could be very plausible to most anyone's life. Someone secretly loves one of the characters or an adventurer will discover unexpected wealth within the next week, are examples of general readings. It isn't until she comes to one hero (Game Master's choice) that her demeanor turns frightfully scary. Leaning towards the chosen member, she foretells of a dark omen soon to befall the hero. She witnesses a vision of a black ominous creature bursting through them, body and soul.

Nikhto of the Guided Hand quickly ends the session as she is truly terrified of the



vision she just saw. To lighten things up and collect her nerves and poise, she offers each hero a deliciously decadent imported fortune cake on their way out. Each one has a simple fortune inside, but the real treasure is the cake itself. Many speak of the spectacular explosion of flavors filling her imported fortune cakes. Unbeknownst to the heroes and Nikhto of the Guided Hand, these are in fact the cursed cakes as mentioned earlier.

✧ **Nikhto of the Guided Hand:** See page 66.

## ANIMAL MAGNETISM

The following is a list of fortunes found inside the cursed cakes. Either choose or roll a 1d10 for each hero who bites into their tasty and flavor-filled cake. Reroll any fortunes already rolled until a new one is obtained. Choosing a fortune works best if the animal is significantly different from the character.

1d10	Fortune
1	<i>Overseeing truths shall make you flat; you shall forever roam the streets as blind as a bat.</i>
2	<i>You plod and drag like one with a fever; from this day forward you'll be as busy as a beaver.</i>
3	<i>Your fists become weapons when in a jam; your nature now shall be as gentle as a lamb.</i>
4	<i>Meals come plenty throughout your course; from now till death you'll be as hungry as a horse.</i>
5	<i>You are the hero most need not rely on; forever forward you shall be as brave as a lion.</i>
6	<i>Your dexterity through life has not been well; after today you'll be as graceful as a gazelle.</i>
7	<i>Kindness opens a door with gentle knocks; from this day on you shall be as sly as a fox.</i>
8	<i>Pride and arrogance bellows within your house; after today you shall be as quiet as a mouse.</i>

1d10	Fortune
9	<i>Your eagerness and persistence has been your fuel; but now when asked you shall be as stubborn as a mule.</i>
10	<i>Health has steered you through the fog; from this day on you'll be as sick as a dog.</i>

After reading all their fortunes, the heroes may do whatever they please at this juncture. It isn't until about thirty minutes later that each hero who consumed the tasty wares begins to feel a little sick. With a successful Vigor roll, the hero may attribute the nauseous feeling to outdated flour. On a failure, the hero gains one level of Fatigue as the effects of food poisoning seem to be settling in.

Another thirty minutes goes by when anyone that consumed the cakes begins to feel a random part of their body start to take on the appearance of the animal in their fortune cake. Roll on the table below for the part of the body affected.

1d6	Body Part
1	Left Arm
2	Right Leg
3	Head
4	Left Leg
5	Right Arm
6	Torso/Back

Every hour after, a new roll on the table is made for another body part to begin transforming, rerolling any locations already rolled until a new location is selected.

**GM Note:** The transformation of bodily limbs is not an exact replica of the selected animal. Heroes only take on a hybrid appearance of their chosen beast. They still remain bipedal creatures but may possess hooves for hands, horns jutting from their head, wings attached to their back, a fluffy tail and so on. If at any time the heroes fail a group Stealth roll while trying to sneak through the city's streets, they are met with city guards who try to detain them.

- **Guards (1d4 per failed group Stealth roll):** Use the City Watch profile in *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.

At the first transformation, the characters gain Hindrance for their animal below. They also suffer a -4 Charisma penalty if a transformed body part is revealed. A single arm or leg is fairly easy to hide where heads and torsos are much harder. When the specific body part listed for each animal transforms, the character gains the Special Ability or Edge for that animal. A full transformation occurs after six hours when each hero gains the listed Edge, Hindrance, or Special Ability for their animal and the Charisma penalty is always applied.

Animal	Notes
Bat	<b>Body Part:</b> Torso <b>Hindrance:</b> Anemic <b>Flying:</b> Pace 8"
Beaver	<b>Body Part:</b> Torso <b>Hindrance:</b> Overconfident <b>Aquatic:</b> Pace 8"
Lamb	<b>Body Part:</b> Head <b>Hindrance:</b> Pacifist (Minor) <b>Edge:</b> Alertness
Horse	<b>Body Part:</b> Legs <b>Hindrance:</b> All Thumbs <b>Edge:</b> Fleet-Footed
Lion	<b>Body Part:</b> Head <b>Hindrance:</b> Bloodthirsty <b>Edge:</b> Brave
Gazelle	<b>Body Part:</b> Legs <b>Hindrance:</b> Cautious <b>Edge:</b> Acrobat
Fox	<b>Body Part:</b> Arms <b>Hindrance:</b> Curious <b>Edge:</b> Thief
Mouse	<b>Body Part:</b> Head <b>Hindrance:</b> Yellow <b>Edge:</b> Danger Sense
Mule	<b>Body Part:</b> Legs <b>Hindrance:</b> Stubborn <b>Edge:</b> Fleet-Footed
Dog	<b>Body Part:</b> Head <b>Hindrance:</b> Loyal <b>Edge:</b> Strong Willed

## THE BUTCHER'S BILL

Unless concealed or covered in some manner, the heroes have a particularly hard time making their way through the smoky streets of Lankhmar without gasps of horror or hushed whispers unfolding from every direction. Some may even mistake them for twisted black wizards (see **Black Magic Backlash** in *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*).

Being seen out in the open during any period of transformation causes quite a stir. The heroes' only real option at this time is to try and sneak back to Nikhto of the Guided Hand without being seen. A successful group Stealth roll is required to make it to the fortune shop unseen taking 3d20 minutes.

Arriving at the small fortune shop, the heroes unfortunately find it closed for lunch. A note on the door informs the group that she has taken lunch at her favorite place, Butcher's Block Hall, a savory, charcoal-fueled, open-fire, roasting house just nearby. Some of the best cuts and most tender slices of meats are said to be served there.

Arriving at Butcher's Block Hall, the heroes enter into a world of meat roasting like no other. Fowl, beef, pork, and a plethora of other exotic meats permeate the air. If the group is not fully cloaked, their appearance brings a hush to the hall, in which case the head roast master comes out with a rather large and sharp butcher's axe to see what the hubbub is about. Seeing the hybrid semi-animal heroes almost makes the butcher heave in disgust and he shouts to them to leave immediately. If pushed and with a successful Intimidation roll, he finally gives in and lets them stay but only for a short while.

With a successful Notice roll, the heroes locate Nikhto of the Guided Hand sitting and eating a prime cut of mutton with a side of ox tail soup. She's surprised at the heroes' changed appearance and asks what happened to them. After a short conversation at the table, it's theorized that

the fortune cakes must have been tampered with by some form of curse or spell.

The soothsayer's face goes ghostly white as she covers her mouth with her aged hand. Looking at the group with sorrow-filled eyes, she conveys that she can think of only one person evil and vengeful enough to have pulled this off, Kazzimeer the Seed Sower. The heroes' complete transformation should be approaching at this time. Nikhto tells the group that Kazzimeer the Seed Sower can be found in the northern Tenderloin District. He owns a quaint flower seed and grain store called the Rainy Day.

## A HORRIBLE HARVEST

Making their way to the Rainy Day seed store is a difficult journey. With another successful group Stealth roll at -2 and another 3d20 minutes, they sneak through the crowded stone streets and bypass any confrontations. Upon entering the sad little retail store, a rake-thin old man stands behind a counter with a scowl frozen across his face. Read the following as he eyes the hybrid group over and lets out a maniacal laughter.

*"Has the charlatan's herd come here to graze or is this a social call? I see you've been a (in a sheep voice) baaaaaad boy. You go back and tell that witch that this is only the start of her penance, as all of Lankhmar shall know what happens when they visit that lying, cheating, conniving, and deceitful hag of an impostor. Be gone now, I have work to do."*

There is little the heroes can do to persuade Kazzimeer the Seed Sower to agree to help the group in lifting the curse. He is too bitter inside to willingly aid them.

With a successful Notice roll, the heroes catch him looking at a rather beautiful red and white rose, the pride and joy of his sad and lonely existence and only true accomplishment in life. With a raise, the heroes can see that he is trying to position himself in between the flower and the heroes as if defending the potted plant. If the rose is used as leverage against

Kazzimeer the Seed Sower, he finally breaks and agrees to assist in lifting the curse. The only things he requires are the rest of the fortune cakes to successfully end the hex.

✧ **Kazzimeer the Seed Sower:** See page 66.

## ROUND AND ROUND WE GO

The heroes scramble back to the fortune teller's shop which takes another 3d20 minutes and requires another group Stealth roll at -3 due to the increasing complication of trying to conceal their transformation. The store remains closed with Nikhto of the Guided Hand nowhere in sight. With a successful Lockpicking roll, the heroes manage to break into the mystic's store and collect the rest of the fortune cakes. The only downside to this is they have been seen breaking in and word is spreading that a band of crazed, half-animal, half-human creatures are breaking into businesses to rob them blind.

Trying to get back to the Rainy Day seed store after the alarm has gone up is extremely difficult to say the least. It takes the heroes 5d20 minutes and one last successful group Stealth roll at -4 to duck and hide their way through the now alert city guards and townsfolk. Another hour or so should have gone by at this time when the group knocks on the door of the Rainy Day seed store. Entering, they find Kazzimeer sitting down as he initially gasps at their horrific transformations then smiling at their discomfort, he gets up and asks the hybrid heroes if they truly want him to perform the ritual to stop the transformation and give up their new abilities.

Regardless of the answer, he laughs at the heroes and tells them the following:

*"You're such fools! Do you really think I'd take the chance of being hanged for performing such black magic, much less spend the money to have something so powerful cast? The curse was never permanent. I just wanted you running*

around town and back to Nikhto's shop to frighten folks and ensure no one *ever* goes to her for another fortune again.

*"Within an hour you'll be back to normal idiotic selves and Nikhto will be ruined... just like she ruined me."*

He spits out the final words venomously. Blinded by his quest for unwarranted vengeance, he has no thought for the enemies he afflicted, tormented, and insulted standing in his shop...alone with him. The heroes likely want vengeance of their own, and this is their opportunity to get it. They likely have several options open to them but give a Benny to the player who thinks of feeding Kazzimeer the rest of the cursed fortune cakes. If they leave him to his curse, the characters later hear of a horrifying chimeric creature killed by the guard in the Tenderloin district.

Now is also a good time to return to the original fortunes told to the heroes by Nikhto. The hero who would discover wealth finds a chest in Kazzimeer's shop containing 300 gold rilks, and perhaps a admirer secretly in love with the other character has heard of their ordeal and shows up with a covered wagon to help them get to a safe place until the transformation wears off.

Indeed, every 10 minutes, one of the transformed locations reverts back, such that an hour later, the heroes are fully back to their original forms.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### ✧ NIKHTO OF THE GUIDED HAND

A fortune teller her entire adult life, she has honed her craft exceptionally well. With the aid of her crystal ball, Nikhto of the Guided Hand has predicted very accurate fortunes for many citizens of Lankhmar who revere her as a local celebrity. The exotic and savory fortune cakes she gives her customers are one of the most talked about and delectable treats in the city.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Arcana) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d12+2, Spellcasting d6, Streetwise d6

**Cha:** +2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 4

**Hindrances:** Overconfident

**Edges:** Arcane Background (White Magic), Charismatic, Strong Caster

**Powers:** *Detect/conceal arcana, divination*

**Gear:** Crystal ball.

### ✧ KAZZIMEER THE SEED SOWER

Living in Lankhmar all his life, he used to be a predominant grains distributor until receiving an unfortunate psychic reading from Nikhto of the Guided Hand. Not heeding her guidance, he lost everything in life. Holding a grudge against the fortune teller, he vows vengeance in exposing her as a charlatan and a fraud. He'll go to any lengths to get even with her.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Knowledge (Botany) d8, Notice d6, Streetwise d6

**Cha:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Mean, Vengeful (Major)

**Gear:** Gardening tools.



# PEARLS OF ILLICIAM

Someone has stolen the largest, most valuable, pearls ever discovered from Azarhoth's Treasury—and the Overlord himself sets the prize for returning them at 500 gold rilks!

## BACKGROUND

Many creatures live and thrive in the dark depths of the cold murky waters off the coasts of Lankhmar. Most are mere predatory beasts swimming in search of their next meal with no motive or ambition in life or cognitive reasoning beyond perpetuating their very existence. There are however some creatures which thrive underneath this watery curtain of savagery who not only hunt for food to survive but possess a reason for carrying out their brutal actions.

The Illicytes, a multi-toothed carnivorous horde of scaly seafaring creatures which raid unsuspecting outposts and sailing vessels, are one such menace. Their most notable feature (beyond their fins, scales, claws, and large dagger-size teeth) is a protruding long rod of tissue jutting out of their heads ending in a glowing bulb of light at the tip. They use these lighted beacons to entrance and lure their prey in and attack them with unsettling barbarism and fervor. Not knowing their origin or

species by name, sailors usually refer to these underwater breathing warriors as *Devils of the Deep* or *Deep Devils*.

Few people from Lankhmar have ever encountered Illicytes. Those who have are surviving sailors luckily left afloat on debris after being assaulted by an army of these carnivorous devils from the deep. No one truly knows their culture, way of life, or even how long they live. One crucial fact virtually all land-breathers (the term they refer to humans as) do not know is all Illicytes are born from spherical hardened white egg sacks. Once born, their growth rate is astounding. A male Illicyte warrior can fully mature within two days of hatching, given an abundant food source of fresh meat.

The bulky fishing boat, the *Slippery Eel*, recently made port in Lankhmar toting its day's catch of fresh fish. While trolling the deep coastal waters the day before, the salty sailors snared a grand fortune from the bottom of the sea. Bringing in their nets, the mariners retrieved six magnificent white pearls the size and likes of which no man has ever seen before. Unbeknownst to all, these gargantuan sized priceless pearls are in fact Illicyte warrior eggs, about to hatch and wreak havoc on the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes.

## WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE

The heroes awake to the chiming of bells and shouting from one of the city's heralds. Read the following as the adventurers prepare for a new day in the smoke-filled streets of Lankhmar.

*The repeated clanging of bells continues on as a crowd begins to amass outside. Peering out, you see a young herald atop a wooden stump calling attention to all those within the sound of his brass bell. Unrolling a parchment, the boy begins reading the latest news to the now-excited sea of city folk.*

*"Hear ye, hear ye. By order of his majesty the Overlord of Lankhmar, a reward of 500 gold rilks be granted to any who recover the six pearls of fortune, stolen two nights past from Azarhoth's Treasury. A bounty of 200 additional rilks be assured for the capture and return of the thieves behind the robbery, be them dead or alive."*

The crier continues repeating the news a couple of more times and then moves on. With a successful Smarts roll, the heroes remember hearing about the six gigantic pearls collected from the seabed a few days ago dubbed the *Pearls of Fortune*. They were stored in Azarhoth's Treasury vault for safe keeping which was supposed to be an impenetrable vault. The six pearls were slated to secure compensation for new developments and renovation within the city of Lankhmar.

## BANKERS HOURS

The heroes venture through the streets of Lankhmar to the establishment known as Azarhoth's Treasury, the scene of the crime. They are met by Fitzburt, a rather rotund and high-class dandy of a man. He welcomes the characters into the front room and asks what kind of business they want to conduct in such a tragic time, referring to the stolen pearls. Fitzburt scoffs at any answer other than actual treasury business of storing valuable items in the vault located in the back room. If asked about the two day delay in offering the

reward, he simpers and implies they tried to handle it quietly at first.

With a successful Persuasion roll at -2 due to his wary nature along with a good story from the adventurers, Fitzburt's demeanor towards the heroes shifts enough to grant them access to the vault area for a quick investigation, with Fitzburt present at all times to keep an eye on them.

The vault room is quite stark upon entering. Only a large fully-sealed, metal-worked vault rests in the room. A triple-set keyed lock built directly into the vault's swinging iron door awaits any thief wanting to gain access. Three ornately-shaped keys of differing designs are required to open the monstrous crypt. Fitzburt tells the heroes each key is located in three different places for security reasons. Only by setting up an official appointment do all three keys come together to open the vault, hence the moniker of being impenetrable.

After looking closer at the heavy door, the heroes realize it appears to be unlocked. Fitzburt confirms this by opening the massive tomb to reveal an empty safe. This is how Azarhoth left the vault two days ago when they discovered the pearls missing from the locked vault. They were the only items in storage at the time, so there was no reason to lock it back. With a successful Notice roll at -2, the heroes spy something in the corner of the vault's floor. Upon closer inspection, they find a fine line of gray powder much like volcanic ash. Looking about the entire vault, more lines along the floor's seams and corners become apparent.

At this point, Azarhoth enters the room and immediately becomes enraged. He looks directly at Fitzburt and demands an explanation. If the heroes try to interject, he cuts them off with a highbrow scoff and waits for Fitzburt to explain. Only if the characters divulge the mysterious gray powder does Azarhoth calm down long enough to listen. Otherwise, he commands the adventurers to leave at once or be arrested and thrown into jail where they'll rot for a long time. Azarhoth means business. Be sure to convey Azarhoth's

importance and prestigious reputation within Lankhmar if the heroes try anything foolish.

✧ **Azarhoth:** See page 72.

• **Fitzburt:** See page 72.

## SECRETS REVEALED

Further investigation into the vault's locking mechanism reveals it to have not been tampered with. The only clue to the break-in is the finely-granulated gray powder. With a successful roll or Smarts roll at -4, the heroes believe the powder to be a burnt byproduct of metal heated to extreme temperatures. It is as if the floor was struck with some sort of volatile source of heat or flame or a combination of both along the outline of the floor.

A section of Lankhmar's sewers runs directly underneath Azarhoth's Treasury. A band of cunning thieves tunneled their way through the sewer's stone roofing straight up to the vault's floor. With an extremely unstable alchemic burning paste, which produces a searing flame able to burn through metal, they burned through the vault's floor and retrieved the pearls. Holding it back in place, they chemically welded the flooring just enough to appear as if nothing ever happened.

The floor's metal welds can only support around 500 pounds before breaking, sending the vault's bottom twenty feet down through the tunnel and into the sewer below. Anyone in the vault when this occurs takes 2d6+2 falling damage as they slam into the sewer's stone walkway below.

## I SMELL A RAT

Making their way through the vault's hidden entrance, they heroes find themselves in a maze of dark, foul-smelling sewers. Most people dare not venture underneath Lankhmar for fear of disease-carrying vermin or plagues in general. Only members of the Ratcatchers' Guild regularly traverse the sunken, dank corridors below Lankhmar's streets in

search of rats. It's dangerous working as a ratcatcher as they straddle the border between Lankhmar Above and Lankhmar Below, trying to keep the vermin out of the upper city without overly angering the denizens of the lower city.

Illumination within the sewer system of Lankhmar is considered Dark, inflicting a -2 penalty to all attack rolls. Only with sufficient light from a torch, lantern, or magical means may a person safely navigate the twists and turns of endless watery passages.

It doesn't take long before the characters encounter the vermin residing in the sewers. Read the following as the heroes are about to venture out into the underground labyrinth.

*Just as you are about to start out in search of those responsible for stealing the pearls of fortune, you see a faint, eerie glow from up around the rightmost bend. Standing your ground, you wait for this mystery person or persons to reveal themselves, hoping it to be the thieves you're looking for. High-pitched squeals and squeaks begin to mount from around the corner. A flood of rats burst from the sharp turn and charge straight at you down the walkway.*

*The light brightens and finally rounds the passage, floating above the water like a lone star in the midnight sky. Seconds pass as the lighted orb comes closer and closer down the deep waterway when you ready yourself for anything. The shadowy shape of a small boat begins to take form. A lean-looking man greets you while holding a lantern. He's obviously one of the many ratcatchers at work chasing down a swarm of rats.*

If the heroes ask the ratcatcher if he's seen anyone or anything out of the ordinary as of late, he tells them the rats have been unusually restless the last couple of days, as if someone is driving them out from their nests. He tells the characters the most rodent activity has been in and around the areas under Cheap Street and Murder Alley near the Thieves' Guild. He also tells them if they ever get lost while down in the bowels of Lankhmar's sewers, to

just make camp and wait for another of his brethren to arrive and help. He relays directions towards the Thieves' Guild to the characters and bids them farewell, poling his boat down the reeking waters in search of more rats to catch and fill his weekly quota.

Following those directions, the group navigates the darkened underground maze of sewage-filled waterways until they come to a fork in the sewers. Per the ratcatcher's directions, the right fork leads to the Thieves' Guild. As they stand before the passages, a massive rat swarm barrels out from the left fork, traverses over the walkway bridge, and attacks the heroes.

- **Ratcatcher (1):** See page 73.
- **Rat Swarm (1):** See page 73.

## FOLLOW THE BREAD CRUMBS

Finishing off the vermin horde, the heroes catch their breath before continuing. A successful Smarts roll reveals a swarm that large must have been provoked to lash out and attack with reckless abandon instead of fleeing past them. With a successful Notice roll, the vermin slayers see what looks like a trail of blood drops leading down the left fork. With a raise, they spy the leftover remains of a human finger amidst the pool of dead rats.

Read the following as the heroes continue down the left sewer passage.

*Step by slippery step you proceed down the vile sewer as drops of crimson-red blood dot the stone walkway like raindrops falling from a passing cloud. Another finger lies on the ground covered in blood, a rat gnawing at what's left of the visceral tissue. A few more steps and an entire hand comes into view, then a shredded boot with only part of a foot jutting out, followed by more half-eaten and blood-covered appendages. Seconds later it hits you like a hammer crashing down on an anvil, the unmistakable iron-rich infused smell of blood, lots and lots of blood.*

*Squeaks of vermin begin to swell in volume as you advance farther into the*

*dark abyss. Your eyes adjust not only to the minimal amount of light underground but to the ghastly scene coming into view. Horrifyingly, you see a mass of human blood, tissue, and bones lying heaped in a pile directly in front of you. Rats scurry about jockeying for position in finding the best parts of leftover meat to chew on. The carnivorous onslaught almost sickens you when something reflects off your light source from behind the mound of putrefying flesh.*

Investigating behind the pile of human compost reveals one of the gigantic pearls of fortune, but not in the shape one expects a hardened round pearl to be in. It appears to have been struck by a force strong enough to shatter it into a million pieces of varying sizes and shapes.

If needed a successful Smarts roll concludes the stack of human remains is almost certainly from the thieves who stole the pearls. With a raise, one possibility of their gruesome fate could be someone double-crossing them, leaving their remains to be consumed by the hordes of ravenous rats, thus eradicating any evidence of the heist. The pearl most likely was collateral damage during the altercation.

## LIKE A MOTH TO A FLAME

Continuing another five minutes down the left fork only leads the characters to a dead end. Backtracking the way they came, they reach the fork in the sewers leading to the Thieves' Guild. Read the following as the heroes plod onward towards the guild house, only to encounter a horrific surprise.

*Enduring the stagnant foul smell permeating from every part of your being, you head to the Thieves' Guild. The sound of ripples in the water resonates off the stone walls as the tiny pitter patter of squeaking rats advancing towards you increases in volume. Another orb of light hangs over the murky sewer waters as it floats effortlessly towards you, swinging ever so slightly back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.*

The light is not from another ratcatcher's lantern, but from the end of an Illicyte warrior's lighted orb who tries to hypnotize the group and attack. Only heroes who successfully resist the Illicyte warrior's entrancing effect are dealt a card and act in the first round. Hearing the ear-shrieking cries of his brethren, a second Illicyte warrior enters the fray from underneath the water and attacks at the beginning of the third round or earlier if the first warrior is eliminated before then.

✂ **Illicyte Warrior (2):** See page 72.

## FILLET-O-FISH

After overcoming the Illicyte warriors, the characters clearly see a gruesome trail of bloody human bits and pieces leading towards the general area underneath the Thieves' Guild. The path of carnage finally ends in a large twenty foot square collecting basin. This room is built to store the flowing water from various sewer tunnels around the area and unfortunately for the heroes, is a perfect nursery for hatching Illicyte warriors.

If the characters haven't figured out by now the Pearls of Fortune are eggs, it becomes very apparent from viewing the remains of five shattered giant pearls on the walkway surrounding the collecting basin. Strewn about the mix of pearl pieces, the heroes see an almost half-intact pearl egg shell, thus cementing the theory these nautical savage hunters did in fact hatch from these beautiful white orbs of death.

The water flows in from small tunnels high on the walls so the only immediate way out of the area is by climbing one of two ladders leading to the surface located on the opposite side of the room. At the top of each ladder, an iron latticed plate covers the exit, letting rain water filter into the collecting basin. Approaching the exit, the heroes easily see the metal grates have been battered and twisted completely open. Surfacing, the heroes find themselves just around the corner from the Thieves' Guild on Death Alley and alone.



Cries of terror suddenly erupt just ahead of the heroes on Cheap Street. Then, even more bloodcurdling screams explode from behind the heroes on Plague Court. The remaining Illicyte warriors, two groups of two, are attacking innocent citizens with bloodthirsty zeal as they try to make their way back to the waterfront docks of Lankhmar. The Illicyte warriors only stop to fight when engaged; otherwise they instinctively run as fast as they can towards the water's edge.

Unless the heroes split up and tackle both groups of crazed Illicyte warriors at the same time, many of Lankhmar's populace succumb to the violent and barbarous attacks of the Illicyte group not confronted by the heroes who successfully flee the city.

✧ **Illicyte Warrior (4):** See page 72.

## PEARLS OF MISFORTUNE

Eliminating the Illicyte warriors before escaping, the heroes are bombarded with questions from townsfolk who stare in shock and awe at the very sight of these aquatic deep devils. The city guards arrive and finally restore order. An old one-armed man points at the fishmen and begins uttering "Devils of the Deep" over and over.

At this time the heroes should discern the truth behind the pearls of fortune—or misfortune, as they soon are labeled. With the frightening and grotesque evidence exhumed from the sewers, the heroes do not receive the 500 gold rilks reward for recovering the six pearls intact. However, the 200 gold rilks bonus for capturing the thieves responsible for the theft dead or alive is awarded to the heroes with much fanfare. So ends another salty breeze off the docks of the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### ✧ AZARHOTH

The owner and namesake of Azarhoth's Treasury, he's accumulated much power and riches over the years in Lankhmar.

Cunning as much as he is greedy, Azarhoth's association with the Overlord is his only saving grace as many townsfolk refer to him as a bitter and old miser who'd pick your pockets dry rather than lend any sort of helping hand. Many of the children imitate him during the festival seasons as a reminder of what not to become in life and how you shouldn't treat others.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Investigation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d6

**Cha:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Greedy (Major), Ugly

**Edges:** Connections (Overlord), Filthy Rich

**Gear:** Walking stick (Str+d4).

### FITZBURT

The manager of Azarhoth's Treasury, he's a coward when it comes to physical confrontation so he plays to his strengths of persuasion. Never missing a meal, Fitzburt is quite a large man in size around the midsection which matches his rather large ego and highbrow attitude towards others.

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d8

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** Obese, Yellow

**Gear:** None.

### ILLCYTE WARRIOR

Known as the *Devils of the Deep* or *Deep Devils*, these aquatic bipedal creatures are as savage as they are frightening to encounter. Their razor-sharp teeth are able to rip through most flesh, be it animal or human—it makes no difference to them. Illicium, their underwater kingdom, is home to hundreds of Illicytes ranging from warriors to priests to heroic leaders defending their watery realm with all their might. Few have ever witnessed them in their scaly flesh and even fewer have lived to tell the tale. Their appetite for fresh meat drives them to hunt further and further into the "land-breathers" world: the term

they use for all those who live above the water's surface.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Swimming d10

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

**Gear:** None

**Special Abilities:**

- **Aquatic:** Pace 10".
- **Armor +2:** Illicyte warriors have tough hardened scales.
- **Bite or Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Low Light Vision:** Illicyte warriors ignore any penalties from Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Lure:** By swaying the tip of their glowing orb appendage to and fro, an Illicyte warrior can lure their prey into a trance like state with an opposed Spirit roll against all who see the light. With a success, the target is Shaken and moves their normal Pace towards the glow. While the target is Shaken by this ability, the Illicyte does not register as a threat. At the beginning of their turn, targets roll Spirit to recover from Shaken but the roll is opposed by the Spirit of the Illicyte. The hypnotic ploy lasts until the target succeeds at the opposed roll, spends a Benny to automatically remove their Shaken condition, or when the Illicyte attacks, getting the Drop on the mesmerized target. Breaking visual contact with the light source also disrupts the lure. The appendage requires a Called Shot at -6 to specifically target, but any success or higher on damage severs the light which instantly goes out.

## RAT SWARM

Lankhmar's underground sewer-ways breed an exuberant amount of filthy rats which sometimes swarm en masse, attacking anything remotely edible. The swarm is treated just like a creature. When it is wounded, the swarm is effectively dispersed. Swarms cover an area equal to a Medium Burst Template and attack everyone within every round.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Notice d6

**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite or Sting:** Swarms inflict hundreds of tiny bites every round to their victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template. Damage is applied to the least armored location (victims in completely sealed suits are immune).
- **Split:** Some swarms are clever enough to split into two smaller swarms (Small Burst Templates) should their foes split up. The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered by -2 (to 5 each).
- **Swarm:** Parry +2; Because the swarm is composed of scores, hundreds, or thousands of creatures, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round. Swarms are usually foiled by jumping in water.

## RATCATCHER

It takes a certain kind of person to work in the dark, foul-smelling recesses of Lankhmar's sewer system in search of plague-infested vermin. Ratcatchers take their secret craft of tracking down and eliminating rats seriously, all the while balancing their exterminating services against retribution from the rats of Lankhmar Below. There's always a need for snaring rodents in Lankhmar and no one does it better than the ratcatchers.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Boating d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Swimming d4, Tracking d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** —

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Lantern, boat, punting pole (Str+d6, 2 hands, improvised weapon).

## SCROLLS OF EXIMIR

When the characters investigate a mysterious tower, they get caught up in a mad wizard's quest.

### BACKGROUND

There is an open lot in the slums of Lankhmar called "tower square," though none can say why. There are no towers visible from there. While the space is large enough to have once held the foundation for a small tower, there is no record of one ever built there, much less later being destroyed. Still, the name persists, as well as the superstition that it's bad luck to sleep or—gods forbid—try to build anything there.

In truth, there once was a wizard's tower on this site centuries ago. But as sometimes happens to those places touched by powerful magic, it has become unstuck in time and space. When it vanished some 300 years ago, it not only disappeared from its location, it vanished from history as well, taking all evidence of it ever existing along with it.

The tower wasn't gone forever. It reappears every 10 years or so in the same spot, displacing whatever structures or people happen to be there at the time. When it appears, it inserts itself into the timeline, so those nearby remember it having

always been there. This is a localized effect; those farther away remember the lot as empty and are surprised, when they visit, to see a tower where none should be. It would cause quite a commotion, but the tower never stays for long. It appears at sundown and vanishes again at dawn.

The tower's owner is one Eximir, a wizard so old, he's forgotten more than most magi will know their entire lives. One of the things he's forgotten is exactly where he left a certain spell scroll. He knows it's somewhere inside his mystical tower, but can't remember much about the tower itself except it's dangerous for him to go inside. That's why Eximir has hired some brave and foolish heroes to enter the tower in his place.

### RUSTY TOWER

The characters are looking for the Rusty Cuts, a gang of street thieves in the Marsh District who have been thumbing their noses at the Thieves' Guild. The Guild often ignores low-level thievery in these slums, but this gang has been spreading its operation out into the more prosperous parts of town, and it's time for someone to remind them of their place in the criminal hierarchy. Tonight, those someones are the characters.

The characters know the gang has taken up residence in a collection of shacks in the area called "tower square," as well as how to find the square. However, as they arrive at the site, they discover not an empty lot littered with trash and squatters, but a windowless four-story tower. It's made of the same soot-stained stone as the buildings around it, giving the appearance it belongs in this location.

Asking around, the characters receive conflicting reports. Some say there is no "tower square," there is only the old tower, which has been there forever, with no one ever going in or coming out. Others point to where the tower is, saying it's the site of the square, but the tower is definitely new. "I walked past here yesterday," one of them says. "And I'm sure there was no tower. Well, *pretty* sure. Might I have just missed it?"

While poking around outside the tower, the characters are approached by Eximir, who appears as an old man in a hooded robe striped with a shiny, metallic material. His face lights up when he sees them and he pulls out a bag of coins.

"Oh good, you're here," he says. "I was afraid you wouldn't honor our arrangement. Here's the money I promised you." He proceeds to give each of the characters 5 gold rilks, ignoring any of their questions.

"Of course, this is just a down payment. As I told you, there's another 20 gold rilks in it for each of you when you return with the scrolls. Now, get on with you. You've only got until dawn."

If the characters balk or press Eximir for answers, he sighs and shakes his head.

*"And I thought my memory was bad..."*

*"The spells in the red scroll case—the one I told you about—the ones I hid in my youth? Yes, those. As I said, I had to abandon them when I...when I left the tower, so many years ago. And though it shames me, I can't remember enough of the tower to dare try to retrieve them myself. I'm old now, and slow. And the tower, I'm afraid, is full of traps and dangers designed by and for a younger me. A much younger me, I'm afraid."*

*"But yes, the case...It's a tube as long as my arm, as wide as my fist, and red as my blood. It's got runes on it you can only see if you turn it just right, but don't read them! Don't even try to read them! I can't be held responsible for what might happen! In fact, you probably don't even want to look at the case. Just feel for it, and bring it to me, and I'll fill your pockets with gold."*

*"But hurry! For the tower is here but for a night. It vanishes again with the dawn, and if you're still inside, you'll vanish with it! Now go!"*

With that, Eximir waves his hand and the great wooden double doors on the front of the tower swing open.

## THE SEA CHAMBER

As the characters approach the tower doors, they see a second pair of doors beyond the first. This second pair is also open, revealing a dim, flickering blue torchlight inside the tower itself.

Once the characters pass through the first set of doors, both sets of doors slam shut, sealing them inside the tower's foyer. The faint blue light is replaced by a bright white light emanating from the walls themselves. And what walls they are!

The walls are paneled in smooth white marble carved into murals depicting underwater scenery: stylized fish swim between intricate groves of coral and sea grass. Crabs and other, tentacled creatures lurk near the bottom of the wall, where they seem to lie in wait for prey. Sharks patrol the topmost parts of the wall, just above the characters' heads and below the ceiling. While none of the carvings are actually moving, they have been crafted with such skill, it almost seems as if they are. A thin sheet of water flows down the walls from the ceiling, adding to the aquatic illusion.

This underwater foyer is square and about 15 feet on each side, with walls ten feet high. The doors through which the characters entered have vanished into the wall, their seams and edges hidden amongst the ornate carvings.

## LOOTING THE TOWER

Ambitious or greedy characters may try to rob the tower of more riches than the Game Master feels comfortable letting them have. The books in Eximir's library, for example, could be worth a fortune.

If that's the case, the Game Master can decree most of the objects are "time locked" into the moment when the tower vanished (like the people trapped in the tower). Removing such an item from the tower causes it to "unlock" all the lost time and disintegrate to dust. The scrolls they seek are protected from this effect by the enchanted scroll tube.

Of course, if the players come up with a fiendishly clever way around this restriction, they should be rewarded, maybe not with a full library of stolen books, but maybe a single book of tales from the Eastern Lands, worth  $2d6 \times 10$  gold rilks to a collector.

Though the characters might not realize it at first, the ornamental water falling down the face of the walls isn't draining out. It is, in fact, slowly filling the room. As if on cue, as soon as the characters realize they're in danger, the rate at which the water falls suddenly doubles.

The characters know there is an exit; they've seen it. But like the entrance doors, the exit's seam is also hidden amongst the carvings of life beneath the sea. Finding the doors requires a successful Notice roll at -4.

A successful roll reveals not only the shape of the doors themselves, but their locking mechanism. The character slides open a piece of marble to reveal a strangely organic-looking panel that reeks of fish, with knobs and gears that look like they're made of bone.

Opening the door is Dramatic Task (see *Savage Worlds*) requiring Lockpicking rolls at -2. If the characters fail to acquire five successes, the water fills the room. Subsequent Lockpicking rolls are -4, and the characters must hold their breath

(see Swimming in *Savage Worlds*) to avoid drowning. If a character can no longer hold their breath, he must succeed at a Vigor roll at -2 each round or gain a level of Fatigue (as per Drowning in *Savage Worlds*). Attempting to break through the marble doors faces a Toughness of 14.

When the doors are successfully unlocked or broken, they swing open, dumping the characters and any built-up water into the next room of the tower where the water quickly disappears down hidden drains.

## EXIMIR'S DOMAIN

The first floor of the tower is taken up by Eximir's old living quarters, lit by the same arcane white glow from the walls as the foyer. The characters might be a bit disoriented at first because the space here is larger than the tower itself.

The foyer opens onto a large "living room" area furnished with couches, cushions, a low table, and thick carpets on the floor. The walls are lined by shelves filled with books in dozens of languages on hundreds of topics, not all of which are suitable for human intellects. One wall has a large picture frame hanging on it. The picture serves as a window outside, and it shows a live view of Lankhmar from atop the tower. (The picture also serves as a reminder to the characters that whatever madness they encounter inside the tower, time is still passing, and dawn is on its way).

There are three doors opening off the living room:

**West Door:** This leads to a small kitchen, featuring a table with two chairs, a jar of water, and a lidded wooden box marked "food." Upon opening the box, the characters see fresh fruit, bread, and slices of well-cooked meat. Opening the box a second time, they see a different array of food no less fresh as the first time they looked. The food is perfectly normal. The box was enchanted by Eximir to provide sustenance. The jar of water is likewise enchanted, and will never go empty. Both can be taken if a character so desires, but the magic only works in the tower.

**East Door:** This leads to what used to be Eximir's bedroom. The room is spacious, but dominated by a large pile of cushions covered in blankets. There is a closet and a chest of drawers, but both are empty. (Eximir retrieved his clothes on a previous expedition.) The walls are covered in tapestries showing magical symbols, scientific formulas, and shocking images of bathing maidens from the Eastern Lands. A small privy sits off to the side, with magic taking the place of any modern plumbing.

**North Door:** This door is visible, but blocked off with a tipped-over wooden bookshelf with a couch wedged up against it.

But before the characters have a chance to fully take in their surroundings, they realize they are not alone.

## FEAST OF FOOLS

Thirteen people are living in Eximir's old quarters. Thirteen people have had the misfortune of being in tower square exactly as the tower appeared, and having the tower manifest around them. Thirteen people—six men, five women, and two children—have lived here for centuries, their minds torn apart by the conflicting memories caused by the tower's appearance. They make for pleasant company at first, but they are all completely mad.

The mad thirteen are gathered in the living room, feasting upon roast meats and fruits, when the characters arrive. They look up, startled by new arrivals, but smile welcomingly. One of them, a middle-aged man in a black toga, greets the characters.

*"Welcome to our home, strangers! I am Makim, and these are my friends. We were just sitting down to a glorious feast, and we would love to have you join us!"*

The feasters are very friendly, if a little odd. One of them keeps removing a bracelet from one wrist, only to put it on the

## SCROLLS OF EXIMIR FIRST FLOOR



other. Another is adding the stuffing from a pillow to her meal, but denies doing it if asked. A third is constantly offering food to someone who isn't there.

They also have very short memories. Makim, for instance, introduces himself three more times before he remembers he's actually done this before.

It can take patience, but the characters can eventually get the people to share their tale. Each of them was in the tower square when the tower arrived. They found themselves here, and have been here ever since. But even while they are inside the tower, they can't wrap their brains around the idea the tower has always been here while simultaneously knowing the tower has never been here. The characters may rightly suspect this temporal paradox has helped drive the people insane. Inspecting the bookshelves may also reveal the alien nature of some of the books on the shelf... easily enough to drive one mad.

Another factor in their insanity is how long they've been here. Some of them were pulled into the tower, into this very room, over 200 years ago. Time passes normally for them in here, even though they never age and nothing really changes. Decades or centuries of living with the same people in the same space is enough to drive anyone mad. It's no surprise they're so happy to see the characters.

Makim and his friends are happy to show the characters around. If asked about Eximir's scroll case, they vaguely recall someone else coming to find it ages ago.

*"He went out the 'no' door," says Makim sadly. "He never came back."*

*The others look to the blocked-off northern door and shake their heads. "You go out the 'no' door," they say in unison, "And you never come back."*

*"Just like those last ones." Makim adds.*

## THROUGH THE NO DOOR

No one who goes through the "no" door ever comes back, Makim explains. Sometimes there is screaming. Sometimes, when all the feasters are sleeping, there is a howling and pounding at the door as something tries to get in. "We must never go out that door. We must never open that door. If we do, the others might get in."

If the heroes ask about the "last ones," Makim seems to lose focus then his eyes widen as if remembering again. "Yes, others appeared in the room a little while before you arrived. They were uncouth ruffians and they went through the 'no' door."

If asked what the others looked like, Makim continues to describe them as ruffians but does add that the leader had a tattoo of a rusty knife on the back of his right hand, which fits what they know of the Rusty Cuts gang.

When the characters realize the scrolls aren't here, and they must explore the rest of the tower, the mad feasters are violently opposed to them leaving through the forbidden door.

"Stay here!" they cry. "Stay with us! We are so sick of each other. We need new voices, new bodies, new minds that aren't yet—Where are you going? Stay here!"

While the feasters aren't strong combatants, and are armed at best with knives from the kitchen, they have two advantages: they outnumber the characters, and they are effectively immortal.

Because they exist outside time, the feasters not only don't age, but any wounds they receive are almost immediately healed as their bodies revert to the form they had when they arrived. (The characters, because they came in through the door, don't have this side-effect of time-displacement.)

One way to stall the feasters, aside from simply beating them back, is to drive them into one of the side rooms and block the door.

The "no" door isn't locked, but moving the things blocking the way requires a Strength roll. Once the characters get the "no" door open, the feasters fall back: their fear of what's behind the door is stronger than their determination to keep the characters from going through it.

Beyond the door is a stone staircase spiraling upward. The walls are scratched as if by great claws, and glow with the same white light as the rest of the tower.

- **Feasting Fools (13):** See page 82.

## THE IMPOSSIBLE CITY

The spiral staircase goes up one floor and ends in a second doorway. The door is open, and blinding sunlight is pouring through the doorway.

Stepping through the doorway, the characters find themselves on a narrow cliff protruding from the edge of a bluff overlooking a desert valley. A similar bluff rises on the far side of the valley. Looking straight across, the characters can barely make out a white glowing rectangle on the opposite bluff wall: another door, and the exit from this area.

The valley below is filled with an abandoned city. The buildings are

rectangular and made of baked clay the same color as the ground. They have no windows, but reach to heights of three and four stories, with external staircases connecting each floor.

This alien valley is a pocket universe, long-abandoned, Eximir discovered in his studies. He used it as a dumping place for his failed experiments. Some of those experiments were alive. Some of them survived here, thrived here, and live to hunt.

Making their way down to the valley isn't hard so long as the characters take their time. If they rush, however, they must make Agility rolls to keep their footing on the narrow pathway.

Once they hit the outskirts of the abandoned city, the characters hear the scrabble of claws on the hard-packed earth. With a successful Notice roll, they realize they are being followed. Those who get a raise catch a glimpse of a slithering snake-like creature, twice the size of a

man, climbing around the buildings and watching them.

There are skeletons scattered around the stone city. Some are human. Some may have once been human, but were transformed at some point by Eximir's magic into something else, then abandoned here to their fates. As they turn one corner though, the heroes come upon the more recently dead. The scattered remains of the Rusty Cuts gang litter the area. The desert hunters left little to search, but it's obvious from the pieces left the entire gang was killed. A successful Notice roll discovers a hand with a tattoo of a rusty knife on the back, enough proof to get paid by the Thieves' Guild (one smerduk for each character).

Once the characters are well inside the city, the stalker pounces.

The creature tries to ambush the characters one at a time, or finish off the characters as quickly as possible.

Aside from the scraping of claws, the creature makes no noise during the battle



until it takes its second wound. At that point, it gives out a horrendous howl which echoes throughout the valley. As the echo dies away, a second creature somewhere on the edge of the city takes up the howl. Then a third, then a fourth, then the air is filled with the howls of the hunters and the characters realize they are in more danger than they had expected.

(If the characters make a lot of loud noises during the battle, they likewise awaken the other beasts.)

The characters may realize fighting a whole pack of these failed experiments at once isn't the best bet. It would be safer for them to run to the far side of the valley and make for the exit instead. The creatures give chase. The characters can try to make better time climbing the bluff by going straight up it rather than following the switch-back trail, but doing so requires a Climbing roll. Success means they get a step ahead

of those chasing them. Failure means they slip, and make no progress at all this round.

When the characters reach the far door, they easily open it and see it leads into a (relatively) dark stairwell, where the familiar spiral staircase leads upward. Once inside, they can close the door and lock it, securing it against the beasts throwing themselves against the other side. The door can't break, but it can be smashed open if the characters don't hold it closed with an opposed Strength roll. After three rounds, the desert hunters give up the chase and return to their slumber.

- **Desert Hunters (1 per hero):** See page 82.

## THE VAULT

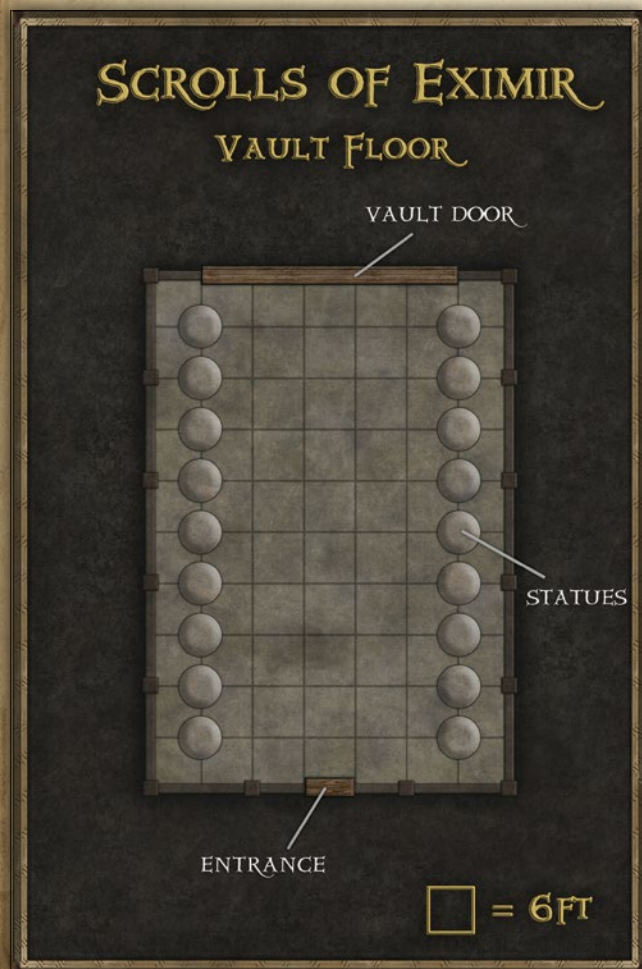
The stairs ascend for about two floors. At the top of the stairs is another wooden door. It's unlocked, and passing through it,

the characters find themselves in a large stone chamber decorated with statues and thick carpeting.

The statues are of eagle-headed children, representing guardian spirits in some other world Eximir visited. They are not merely statues, but stone golems, placed here by the wizard in his younger years to destroy those who would steal his secrets.

At the far end of the room is a large metal vault door, roughly 12 feet in diameter. Concentric rings surround the center of the door, each with a series of numbers and mystic symbols on them. The characters must decrypt the code to figure out the combination and open the vault.

Unlocking the vault requires the characters to succeed at a Dramatic Task using either Smarts (to figure out the code) or Lockpicking roll (to crack the safe). Each roll has a difficulty of -4. Failing a roll causes some of the statues to come to life. There are 18 such statues around



the edge of the room, against the walls perpendicular to the vault and entrance doors. The first time a character fails the Lockpicking roll, a random statue's eyes begin to glow red and it grinds to life attacking the nearest person with a blast of arcane energy from its eyes.

On the next failure, two statues awaken. On the third failure, three statues, and so on. If the failure occurs during a Complication, twice the number of statues awaken.

When the characters accumulate sufficient successes to open the vault, any active statues stop attacking and move back to their positions along the wall.

Then the vault swings open, revealing Eximir's scroll case.

- **Stone Children (18):** See page 82.

## THE SCROLLS

The vault is an empty room, 30 feet on a side. It has no ceiling. Looking up, the characters see a swirling void empty of matter but full of darkness. Staring too long causes them to hear whispers in strange languages from voices that know their names.

The walls are made up of many small lockers, all of which are hanging open, empty.

The floor is a grid of 25 white marble tiles. Each tile is marked with symbols and mystic iconography. On the center tile is a pedestal, at the top of which is a red scroll case, protruding straight up from a slot in the base, like a mythic sword in a stone.

The floor is, of course, trapped. Only one stone in each row is stable. Stepping on any other stone causes it to crumble away, exposing the same swirling void below as above. A character stepping onto a breaking tile must make an Agility roll to not immediately plunge into the abyss. A raise means he steps back from the tile. A mere success means he falls, but catches the edge of the floor and must make a Strength roll to pull himself out of the hole

## SCROLLS OF EXIMIR VAULT



or a companion can pull him up with a Strength roll.

Failing—and falling—means they drop 30 feet below, disappear, and then reappear out of the void 30 feet above. The character unfortunately does not emerge over the same space he fell but over the solid floor, taking 6d6+6 falling damage. Additionally, the unhappy hero must succeed at a Spirit -2 roll or be Shaken due to the undecipherable yet somehow unsettling whispering of the voices before he hits the ground.

To find the stable tiles, the characters must make Notice rolls to see a certain bat-shaped icon appears on every tile, but in different quantities. On the first row, only one tile has but one bat on it; the others all have two or more. In the second row, only one tile has exactly two bats; the other have more or less bats. And on the third row, of course, only one tile has exactly three bats. The pedestal is next to that one tile on the third row. Those are the safe tiles to step on.

## BACK IN TIME

As soon as one character touches the case, the world vanishes. A moment later, all the characters, with the red scroll tube, appear next to Eximir, who is sitting in a tavern near the tower, drinking ale and eating stew. He squints at them.

"You look familiar," he says. "Do I know you?"

At first, he refuses to believe the characters' story of how he sent them on his mad quest and promised them a reward. With some patience (or a successful Persuasion roll), he comes around. He gives them the promised reward, takes the scroll case, and simply vanishes.

At dawn, the wizard's tower vanishes. Those closest to it immediately forget they ever saw it. Others, such as the characters, find their memory of the tower fading over time, though the gold in their pockets remains as real as it ever was.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

Eximir the wizard is on the scale of Sheelba and Ningauble and therefore not given a stat block below.

### DESERT HUNTERS

These giant lizard-like creatures prefer to stalk their prey, waiting for the perfect opportunity to strike, and even then going after the smallest and weakest party members first. Desert hunters prefer to hunt alone, but will call for others to help if the prey is too much for them.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d8, Stealth d10

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 14 (4)

#### Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** Scaly hide
- **Claws/Bite:** Str+d8.
- **Size +3:** Desert hunters are over 12' long from snout to tail.
- **Slow:** Desert hunters use a 1d4 running die.

## FEASTING FOOLS

Those trapped in Eximir's tower are effectively immortal. They don't age, and any wounds they receive (even fatal wounds) are healed in seconds when their bodies "reset" to the moment when they were pulled into the tower. Unfortunately for the trapped, they're also completely insane.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Knowledge (Varies) d8, Notice d6

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** Delusional (Major)

**Edges:** Berserk

**Gear:** None or makeshift club or knife (Str+d4).

#### Special Abilities:

- **Fast Regeneration:** The fools can regenerate even fatal wounds, making a Vigor roll each round to heal a wound. +2 to recover from Shaken.

## STONE CHILDREN

The wizard Eximir loved to experiment and added an energy attack to these stone golems with great results.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d12

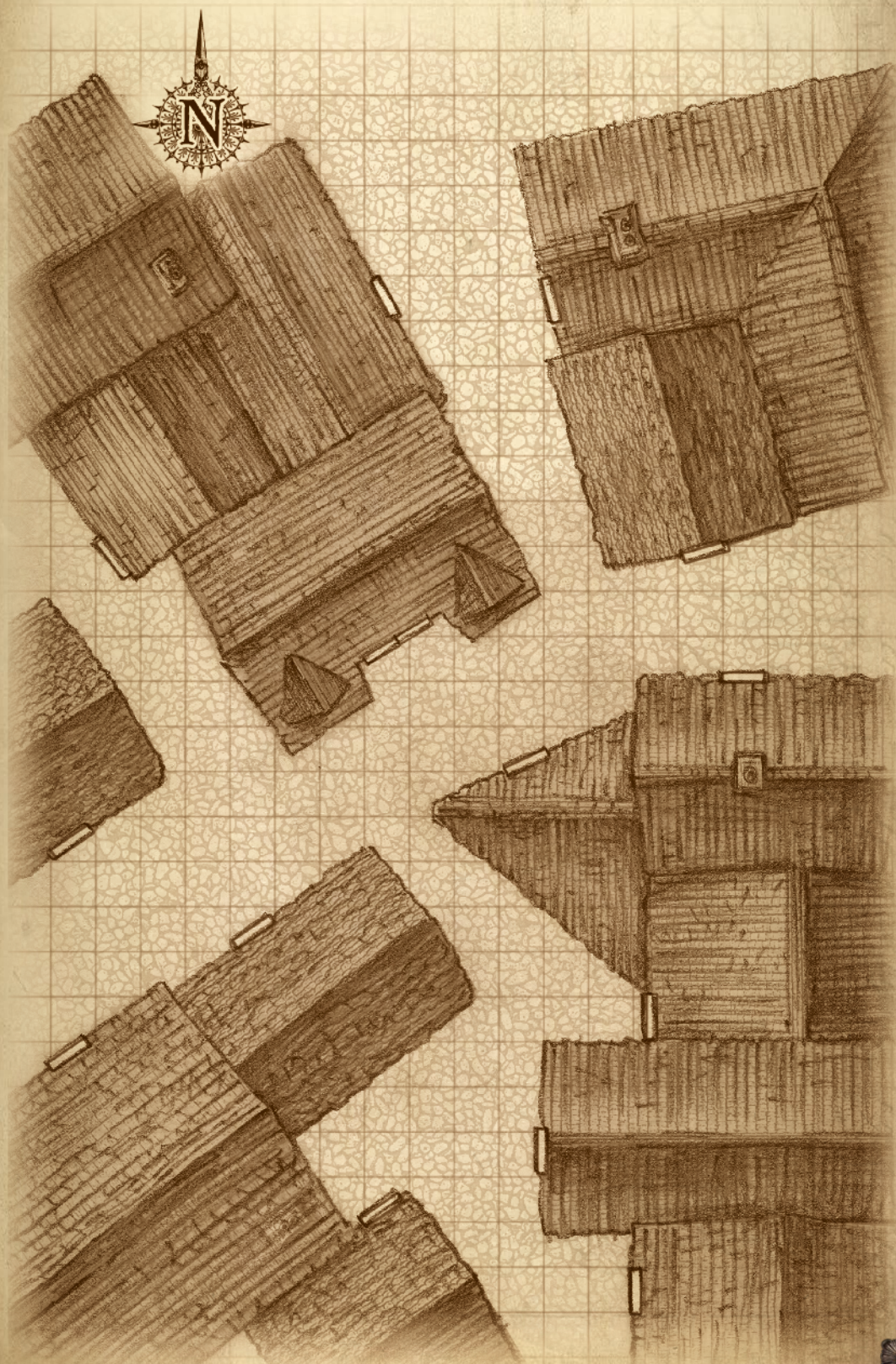
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6

**Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11 (4)

#### Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** Magically hardened stone.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from called shots; Immune to poison and disease.
- **Eye Blasts:** Range 6/12/24, Damage 2d6.
- **Fearless:** Stone children are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Improved Arcane Resistance:** +4 Armor against damage-causing arcane powers and +4 on trait rolls to resist opposed powers.
- **Size -1:** Stone children stand only 4' high
- **Stone Fists:** Str+d6.

# STREET MAP



# SHADOWS OF BETRAYAL

An eccentric but kindly elderly thief begs the heroes to help him secure one last big score based on new evidence of an ancient trove.

## BACKGROUND

Many legends of old ring out through the streets of Lankhmar as storytellers and actors recount the sagas of the past. One such tale centers on a long-lost artifact known as the Crown of Shadows. This silver jewel-encrusted crown possesses the power to conjure forth and command darkness itself in the form of pitch-black ethereal minions. Supposedly neither good nor evil, the crown serves only the one brave enough to wear it atop his head. The Crown of Shadows was sought after by many but worn by few. The last known bearer was Malefester, a ruthless tyrant and cruel ruler south of the city of Lankhmar. Eventually overthrown and slain by his own people, Malefester was lost forever, as was the Crown of Shadows.

Only a few stories of the crown's existence and current whereabouts have surfaced since its disappearance. The last known reference to the crown is inscribed on a tattered old piece of weathered parchment depicting its latest resting place. Fylus the Defiler, an elderly evil wretch of

a man, possesses this parchment and its secrets into locating the long lost Crown of Shadows. Due to his old age, he is in need of a few strong-backed, weak-minded, and disposable assistants to help aid in his quest for the crown.

## FOLLOW THE LEADER

As the heroes make their way through the crowded streets of Lankhmar, they begin to hear shouting from some of the city's guards. Read the following as the guards' aggressive cries go unabated and begin to increase in volume.

*Shouts and cries from city guards begin to echo off the stone and hardwood buildings. The troop's footsteps grow louder every second like a raging thunderstorm slowly building up to unleash its terrible power upon everyone below. Suddenly, a dark shadow fills the sky directly above you. Expecting to see a passing cloud or patch of smog blotting out the sun, you look up in horror to see a raggedy old man in mid-freefall, having leapt from the roof above them. The timeworn codger lands not more than two feet from your location in a horseless cart filled with loose hay. Within seconds, a large squad of Lankhmar's finest city guards arrives on the scene.*

The guards surround Fylus and the adventurers with weapons drawn. Heated talks between the old man and the captain of the guard erupt as he accuses Fylus of thievery and orders his men to take him into custody. As the armored men move in to escort the old man to the city's jailhouse, he begins incriminating the heroes as being members of his band of thieves. He argues if he is going to rot in a dark, damp, and filth-imbued cell, then all of his men shall join him. He's scouted the characters ahead of time, learning their names, current residences, and travel patterns throughout Lankmar. Fylus calls each one of the adventurers by name to further implicate them as one of his backstabbing brothers in arms.

After all sides weigh in on their affiliations between each other or lack thereof, the captain orders the guards to take Fylus and the heroes to the jailhouse until the real truth is ascertained. With a successful Notice roll, the group catches Fylus winking nonchalantly to them as if signaling he has some kind of ulterior motive for their abduction. With a raise, they faintly hear him utter words under his foul, stench-filled breath: "Follow me to ultimate riches." The massive amount of guards on the scene should deter any unwanted physical altercations. If push comes to shove, the guards swarm the characters and Incapacitate them before hauling their motionless bodies to the jailhouse.



- **Guards (4–5 per Hero):** See City Watch profile in *Lankmar: City of Thieves*.

## SECRETS REVEALED

The heroes are brought to the city's jailhouse, led to the lower level, and locked up in cells A and B. Fylus is locked up in cell C by himself. All are first stripped of their gear which is placed in a pile on a nearby table. The guards leave several minutes later, confident their captives are confined and going nowhere. Read the following as Fylus contritely recounts to them a magical adventure-filled story of mysterious riches and treasure.

*"I am so sorry for my trickery. I never meant for any harm to befall you. My name is Fylus, a resident here in Lankhmar for what seems far too long. The ravages of time may have stricken my physical appearance but my presence of mind still remains intact. Most see me as a worthless and filthy thief, but that couldn't be farther from the truth. The smell of bad luck has soiled my life for some time, but no more.*

*"I have recently come into possession of an ancient parchment showing the path to a long lost treasure of immense power and wealth. In my younger days, I would have claimed it for my own, but alas, the many years of traveling a hardened road has taken its toll on my body. I've searched high and low for a group of strong, trustworthy, and loyal companions to help aid in my quest. Again, I am truly sorry for misleading you and besmirching your good name.*

*"If you are not interested, I'll accept the blame solely and decree your innocence. But if you are interested and want an adventure filled with wondrous riches beyond your wildest dreams, then figure a way out of your cells and into mine, as my cell is where the path to fortune and glory begins."*

Fylus only tells the characters enough information to bait them into helping him. If questioned, he tells them the story of King Malefesor and his cruelties towards his people by hoarding all their treasures throughout his lands. He concludes the story by fabricating some sort of unknown natural disaster which befell Malefesor's kingdom, wiping its existence from the pages of history. Above all, Fylus mentions nothing of the Crown of Shadows to the group. He plays the part of eccentric grandfather to the hilt, and promises the lion's share of the treasure to the heroes—he only wants enough to "retire comfortably on."

If the heroes decide not to help Fylus, he turns on them after being led away for questioning, conveying his innocence and the adventurers' manipulative ways towards a starving old man. Believing his convictions, Fylus is set free. The characters are charged with thievery

which warrants a week's imprisonment and a 20 smerduk fine each. Those trying to talk their way out of the fine may make a Persuasion roll -2, and with each success and raise reducing the fine by 25%.

If the characters decide to help Fylus, they must first set themselves free. With a successful Notice roll, they spy a small ring of keys on the far wall, no doubt the jailer's key ring. Picking their cell locks requires a successful Lockpicking roll at -2 unless a set of lockpicks are readily available. Fylus gives no aid to the group in trying to escape. Award Bennies for a well-executed plan of escape during this pivotal scene.

## ONWARD AND DOWNWARD

Finally altogether in cell C, Fylus again reiterates his apologies towards the heroes. Pulling out a weathered parchment depicting a drawing of a magnificent stronghold, he begins feeling around the prison's stone walls until an enthusiastic smile comes across his face. Pointing towards a section of wall, Fylus tells the heroes the entrance into Malefesor's kingdom resides behind this stone fortification. He eagerly instructs them to push the stone wall with all their might. With a success on a Strength roll at -2, the group begins pushing the stone entrance inward as it pivots open much like any normal door, revealing a spiral stone staircase leading down into the dark abyss of the unknown.

Unless some artificial light source or torch is used, the winding natural stone corridor down is considered Pitch Darkness. Traversing the narrow and somewhat damp steps keeps the group in single file. After making a dozen or more complete loops down, the heroes arrive at a landing with a single door built into the stone wall, standing slightly ajar. Soft ambient light shines through the open crack.

Opening the door, the group finds themselves in a small cave lit by bioluminescent moss growing on the walls. The natural passage leads only southward.

Fylus quickly begins down the eerily glowing cavern as his excitement intensifies. Two hours pass as they gradually descend lower and lower through the rocky cavern before ending in an open chamber with an underground waterway flowing through it. Only two openings in the immediate area can be seen—one where the river flows into the cavern and one where it flows out through a dark tunnel. Tied up next to the small rocky bank are four rather old and decaying long boats. Three look seaworthy but only slightly compared to the fourth which has a giant hole in its hull. Each boat has a capacity of three passengers and their gear. Fylus holds out his parchment, gazes at the faded writing using the glowing fungus as an excellent natural light source, and points in the direction of the flowing river while shouting, "Grab a paddle, our destiny lies through there!"

## RAGING BLACK WATER

The heroes set off in the long boats down the fast-moving current of the underground river. Glowing moss faintly lights the rocky tunnel as it clings to the walls in sporadic locations. Unless some kind of alternate light source is used, the river ride is considered Dark at best.

After a somewhat safe journey down the twisting river of blackness, the dull roar of rapids becomes apparent ahead. With a successful cooperative Boating roll for each boat, they steer clear of the sharp jagged rocks and slip through a small open passage in between the rapids.



Failure sends a boat careening off the rocks, punching some holes in the vessel's hull which begins taking on water. A damaged boat stays afloat for 2d4 minutes unless the holes are patched up or plugged somehow.

Another short time passes as the river's current begins to quicken. Coming around a luminous moss-lit bend, the group sees a slight dilemma in their underground boating excursion. A rather fearsome black whirlpool is clearly seen swirling at a rapid speed just before the cavern dead ends. The sheer volume of raging black water being sucked down through the fissure in the river's bedrock floor is downright frightful. With a successful Notice roll, the group spots a very small landing to the far right of the turbulent whirlpool. Another successful cooperative Boating

roll per boat, at -2 due to the whirlpool's massively strong undertow, is required to safely navigate past the natural fury of blackness. Anyone unfortunate enough to be sucked into the swirling black beast takes 3d6 damage per round as the force of the whirlpool's strong current bashes anything sucked in against the sharp rocky floor—and they may drown (see **Hazards** in *Savage Worlds*).

## FINDERS KEEPERS

Reaching the landing, the heroes see a stairway carved in the cavern wall leading up some fifty feet. Traversing the stairway, the group ends up at a large iron door with a steel emblem emblazoned on the front depicting the stronghold drawn on Fylus's parchment. Scratched into the iron door itself, just below the magnificently crafted emblem, are the words "beware the shadows."

The door is not locked and opens freely with a little encouragement from the characters. Read the following as they have reached their final destination.

*The large iron door moans from years of decay as you thrust it open enough to peer through. To your amazement, you see the fallen remains of an ancient fortification deep inside a giant fissure, possibly swallowed up by a devastating earthquake. Only the remnants of crumbling walls and their foundations dot the area like a horrific maze of destruction.*

One building in the center of the stronghold looks to be relatively intact as Fylus races for the stone structure. Approaching the stone edifice, Fylus cries out with joy over the discovery. Gathering himself, he closes in on the only door to the building and opens it wide for all to behold the treasures lying within.

The 30' × 30' vault's floor is littered with ancient silver coins not used in today's circulation, roughly 200 in all. Each wall has two evenly spaced bronze sconces for eight total and 2d4 have usable torches. Sacks upon sacks of bulging bags are neatly stacked in pyramids of 30 each.

An estimated 600 bags reside inside. A single dusty and blackened crown atop a deteriorating corpse swathed in a tattered royal cloak sits motionless on an outcropping of bags. The sight of Malefesor being sentenced and buried alive in his own vault by the very people he ruled is a true testament to what tyranny may lead to.

## BETRAYED ONCE MORE

Fylus reaches for Malefesor's crown and wipes off the decades of thick layers of dust and tarnish accumulated upon it. He finally reveals the obsidian-encrusted silver Crown of Shadows and places it on his head. His demeanor instantly changes from a decrepit old man into a wild power-drunk evil tyrant as his skin becomes an unnatural dark gray hue. If anyone shows concern or acts threateningly, he laughs manically at them and divulges the truth of his intentions all along to use the heroes to locate the lost Crown of Shadows. Fylus calls upon the power of the crown to do his bidding in dispatching the adventurers.

✧ **Fylus the Defiler:** See page 89.

• **Shadow Warrior (8):** See page 89.

## FORTUNE AND GLORY

After defeating Fylus and the shadows, the treasure vault reveals yet another unkindly secret. All the bags of silver coins have been replaced with worthless small stones and pebbles. Only the 200 silver coins strewn about the floor are of value, which if sold back in Lankhmar, nets a total profit of 400 silver smerduks. Even without any magical powers, the Crown of Shadows' estimated value is 500 gold rilkis.

The heroes make their way upstream through the churning black river with no further altercations, although the effort of paddling upstream causes a level of Fatigue lasting one day. When they return to the prison, they find the place empty. Shutting the secret door just in time as a couple guards make their way down, they are greeted and set free, cleared of all charges.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### ✂ FYLUS THE DEFILER

Fylus is an old decrepit thief who has led a hard life. Always looking for the next big score, he has come into possession of an ancient parchment leading to what he figures is his last chance for fortune and glory.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Stealth d8

**Cha:** 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

**Hindrances:** Elderly, Greedy (Major)

**Edges:** Connections (Thieves' Guild), Thief

**Gear:** Crown of Shadows, staff (Str+d4, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands).

### SHADOW WARRIOR

These shadowy creatures drain the strength and life out of their victims with their cold chilling necromantic touch. Almost undetectable except in well-lit areas, shadow warriors appear as nothing more than what their name implies. Shadow warriors are controlled by the Crown of Shadows.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d12, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d12, Notice d10, Stealth d12, Throwing d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

**Gear:** Thrown objects (Str+d4).

#### Special Abilities:

- **Draining Touch:** Shadow warriors drain life force with a mere touch. Instead of a normal attack, a shadow warrior may make a Touch Attack. On a success, the victim must succeed at a Spirit roll or take one wound. A raise on its Fighting roll inflicts a -2 penalty to the target's Spirit roll. If the target is Incapacitated, any Injury is automatically a one die type reduction in Spirit to a minimum of d4. Recovery of the injury works like any other. Targets Incapacitated by Draining Touch cannot bleed out but can suffer a permanent Injury.

## CROWN OF SHADOWS

This simple-looking silver crown is adorned by intricately-cut obsidian gemstones. When placed on its owners head, the true power of the crown is revealed as a sudden surge of dark energy rushes through the wearer's body, inflicting three points of corruption permanently. Fylus immediately gains the Cocky and Mean Hindrances, and his skin takes on a dark gray coloration. This magical artifact has the ability to summon up to eight shadow warriors to do one's bidding. The beckoned shadows obey every command of the summoner without hesitation. Once the crown is removed, the creatures immediately disappear back into their dark plane of existence until called forth again to serve. Destroyed shadows can be recalled after 24 hours as long as one shadow survives. If all eight shadows are destroyed, the crown loses its power permanently. Neither Fylus nor anyone else living is aware of this particular limitation.

- **Ethereal:** Shadows are immaterial and only be harmed by magical attacks and their Weakness.
- **Fear (-2):** Shadow warriors cause Fear checks at -2 when first seen.
- **Weakness (Light):** Shadow warriors hate light. Any weapon which gives off light, such as a torch or lantern, bypasses their invulnerability doing a flat 2d6 damage. If caught within a light spell, shadows take 3d6 damage immediately and at the beginning of the caster's action if still in the area. Their innate fear of light inflicts a -2 to Fighting rolls against targets carrying a light source.

# SMOKE AND MIRRORS

In the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes, one type of red smoke has lethal consequences. Black magic? A guild war? The heroes are hired by the Peat Collectors' Guild to find out.

## BACKGROUND

The Peat Collectors' Guild oversees the dangerous art of fuel production within the city of Lankhmar. Its members take the production of peat charcoal very seriously, defending their closely guarded process with their lives. Guild members venture daily to harvest the profitable decaying vegetation from the nearby fly-infested stagnating salt marsh. Once refined, the guild master sets the current price for their hardy, rich-burning fossil fuel, dependent on the ebb and flow of demand and the guild's current stockpile. Quality plays a major role in determining the final price as the greater the quality, the higher the price. Their main competition in the energy market is the Woodcutters' Guild. This fierce rivalry over which natural resource should be used within the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes has waged on since the city's inception. Each guild would stop at nothing to obtain an advantage over the other.

A mysterious and lethal phenomenon is stirring in and around the dwellings along the north end of Cheap Street. Terrified townsfolk are spotting thick red plumes of smoke billowing out from various chimney stacks. Investigating each smoke-infused building reveals the same sickening and gut-wrenching fact. Most within perish, succumbing to the engulfing red vapors like a crimson blanket of death. Rumors of dark magic and sneering allegations of producing impure or tainted peat charcoal are mounting. To make matters worse, harvesters from the guild have recently gone missing after leaving to collect their daily quota.

The Peat Collectors' Guild has launched an investigation into proving its innocence and emphatically denies any and all accusations. The guild is claiming sabotage by the Woodcutters' Guild who means to besmirch them and muscle in on their territory. As the guild's uncontaminated stockpile dwindles down, the price of peat charcoal has skyrocketed, earning the guild a nice hefty profit during this unfortunate and deadly catastrophic chain of events.

The entire peat charcoal shortage is all a ruse to hike the price of fuel and line the guild's pockets with enormous profits. The Peat Collectors' Guild is secretly tainting some of their very own harvested peat

moss with a poisonous element, fatal to all those inhaling the odorless smoky-red byproduct when burned. To aid in their deception of sabotage, the guild has instructed its missing members to hide out in a makeshift waterlogged bunker located deep in the heart of the marsh. Eventually, they plan to return to Lankhmar with the story of a ruthless band of thieves from the Woodcutters' Guild capturing them and their heroic near-death escape.

## RISE AND SHINE

The characters have bedded down for the night in one of the many rentable tenements or apartment buildings throughout Lankhmar. Read the following as dawn breaks over the city's horizon.

*You're awakened in the early morning from the feverish clanging of bells ringing in the streets outside your window. The hazy fog of sleep releases its grip over you as you open your eyes to what looks like another dreary day in the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes. A town crier, and member of the Peat Collectors' Guild, thrashes about his musical talents as he shouts on behalf of his guild to anyone seeking high adventure and good pay. A crowd begins to swell outside like rats summoned by the piper himself—when suddenly a high-pitched scream erupts through the air. You begin to see whiffs of red smoke creeping from underneath your door and into your room.*

Toxic red smoke from tainted peat charcoal used in cooking the morning's breakfast has flooded the adventurers' dwelling. Only the sleeping quarters or individual rooms remain smoke free, but only for a short while. Breathing small amounts of the deadly vapor causes a character to become sickened while prolonged exposure results in death. The heroes can either try and hold their breath while navigating through the thick murky smoke in hopes of reaching the exit downstairs or make their escape via their room's second floor window.

Characters who immediately hold their breath can do so for their Vigor die type

+ 2 rounds. Any character waiting more than a round while the smoke fills the room only gets a partial breath from the window which can be held for half as long. It takes four rounds to safely trudge through the smoke-filled building to the lower level exit. While in the smoke, characters must make a Vigor roll each round to avoid coughing from the stinging fumes. Anyone failing the roll (as well as anyone not holding their breath) breathes in some of the smoke suffering a level of Fatigue. Any Incapacitated person remaining inside the smoldering deathtrap perishes after a number of rounds equal to half their Vigor. Once removed from the smoke, characters recover a Fatigue level every eight hours.

Escaping through the window may be the quickest and easiest way out compared to running through a poisonous smoke filled building, but it possesses its own perils. The height of the window is 20' feet or 4" for table-top purposes. All Climbing rolls are made at -2 due to the lack of handholds. No Climbing rolls are needed if someone in the group possesses a rope long enough to safely reach the ground. The window is only large enough for one person at a time to climb out, any others still in the room must hold their breath and make Vigor rolls as above. If desired, two characters per round may jump out of the window instead of climbing, suffering 2d6+2 damage from the fall. If one character breaks the fall of another (either through catching them or perhaps being landed on), a successful Agility roll means both take half the damage, 1d6+1, or no damage on a raise.

## THE CRIMSON VEIL

Once all are outside, the adventurers are swarmed by the swelling crowd of townsfolk. Shouts of bitter revenge and gritty profane accusations towards the Peat Collectors' Guild begin to erupt when the guild's crier starts clanging his bells to restore order. He emphatically requests the heroes to help with the guild's investigation due to their recent harrowing near-death clash with what the city is now calling The Crimson Veil. The crowd joins in

to help spur the heroes into accepting, and if needed the crier hints the guild may pay handsomely for the end of The Crimson Veil.

Making their way to the guild's house, a mere stone's throw away from Cheap Street, the heroes are met by Tarasz, the guild's security official in charge of locating the missing marsh workers. He acknowledges their willingness to participate with a big smile and boisterous warm welcome. Tarasz is leading a small unit of six armored guards into the quagmire along with the heroes as added support. No other townsfolk have stepped up to aid in the search of the missing marsh workers. Tarasz supplies each adventurer with two days of food and water and the promise of 5 gold rilks for any services rendered while in the foul-smelling creature-infested swamp. He's easily convinced with a successful Persuasion roll to increase the reward up to 10 gold rilks each, as he has no intention of paying them (see **For Peat's Sake**).

Making their way through the crowded smoke-littered streets of Lankhmar, the

adventurers see many townsfolk waving and cheering their efforts in trying to unravel the gruesome mysteries behind The Crimson Veil. Beautiful women strew flower petals of various hues before their feet as they make their way to the eastern Marsh Gate. A real sense of royalty and benevolent pride should be bestowed upon the players as they leave the city's defenses and trek into the unforgiving and retched Great Salt Marsh of Lankhmar.

## A WICKED LAND

The journey through the marsh is very dangerous. It's littered with all manner of poisonous snakes, disease-carrying insects, and venomous salt spiders, not to mention the foulest, toxic-decaying smell that's erupting through the black stagnated waters of the marsh itself. A successful Vigor roll is required for anyone entering the marsh. Failure induces extreme nausea, and a critical failure results in vomiting and one level of Fatigue which is recovered after four hours. The peat fields are roughly



five miles due east of the city. The slow-moving waterlogged nature of the terrain lengthens the time it takes the investigating team to reach the profitable coal-producing crop to a half day's trek.

Approximately halfway to their destination, the travelers disrupt a hidden nest of salt spiders. The spiders get surprise and begin on Hold. Tarasz and his guards group up to protect themselves, offering no direct aid to the heroes. If noted by someone, Tarasz apologizes saying his men fall back to their training to support each other and aren't used to working with others but he will speak with them.

- **Salt Spider (2 per Hero):** See page 95.

## FOR PEAT'S SAKE

Finally arriving at the peat fields, Tarasz orders the group to drop their packs on slightly drier ground and rest a while before they begin their investigation.

The inquiry into the missing peat workers was a lie from the start. Tarasz plans to lead the group deep into the marsh and eliminate them without anyone the wiser. He intends to create a story of ruthless thieves from the Woodcutters' Guild ambushing them in the middle of the night. Casualties from this fabricated battle would of course be the unknowing heroes who valiantly defended Lankhmar's honor and died. Tarasz waits for nightfall to dispatch the adventurers while they sleep unless provoked earlier, in which case he and his men then draw swords and attack the group on sight.

With a successful Notice roll, the heroes see no sign of a struggle or disturbance in the immediate area and no manner of proof that any peat workers were even here recently. If brought up to Tarasz, he simply shrugs it off as the changing conditions of the marsh and flood patterns must have covered up any evidence of their whereabouts. With a raise on the Notice roll they find a small piece of torn paper underneath a mossy stone. Unfurling the paper scrap reveals the following message.

Tarasz and his men attack immediately if the note is brought up or too many

*Still not time to return to Lankhmar. Food and water will be delivered as scheduled. Dispose of letter after reading.*

*Tarasz*

questions are asked. His kind and generous demeanor only lasts a short time, after which, the maniacal wild-eyed madman and assassin breaks free. Tarasz fights with a crazed smile of pleasure on his face. Neither he nor his men give up easily. They do not wish to be interrogated—by the heroes or their guild.

- **Guards (6):** See Guard profile in *Lankhmar: City of Thieves*.
- **Tarasz:** See page 95.

## TERROR UNDERHILL

With Tarasz and his men vanquished, the heroes either make their way back to Lankhmar or go in search of the hiding peat workers. With a successful Tracking roll at -2, the adventurers pick up a faint trail leading northeast of the harvest fields. About a mile through the marsh, read the following as the heroes come upon what looks like a small mound or hill.

*Coming to a halt, your feet sink into the retched muddy vegetation of the marsh. Up ahead, you see a sizable hill carpeted with patches of long decaying marsh grass. There's something odd about this mound of mud packed soil—other than that it's the driest ground you've seen for miles. The cool wind begins to whip past your face when the faint smell of fried pork belly being sizzled to a crisp reaches you. Your mouth salivates ever so slightly as you begin to see tiny plumes of white smoke trickling upward from behind the hill.*

Investigating the hill reveals a deserted bunker made of cut sod, with only the remains of a small fire pit outside. Numerous footprints stamped into the mud and rushes are clearly visible all

around the hideout. A charred slab of pork belly flickers in the ash-covered coals. The bunker is completely dark inside with no visible windows and only one entrance. With sufficient light, the shelter reveals a gruesome story.

Inside lay the remains of the missing peat workers, their bodies strewn about like slaughtered lambs. The mud walls inside are a horrific mural of splattered rosy-red blood, some already coagulated from being exposed to the elements. A successful Smarts roll enables the heroes to surmise the peat worker's demise as the varying degree of ripped, slashed, and cut flesh become more apparent. The state of brutality at which the lifeless corpses are in reeks of foul play and betrayal.

Heroes using Investigation or Tracking (or Notice -2) at the scene of the crime discover no new sets of boot tracks with a success. With a raise, the boot prints most commonly associated with the blood-letting match that of Tarasz and his men.

The peat workers were in fact set up by their own guild. Their ruthless deaths are the foundation of the guild's fabricated story of the Woodcutters' Guild's brutality and traitorous ways towards the Peat Collectors' Guild and its charcoal production.

## A TRIUMPHANT RETURN

Word spreads fast when the group arrives back in Lankhmar—the Peat Collectors' Guild paid the Beggars' Guild to watch for the heroes. It isn't long before the group is paraded to the Peat Collectors' Guild headquarters on Cheap Street with growing fanfare, slowing them to a crawl through the crowded streets. Characters making a successful Streetwise check realize this is strange—parades of this magnitude usually require organization. With a raise they notice the hue and cry is led by beggars, meaning the Beggars' Guild has likely been hired to stir up the citizenry, and they should be on their guard.

Leaders of the Peat Collectors' Guild meet the heroes on the front steps of their headquarters and publicly ask the

### WHAT ABOUT THE SMOKE?

Some players will want to investigate how the smoke was poisoning people. Was it indeed Black Magic? A mixture of marshback snake and salt spider venom? We'll leave this one up to you, Game Master!

heroes for their report, noting if Tarasz and his guards are missing.

Using the **Social Conflict** rules from *Savage Worlds*, the Peat Collectors' Guild intends to twist the heroes' story to their advantage. Leading the discussion for the guild is guildmaster Fraelug, a thin man with imposing robes embroidered in red flames. He is supported by plants in the crowd, who make a cooperative Group roll (Persuasion d6) to aid him. There are an equal number of plants in the crowd to the number of heroes. If at least half the plants are removed (threats, physical conflict, or bribery of at least 5 gold rilks are all possible tactics) the others leave as well and the guildmaster no longer gains their benefit.

The heroes must select a speaker for their side, and any others in the group may assist with cooperative rolls or attempt to neutralize the plants in the audience. Persuasion is not the only roll allowed for cooperation—a hero may offer a statement based on their expertise with Tracking and use it instead.

### TO TELL THE TRUTH

If the adventurers tell the truth, implicating Tarasz and the guild in some sort of conspiracy, the guildmaster questions if their story is actually true. While the heroes were in the Marsh, the Beggars' Guild learned all they could of any secrets the heroes may be hiding—Game Master's discretion about how deep the beggars were able to dig!

- If the guildmaster wins on a tie, the heroes are refused payment but allowed to leave.

- If the guildmaster wins with more than 2 successes, the city watch is called to detain the heroes for questioning.
- If the heroes win on a tie, they are paid and the guild members hurry back into their headquarters, disgraced for the next few days.
- If the heroes win by 2 or more successes, the city guards arrest the guildmaster and begin an investigation. The heroes may or may not be paid, but they are certainly well known for their efforts.

## LIES UPON LIES

If the heroes go with some form of untruth, implicating roaming bandits—or better yet, the Woodcutters' Guild—guildmaster Fraelug smiles smugly, pays the group their quoted compensation, and cheerfully proclaims the end of The Crimson Veil, all due in part to the characters' heroic actions.

The heroes have earned a cunning ally, and are hailed saviors of the city...but they harbor this secret, and secrets are hard to keep in the City of Thieves. And the Woodcutters' Guild, if disgraced by their report, may want revenge on the heroes.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

### SALT SPIDER

Salt spiders are about the size of a medium-sized cat. They're one of the few creatures which covet the rich salty deposits within the Great Salt Marsh, the reason for their milky white appearance. Being an ambush predator, salt spiders hide in the thick swampy grass, waiting for their next meal to unknowingly walk near them.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d12, Fighting d6, Intimidation d4, Notice d8, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 3

### Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Leap:** Salt spiders attack prey by springing from ambush. They can jump up to 2" as part of their normal Pace and gain +2 damage if they are more than 1" from a target before making a Fighting attack.
- **Marshwalker:** Salt spiders do not suffer difficult ground penalties to Pace for swampy or marsh-like terrain.
- **Poison (-2):** Salt spiders unsurprisingly have a salty venom. While not deadly, the poison is very painful. Targets Shaken by a salt spider's bite must make a Vigor roll at -2 or suffer a level of Fatigue. A victim cannot be Incapacitated by the poison and recovers one level of Fatigue per hour.
- **Size -2:** Salt spiders are only 2-3' in length.
- **Small:** Anyone attacking a salt spider must subtract 2 from his attack rolls.
- **Wall Walker:** Walk on vertical surfaces at Pace 6".

### TARASZ

Tarasz is the Peat Collectors' Guild's security official. A rather maniacal man when it comes to getting one's hands dirty, he enjoys the jobs most others couldn't or wouldn't even consider performing.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

**Cha:** -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty

**Edges:** Block, Combat Reflexes, Command,

**Gear:** Corselet (+3), dagger (Str+d4), long sword (Str+d8), medium shield (Parry +1), open helm (+3), plate arms and legs (+3).

*"But my dreams are haunted by those black cliffs and by visions of the whitening bones of my masters, and their grinning skulls staring empty-eyed at something strange and deadly."*

*—The Bleak Shore*

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