

THE GLORY ROAD

Issue 9

Mini-Adventure; Tables for Your Table

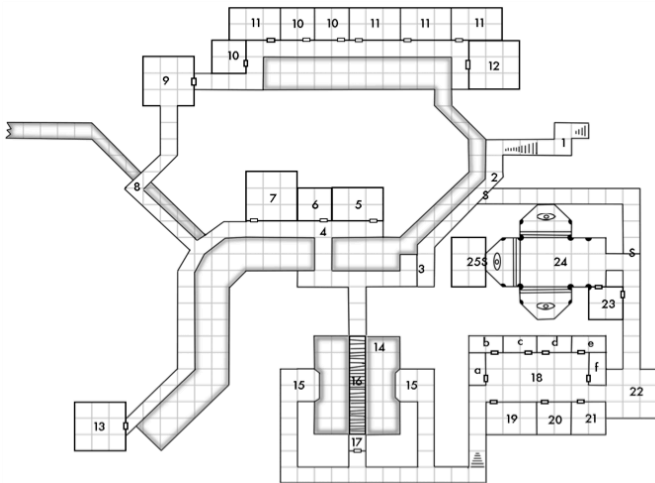
Mini Adventure: The Rat Cult

The cult of the Rat God resurfaces in Estarion every few years. Usually, it serves as a sort of protection racketromising that the cult can protect folks from diseases spread by rats. This time, cultists are also focused on overthrowing the Aquilans and with three Hags outside of the city to build an army of warriors. They do not realize that the hags are manipulating them for their own ends. Instead, they have been given a cursed supply of Lotus Powder, an illicit narcotic that will also mutate users into monsters serving the hags. The Player Characters have been contacted by the Beggar King of Estarion, Shariq Al-Bassad, to learn what is happening to his people.

Initial Investigation

Disappearances are concentrated in Downwind, Locals note that rats are normal out here. Asking about sedition talk is more productive. Rebels work out of a fuller's mill. Fullers cleanse wool—raw wool is worked by the feet of workers ankle-deep in a pool of ammonium to cleanse and whiten wool. The shop is unpleasant to be around and serviced by slaves, but men filter in and out regularly. Asking about a rat cult will eventually lead the characters being stalked by rat cultists, who will attempt to kidnap and question them, if not just kill them.

The fuller, Fariq, is a nervous man. He dislikes being questioned, and tends to answer questions indirectly. His shop is two rooms: a small office, where he meets with clients, and a larger work room with three doors: one to the office, one outside, and one locked closet door. He and his assistant Tammuz work in the office, while four slaves work the wool.



One square = 5 feet. Shaded areas are sewers, water is about four feet deep.

Key

1. **Stairs Down:** 2 Cultists (MM, p345, plus 3 javelins), 2 in 6 chance to alert the guards at area 3.
2. **Secret Door**
3. **Entry :** 2 Cultists (MM, p345). Door is locked.
- 4, 8. **Patrol:** 3 Cultists (MM, p345) and 2 Giant Rats (MM, p327), use bridge as narrow ground.
5. **Storeroom:** Water barrels, crates of dried rations.
6. **Meeting room:** Table and four chairs. 50% chance 1 Acolyte (MM, p342) and 2 Cultists (MM, p345)
7. **Armory:** Thug (MM, p350), Cultist (MM, p345), 1 giant rat (Giant Rat, MM, p327). 20 scimitars, 10 crossbows, 200 quarrels, 20 spears, 10 suits leather armor.
9. **Guards:** 3 Cultists (MM, p345), 2 Giant Rats (MM, p327).
- 10, 12: **Barracks:** 2 **bunks**, 2 footlockers. In one of the two 1 Cultist, (MM, p345) in breechcloth with a blanket, a pillow, and a dagger under his pillow. Cultist has a 50% chance of waking. Footlockers hold commoner garb, house keys, and purse filled with 3d6x10 silver pieces.
11. **Unoccupied Barracks:** 3 **bunks**, 2 footlockers. Footlockers hold commoner garb, house keys, and a purse filled with 3d6x10 silver pieces.
13. **Giant Rat Kennels:** 6 Giant Rats (MM, p327)
14. **Pit Full of Sewer Water:** 5ft deep sewer water, 2 Crocodiles, (MM, p320).
15. **Rope Bridge:** 2 cultists with long spears (MM, p345) plan a fighting retreat, cutting the rope behind them.
16. **Rat Cultist Snipers:** 2 crossbow-wielding Rat Cultists (Cultist, MM, p345) sit behind partial cover of stone
17. **Acolyte Overseer:** 1 Acolyte (MM, p342) will support, then flee through the door, bolting it behind him
18. **Prison Cells:** 4 Cultists (MM, p345) ,2 Giant Rats (MM, p327) and 6 cells:
 - a. Nasr Faad, spice merchant, held for ransom
 - b. Kasim Jalil, beggar, held for interrogation.
 - c. Empty
 - d. Aaliyah Saad, seamstress, held for ransom.
 - e. Nadiya Nasim, beggar, held for interrogation.
 - f. Maahid Saam, drunkard, to be made into wererat.
19. **Barracks:** 6 bunks and footlockers. 2 Cultists, (MM, p345) in breechcloth with a blanket, a pillow, and a dagger under pillow. Cultists have a 50% chance of waking. Footlockers hold commoner garb, house keys, 3d6x10 silver pieces.
20. **Supply Room:** 3 large barrels of water, a barrel of beer, and crates of dried rations.
21. **Interrogation Room:** Table with straps, cages of normal rats, small cage that can be strapped to a person's face, and a rat dropped in.
22. **Fresco Room:** depicting rats harassing and directing men with bites, sickness, and numbers.

I wanted the feeling of romance and the sense of wonder I had known as a kid. I wanted the world to be what they had promised me it was going to be—instead of the tawdry, lousy, fouled-up mess it is. — Robert A Heinlein, *The Glory Road*

23. **False Treasury:** doors locked. 3 locked and trapped chests. 1st: shoots poison dart (+3 hit, 2d6 poison, CON DC 10 for half), 750 sp, 2 bottles water; 2nd: releases 10ft radius sleep gas (DC 11, save or slowed, save again or sleep), bolt of silk worth 25g.p., 1000c.p.; 3rd releases acid spray in squares right and left of chest, 2d6 acid, DEX DC 11 for 1/2, 5 pelts worth 50g.p. each.
24. **Rat Temple:** 1 Were-rat (MM, p208), 1 (MM, p342), 6 Cultists (MM, p345), 3 Giant Rats (MM, p327). The wererat is wearing a gold and lapis lazuli ring worth 100g.p, and carries a keys to room 23 and the chests in that room.
25. **True Treasury:** 3 chests: 1st: 2 wooden boxes of spices worth 100g.p. each, 5 bottles of perfume worth 25g.p. each, and 3 healing potions. 2nd: 5 sacks of 100g.p. and 4 silver goblets worth 50g.p. each. 3rd: 5 bolts of silk worth 25g.p. each and a silver necklace worth 150g.p.

Table: Random Encounters

d%	Result
01-05	Pickpocket tries to steal a character's purse.
06-08	Press gang out to capture the Player Characters.
09-11	Street urchins harass the Player Characters for coppers.
12-13	An angry drunk picks a fight with a Player Character.
14-15	A very affectionate drunk wants one or more of the PCs to know he loves them.
16-17	2d4 thugs are assaulting someone on the street. Roll d6: 1-4, an innocent victim, 5-6 they are attacking a rival criminal gang member
18-20	A street brawl has broken out between citizens. Though not a group dangerous to the Player Characters, this may result in a riot if it continues out of control.
21-24	A funeral procession clogs road: coffin followed by chain of mourners. Roll 1d6: 1) respected merchant, 2) feared criminal, 3) a beloved grandmother, 4) hated man of wealth, 5) powerful priest, 6) criminal, and his procession ends up attacked by a rival gang, leading to a street brawl.
25-26	A scruffy kid is tailing the Player Characters as a scout for a gang of criminals.
27-30	A drunk, ugly, and loud prostitute solicits one of the PCs in a very graphic way.
31-33	A beggar sleeping it off in the street is attacked by a pack of rats.
34	A plague of flies has swarmed the city from the Salt Marsh
35	A holiday parade blocks the street for several blocks in either direction.
36	A dangerous circus animal has escaped its cage and is out of control .
37-38	Pack of dogs is harassing and biting people in the street.
39-40	Oppressive heat makes it hard to do anything during the day.
41	A desperate friend needs the PC's help because s/he is in real danger.
42	An NPC is convinced a PC is a lost old love, and will not leave him or her alone.
43-44	A woman tells everyone who can hear that a PC used her, impregnated her, and has to marry her.
45	An NPC calls out one of the PCs, saying that the PC killed their family member. The NPC is clearly not a trained combatant, but they demand satisfaction.
46-47	Sudden and short-lived downpour drenches the city.
48	Eclipse.
49	Woman fleeing a group of thugs collapses at PCs' feet begging for help. The thugs tell the PCs to mind their own business and are clearly dangerous.
50-51	Sudden windstorm whips up dust, and makes it hard to move.
52	An Aquilan aristocrat is brutally whipping her servant in the street.
53-55	Nervous criminal tries to sell PCs an item clearly either stolen or contraband.
56-57	PCs are hassled by the man (see the Hassled by the Man table).
58-59	A chamber pot emptied out of overhead window.
60-61	Anti-Aquilan rally will eventually result in a crackdown by centurions.
62-63	Child pickpockets (think the Artful Dodger from <i>Oliver Twist</i>) work the crowd.
64-67	Street performers, 50% likely to be good, 50% bad. Roll 1d6: on a 6 they are a

	cover for a criminal gang's activities.
68	A street gang harasses a PC based on a case of mistaken identity.
69	Pair of burly men dragging a woman into a doorway as she tries to escape.
70-71	One of the PCs is smitten by a random person on the street, who they lose sight of almost immediately.
72	Centurion has caught a thief, and is about to cut off their hand.
73-74	2 carts have collided, blocking traffic and causing a huge argument.
75	2 of Aquilan aristocrats demand one of the PCs help load something heavy into their carriage. If the PCs do not comply, they will have their driver whip the PC if he or she is a peasant. If the PCs fight back, the Aquilans call on the guard.
76	A street preacher is preaching the evils of the Olympians. The PCs see him again and again. Each time, he is better dressed, healthier and taller; the crowd is bigger; and preaching becomes more focused on power, ruthlessness, and self-interest, until he becomes leader of a full cult of Asmodeus.
77-78	A prostitute and either a client (1-4 on a d6) or a pimp (5-6) are in the middle of a loud and potentially violent fight.
79	Man in a hair shirt with shaggy beard spouts apocalyptic warnings of coming days of fire. He stares PC in the eye, addresses her or him by name, and prophesies before collapsing. Afterward, he remembers nothing of the event.
80	Wild-eyed beggar tells you "they" have been hunting him, trying to return him to their underground kingdom, that they rule the world with their mental rays. Has a smooth, unhinged leg shackle that cannot be removed by normal means.
81-82	Street entertainer with a monkey. Roll a d6: 1-3) it's charming and entertaining; 4) it's ill-tempered, bites, and flings poop, takes instant dislike for one of the PCs; 5) it's trained as a pickpocket for a thief; 6) it's actually a monster such as an imp in disguise, and the entertainer is a warlock.
83	A cart has tipped over and from a smashed crate emerge low-level undead—skeletons or zombies, for instance—out of control and lashing out.
84	Imperial troops are breaking into houses looking for rebels.
85	Fire! A bucket brigade is quickly being formed.
86	Woman is being dragged from a home, with the crowd calling her a witch who poisoned the children of the neighborhood.
87-89	Warm weather and river sewage in the river create an overwhelming stench .
90-91	Labor strike on the riverfront or waterfront means that goods aren't coming in or out of the city, causing shortages of food and goods, and general unrest.
92	A courier presses a package in the hands of a PC, saying "don't let them get their hands on this!" The package is a book filled with blank pages. The courier then runs away pursued by a group of fanatical knife-wielding thugs.
93	Authorities have cordoned off a building as they investigate. If you look inside, there are 3 badly maimed bodies and 1 large mass of dead tentacles.
94	A twisted monstrosity has escaped from the laboratory of a sorcerer or alchemist. The creature is tough enough to defeat the PCs, but the sorcerer or alchemist knows of an obscure weakness that can help defeat the creature.
95	A group of Behdoon nomads have surrounded a young (14 or 15 year old) couple. They have tried to elope , escaping her arranged marriage to a rival chieftain. The Behdoon plan an honor killing, and don't care for interference..
96	Group of Goblins have become wild-eyed and manic in the streets. No clear cause can be found, though they rant constantly about the "masters below".
97	Groups of commoners overcome by hallucinations, ranting, dancing, and convulsions due to a disease or toxin like ergot poisoning.
98	Street preacher is whipping the crowd into a religious frenzy. Roll 1d6: 1— Overthrow the Aquilans; 2 — Drive non-humans out of the city; 3 — The end is nigh, reject materialism, give your wealth to the gods; 4 — The end is nigh, give up virtue, give in to pleasure and debauchery; 5 — The end is , the Great Prophet has come to save us; 6 — Danger comes from below! The truth is written in the very stones! They prey on us at night!
99	Processional including prince and major city officials, heavily guarded. 1 in 6 chance that the Player Characters see a would-be assassin preparing to strike.
00	One of the PCs sees a relative in the crowd from a distance— it might even be someone presumed dead!