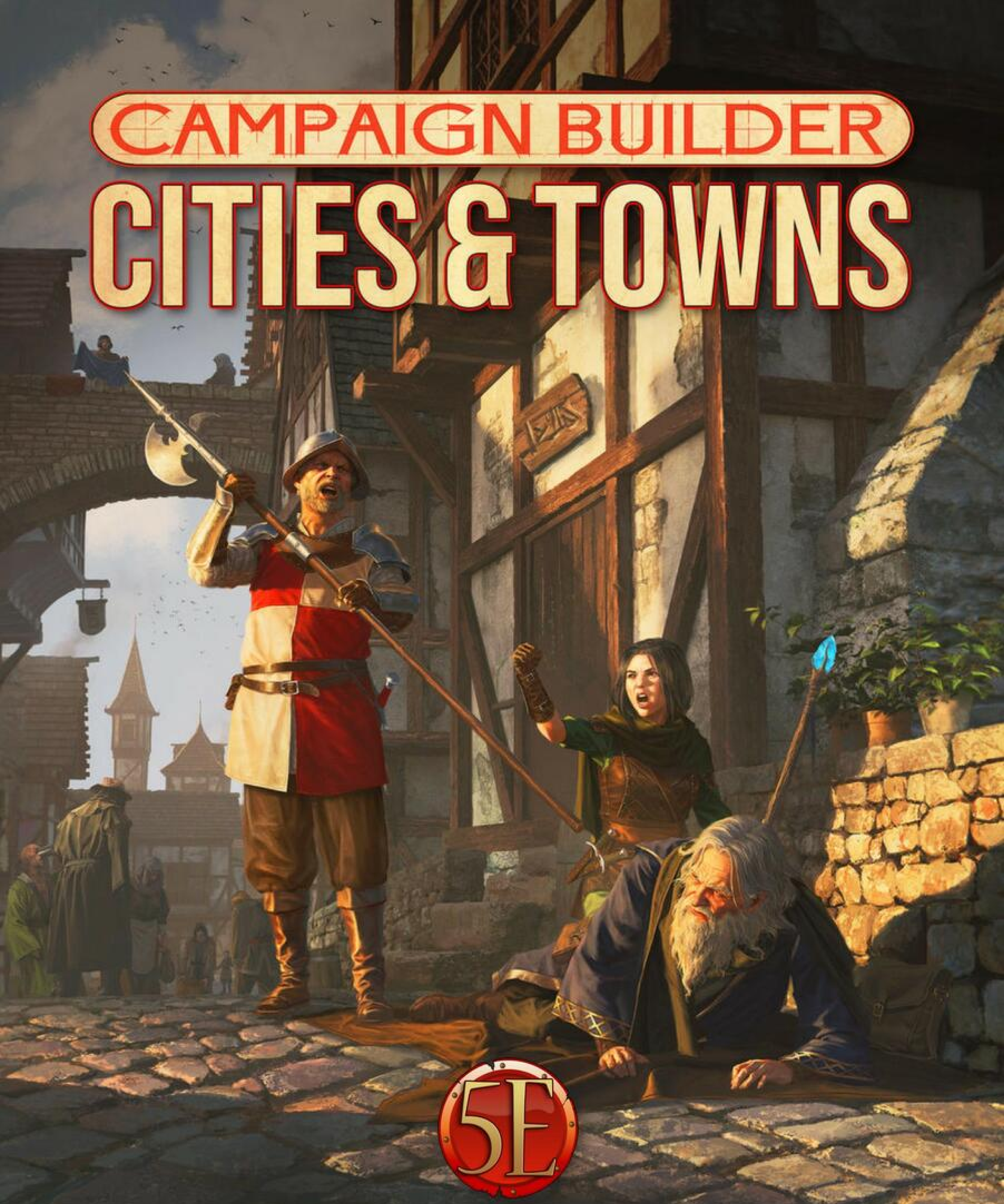
CAMPAIGN BUILDER

CITIES & TOWNS



5E

By Green, Hitchcock, Madsen, and Rombach

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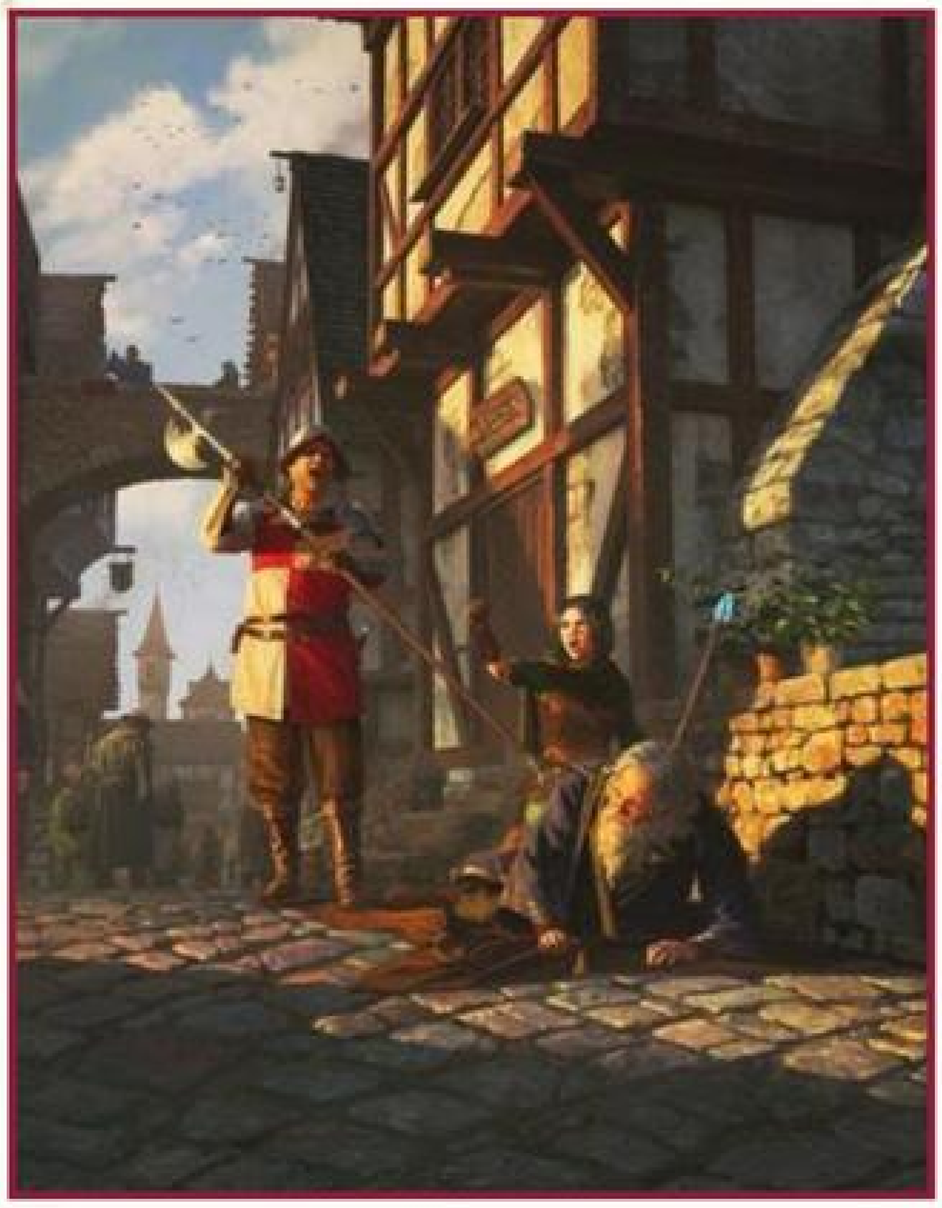

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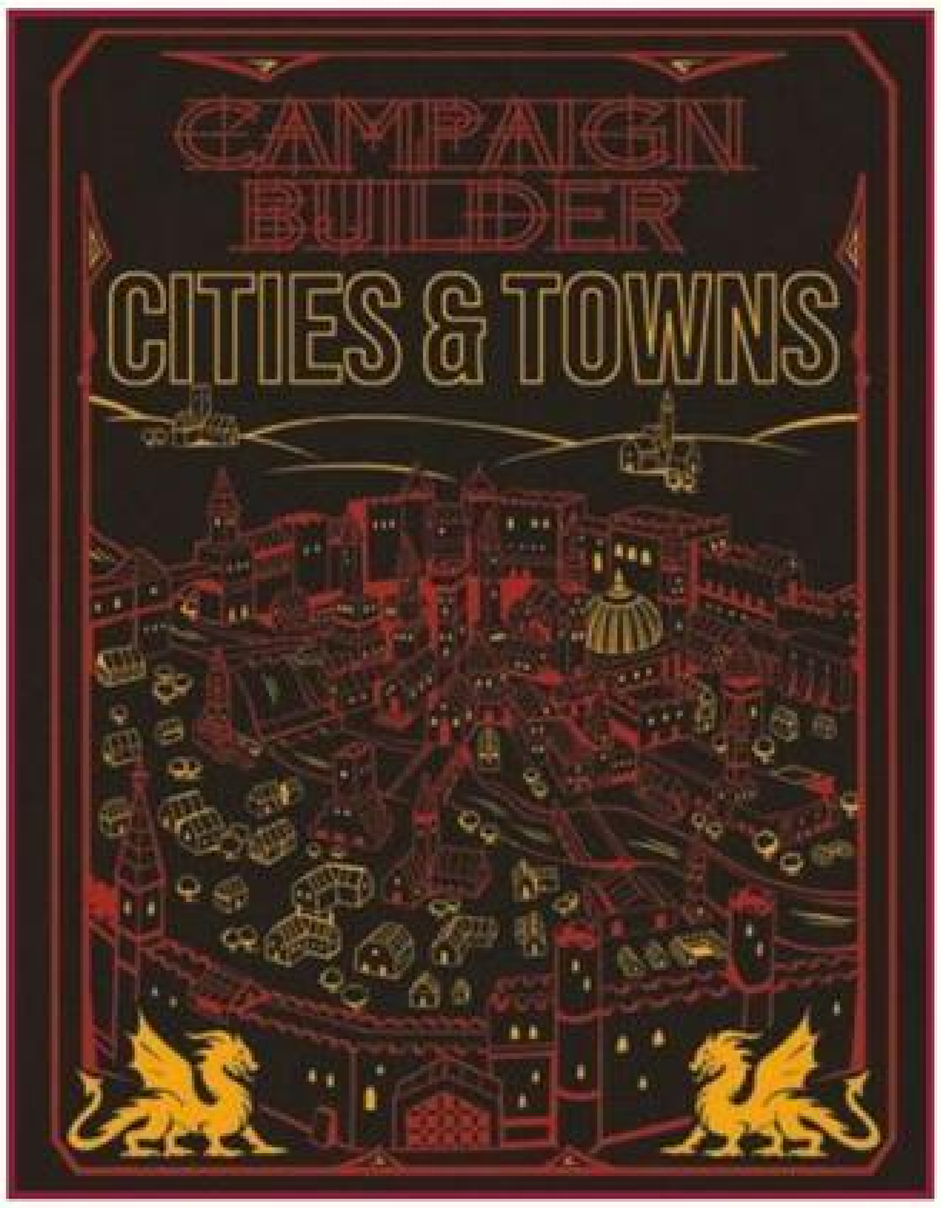
Two adventuring spellcasters are rudely awoken from their nap on a city street by a guard who tells them to move along in this art by Lie Setiawan.



ON THE LIMITED EDITION COVER

A cityscape bisected by a river stretches across the land in this art by Addison Rankin.

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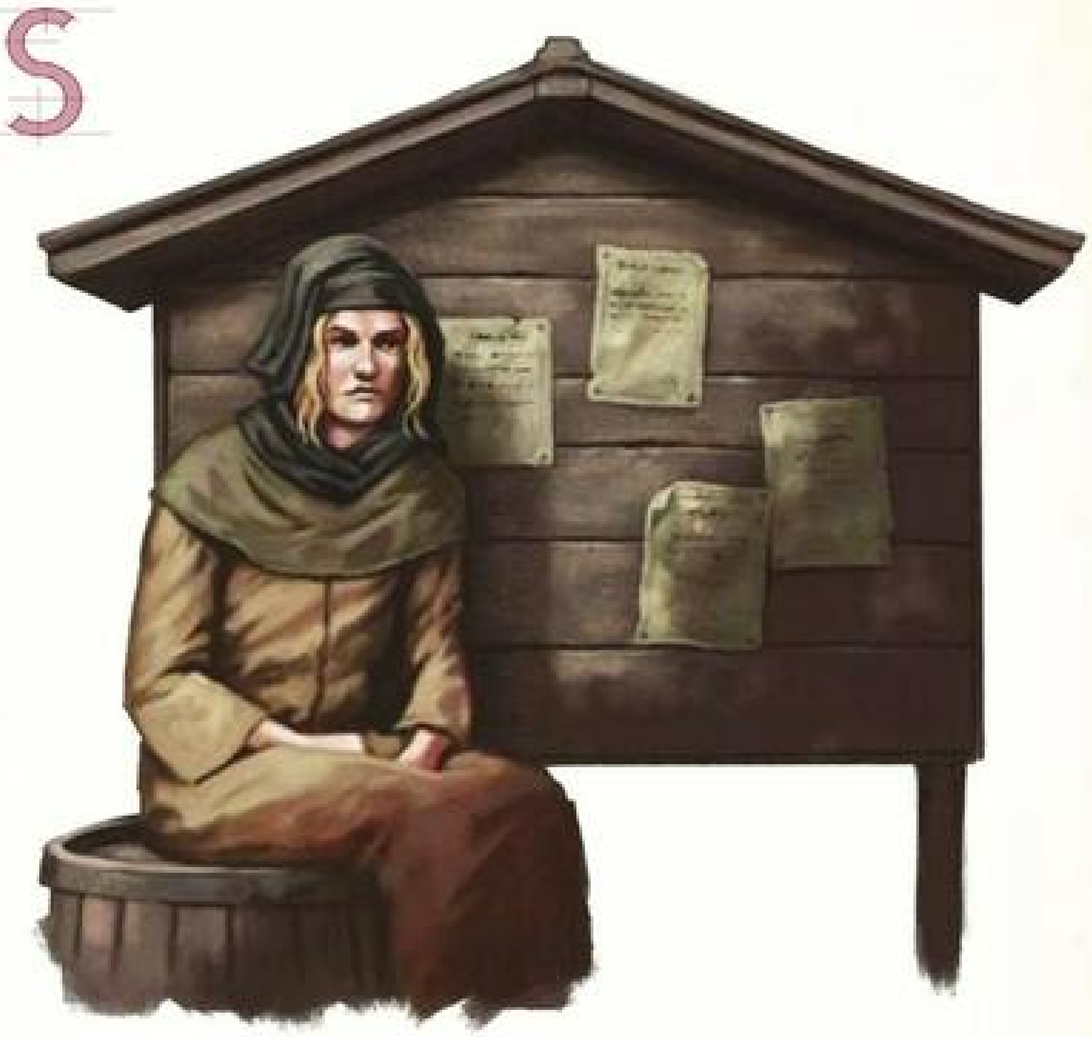

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BRIGHT MAGIC, BIG CITY

Nothing stirs up a tabletop game quite like the city! So many people, its crowds bustling, everyone busy with places to go and things to do. Its broad streets, nooks and passages, hideaways and quiet alleys. So much history embedded in its town halls, the soaring spires and storied monuments, the sprawl and ambition of great temples, and the mingling of fantasy races, traditions, and languages. And oh, there's so much magic in the city. (I once saw a dragon, no lie, put on a magic show in the main thoroughfare!) It's not always obvious, but it's all around.

Campaign Builder: Cities & Towns has everything you need to build population centers, whether cities or towns or villages, in your game world. No matter the setting, you can start from the ground up, staying true to the game world and the needs of its peoples while providing fun and excitement for players:

- **Chapter 1** sets the parameters for your city: its age, primary function, trade goods, size and population, and government structure, plus the level and prevalence of magic.
- **Chapter 2** details geography and climate, architecture, and city districting.
- **Chapter 3** talks about the people: rulers, the guilds and organizations, henchmen and hirelings, and monstrous citizens. This chapter also includes statistics for urban NPCs and monsters.
- **Chapter 4** shows you how to run urban adventures and campaigns: how to stage encounters, the roles of citizens, crime and punishment, city wealth and taxation, how to direct player characters and keep track of nonplayer characters, and more.
- **Chapter 5** brings you player options, like character backgrounds, subclasses, spells, and magic items, as well as new rules for incorporating a contact network and running a business.
- And the **Appendix** brings you a ton of useful, tables to help flesh out your city and its people.

Adventure awaits in the city—welcome to *Campaign Builder: Cities & Towns*!

1 CITY PLANNING

Urban centers are often stopovers for player characters between all their wilderness exploration and dungeon delving. Filled with options for entertainment and leisure, places to offload treasure, and even opportunities to build their own families and businesses, cities and towns can be daunting for any GM to create. This chapter covers the basics to keep in mind when creating any urban location, from the core questions that define it to the role of magic.

A roving chimera approaches the city walls, and two soldiers scramble to their stations on the battlements to fend it off.

FIVE QUESTIONS

To avoid getting overwhelmed from the start, here are five questions to keep in mind when creating an urban location. Answer these questions for quickly fleshing out any existing urban centers the characters might visit and for building new cities and towns from the ground up.

WHAT IS THE CITY'S AGE?

Like a living organism, any urban center, whether in the real world or in a fantasy game world, begins its life as a fledgling but matures and even develops a distinct personality over time, reflecting its population. Some might shrivel and die off, destined to become mere footnotes in history, but others will grow into venerable

communities. When considering the design of a city or town, keep in mind how the age of the place affects both its physical elements and its personality, or spirit. Roll a d8 and consult the **Community Age** table or choose the city's age.

COMMUNITY AGE

d8	Age
1	New community (unplanned/organic)
2	New community (planned/laid out)
3	Young community (unplanned/organic)
4	Young community (planned/laid out)
5	Mature community (unplanned/organic)
6	Mature community (planned/laid out)
7	Ancient community (unplanned/organic)
8	Ancient community (planned/laid out)

NEW CITY

Many communities might already exist throughout a given game world, so consider for a moment their origins. Maybe it was all very deliberate, or maybe it started as nothing more than a handful of people who made the fateful decision to stop—deciding not to finish their journey—and settle down, trying to make a life in that spot where they stood. Typically, the location is selected for one of three reasons: because natural resources are nearby, because it's a day's travel from where folks last rested, or because it's easily defended. Often, it's all three reasons. Regardless, a new settlement begins as just a few buildings, set up in proximity to one another and clustered to be mutually beneficial. These buildings provide for some need and enable and encourage more folks to stay a while, such as businesses that cater to travelers, serve the needs of the residents, or improve the odds of avoiding mishaps and threats.

As such, most new cities begin organically, gathered at a resource like a spring or near timber, at a crossroads where many travelers pass, or at the top of a hill or ridge. First, an inn might spring up along with a stable. Then a blacksmith arrives and maybe a trader. Businesses start to diversify, and perhaps a laundry appears, then a baker and a cartwright.

This organic type of city is the most common, but it is not the only way. In some cases, a city can grow amazingly fast, such as when a valuable resource is discovered in abundance or when other abrupt needs require it, such as during military activity. In these cases, the population of the city might grow very quickly, outpacing the city's capacity to develop needed infrastructure. Consider goldrush towns that "sprang up overnight" in the American West. Miners and the businesses that wanted to get rich off their spending would flock to the latest new rumors of rich veins of gold and silver, scrambling to beat the competition to all that supposed wealth. The "city" in those cases was often rows of tents with no streets, few permanent structures, and next to no law enforcement. Nonetheless, they were communities in every sense of the word.

In other cases, a young city might be what would be called a master-planned community today. Perhaps the local power structure, desiring to make or improve claims to previously unsettled regions, creates an artificial incentive for new citizens to come and settle. Offers of land, coin, and resources in exchange for uprooting and relocating could be a huge driving force in a city's blossoming where only wilderness existed mere months before. In some cases, the city might be planned and geographically laid out well before its population grows to fit it. A prime example of this kind of planned community is Washington, DC, which was drawn up and surveyed to very exact specifications established by federal law. Many streets and buildings were laid out in a master plan before construction even began.

New cities, regardless of their size, almost always appear along a frontier. It is rare for a community to spring up where citizens have already been living for numerous generations. Occasionally, war or migration might cause new communities to establish themselves where older cities already exist, but such circumstances are specific and rare. Because of this, the new city has a very distinctive sense of community—or lack thereof. The first folks to settle in a new city are often the young and hardy, and they don't always feel a strong bond to the place. They don't yet have roots there, or traditions, and it doesn't yet feel like "home." There might be high turnover, particularly after hardship. People living in new cities might still feel a bit like travelers who have only stopped for a brief time before they move on again, and this attitude is reinforced by the reality of the city: laws, customs, friendliness, celebrations, cleanliness, and such all have yet to be solidly established.

YOUNG CITY

Typically, new cities eventually grow into young cities. The population of a small, organic community increases as more citizens flock there to work and prosper. In a handful of years, a small but thriving community has established itself as a permanent place where people feel safe. Better infrastructure aids in growth. More and larger permanent structures emerge, including public

buildings, and construction materials often improve. Wooden houses become stone houses, and untamed woods become parks surrounded by urbanization. A ford across a watercourse becomes a wooden bridge and then a stone bridge. Walls for improved defense spring up. The prosperous construct additions to existing buildings and properties, such as a barn and stables, an orchard, and an apiary for the inn at the crossroads.

Young cities are typically thriving. People are still coming there for the promise of a better life. Goods and services are plentiful and of high quality. As it ages, it likely grows—but not always. Sometimes physical limitations halt growth, and at other times, resources peter out, or competition from another city along an alternative trade route causes a community to stagnate. Consider cities in the American West that grew along stagecoach routes but shriveled and faded when the railways went a different direction.

The citizens of a young city are more likely to feel connected and as if a part of the community. They have evolved from those young faces seeking new opportunities and better lives into families consisting of several generations who have lived most or all their lives here. Older generations are even buried here (and the social and psychological value of a community cemetery shouldn't be underestimated). They usually have a sense of pride and are willing to work or even fight to maintain and protect it. Still, if a city is young and begins to wither, it doesn't take much for its citizens to rethink their devotion and consider moving on. Young cities' roots aren't yet deep enough to withstand a prolonged period of resource scarcity or suffering.

MATURE CITY

Cities that stand the test of time, becoming mature communities with considerable history, have a lot of character. Architectural styles become strongly associated with such a place. Families that have lived there for many generations are frequently well known and politically powerful. The city's reputation grows as it becomes known for specific cultural traditions, for unique or especially high-quality goods and services,

and for famous individuals, like powerful leaders, artists, and military minds. Monuments to heroes and momentous events decorate public spaces. A mature city has a distinct personality all its own.

Cities that last this long transform physically as well. Old structures are razed to make way for new ones, but many secrets remain from those first days too. Cellars, twisting alleyways, parks, and ivy-covered estates remain even as the landscape shifts. Old, run-down parts of a mature city might experience gentrification. Walls from the earliest days of a city's defense might become nothing more than monuments in the center of a great urban sprawl, landmarks of an older time. Great fires might level entire neighborhoods, leaving behind the remnants of earlier foundations that get incorporated into new construction.

Very often, cities grow upward as well as outward. New buildings are built right on top of old ones, streets become sunken or subterranean pathways as they wind below the newer surface levels, and more advanced construction techniques allow for taller structures that hold a commanding view in every direction or simply loom over the shadowed streets below. Some structures are abandoned but never torn down, and they become a part of the background scenery. A venerable wizard's tower, long deserted, might still stand behind crumbling, overgrown estate walls, or an old bridge for pedestrians might still span a river or canal even though a newer, wider bridge—able to accommodate carts and wagons—handles all the traffic.

The citizens of a mature city maintain a powerful sense of belonging. They take pride in being a part of the traditions and culture of a place, bragging about the cuisine, the beauty of the architecture, and the importance of its history and ties to the land. Perhaps they speak of how their city has never fallen to enemy invasion, how the best fabrics come from their looms, or how the light from the setting sun splashes the white towers of the local wizard's college in magnificent hues. Noble families, powerful merchant clans, and tradition-steeped organizations all claim the city as their own, a place to be ruled, plundered, and protected.

It would take a significant amount of destruction to kill most mature cities. Beyond the physical presence of walls and buildings, the conviction of a city's citizens to hold fast, to reclaim and rebuild, is strong. Living in a city steeped in history and tradition creates a very real sense of being, a feeling that the person and the place are one and the same. Not all mature cities have thriving communities though. Some urban centers, long in the tooth, do not recover from widespread devastation. Others gradually cease to offer much in the way of value, and over time, the citizenry drifts away, leaving behind only those who are too attached or too hopeless or poor to journey elsewhere. Such places become ghost towns, decrepit vestiges of their former glory. Structures crumble, lawlessness increases, and people speak of the city in sad, wistful tones.

ANCIENT CITY

Only a small handful of urban centers become ancient cities. These locales have watched the rise of civilization itself. Old beyond measure, they have witnessed a long succession of peoples, cultures, and technologies grow and change over time. An ancient city has seen it all. Perhaps multiple tribes or cultures have used the site as a homestead, leaving behind their signatures in the detritus and in the legends of their passing. Perhaps the city has lain in ruins for stretches of time, rediscovered and rebuilt by successive waves of people. Or perhaps an ancient city is no longer inhabited by anything other than ghosts and the encroachment of nature—a monument to a long-dead civilization that no one is yet willing to reinhabit.

Ancient cities, whether thriving metropolises or ruined relics of past lives, abound with history, both physical and spiritual. The layers upon layers of construction in such a venerable community mean there is much that is hidden from the surface world: old tunnels, crypts, catacombs, sewers, and cellars permeate the foundation, concealing old knowledge, treasure, and mortal remains. Archaic, crumbling edifices from bygone eras mingle with newer, more modern buildings throughout. Streets as old as the very first peoples that passed through the region still follow the ancient trails they trod. But that's merely the physical characteristics.

The city exists outside its tangible reality too. An ancient city is known throughout the land, indeed the world. It is a part of history, and it shines as a beacon of all the peoples' hopes and dreams of permanency. For the people who live within an ancient city, there is no greater badge of honor than to be able to claim residency and descendance from those who dwelt there before. In venerating the place, its citizens venerate what is possible, what can last through will and determination. They speak of it in reverent tones, honoring all those who dwelt there and added stones and stories to its existence. In effect, they have acknowledged it—and by extension, themselves—as timeless.

WHAT IS THE CITY'S PRIMARY FUNCTION?

Urban centers do not spring up randomly. A civilization needs a reason to settle in a specific area. Sometimes that reason is simply because it was a dry patch of land in a rather waterlogged region. Maybe it has easy access to fresh water, or it might even be on the bank of a river or lake that makes travel and trade easier. Perhaps it is at the crossroads of two major trade routes, and it began as a tavern and stables for road-weary travelers to rest.

When developing a city, consider its geographic placement and why it was founded here, in this particular spot. The answer to that question—and there could be more than one—will help flesh it out. Here are some of the main (though of course not the only) reasons why a settlement might be established in a specific location.

Roll a d20 and consult the **Determining Primary Function** table or choose the role of the city.

RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

The area might be important to one of the region's dominant religions. Perhaps a nearby mountaintop is the place where a god struck down a foe and is celebrated in legend. Perhaps a beloved martyr died in the nearby fields. Perhaps the seemingly bottomless hole in the earth nearby is where a long-slumbering demon is prophesied to rise. Cultures of all sorts place spiritual and religious significance on the land for many distinct reasons, and a city might spring up nearby for the ongoing support of the devout.

There might be a large permanent population, such as if it becomes the seat of a particular church. The population might be made up entirely of the devout and their families, or it might host people of all walks of life while being run or heavily influenced by the devout. It might only have a small population of permanent residents while hosting significant numbers of pilgrims during holy days or even all year. There might even be

DETERMINING PRIMARY FUNCTION

d20	Function
1	***Creation.*** The honey from this region is exquisite and makes wonderful candies from crystalized honey.
2	***Creation.*** The soil in this valley grows the best grapes for a superior vintage of wine
3	***Creation.*** The tall grasses of this region make wonderful, fragrant baskets. Crafters have mastered the art of weaving amazing creations of all sorts.
4	***Export.*** A rare and sought-after mushroom grows only in this area.
5	***Export.*** A gemstone used by many arcane practitioners and magical artificers is abundant in the local mines.
6	***Export.*** The timber in this region is particularly well suited to constructing sailing ships downriver.
7	***Military.*** A major fortification, complete with a fortress and a long wall spanning miles in either direction, this city is a bulwark against marauding bands of outlanders.
8	***Military.*** It's a remote outpost with a handful of bored soldiers.
9	***Politics.*** Situated near a triple border, this settlement houses diplomats from many realms.
10	***Politics.*** The capital city of the realm, this city houses the ruler(s) and hundreds of other politicians.
11	***Religion.*** A monastery sits in the foothills a few hours' away and sees a constant low-level flow of pilgrims.
12	***Religion.*** Legend says a goddess once fought and bled on the spot, and the vibrant red blossoms that grow in profusion across the fields are said to be the product of her blood hitting the earth.
13	***Tourism.*** Clear water said to cure any illness or affliction pours from a crack in the cliffs just outside of town.
14	***Tourism.*** The beautiful (and stinky) natural hot springs are rich in minerals and said to have healing properties.
15	***Tourism.*** The birthplace of a renowned holy woman is said to bring good luck.
16	***Trade.*** A busy port town at the base of a major trade route, it sees trade by land and sea.
17	***Trade.*** Situated at the crossroads of two major trade routes, it is also a popular stopping point for goat and sheep herders heading to the mountains.
18	***Travel.*** A guided caravan across the mountains departs and returns to this town monthly.
19	***Travel.*** This is the only place for miles where the water of the river is shallow enough to ford it.
20	***Travel.*** This town is the halfway point between a major city and a port town, and it makes a good resting point for travelers.

opposing factions of the same religion who constantly struggle for primacy.

In a polytheistic setting, a particular location might be a holy site for followers of multiple gods. They might work in concert with one another, or they might constantly be at one another's metaphorical—or literal—throats. In a situation where a particular location is being guarded (whether to keep others out or to keep something contained), there might be a sizable contingent of paladins and other holy warriors, perhaps even a special order, dedicated to site.

SIGNATURE GOODS

The area is especially suited to the creation or export of a particular commodity. Perhaps there is gold (or iron, silver, gemstones, or other precious materials) buried in the nearby hills, so a small settlement springs up to support the miners and their families, plus any customers, merchants, and traders that come through. Those able to process and work the material might then take root nearby, allowing for increased throughput and more diversity in what's being offered and growing the community. Or perhaps the soil here is exactly right for growing a specific type of grape, which in turn is fermented into a particularly coveted wine. Whatever the good, a specialized community grows around its production and the needs of its population.

There might be a yearly celebration dedicated to this particular good. Perhaps there's a harvest festival, where people from all over can come help with the grape harvest, enjoying the latest vintages and buying wine and related products to take home—either for personal consumption or to sell at a marked-up price. Perhaps the mining town has a yearly or bi-annual market festival where crafters compete to make the most impressive weapons, jewelry, or armor, and they bring their own wares to sell, all while drinking, feasting, and talking business with merchants and shop owners from across the land.

STRATEGIC VALUE

The area might have a high strategic value, whether martially or politically. It might be on the boundary between two nations and serve as a sentinel against a neighbor's aggression. In this case, it might pull double duty as a border marker and trade hub, leveeing taxes on any imports. Militaristic fortifications would be the norm, including thick outer walls with easily defensible bastions, and there might be a fortress at its heart. If there's a history of war, it's likely left a long, lasting impression on the citizenry. Alternatively, the city might be at the core of an established nation, its capital city—perhaps because it's centrally located or easily defended or because it's already important as a trade hub or for the wealth of its coffers, due to a concentration of the rich and politically motivated.

Such cities likely have a significant military presence. Even the smallest outpost will have at least a handful of soldiers with standing orders on how to proceed in the case of invasion or other threat to security. A soldier might be stationed there for a set number of months or years before being sent elsewhere, or they might simply be awaiting new orders.

TOURISM

Luxurious locales have their own attraction, and even if the rich and powerful do not establish their permanent residence in such a place, they might set up a summer (or winter) home where they spend weeks or even months on holiday. Perhaps the area has an especially desirable aspect to its geography or climate, such as soft sand beaches, therapeutic hot springs, cold mountain air, breathtaking jungle scenery, historic ruins, or a population of rare creatures. As travelers pass through a particular site, establishments to serve them—such as for food, lodging, and other luxuries—might inevitably spring up.

Areas that subsist on tourism often have an "off-season," when it is devoid of visitors due to a change in the seasons or because it is simply not fashionable to be there during a certain time. Other areas might see a steady stream of tourists year-round, especially if they have a constant climate or multiple attractions that vary based on the time of year.

Merchants and service providers likely dominate the landscape, such as many taverns, inns, trinket shops, and stores catering to the activities nearby. For instance, beach-front towns might have stores with chairs and umbrellas and bathing outfits, and a town supported by big-game hunting might sell traps, weapons, and taxidermy and butchering services. The permanent population (so not including the tourists) might fluctuate heavily as those who live and work in the town during the height of the season leave during the quiet months, perhaps returning home or traveling.

TRADE HUB

The area might be situated at the intersection of two busy roads, on a harbor, at the mouth of a river, or at a similar hub for trade. Goods must get from one city to another, and places that rely on such traffic likely have many inns and stables and do brisk business in industries that cater to merchants and travelers and their needs, such as blacksmiths, cartwrights, and

cobblers. Traveling troupes might visit often along with a constant rotation of entertainers, merchants, pilgrims, and even con artists and other criminals due to the high concentration of goods and marks.

WHAT ARE THE CITY'S TRADE GOODS?

Urban centers rarely function in a bubble, and they rely on others just as others rely on them. The economy and the quality of life for its citizens often relies on trade—even with other nations—but it might be self-sufficient enough to meet the basic needs of its citizens without depending on others.

The answer to this question might partially be answered by the previous question: **What is the City's Primary Function?** If too isolated, it might need to be primarily self-sufficient, only trading sporadically, maybe going long stretches seeing no outsiders at all. They likely maintain plenty of nonperishable items for sale to the odd travelers and for their own use though: a farming community, for example, might have excess grain, wool, wood, and other shelf-stable staples; a fishing village might have barrels of salted fish; and a remote mountain town might brew their own specialized liquor that can be found nowhere else. They might trade these for products that are harder to come by in their region, be it dried fruits from far-off places or necessary items like needles or replacement wagon wheels.

Exports are goods sent out of the city to be sold or traded. When determining primary exports, consider the land, the people, and what is available to them. Is the city near a mine where most of the populace works? Does the raw ore get shipped out directly, or is it smelted and refined before it leaves? Are the residents' crafters that work with the refined metal, making and selling completed products like swords or jewelry? Perhaps the nearby mine isn't for metal but instead for a mineral that is used to create a certain pigment of paint. How does this effect the way the city functions?

Imports, on the other hand, are goods that are brought into the city to be distributed or sold among its citizens. When considering what the city needs to import, ask the same questions. What is readily available in this region, and what products might be scarce? The more vital a product, the more a city will

need to import. If all a citizen's basic needs are met, they likely have more free time and require more luxuries that must be imported if they can't be sourced locally. In this way, the ebb and flow of imports and exports fills a city's coffers, empties them, and then fills them again.

If the society functions under basic capitalistic principles, then the greater the demand for a product, the greater the cost for it. Consider this when pricing goods, and keep in mind the question from above: what is readily available in this region, and what products might be scarce?

IMPACT OF MAGIC ON TRADE GOODS

When considering trade goods, keep in mind the ever-present reality of magic. If the setting is high in magic, trade goods might involve things like high-quality inks and papers for scrolls and spell books, gemstones and other spell components, and even magical creatures and their byproducts. Settlements in regions where the barrier between the planes is thin might trade with cities and civilizations not of the Material Plane or might find that effects of the nearby plane bleed over and have an impact on their environment. Chickens raised near a portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire might have a smokey flavor, and ore mined where the Elemental Plane of Earth has influence might be stronger or more malleable.

Of course, magical travel and spells of all sorts can prove an issue. Consider how teleportation, conjuration spells, and similar magics affect both the scarcity and the demand for certain goods in the city. A city with a high number of magic users might not want for food, but they might have other needs.

TRADE GOODS AND PRICING

The **Trade Goods** table lists common trade goods along with several price points. The "low scarcity" price is for products that are easily found in the area (so if the city's primary export is flour, the citizens likely don't need to pay much to buy a loaf of bread), the "median" price is what the average consumer would likely pay, and the "high scarcity" price is for goods in limited availability. Consider cities independently when pricing goods.

To help determine a city's primary exports, roll on the **Trade Goods by Region** table or choose the exports by region.

TRADE GOODS BY REGION

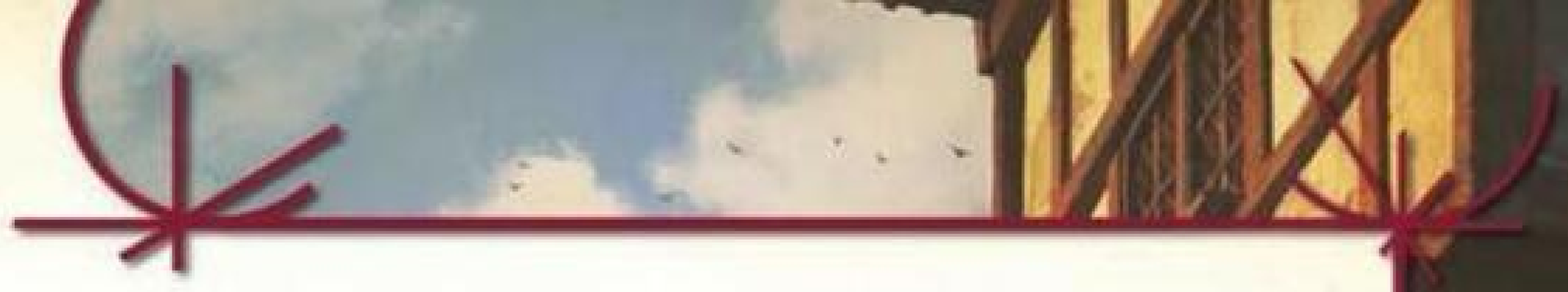
d8	Type of Region	Trade Goods
1	Agricultural	Apples, cider
2	Agricultural	Chicken, guineafowl
3	Agricultural	Goats, sheep
4	Agricultural	Grapes, wine
5	Agricultural	Hay, tobacco, wheat
6	Agricultural	Honey, mead
7	Agricultural	Nuts, oil, olives
8	Agricultural	Spices

d4	Type of Region	Trade Goods
1	Coast	Abalone, pearls
2	Coast	Fish, shellfish
3	Coast	Salt
4	Coast	Seaweed

d6	Type of Region	Trade Goods
1	Desert	Camels, goats
2	Desert	Copper
3	Desert	Dates and other fruits
4	Desert	Gemstones
5	Desert	Iron, stone
6	Desert	Salt

d6	Type of Region	Trade Goods
1	Forest	Berries, stone fruit
2	Forest	Fowl, venison
3	Forest	Furs, pelts
4	Forest	Herbs (cooking and healing)
5	Forest	Lumber
6	Forest	Mushrooms

d6	Type of Region	Trade Goods
1	Jungle	Animals
2	Jungle	Figs, kiwis, pomegranates
3	Jungle	Gemstones
4	Jungle	Herbs (cooking and healing)
5	Jungle	Lumber
6	Jungle	Plumage



TRADE GOODS

Goods	Low Scarcity Cost	Median Cost	High Scarcity Cost
Ale, cask	3 gp	7 gp	15 gp
Canvas, 1 sq. yard	5 cp	1 sp	1 gp
Chicken (live)	1 cp	2 cp	5 cp
Cinnamon, 1 lb. (ground)	1 gp	2 gp	10 gp
Cloves, 1 lb.	1.5 gp	3 gp	15 gp
Copper, 1 lb.	3 sp	5 sp	2 gp
Cotton cloth, 1 sq. yard	3 sp	5 sp	2 gp
Cow (live)	5 gp	10 gp	30 gp
Flour, 1 lb.	1 cp	2 cp	5 cp
Fur, 20 pelts (bear)	200 gp	400 gp	800 gp
Fur, 20 pelts (fox)	20 gp	50 gp	150 gp
Ginger, 1 lb. (dried)	5 sp	1 gp	5 gp
Ginger, 1 lb. (fresh)	1 gp	2 gp	10 gp
Goat (live)	5 sp	1 gp	5 gp
Gold, 1 lb.	25 gp	50 gp	100 gp
Honey	8 gp	15 gp	30 gp
Horse, draft	25 gp	50 gp	100 gp
Horse, riding	50 gp	75 gp	150 gp
Iron, 1 lb.	5 cp	1 sp	1 gp
Linen, 1 sq. yard	2.5 gp	5 gp	20 gp
Lumber, pallet (hardwood)	75 gp	150 gp	300 gp
Lumber, pallet (softwood)	25 gp	50 gp	100 gp
Nuts, 1 lb.	5 sp	1 gp	5 gp
Ox (live)	8 gp	15 gp	40 gp
Perfume	5 gp	10 gp	20 gp
Pig (live)	1.5 gp	3 gp	15 gp
Platinum, 1 lb.	300 gp	500 gp	1,000 gp
Saffron, 1 lb.	8 gp	15 gp	40 gp
Salt, 1 lb.	3 cp	5 cp	10 cp
Sheep (live)	1 gp	2 gp	10 gp
Silk, 1 sq. yard	5 gp	10 gp	30 gp
Silver, 1 lb.	2.5 gp	5 gp	20 gp
Wheat, 1 lb.	1 cp	1 cp	3 cp
Wine, barrel (common)	10 gp	50 gp	100 gp
Wine, barrel (fine)	500 gp	1,500 gp	3,000 gp
Wool, 1 lb. (raw)	5 cp	1 sp	5 sp
Wool, 1 lb. (spun)	5 sp	1 gp	5 gp

d6	Type of Region	Trade Goods
1	Mountains	Coal
2	Mountains	Copper, iron
3	Mountains	Diamonds, emeralds
4	Mountains	Furs, pelts
5	Mountains	Lumber
6	Mountains	Marble

d6	Type of Region	Trade Goods
1	Tundra	Ambergris
2	Tundra	Baleen, oil
3	Tundra	Caribou, deer (horns and meat)
4	Tundra	Fish
5	Tundra	Ice
6	Tundra	Pelts (bear, fox, seal)

WHAT IS THE CITY'S SIZE AND POPULATION?

Every community within a fantasy setting has a specific number of people living within it. From the smallest thorp to the largest metropolis, the number of citizens defines it. Smaller communities dot the rural landscape in all directions, where people enjoy a quiet, simple life, producing all they need and more. The excesses of their labors are transported afield to larger communities in which there are more mouths to feed than there is land to provide for them. Within those environments, hordes of people jostle one another endlessly as they bring a myriad of talents and skills together to provide every imaginable good and service.

Roll a d8 and consult the **City Size and Population** table or choose the size of the city.

CITY SIZE AND POPULATION

d8	Community	Population
1	Thorp	1–20
2	Hamlet	21–50
3	Village	51–200
4	Small Town	201–3,000
5	Large Town	3,001–6,000
6	Small City	6,001–10,000
7	Large City	10,001–30,000
8	Metropolis	More than 30,000

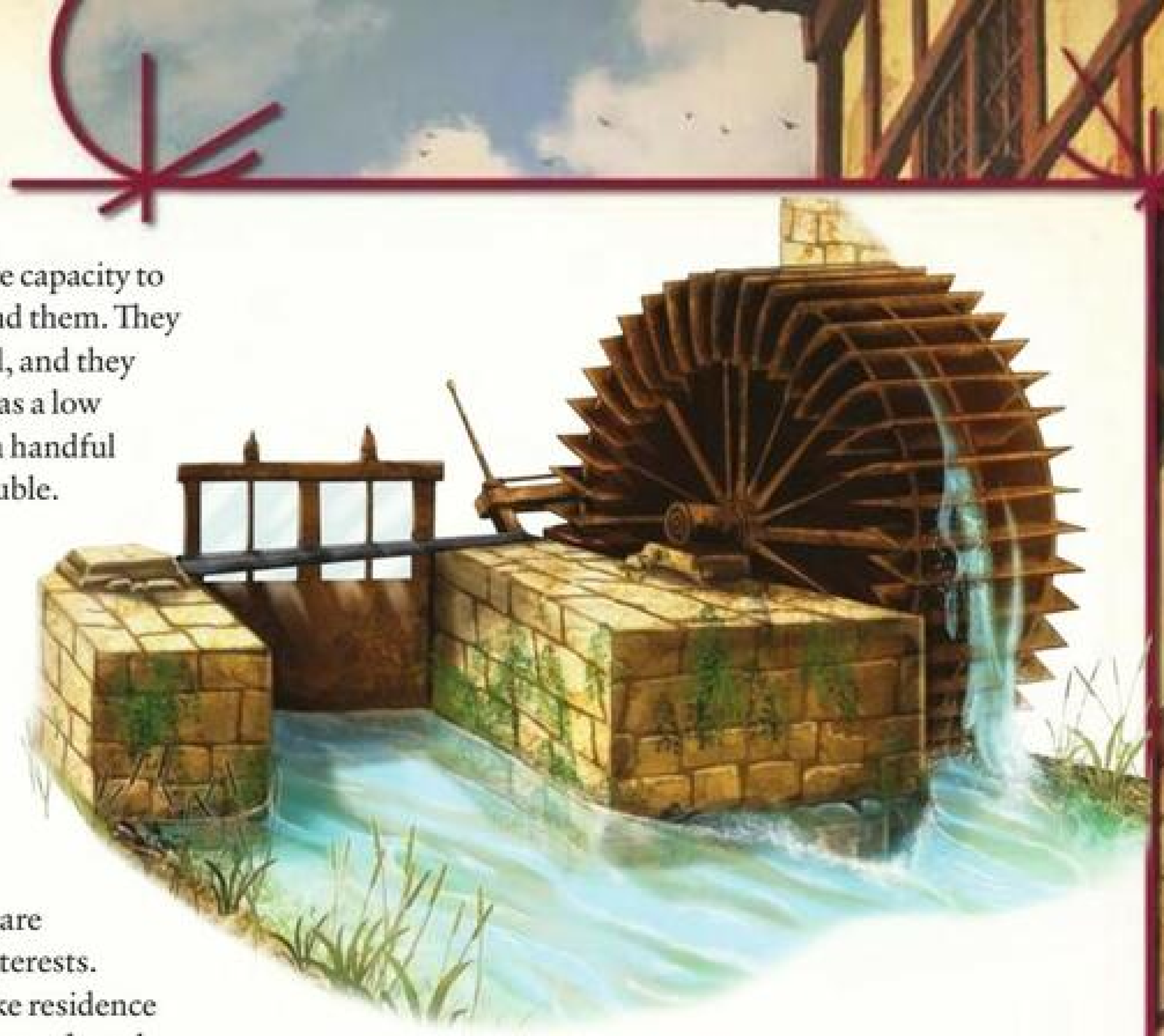
THORPS, HAMLETS, AND VILLAGES

Typically, small communities of no more than a few dozen people or families are scattered across the landscape of a campaign world. Any place that is easily defended, that easily bypasses obstacles such as streams and bluffs, or that has easy access to plentiful natural resources serves as a promising site for settlement. Most such communities never grow beyond their meager beginnings, due to the limitations of said resources or because other locales within a day's walk or ride have flourished. If a tiny logging camp pops up near a rich source of timber but little else, the place might become a permanent thorp of loggers and their families along with the handful of small businesses that serve them—such as a trading post, cartwright, and blacksmith—but it's unlikely to blossom into anything more. These tiny communities are numerous in civilized lands where long years of domestication coupled with martial force have diminished the dangers of the wilds. They are much less common on the frontier where dangers require sufficient defenses and citizens to withstand them.

Thorps. Thorps are the smallest sites of communal living, never more than a handful of people. Often, they are nothing more than a couple of buildings along a rural trail or river, taking up no more than an acre or two of land, and they almost never feature a formalized government structure or organized religious presence. They are simply a collection of a few houses with perhaps one or two common buildings or businesses such as an inn and stables. The people who live there are common folk, farmers, ranchers, and sole proprietors. Higher classes of citizenry are rarely if ever found dwelling in a thorp.

Hamlets. Only slightly larger than thorps, hamlets usually occupy a few acres at most and most often differ from those smaller communities by the presence of authority figures, such as a mayor and elders. Even then, the hamlet is still largely nothing more than "a wide place in the road," a stopover to some other destination. There might be a common building for gatherings and a shrine or chapel to some local agricultural deity within a hamlet, but just as often, public business occurs outdoors, perhaps under a large tree or on a green, and religious needs are met by traveling priests who pass through on a regular basis. Again, the people of a hamlet are simple folk who labor for a living. Perhaps a retired adventurer or merchant has taken up residence in a hamlet to "get away from it all," but they are rare.

Villages. Communities of a hundred or more citizens, villages occupy maybe a half dozen to a dozen acres



and often serve in a central administrative capacity to several smaller hamlets and thorps around them. They usually have a mayor and a village council, and they likely feature some type of defense, such as a low stone wall or a palisade, and can muster a handful of armed folks as a militia in times of trouble. Villages typically feature a civic center where a handful of public buildings and businesses sit in proximity, including at least one inn and stables, a meeting hall, a trading post, and a small chapel. They sometimes form around some defensive structure such as a fort, tower, or small keep. Most people living in or near a village are common laborers, but a few operate businesses or are wealthier experts representing distant interests. Adventurers, often retired, frequently take residence in a village where there is enough in the way of goods and services to allow them to establish a hold, keep, or tower of some kind.

Population Density. In most cases, the population of a thorp, hamlet, or village is spread out around the periphery of its geographic center, occupying farm or ranch land. Only a handful of citizens live in the middle of the community. Thus, population density remains quite low, and often, most of the citizens might go several days without even seeing one another. In some cases where geography demands it, population density is high, even though the total population is low. Such examples include communities built on small but very defensible land (upon ridges and bluffs, along cliff walls, or on bends along a river) or where solid, stable land is scarce (in a swamp or bog, on an island, or in subterranean locales).

TOWNS

Communities of a few hundred to a couple of thousand citizens or more are considered proper towns. They appear and grow on highly advantageous sites where trade thrives, multiple resources are abundant, and travel is regular and frequent. They occupy anywhere from several dozen to over a hundred acres and often include defensive works like wooden or stone walls with towers and gates surrounding most of the dwellings. Numerous businesses operate within a town's confines, including several inns and taprooms, a variety of goods manufacturers, and a handful of traders. A formal government entity maintains order and makes decisions regarding the upkeep of the place, and one or more religious orders frequently reside in formal chapter houses and temples. Towns also usually exhibit substantial public infrastructure, such as public docks or piers, paved roads, bridges, parks, and monuments.

Towns serve as the central civic center for dozens of smaller communities for miles around in every direction. They become a central hub for trade of rural industries such as crops, livestock, textiles, and unrefined resources, like timber and ore. In turn, they administer laws and justice and are frequently the collection point for taxes and a mustering point for military service beyond the soldiers' home communities. Towns often maintain a company of trained professionals as a permanent watch to keep the peace.

Population Density. Larger communities like towns naturally bring more people together into tighter confines. Having a central location to trade goods, protect the populace, and meet others necessitates closer quarters than smaller, more rural locales. In some instances, towns grow outward, becoming sprawling acres of meandering roads and paths interspersed with townhomes surrounded by gardens and parks. Most towns, however, adapt to more citizenry by growing upward and condensing the size of living spaces. Many shops wind up with upper stories above them to serve as living quarters for the owners and their employees.

Wealthier citizens might maintain larger townhouses in the center of town, or they might hold small estates on the outskirts. Any farmlands or parklands that once sat interspersed with other dwellings are frequently absorbed and built over, though sometimes the citizens work to preserve such greenbelts, particularly in more residential parts of town.

CITIES

In many ways, cities are simply towns that have gotten bigger. The population continues to expand, filling in the middle where possible and surrounding the existing sections with additional sprawl, taking up a square mile or more. A set of defensive walls that once surrounded the perimeter of a town eventually serves as a demarcation between the "old city" and the "new city." The community likely grows less homogenized, developing districts where similar businesses congregate over time. The city becomes a center of trade for a larger portion of the surrounding lands, and it typically maintains a standing military to march against external threats or uprisings outside the city boundaries.

Population Density. Population density within a city is like that of a town but taken to its practical extreme. As many people as possible cram together in the limited space available. Individuals might rent a small room in an attic or basement or even share such accommodations with one or more others. Families sleep in single rooms in boarding houses, and in poorer sections of town, such buildings are further subdivided into slums and hovels. In such places, disease and fire hazards abound, and foot traffic fights with carts and wagons along countless thoroughfares.

Land is at such a premium that only the very wealthy can afford to maintain actual estates within a city's walls. Property bounded by its own set of walls, sheltering gardens and trees, sit within the bustle of the community at large. Parks and greenbelts still exist, along with large public plazas, but they are crowded most hours of the day.

METROPOLISES

The largest of the communities, metropolises are few and far between and are often the capital cities of great nations or empires. They are everything a city is, just larger. These population centers are home to tens of thousands of people and sprawl across several square miles. Most metropolises typically began as two or more smaller communities—villages, towns, or cities—that eventually grew together to form a single, massive urban area. A metropolis is the central hub of an entire government, civically and militarily administering every lesser community within range. The resources required to provide food, clothing, and shelter to its populace are immense.

Population Density. The crowded conditions that exist within any fantasy city occur inside a metropolis too. As with cities, districts form in different parts, often even more pronounced due to the way the metropolis slowly enlarges and engulfs its constituent urban centers. The size of a metropolis also means many citizens live within a single neighborhood or district for their entire lives and never even see the rest of the city. Due to the time required to travel from one section to another of a large metropolis, law enforcement and other civic services are likewise segmented to only attend to one region.

WHAT IS THE CITY'S GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE?

City governments take many forms. Some are traditional with well-known types of rulership, and some are more exotic. In all cases though, they exist whether the community in question is a simple thorp of a handful of rural folks or a sprawling metropolis where tens of thousands of citizens must be guided or coerced and where order must be preserved in some form. Below are examples of various government types.

Roll a d10 and consult the **Government Type** table or choose the government of the city.

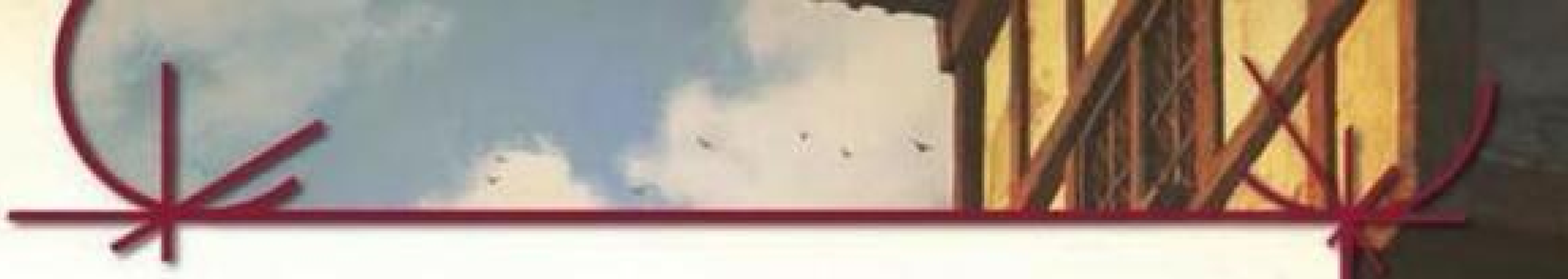
CITY GOVERNMENT

d10	Government Type
1	Corporatocracy
2	Democracy
3	Dictatorship
4	Magocracy
5	Monarchy (absolute)
6	Monarchy (figurehead)
7	Pedocracy
8	Plutocracy
9	Stratocracy
10	Theocracy

AUTOCRACY (DICTATORSHIP OR MONARCHY)

If the city's ruled by a single individual, chances are it falls into this category. There are various levels of rulership in an autocracy, from figureheads who hold little actual power to absolute rulers who prescribe every law and punishment, but they are all totalitarian in nature. Such rulership is absolute and maintained through loyalty of martial forces to keep the citizenry in line. Rulers often rule capriciously, eliminating their political enemies and pronouncing edicts on a whim or to satisfy personal desires at the expense of the populace.

Monarchs are not usually as absolute in their rule. They are frequently hereditary positions, and they must



derive consent from their nobles to maintain power. In some cases, monarchs hold no real power at all, as advisors, regents, and nobles who control the treasury can dictate the affairs of state to their own liking. Occasionally, an absolute ruler of this type proves to be exceedingly benevolent and wise, ruling justly and fairly, but corruption is far more often the norm.

By definition, the city is ruled by an individual, an autocrat, such as a monarch or military general or emperor, but offshoots of this type of government might also be ruled by committee, such a council of officers in a military dictatorship (see also **Stratocracy** below). The city usually features a keep or palace of some type, and there is typically a contingent of soldiers housed in barracks near this splendid structure. Troops move through the streets, enforcing the ruler's will and reveling in their own level of power over the common citizenry. In much smaller communities, an absolute ruler might simply be a mayor or elder with a handful of hired toughs who enforce the rules, or the leader might be a minor lord in a feudal society who controls the populace through control of the land.

CORPORATOCRACY

Though the term rings somewhat modern, the concept of a corporatocracy fits well with many fantasy cities where commerce and mercantilism are a strong theme. In such a city, business is king, and the interests of the merchants reign supreme. On one end of the spectrum, a corporatocracy means rulership by the heads of the varied guilds in the form of a council. The council elects rulers and forms a governing body to maintain law and order. In such cases, there is usually a large building in a public space where debate and enactment are conducted transparently. At the other extreme, only the wealthiest merchants hold true power, making decisions based on their own fiscal interests (see also **Plutocracy** below). Their decision-making often takes place behind closed doors, enforced through the judicious use of coin to persuade others to embrace their causes.

In any small community, a handful of business proprietors might rule by mutual agreement. For example, the innkeeper, the blacksmith, and the cartwright might maintain enough pull with the rest of the citizens to allow them to make the decisions that are best for the hamlet or village.

DEMOCRACY

Any city that allows its citizens to make decisions for the good of the community they live in is a democracy. In some rural locales with small populations, that right to rule might be direct, as in every adult has a vote. In most cases though, rulership is implied through representation, where the populace elects individuals on a regular basis to rule on their behalf, and the ruling body at least purports to represent the will of its people. In a fantasy setting, leaders might come from among successful merchants, wise sages, skilled adventurers, or manual laborers, assuming any of them can win the support of the folks they would represent. These individuals become a mayor and aldermen or a ruling council or any of a number of organized bodies. The process of governing takes place in a public place, either a communal area (in the case of very small communities) or a public building constructed for such. Terms of leadership are limited, and the populace has some recourse to remove the elected officials from office if they grow dissatisfied with the results.

MAGOCRACY

A magocracy is a ruling body formed by those individuals who command the most powerful magic. It might take the form of a single ruler (in which case it can very easily veer into the territory of an autocracy; see also **Autocracy** above), a small group of only a few individuals (such as a triumvirate), or a large body made up of every citizen who can demonstrate some proficiency in arcane ability. The level of derived power, the relative transparency of decision-making, and the amount of corruption infesting a ruling body made up of cunning, secretive, and eclectic wizards can run the gamut, but it rarely makes for a dull city.

In a much smaller locale, a magocracy could take the form of a single wizard, perhaps living in the old tower nearby. The "ruler" might appear only occasionally, declaring some new edict or prohibition or demanding some assistance with an esoteric need. The rest of the time, the citizenry is left alone to do as it pleases, though if the wizard has established a comprehensive set of "dos and don'ts," the populace would likely follow said list rigorously to avoid angering the ruler.

PEDOCRACY

A pedocracy is a government formed by the wise and learned. In its simplest form, this type of rulership manifests as a small, rural community led by a wise elder who discusses challenges with and arbitrates disagreements between the locals. The ruler draws upon years of experience to guide younger or less insightful citizens and aids them in seeing the more subtle consequences of their choices. In a larger population, rulership by the most educated could focus on teachers and sages as well as priests and wizards. Conversely, it might function as a variation on a corporatocracy, where

the most experienced tradesfolk who practice skilled labor are designated as community leaders. A pedocracy also frequently forms within a society where the citizens are particularly long-lived, such as dwarven and elven communities. There, the rulers are chosen from among the senior-most inhabitants who can truly draw upon centuries of experience to guide the populace.

PLUTOCRACY

A plutocracy is a system of government made up of the wealthiest citizens. It doesn't matter whether said wealth is inherited, comes from trade, or has been collected through adventuring, war, or some other exotic activity. The leaders in such a system might rule overtly, placed in positions of power through some traditional manner where they simply prove their vast wealth. Conversely, they could be the power behind other forms of government, subtly guiding events in their favor through lavish but covert spending. In small communities, the line can blur between types of government when the person with the most wealth also happens to own the only defensive structure or all the businesses in town. It's hard to argue with someone who can offer protection, who pays for everyone's livelihood through jobs, or who simply monopolizes trade, even if they are not a traditional lord.

STRATOCRACY

This type of government is rule by the military. It can take numerous forms, from a well-disciplined martial culture led by the most respected strategists to a despotic military dictatorship where a handful of the most accomplished soldiers stage a coup and take over the government. A city that has been near the forefront of a long war or that serves as a haven against a wild and dangerous environment beyond its walls might be well served by a ruling class made up of the most adept military minds. This is also true in smaller, more rural communities where a single warrior might be held in high esteem or where a handful of martial adventurers have established a small keep or fortress within a frontier region and maintain order as a means of survival in a hostile land.

THEOCRACY

When a city turns to its holy leaders for guidance and stewardship, that is a theocracy. Belief in higher powers often causes citizens to place their everyday care into the hands of those deities' representatives, hoping that divine powers better know what's good for the populace. Sometimes the people enter into this type of governmental system willingly, even enthusiastically, but on other occasions, the holy power of a despotic leader, serving a capricious and unkind god, can force a people into subservience against their will. In small communities, a single religious leader, such as a druid or a cleric of a god of agriculture or peace, can act as the spiritual leader of the locals. In larger towns, a thriving temple that draws many devout worshipers can wield influence by default. In some cases, holy fighting orders can establish chapter houses and command the citizenry to abide by the laws of the deities they serve.

MAGIC

In worlds where magic exists, the presence (or lack) of it can influence the development of an urban center. Whether only the wealthiest citizens have access to the magic, or the city is filled with magical lights powered by the arcane college's junior students and ever greater wonders, magic within a city can tell a subtle story of the city's history and growth.

IMPACT OF MAGIC

The prevalence of magic within a city can have a major impact on every aspect of urban planning and public life. When essential functions are conducted by magical means, it fundamentally changes the way a city operates, which in turn impacts the city's design. The extent of the impact varies, largely dependent on who's using the magic and why: is it used for the betterment of the entire population, is it reserved for a few elites, or something in between? And that use of magic depends on its accessibility and usability—can anyone learn it or is it difficult to master?—or it might be considered the privilege of the upper classes and restricted (or outlawed) within the lower echelons of society. Whatever the reasons, taking magic into account in a fantasy game world can lead to some intriguing city plans, rendering certain designs obsolete and certain assumptions irrelevant. This chapter details the ways that magic might impact a city.

MAGIC'S PURPOSE

Magic is the wild card in every fantasy setting. With it, civilizations can replicate the effects of advanced technology and, in many cases, far surpass what technology alone would be able to accomplish. And magic might even work in concert with technology, making something altogether new. Like technology, magic is developed for any number of reasons: convenience, efficiency, utility, war, worship—even aesthetics. Just like technology, it is created to fill a need, and those needs can be as diverse as the world's peoples.

When considering the level of magic in a city, think about the needs of the people and the ways magic can and would fill those needs. Even the smallest, most frivolous problem might have a solution in magic, so ask the important question, "Should magic be used here, and if so, how?" There are many obvious answers to this question, but there are some not-so-obvious answers too.

TYPES OF MAGIC

Magic is not homogenous but has many sources, each with its own limitations, requirements, and capabilities. That a society has access to one sort of magic doesn't mean it has access to all sorts of magic, and it is entirely possible to have a society with different levels of prevalence in different types of magic: differing casters require differing infrastructure and have differing cultural implications and consequences.

Wizards require institutional education, the presence of clerics implies formal religious services or widespread spiritualism, druids can't perform without a connection to the natural world, and the pact magic of warlocks necessitates the existence of powerful creatures willing to make questionable deals. Beyond that, types of magics have differing access to spells with further implications for a society. Easy access to *create food and water*, for instance, doesn't mean the same level of access is available to an automaton workforce, or illusions, or scrying magics. Consider how the proliferation of different types of magic might affect a city.

PREVALENCE: MAGIC IS EVERYWHERE

In a high-magic city, it could be that magic is accessible to anyone at any time or simply that a sizable portion of public services, like health care, sanitation, transportation, and utilities are all powered by magic. Minor elements of everyday life might also be easily modified: servants might have access to magic to help with their work, a noble might utilize magic to change their hair color, and laborers might benefit from the

local druid's use of *goodberry* and some empowered tools. There might not even be a distinction between doing something with and without magic. Every task might involve at least some, and most of the people might know some cantrips relevant to their job.

When designing a city with a prevalence of magic, consider how the average citizen would use it and how that use would change the everyday functioning of the city. What enables magical access for so many, and how is it maintained? Are there specific resources, traditions, or institutions the city relies on to keep the magic flowing? Some of the areas potentially impacted by a high-magic setting are listed below.

IN THE BACKGROUND

Cost of Plenty. Magic isn't free, even when it's everywhere. Material components have irreplaceable costs in precious materials, spell slots are limited by the day and by the number of available casters, magic items require investments in time and materials from dedicated enchanters, and higher-level spells might only be available to a well-trained few. Even in the grandest and most egalitarian of magical societies, there is a cost, and someone is paying it. When designing a high-magic city, consider who pays this cost and how that affects magic's proliferation throughout the city.

This could be a traditional economic approach in which the city pays for some magical public works for the common good, and for everything else, people purchase what spellcasting services are available to them. In this situation, high-level magics and expensive rituals might be out of reach for the working class, while those with money can surround themselves with near-endless magic and purchase miracles on a whim. Spellcasting is a profession like any other, and high-level spellcasters are paid like particularly skilled specialists in other professions.

If magical prevalence is due more to intense centralization, the magic and spellcasting abilities of the city are reported to the government and then redistributed to the entire population, resulting in widespread access to magical goods but less discretionary access to spellcasting. Such a system might look like a more equitable version of the **Magic is Restricted** level of prevalence (see below), where even the elite find it difficult to get more than their fair share of spellcasting.

Magical Infrastructure. High magic is not a stable equilibrium. To reach and maintain it, there are enormous and invisible investments that must be made. Spellcasters must be trained, components sourced and possibly imported, political concerns assuaged, and environmental factors managed—and all of this on such a scale that its results are available to everyone. When designing a high-magic city, consider how it developed to this point and what's necessary to keep magic prevalent.

Was this the work of centuries, of incremental improvements in institutions, the slow growth of trade networks and interplanar diplomacy to secure reagents, ultimately creating the possibility for anyone to learn how to cast spells?

Or was this a recent development? The dream of ambitious rulers or a far-sighted council and a sudden rush of frantic development, furious importation of specialists, knowledge, and materials to bring magic to the people? Do grandparents, or even parents, remember when magic was not so common? Is the newfound prevalence of magic stable, or does the city risk backsliding if deep gemstone mines run dry or grand trade routes collapse?

The nature of that background informs the nature of the city's magical infrastructure, which might also inform the aesthetics of magic in the city. Does it rely on massive strip mines with dedicated refineries to sift magically useful gemstones and precious metals from the dross? Is it blessed by ancient pacts sealed with forgotten deities whose rites have ossified over millennia? Do cargo ships unload tons upon tons of magical fuel every day, burned to maintain decades of layered enchantments? These details primarily serve as flavor to the abundant magic on display but also go a long way toward making the city feel real—even potentially serving as a plot hook.

CONSTRUCTION

Constructing buildings and roads is a time-consuming process, but in a high-magic city, one magic wielder can complete in hours what it might take dozens of workers a day or more. Whether the materials are lifted by golems or the stone and wood are sculpted by spells—or a building is simply summoned into being, fully fabricated—magical construction takes but a fraction of the time. Impossible architecture, sustained only by luxurious spells and possible only through magical construction, might become the mark of public works and wealthy estates.

However, dedicated magical construction can be expensive in labor, materials, and time. More mundane construction workers might use illusions to establish what a building should look like as it's being built, provide light and rations for work crews, and compensate for material imperfections. If golems

are plentiful, they might replace manual laborers in construction jobs with citizens relegated to oversight, quality control, and commanding constructs.

EDUCATION

When magic is ubiquitous, magical education is the norm. The principles behind translation magic are taught alongside advanced language lessons. Runes are taught alongside the alphabet. Martial drills practiced by military recruits include basic first aid or utility cantrips for use on the march. Blacksmiths teach their apprentices the *mending* cantrip.

Magic can also assist in the education process: illusory teaching aids, conjured or enchanted teaching tools, and the ability to record and replay lessons could all be an invaluable part of a formal education. If the most prevalent types of magic require formal education, then a centralized, formalized education system is likely, since the proliferation of magic is necessary for the city's continuation.

ENTERTAINMENT AND LEISURE

Magic can do a great many wild, wonderful things. While a good portion of these can be used for strictly utilitarian purposes, it has plenty of uses for entertainment and leisure. Magic competitions, arcane-enhanced sporting events, displays of skill and might—the list is only limited by one's imagination. Some of these activities might require custom fields or arenas and might draw large crowds of spectators, becoming a cornerstone of a city's economy.

Smaller, more intimate gatherings and events might also be impacted by the prevalence of magic in a setting. Bathhouses might contain magically infused water laced with charms that rejuvenate the bather. Grand, complex illusions that feature both movement and sound might replicate scenes from popular stories or enhance a theater troupe's performance. Ethereal servants might float among partygoers, offering enchanted refreshments balanced on fine silver trays.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

With a high proliferation of magic, no citizen of a city needs to ever go hungry. Spells of all types have been developed for the creation of food . . . even if it is bland and unappetizing, it still provides the necessary nutrition for survival. A high-magic city that has any percentage of the population struggling with hunger and malnutrition is a city that is willfully ignorant or woefully mismanaged.

In such a situation, conjured food might become a sign of poverty. The truly rich might refuse it entirely, for it would be beneath their station to eat such a thing. Meanwhile, the working class finds ways to make it more palatable and save for the occasional meal of real food. Some families might treat conjured food as a filler, keeping themselves fed when times are scarce but trying their utmost to eat real meals.

HEALTH CARE

Health care in a high-magic society is widely available and, while not necessarily inexpensive, is accessible to individuals from all walks of life, leading to a healthier population. When disease can be eradicated with a touch and injuries can be healed with a word, death from such things is a rare occurrence. Hospitals, temples, and clinics can offer quick and painless solutions to most of life's physical ailments, letting the sick and injured return to health—and their lives—with alacrity, and potions purchased easily at the corner store allow citizens to treat themselves in their own homes without much thought or concern.

Magic can also be used to aid in mobility and daily living. A chair that levitates, a back brace that reacts and compensates for its wearer's movements, quills that take dictation, shirts with self-buttoning closures: these are all examples of ways magic can aid those who need it.

With divine magic, death itself might be a loss defined by its material cost. While the diamonds for a *revivify* spell are out of reach for the poor, moderately wealthy merchants can afford to be brought back in an emergency while the truly rich and powerful can treat death as an inconvenience, meaning likely greater risk-taking from wealthy youths. Laws might also adjust to deal out lengthier sentences or simply outlaw resurrection from rule-breakers.

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

A wide proliferation of magic affects all aspects of everyday life: a shopkeeper might have magical security measures or an automatic ledger that makes a record of every transaction, a dressmaker might be able to change the color and design of her fabrics with a flick of the wrist or incorporate illusion magic into her garments, and the grocer keeps his produce cold with the help of enchanted coolers.

Similarly, from the milling of grain and flour to the sculpting of clay crockery to the weaving of a delicate silk fabric, most manufacturing industries can be aided with the use of magic. Arcane-powered machinery, summoned elementals, or even just the prolific use of *unseen servant* and *mage hand* all make mass-production of goods easier and more efficient.

PUBLIC SAFETY

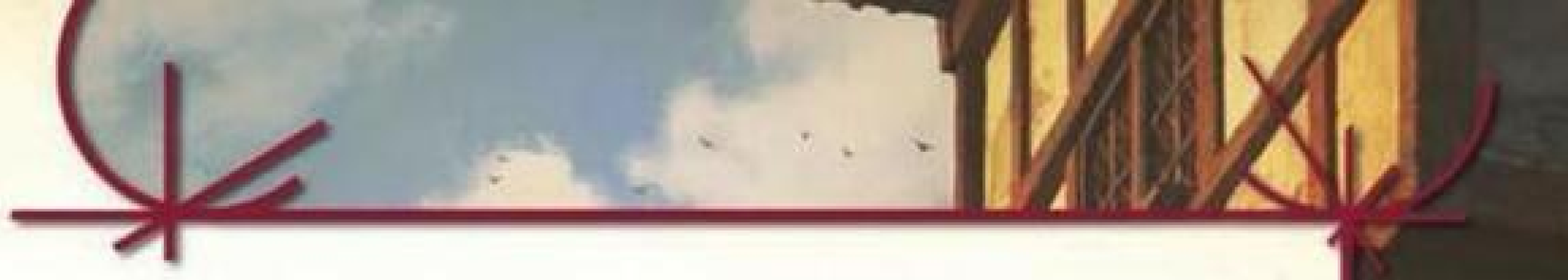
The city watch in a high-magic city is likely well-equipped with magic items to help in the surveillance and apprehension of criminals. Wands that stun, arcane communication, and cuffs that restrict the use of magic as well as movement are but a few examples of the ways a police force could be enhanced with magic. Particularly important is the watch's ability to combat magic—in a city with magic everywhere, a mundane police force would be quickly and easily overrun. The ability to detect and counter the use of magic would be high on the priority list of such an organization. The city watch might even be composed more of magic wielders than those skilled with the blade and bow—when a criminal can be immobilized with a word, weapons become obsolete.

Alternatively, enchanted blades and bows might become sidearms. The watch might be expected to solve most problems with words, but since spells can be unreliable, for pretty much everything else, a couple feet of enchanted steel works properly.

SANITATION

Cities of any size face challenges when it comes to sanitation. Garbage piles up, and sewer systems become havens for disease, vermin, and criminals. Cities with plentiful magic might not have need for a sewer system and can provide for the easy removal and destruction of refuse, keeping the streets clean and the citizenry healthy. Magical incinerators, in-home portals to pocket dimensions crafted specifically for holding waste, or arcane automatons that aid the local sanitation crews might all be present in a high-magic city.

Such conveniences might be individualized for the rich, housed in enchanted wings of their estates, while centralized for everyone else. Citizens who can't afford a personal incinerator might haul their refuse to a communal one. With the public burden of waste greatly reduced, fines might be levied on those who don't properly dispose of their trash.



TRANSPORTATION

Magical carriages trundle down wide avenues, large shipments of goods float on levitating platforms above the rooftops, and multiple teleportation circles move long queues of commuters from one side of the city to the other in the blink of an eye. Magical means of transportation can come in all shapes and sizes and drastically impact the layout of a city. Consider, for instance, if no horses or other beasts of burden are needed for moving people or goods: the roads are free from animal dung, no room needs to be allocated for stables or training yards, and the street cleaners' jobs are far simpler. If commuters use teleportation or flight for longer distances, the streets might be tailored much more for local foot traffic rather than carriages, or they might be used primarily for transporting goods rather than people. And rooftops might be wider to accommodate landing pads and rooftop entrances. Magical elevators ease the burdens of the residents, and getting easily from place to place is no longer a hurdle for any citizen, regardless of income, class, or ability. Airships powered by arcane crystals or by harnessed elementals float through the air, shuttling both passengers and goods across the land.

UTILITIES

Many fantasy game worlds often rely on the pastiche of medieval Europe and other civilizations from the Middle Ages with similar levels of technology. But with magic, people can replicate or even far surpass the technology found in the Middle Ages or even today.

Cities without magic might rely on large aqueducts to transport water throughout the city or might have no running water at all, perhaps relying on wells (whether in the central square or in a resident's yard) to provide fresh water to households and businesses. A well can run dry, a water source can become polluted, and citizens can become ill or even die from a lack of clean water. A city with a high level of magic can easily bypass these issues. Are there fountains that provide fresh water for the populace? Does every citizen have a font of water in their home, funneled directly from the Elemental Plane of Water, or nozzles enchanted with a *create or destroy water* spell?

In a city with so much magic, instead of open flame, each home might rely on enchanted crystals to provide heat and light. Perhaps the use of *continual flame* or *light* is used for lighting houses, or homes might make use of a bound fire elemental. With no need to constantly replenish their fuel sources, families would have more expendable income, and servants would have more time to see to other needs rather than constantly tending fires and replacing spent candles.

PREVALENCE: MAGIC IS LIMITED

In some settings, magic can be abundant but difficult to use or to learn. In such instances, it would not be unusual to find schools to help those with the aptitude to hone their abilities or shops selling magic items and services to the general populace at an increased price. A few of the major public services might be covered by magic, but it is not as common, and the average citizen might only interact with it periodically.

IN THE BACKGROUND

Equilibrium. That magic is limited is assumed as the default. Magic is present and common, but it's not so common as to be an everyday norm. Spellcasters are known but a novelty: neither subject to special restriction nor "normal" to most people's experience. By default, this is due to a lack of availability rather than active malice, and it's a comfortable default to work with. Barring the active effort of building toward a greater level of magic, this limited magic is a logical equilibrium.

That said, it doesn't have to be. A nation clawing itself out of disaster might have had greater magic and only recently lost it, possessing a still-active magical infrastructure that serves as a constant reminder of the good times. A city that recently overthrew its overbearing magical overlords might be in the process of creating a new, more equitable approach to magic, and the current limitations are a steppingstone to something greater. Even in settings where limited magic has been the default, ambitious rulers might be building up magical infrastructure to make it more prevalent, or recent terrors might see a push to have it restricted and shut away from the masses.

Local Flavor. In a high-magic city, magic is so common as to be industrial, while in a restricted-magic city, magic is often subject to the whims of the powerful. Within a limited-magic city, however, individual eccentricity can have a more visible impact. When the town wizard who handles everyone's enchanting needs really likes ducks, there will end up being a plethora of magic items that look like ducks. Ragalrax the Ineffable's sudden inability to make a decent *potion of healing* has an immediate effect on the local stores. Magical infrastructure might be a passion project from some long-ago archmage, maintained and improved upon by apprentices of their school ever since. The seemingly simple act of characters rescuing a few acolytes from an experiment gone wrong or mending fences between a

druid circle and the city council can have serious, swiftly visible benefits for the citizenry at large.

CONSTRUCTION

Construction in a limited-magic city is likely mundane, perhaps one or two elements assisted by magic. Companies might hire those skilled in magically shaping stone or the use of *telekinesis*, but the number of individuals who both have such skills and wish to leverage them in building structures are likely few and far between—an architect or foreman with such abilities is likely in high demand. A particularly lucky or well-off construction company might have a handful of automatons or golems at their disposal, but they are not the norm.

EDUCATION

Arcane academies and other institutions that offer instruction in magic are often found in settings with limited magic. The schools are likely in larger cities with admission being prestigious and coveted, or they might be viewed with suspicion by those with no access to the arcane arts. A magic school might be a boarding school, meant to cater to children of all ages, or it might be a university intended for deeper, more theoretical study once a practitioner has developed their abilities on their own. Tutors and instructors might travel to smaller towns and villages, always on the lookout for any who display the potential for learning and controlling magic, and they might provide private instruction to particularly promising students or to those who cannot travel to the school itself.

Bureaucracy inevitably springs up in the wake of such institutions, especially if they are a sign of merit or prestige. In such cases, employment within the schools also comes with prestige, and the position of teacher or administrator is highly sought after. The local government might even be involved in the operation and oversight of the school, with appointed or elected officials having the final authority in any school business. Whole buildings might be constructed to house the administrative offices for such schools, or wings of government buildings might be reserved for the reams of paperwork associated with such a task.

More makeshift magical education might exist both on a for-profit basis and on the whims of individual spellcasters. There might be cultural traditions regarding experienced spellcasters taking on poorer apprentices, providing a means of social mobility they couldn't get otherwise. Alternatively, they might be hired as tutors by those with both wealth and a desire to have their children become spellcasters. Particularly generous or quixotic casters might choose new apprentices arbitrarily, giving a child and their family the social mobility promised by professional spellcasting because they like a kid's pluck or wanted to do a good deed.

ENTERTAINMENT AND LEISURE

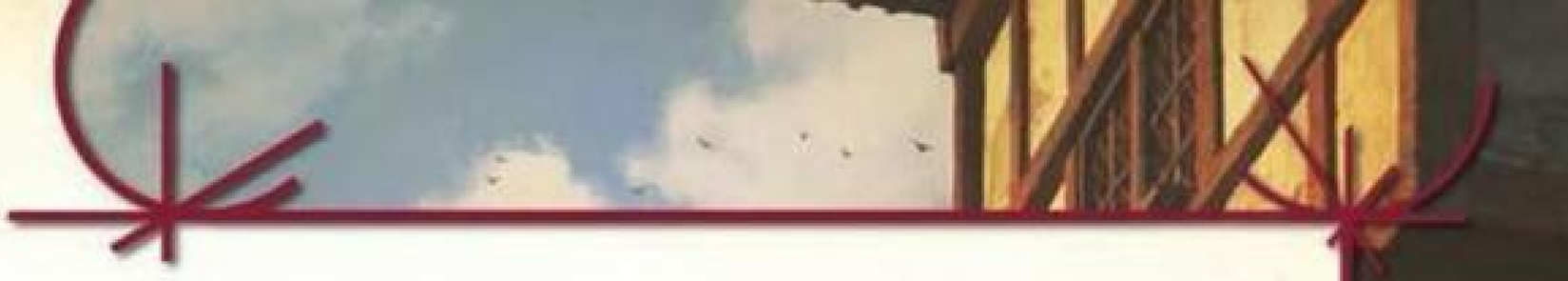
Limited access to magic means common leisure activities are likely nonmagical. Magical entertainment or effects might be rolled out for special events—a city-wide festival, a traveling troupe of performers, or a student demonstration might all have displays of magic—but the day-to-day amusements of the townsfolk are ordinary and lack elements of the arcane. A particular establishment might be well-known for its magic, or it might feature more subtle magical enhancements, like magically controlled stage lights in a theater or self-cleaning latrines in the city's primary sporting arena.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

While magic isn't widespread enough to feed entire communities with conjured meals, there might be enough to supplement charity kitchens and make their supplies last longer. More relevant to such an environment might be the *purify food and drink* spell since, as a low-level spell that affects an area rather than a set quantity of food, it can help deal with tainted wells, compromised granaries, and the vagaries of food waste. Such duties might be standard fare for acolytes, turning waste into fresh, delicious food for the community, and a common first interaction with magic for the working class.

HEALTH CARE

In a city with limited magic, temples or clinics might offer healing services for a fee (or generous donation), and potions and magical salves and balms might be available for purchase by the general populace, but it might come at a much steeper cost. Disease might be more rampant, and a plague might cut through a population before it is able to be contained by both mundane and magical means. More powerful or expensive magical healing might be reserved for emergency situations only or might be the purview of one or two members of the clergy or of a local clinic and therefore limited by their own magical capabilities. If a settlement is large enough to produce *potions of healing* for adventurers and guards, they might have a stash of potions on hand for emergency triage.



INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

With limited magic, the manufacturing and commerce sectors would likely see little use of convenience-based magic. Despite the production of goods typically being mundane, shops that offer magical items or wares enchanted to be more useful or aesthetically pleasing would find they do a booming business with those who can afford them. Many shops could cater to the wealthy, to other businesses, or to adventurers and mercenaries who require a constant influx of potions and new and improved gear. They might have a larger offering at certain times of the year—when a particular holiday or festival is approaching, for instance—but the average consumer likely has little need for everyday magic items, even if they could afford them.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Depending on the society, a police force that does not typically need to combat magic might still have plenty of gear to do so, especially if they are responsible for a large city with a sizeable and wealthy population. The guards in a smaller town might not have any magical gear or might have one or two items that are reserved for high-priority situations. Some locations, such as a castle, bank, fortress, or harbor, might see a higher proliferation of magical security measures, but even those are expensive and not readily available.

An important part of a public safety regime might be educational. Informing the populace of the symptoms of magical influence, the identification of wild animals and dangerous monsters, and the avoidance of signing binding pacts with dark forces might help nip public safety issues in the bud. (Or perhaps spreading the awareness of niche issues makes them more likely.) Regardless of its effectiveness, knowledge might be more widespread than magic in this city, and public safety would be tailored appropriately.

SANITATION

Sanitation in a limited-magic city is still a high priority for any city (though it's likely far less flashy and convenient than in a high-magic city). In-home magical disposal systems are rare, and trash and other refuse might be put out on the street to await collection. Collection could be a task force of citizens, the garbage might find its way to a magical disposal rather than a landfill, and the sewers could be equipped with purifying (or at least scent-suppressing) enchantments. Trash-eating monsters—tamed, raised, and handled by municipal employees, of course—can help keep the streets clean and the sewers flowing.

TRANSPORTATION

A town with limited access to magic might not have any magical means of transportation at all, or those magical means that *do* exist very well could be more expensive or reserved for emergency situations only. A few arcane carriages might be available for hire or ownership, but they are rare. An individual could have teleportation circles at their disposal, but there are likely none available for public use except by special permission. Airships may be available for charter but are likely scarce or reserved for the transportation of high-priority goods or individuals.

It's possible existing magical transportation becomes a public good. A waystation or inn could be built around the town teleportation circle, a large arcane carriage may make pre-approved routes when not being rented by the wealthy, or the rare appearance of an airship might also bring long-distance mail from across the world.

UTILITIES

In a world where magic is less common, utilities likewise become more mundane by necessity. A particularly astute ruler makes sure the populace has access to clean water and well-lit neighborhoods, and this might come in the form of enchanted public fountains and magical streetlights. Magic utilities, though not unheard of, are rare, and most citizens must make use with lugging buckets from the local well and heating their home the old-fashioned way.

PREVALENCE: MAGIC IS RESTRICTED

In a restricted-magic city, magic belongs only to the elite. Magic is possibly even outlawed for use except by a select few, or it might be simply difficult to use, and those who can wield it are rare. There is a distinct divide between the districts of the city: the upper class might have easy access to magical amenities, but most of the population lives their lives without much, if any, contact with magic unless it is being used to control or oppress them. Those who do (or are permitted to) use magic often can be found as close advisors to the city's leadership or in positions of power themselves, enjoying the benefits of such privilege.

In a city or setting where magic exists but is restricted to the elite, it would do well to lean into the inequality between the differing social classes. Depending on the characters' introduction to the city—whether they walked in the front gates like a commoner or were welcomed as special guests of a noble or government official—they may have quite different perspectives on magic and the lifestyles of those with and without.

However, not all the "haves" are necessarily snobbish or elitist, and many of the "have-nots" are likely unhappy with their situation. A setting in which magic is restricted to the aristocracy or those within the government is rich for conflict and strife, whether between the two layers of society or even within the ranks of each social circle. Not all the nobles might find their exclusive use of magic to be fair, and it's possible they press their fellows to allow the use of magic to expand to the citizenry—or they might be working in secret to advance that goal. Those who do not have access to magic could petition those in power to expand its use and availability to all segments of society. Or they might be quietly (or not so quietly) fomenting revolution.

IN THE BACKGROUND

Scarcity or Restriction. There are plenty of reasons why a city has restricted magic. Environmental disruption might limit the availability of magic, the loss of many casters in a war could mean a lack of both surviving casters and teachers for new apprentices, or recent political upheaval could see a powerful faction of spellcasters hoarding magic for themselves. Populations with restricted magic can be quite varied, and the reality of each is often painful, with the artificial scarcity defined in large part by its cause.

If the issue is availability, then magic is restricted to the upper class because they're the only ones who can afford a singularly scarce resource. However, there's no law prohibiting generous casters from helping the less well-off in such a circumstance. Magical infrastructure is unlikely, simply because of the investment of magical resources it represents, and even the luxuries of the rich are likely purpose-made and at exorbitant expense.

If the issue is a purposeful, class-based restriction, then magic is restricted to the upper class by design. Sumptuary laws, licenses, cost minimums, or simple blanket bans might all exist to keep spellcasters from working for those deemed "unworthy." Even wealthy merchants might find that magic is denied them by their social class, and the right to practice or hire spellcasters becomes a mark of prestige.

In all scenarios, the defining feature of such restricted magic is its expense and rarity. Even the wealthy want to get the most out of any magic.

All or Nothing. Having one type of magic restricted doesn't mean others are. A city might restrict divine magic yet allow arcane casters to operate freely. The city with a lack of sufficient connection to nature to maintain a circle of druids could have no such issue with bards. Where some magic is banned, casters might claim to be a legal spellcaster casting legal spells. Where all spellcasting is banned, casters may rally together in underground cells, the skills of a specific spellcaster less important than their shared identity.

This also means that a city could be stratified, possessing different levels of magical use simultaneously. Such a city with restricted divine magic but free arcane casters might rely on mundane healing for all but the wealthiest yet have much more prevalent arcane sanitation or construction techniques. Depending on the nature of the restriction, this could also make different sorts of casting a class issue: if anyone can legally become a wizard but only the nobility can enter the seminary to become an ordained cleric, then clerics are likely more prestigious than wizards.

Some types of magic are much more likely to be restricted than others. Deals with potentially dangerous otherworldly forces are an obvious candidate for restriction, while the necessary magical education of wizards makes restricting access relatively easy. Clerics, tied so closely to religious practice, might be difficult to restrict without the support of their temples, while many nature-based casters may simply relocate to the wilderness, depriving even the rich of their services.

EDUCATION

Magic schools, if they exist in the setting, are reserved for the elite and their children. Admittance to such an institution requires a lengthy, expensive application process, several recommendations from former or current students, and a hefty tuition to weed out those the school considers undesirable.

Outside of formal schooling, magical study might be limited to covert apprenticeships and private tutoring. Hidden spellcasters may seek out and train apprentices in secret to keep now-outlawed traditions alive or keep their talents available to underserved communities. The rich might hire private magic tutors to instruct their children as part of the spellcasting elite or to secretly train scions to control their restricted gifts.

ENTERTAINMENT AND LEISURE

Any magic in entertainment and leisure is reserved strictly for the upper class. The nobility might revel in elaborate displays of the arcane while the rest of the populace enjoys mundane performances. The aristocrats soak away their troubles in grand bathhouses with enchanted water and keep themselves looking youthful and attractive with magical alterations and prolific use of illusion magic. They might have access to magic that alters the mind or emotions,

producing a sense of euphoria in the user, or they might be able to sober up with the snap of their fingers. Their children have magical toys that walk and talk and even put themselves away at the end of the day.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

With magic tightly controlled, any form of conjured food is a sign of privilege. Nobles can enjoy conjured delights: supernaturally filling and delicious fruits fed to them by the platter or mundane food gifted with impossible flavor by magic. Blander conjured food might go to servants and household staff as a cheaper alternative to feeding them properly. Alternatively, even bland conjured food is a meal exclusive to the nobility, and chefs may contort themselves to turn masses of conjured food into something worthy of a noble palate.

GOVERNMENT

When magic is tightly controlled, those who display an aptitude are often found at the top tier of society and in powerful governmental roles. A monarchy with restricted magic likely has at least one arcane advisor who is a powerful magic user. A city council might be made up entirely of arcane practitioners, even if most of the populace has no access to magic. In some cases, those with magic have forcefully wrested control of every layer of the government from the rest and rule with an iron fist. This is not to say every magic user in a restricted setting is selfish and cruel, but it is an environment with a high potential for corruption and exploitation by self-serving elite.

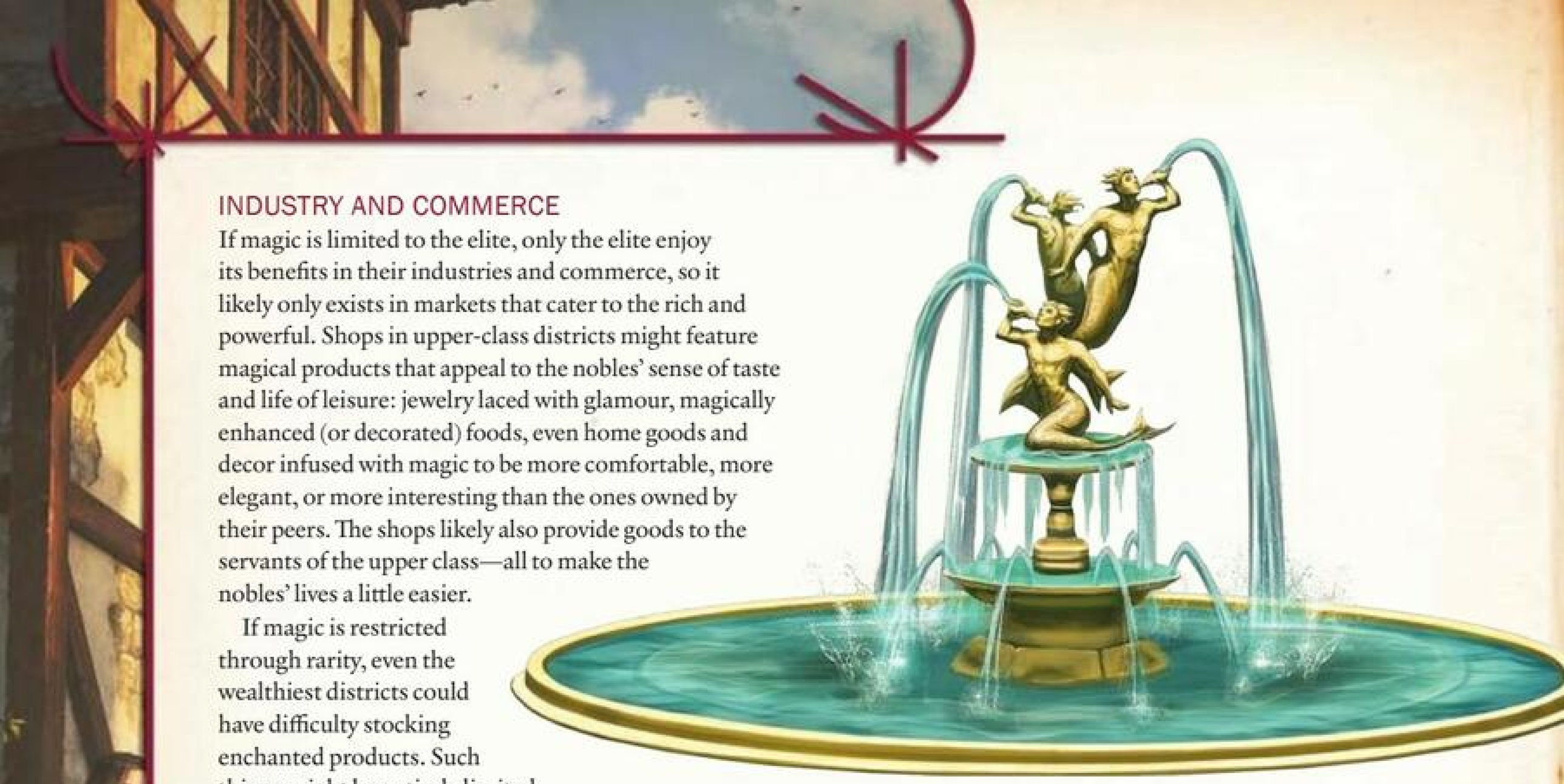
If magic is instead rare, those with aptitude could be important yet pushed away from actual leadership roles. The risks and rivalries of politicking might be viewed as too exposed and fractious for such a precious resource, and casters are instead likely kept on strictly as advisors and specialists. Wizards might be encouraged to further their knowledge in isolated towers, clerics might be pushed to lead local clergy, and druids could have mundane groves they are expected to tend. In such a system, magical aptitude might convey both a rise in social status but also an enforced seclusion that some may chafe against. Noble families might hide a child's aptitude from the authorities to keep them in the family while the poor certainly could view it as their best shot for social mobility.

HEALTH CARE

Magical healing might be available for the upper class in a way it is not in the poorer districts, the latter relying on the charity of the temples or healers that are willing to help the poor and destitute. Even still, their services may come at a prohibitive cost, be limited in availability, or need to be done in secret to avoid watchful eyes.

The nature of magical healing might make it difficult to restrict in the same fashion as other magics. Taught magical traditions have relatively little access to healing magics, but seminaries still must contend with those pious children the gods have opted to bless. Additionally, there's a real risk of guards or soldiers simply refusing to do as they're told if ordered to suppress an icon of their god that performs miracles for the needy.

While restrictions are still possible, where magic is scarce or restricted, magical health care might serve as the carrot in a system full of sticks. Temples might open their doors to heal all comers on holy days while charity healing is heralded as noble largesse. Most healing, especially materially or magically expensive healing, might still be accessible to the rich while this trickle of charity might be the only exposure many get to magic.



INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

If magic is limited to the elite, only the elite enjoy its benefits in their industries and commerce, so it likely only exists in markets that cater to the rich and powerful. Shops in upper-class districts might feature magical products that appeal to the nobles' sense of taste and life of leisure: jewelry laced with glamour, magically enhanced (or decorated) foods, even home goods and decor infused with magic to be more comfortable, more elegant, or more interesting than the ones owned by their peers. The shops likely also provide goods to the servants of the upper class—all to make the nobles' lives a little easier.

If magic is restricted through rarity, even the wealthiest districts could have difficulty stocking enchanted products. Such things might be entirely limited to artisans, creating magic items to order for the very wealthiest of the nobility. Here, magic items may become complex signs of rank meant to accomplish a variety of things to justify their exorbitant expense. A signet ring, for instance, might provide glamours, magically authenticate the identity of its bearer, and send messages all in a single, elegant package.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The power of the city watch in a restricted-magic city can vary greatly, depending on its purpose. If the watch exists to uphold the status quo, its members might be equipped to handle any rogue arcane practitioners—or perhaps they only have mundane equipment since any weapons used against "criminal" magic users can also be turned against any of those in power.

If magic is restricted by law, the upper class may keep private troops of magically equipped guards. Such guards might protect their estates from rival spellcasters, provide a buffer against civil unrest, or provide a prestigious command for martially inclined nobles. They might also form the core of military formations if the city goes to war, though there are likely limitations on how many guards a family may maintain because of the threat they represent to other nobles.

SANITATION

Sanitation throughout a restricted-magic city is often mundane: sludge-filled sewers beneath the streets and trash collector's carts rumbling down the alleyways. The upper-class districts, or wherever the nobles or other government officials live, do not have to contend with this issue, since their waste and refuse is always handled quickly and efficiently, either by magical or mundane means.

TRANSPORTATION

In a restricted-magic setting, magical transportation is limited to those in power and to perhaps the upper echelons of society. Nobles might enjoy things like horseless carriages, but teleportation is only available for those at the very top, and any permanent circles are likely closely guarded. Airships, if they exist at all, are only for the rich and powerful. Most of the populace must be content with walking, horses, or horse-drawn vehicles.

UTILITIES

The rich districts of the city might very well have public services handled by magic or have magic in their homes, but the general populace likely must make do with hand-drawn or hand-pumped water, firewood, candles, torches, and the like. Streetlamps in the upper-class districts could be arcane while those in the lower-class districts are gas or oil. The elite might even enjoy things like hot water and electricity—provided by caged elementals—robust indoor plumbing, and magically controlled indoor climates.

ANCIENT AND FORGOTTEN MAGIC

Civilizations rise and fall, and urban centers are often built on the ruins and remnants of former cultures. Perhaps a city is ancient, and the citizens know they sit upon the bones of their ancestors, but many times, the history of a place remains hidden when a new

civilization is established. Whether a city has high or low levels of magic, it might have foundational elements that have existed beyond memory, elements that still somehow function despite no one alive knowing who built them. This might be the only magical element present, or it could be powered by a completely alien type of magic, one that is a mystery to any current practitioners. This might be something utilitarian, like a complex system for moving clean water throughout the city and nearby villages, or it is perhaps something wondrous and unique, like large landmasses that float for seemingly no reason or a strange and ancient arcane machine beneath the city's foundation that no one has yet to decipher. The mystery of this magic may never be solved during a campaign—and indeed, it might not be *able* to be solved, but it can still be a rich and intriguing element of the world.

Even if forgotten magic is ill-understood, people will still take advantage of it in their daily lives. A mysterious system of waterworks might have waterwheels hooked to it for cheap power. Bizarre arcane machinery could become a source of centralized lighting, an indestructible foundation for construction projects, or an unimpeachable source of timekeeping. Floating landmasses will be explored, ancient rituals studied, forgotten artifacts examined. People are curious, inventive, and motivated, and while the mystery beneath might never be solved, they will find ways to interface with what remains.

DETERMINING THE LEVEL OF MAGIC

To determine the level of magic in an urban center, consider the prevalence of magic in the greater civilization and in the game world as a whole. Is this location representative of the types and proliferation of magic in the rest of the region, or is it an anomaly? What types of plots and themes are likely to be explored? What level of magic should characters have access to?

To randomly determine the proliferation of magic in a city and how it might be evident, roll a d10 or percentile dice and consult the **Magical Features in a City** table. These options can act as inspiration for creating additional magical features. Features labeled "everywhere" are freely available to everyone; features labeled "limited" are available but likely for an increased fee or with less frequency; features labeled "restricted" would likely only be found in the districts of the city belonging to the rich and powerful. Keep in mind, a city might have a relatively low prevalence of magic with one or two notable exceptions, so feel free to mix and match features from different levels of prevalence or move a feature from one level of prevalence to another.

MAGICAL FEATURES IN A CITY

d10	d100	Prevalence	Feature
1	1–3	Everywhere	Temporary rooms can be added to a house via conjuration spells or by adding pocket dimensions in interior closets or pantries. Ideal for the holidays or when family drops by unexpectedly.
2	4–6	Everywhere	Incinerator golems patrol the streets in tight circuits, collecting and consuming the city's trash.
3	7–10	Everywhere	Streetlights are powered by *continual flame* spells.
4	11–13	Everywhere	Professional wizardball games are held weekly in the local coliseum.
5	14–16	Everywhere	Pantries connect to a pocket dimension kept well-stocked by the city government.
6	17–20	Everywhere	*Unseen servant* spells are utilized by stores and households as a substitute for shop hands, attendants, and housecleaners.
7	21–23	Everywhere	Floating platforms convey large shipments to various points in the city without clogging the surface streets.
8	24–26	Everywhere	Homes are equipped with magical devices that allow the residents to communicate with one another over long distances, even from one side of the city to the other.
9	27–30	Everywhere	Healing for any ailment can be obtained at the neighborhood clinic or temple with little to no waiting.
10	31–33	Everywhere	Tiny air and water elementals circulate through the city, functioning in tandem as street cleaners.

d10	d100	Prevalence	Feature
1	34–36	Limited	Members of the city watch are accompanied by two summoned guardians (similar to *conjure elementals*, *spirit guardians*, or *faithful hound*, and other such spells) at all times.
2	37–40	Limited	The city is home to "menders"—individuals who travel door-to-door or own shops where items can be fixed with the use of *mending* rather than by mundane means.
3	41–43	Limited	There is an underground market centered around the local schools where students buy magical items to help them cheat. *Potions of detect thoughts*, quills that draft essays on their own, *hats of disguise*, and scrolls that temporarily increase intelligence are only a few of the items that have been confiscated from students before exams.
4	44–46	Limited	A local messengers' guild has stations all over the city where individuals can pay to have a message conveyed via *sending*.
5	47–50	Limited	Nourishment stations are located throughout the city. These market stalls provide magically conjured food for little to no cost.
6	51–53	Limited	A famous traveling troupe stops here twice a year, bringing with them their magnificent magical acts and arcane special effects.
7	54–56	Limited	A shop in the wealthier district of town sells magical pets, including creatures from various planes of existence.
8	57–60	Limited	The local magic school hosts monthly seminars for those interested in learning more about the arcane arts.
9	61–63	Limited	Airships anchor in the city periodically, bringing passengers and exotic goods from mysterious, far-off places. Those looking for a new life can buy passage, try to get hired on as a ship hand, or stow away.
10	64–67	Limited	The local cisterns are inscribed with magical runes to clean and purify the city's water.

d10	d100	Prevalence	Feature
1	68–70	Restricted	Magical statuary (like animated armor or stone golems) stand guard in front of homes and government buildings.
2	71–73	Restricted	Enchanted greenhouses provide the citizens with healthy, delicious fruits and vegetables year-round.
3	74–76	Restricted	A matchmaker provides insights and visions of true love—for an extravagant fee. They have never been wrong.
4	77–80	Restricted	Draughts and elixirs that cure any ailment are available at nearly every corner store, temple, or clinic.
5	81–83	Restricted	The magical fountain in the center of the district square provides clean water and a strangely relaxing, meditative sound. Those who take a short rest in its immediate vicinity find themselves refreshed and ready to take on their next task.
6	84–87	Restricted	Carriages with open tops (allowing the passenger to see and be seen) are common. The carriages are magically warded from the elements, as if encircled by a moveable *tiny hut* (as the spell), and drive when commanded by the driver without the need for a horse or engine.
7	88–90	Restricted	Homes feature arcane locks that are difficult to pick with mundane thieves' tools.
8	91–93	Restricted	Animated instruments provide entertainment day or night without the need to employ musicians.
9	94–96	Restricted	Those with enough money and sway might approach the local weather-makers and request a certain type of weather on a specific date and time.
10	97–100	Restricted	A local haberdashery sells hats enchanted with illusion magic that covers blemishes and enhances (or diminishes) certain facial features.

2 ANATOMY OF A CITY

Amid the sounds of hammers and saws, the city's chief architectural mage magically shapes a pillar destined for the entryway of the new senate building.

Cities are complex, bustling places that vary wildly in physical appearance and general layout, depending on where they are located, who built them, and the needs of their citizenry. When creating a city, it is important to keep in mind its geographic location and climate, which can affect the city's layout and overall style. A city exposed to chaotic planar energies and weather, for instance, will be very different than a city deep in a jungle. Similarly, the city's architects and its people's cultures will impact the city's shape, districts, and amenities.

Campaigns come in all sorts of flavors, and the scope of this book is deliberately broad. Use what fits the current campaign's style and ignore the rest.

GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

While every community might be unique in its design and character, basic needs unify all peoples with purpose: water, food, shelter, and happiness. Without these, there is no community, so it's important to start a nascent city off right—with a map. Once the details of the region are in place, such as the climate, topography, and resources, the city can grow over time, developing and expanding into the community it was meant to become.

MAPPING THE CITY

It can be challenging to devise a location with all the elements that inform memorable storytelling. Here are two ways to account for the geography for a city—one formulaic and quick and the other creative and involved.

Find a Map. For this method, use an existing map, such as by sourcing a topographical map, which are readily available at the United States Geological Survey (USGS). By following the topography of the terrain when placing a city, its foundation has the added weight of realism to lend it verisimilitude, encouraging players to buy into the setting through familiarity.

Design a Map. For this method, use an assortment of dice, plain paper (not graphed or lined), and something to write/draw with. Take a handful of dice—two or three of each kind is advisable—and scatter them across the paper. Then draw entirely around the perimeter of where the dice lie to form the landmass. Once the landmass is drawn, take time to trace around the dice to create the topography for the map. Vary the spacing of the lines to create fields, hills, valleys, and other geological features. Make parallel lines that cross the landmass into rivers, streams, or roads. If a lot of dice are pooled in the same area, consider connecting those features together into impassable mountains, dense forests, or large bodies of ocean water.

Here are some rules to consider when designing topography from imagination:

- Flora, while varied in individual needs, requires a combination of available water, healthy soil, and sunlight to grow. (Fantastical plant life might break this rule.)
- Life prefers the path of least resistance regarding roads.
- Time and weather cause erosion, which smooths edges, weakens and uproots foundations, and exposes hidden features.
- Water flows downhill and finds the path of least resistance.

Optionally, refer to **Building a Landmass** and **Choosing Land Features** tables to determine what each die and their result mean in designing the map. Use as many or as few of the results as desired. If the results conflict with the rules above, change or ignore those results entirely to maintain the integrity of the space.

BUILDING A LANDMASS

d8	Road and Direction*
1	North
2	Northeast
3	East
4	Southeast
5	South
6	Southwest
7	West
8	Northwest

d6	Climate‡
1	Arid
2	Continental
3	Planar
4	Polar
5	Temperate
6	Tropical

d4	Difficult Terrain (and Examples)
1	Air (celestial impact, high winds, lightning)
2	Earth (earthquake, mudslide, quicksand)
3	Fire (forest fire, smoke clouds, volcanic vent)
4	Water (flashflood, steam geyser, wetlands)

(*) roll again for other direction, and on a duplication, treat as a crossroads; (‡) see **The Six Climates** below.

CHOOSING LAND FEATURES

d20	Artificial Structure
1	Building (important)
2	Buildings (large cluster)
3	Buildings (small cluster)
4	Church, monastery, or temple
5	Dam or dock
6	Farmstead
7	Fortified wall
8	Fountain
9	Gardens or fields
10	Graveyard
11	Lodge
12	Monument
13	Mysterious device
14	Outpost
15	Quarry
16	Remnants of conflict
17	Ruins
18	Shrine or sacred site
19	Tower
20	Well

d12	Natural Formation
1	Butte, hill, or mesa
2	Cave
3	Copse or grove
4	Crater or sinkhole
5	Elder tree
6	Fissure
7	Forest
8	Glacier
9	Mountain ridge
10	Salt flats
11	Stone arch
12	Stone spire

d10	Body of Water
1	Bay
2	Geyser or waterfall
3	Lake
4	Natural dam
5	Ocean
6	Pond
7	River
8	Sea
9	Spring
10	Stream

EVOLUTION OF A CITY

Cities undergo stages of development—similar to the lifecycles of their occupants. For clarity, a city's development is measured in three stages: founded, established, and developed. (See also **Five Questions** in **Chapter 1** and consult the following maps.)

Each of these stages is informed by the needs of its citizenry, adapting to local geography to lessen building costs and best utilize natural features, maintaining access to resources while reinforcing shelter and security, and reacting to and evolving from conflict. To explore these stages, consider a sample city, Bluff Creek, as it grows from a humble hamlet to a grand city worthy of a lord.

STAGE 1: FOUNDED CITY

Here is the small, quiet hamlet of Bluff Creek, designed and overlayed on a topographical map of central Texas obtained from the USGS (see **Map 1**).

Bluff Creek's beginnings are straightforward. The keep was built first on a high hill overlooking a river and the main road that runs parallel to it. In those first years after, a small trading post, inn, and half a dozen homes were built. This small hamlet begins to benefit from the crossroads access, nearby river, and the protection provided by the hilltop keep.

As Bluff Creek is still in its infancy, walls, towers, and barracks are not yet a priority but will become important as the location swells from the prosperity brought in by travelers and trade.

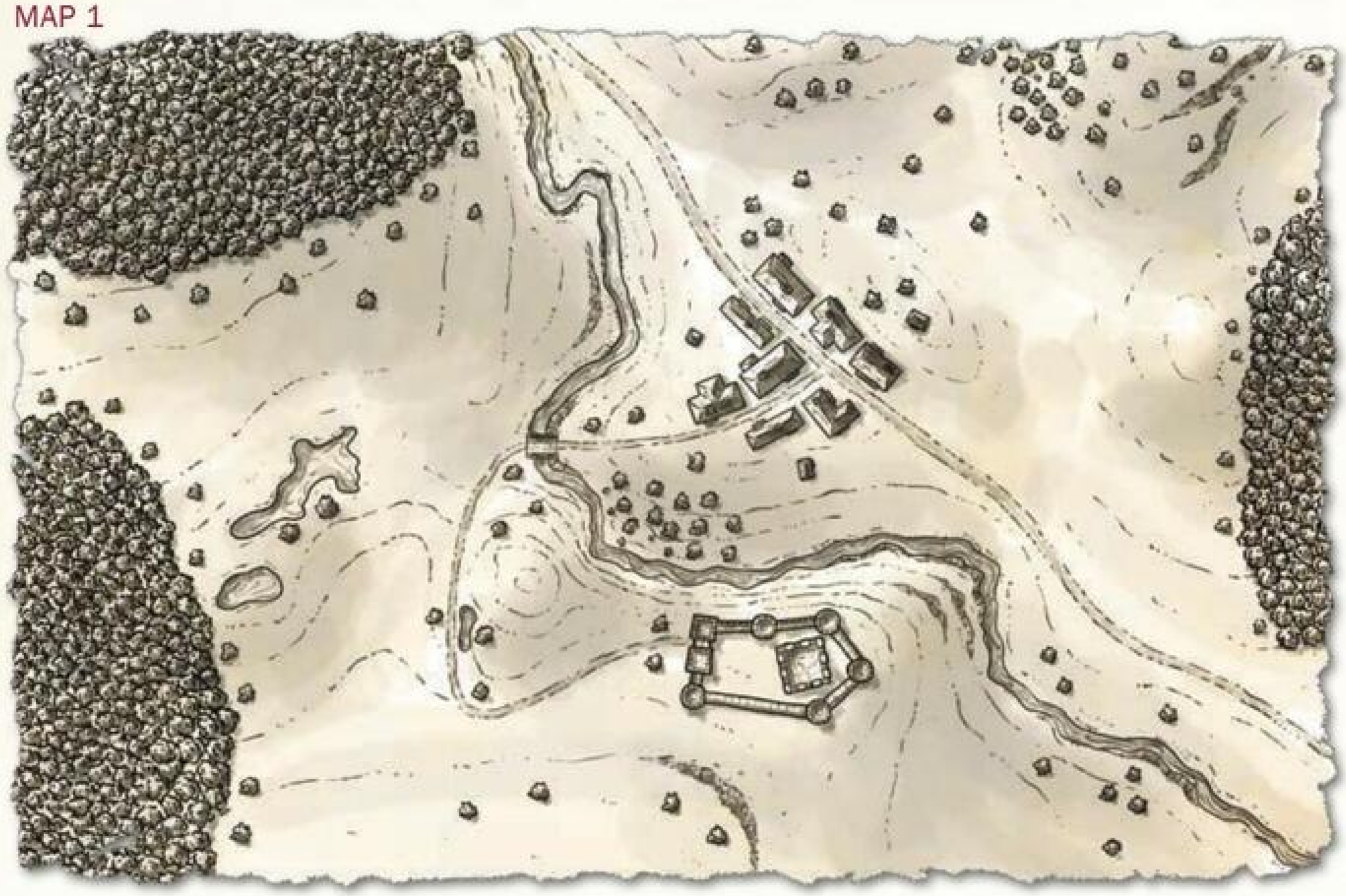
STAGE 2: ESTABLISHED CITY

Bluff Creek's position on the main road has been a boon, making it a prime stop for travelers and merchants selling in neighboring communities. As commerce booms, some travelers find reasons to stay and build families, which then necessitates more housing, amenities, and services (see **Map 2**). What was once an overnight stop is now a small village, requiring more governance than can be handled by the keep's owner, who is entering their twilight years. Recognizing this, the people of Bluff Creek agree that they need a mayor, and that mayor needs a manor. Considering the village's future, its people settle on building the mayor's manor at a midpoint between the keep and the village but also by a pair of small, nearby lakes. The lakes, existing roadways, and higher elevation opposite the village's current position will make for a strong defensive position when the community further expands.

STAGE 3: DEVELOPED CITY

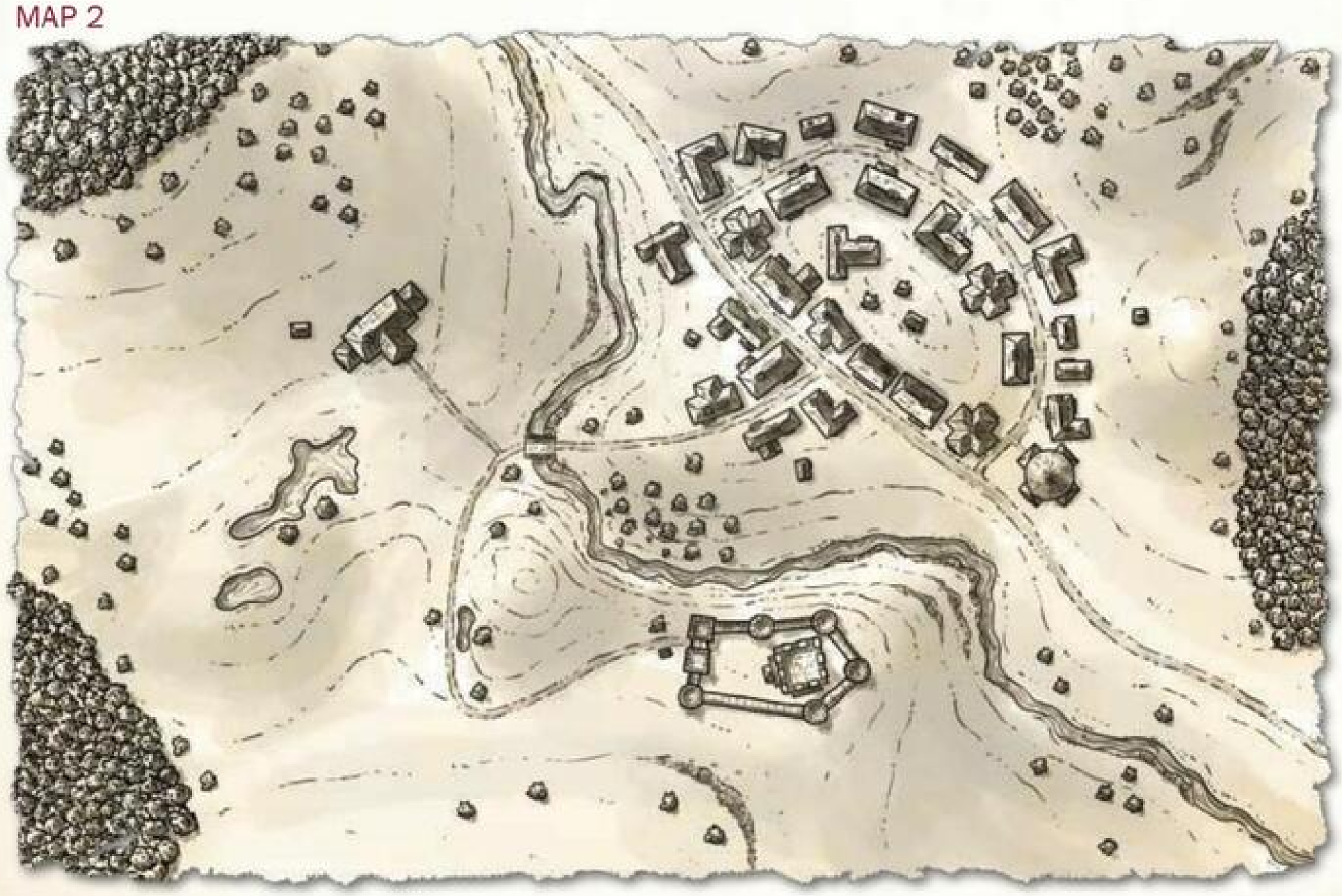
Generations of time have passed, and Bluff Creek's fortunes have been prosperous. The hamlet has come a long way from its humble beginnings and could now be considered a developed city, albeit a small one. As predicted, the area around the mayor's manor has been vital, providing a strong defensive position at the higher

MAP 1



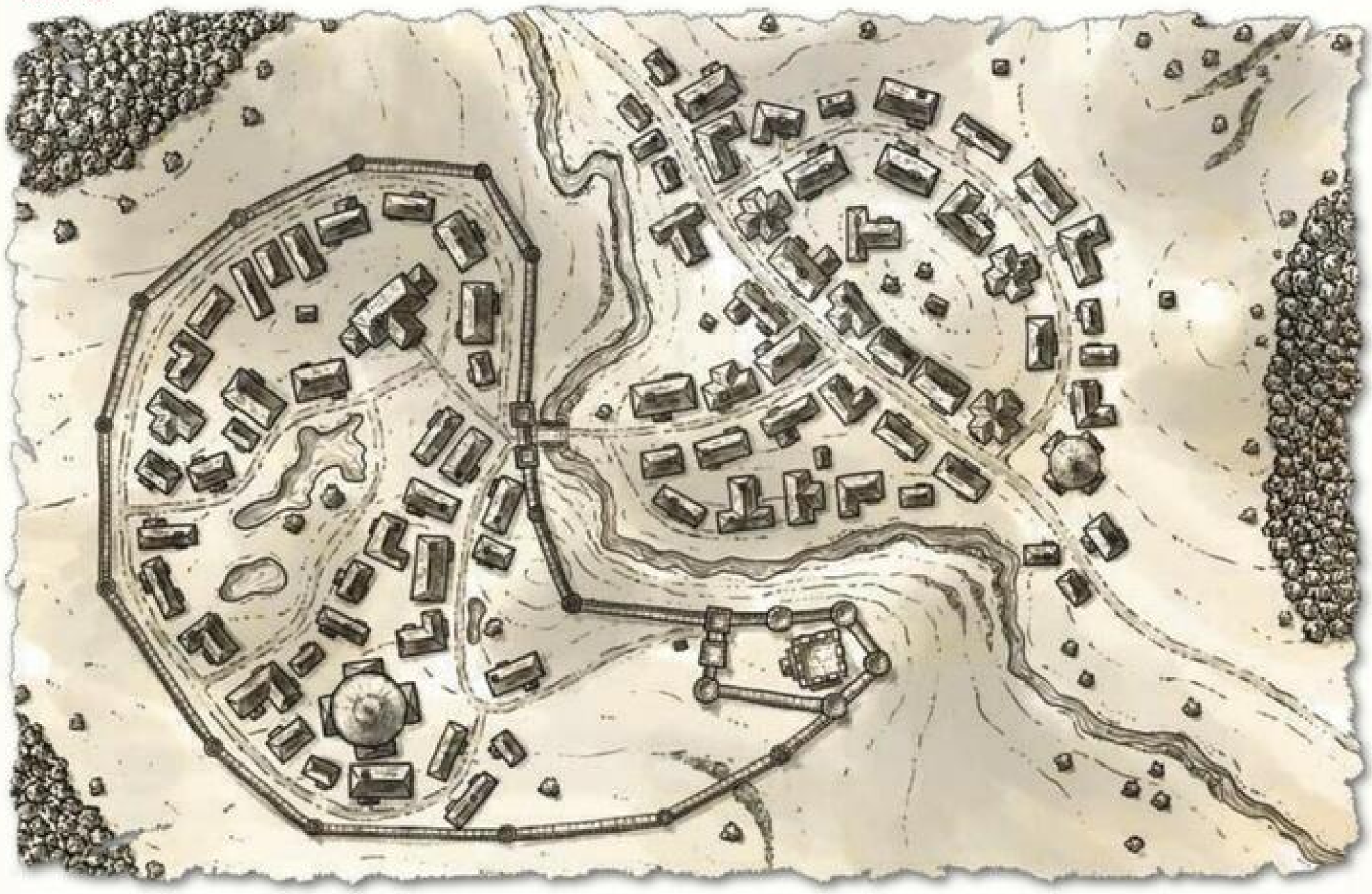
elevation with access to fresh water from the nearby lakes. Walls have been erected around this perimeter, connecting with the keep and providing a retreat for the community in the event of an attack (see **Map 3**).

MAP 2



At this point in Bluff Creek's development cycle, any future improvements are going to occur on a smaller scale due to the expansive size of the city and its upkeep and resource needs. Plans for walls around the older parts of the city are a top priority as well as gates and guard towers at both ends of the main road.

MAP 3



NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources can be many things, though they are typically water and food sources, building materials, and luxuries like gold, silk, and such. Whether the city's imports and exports are recorded in detail or simply maintained in the abstract, there are typically trade-offs to consider with a given resource's availability, accessibility, and defensibility, which can inform the city's focus—such as on military prowess, economic superiority, or a blend of the two.

Roll a d4 and consult the **Resource Suitability** table or choose from the possible results to determine how accessible the city's resources are and how well they might be defended.

RESOURCE SUITABILITY

d4	Resources
1	***Scarce but Defensible.*** Resources are sparse and hard-earned. Cities founded here require regular supply trains or trade to be sustainable, but the geography provides an ideal location for defense, such as a choke point.
2	***Lacking but Accessible.*** The city might have most of its needs covered but lacks in one or more elements of value. Fortunately, routes for trade to other locations are easily made, and it is a frequent traveling stop.
3	***Vital but Inaccessible.*** The city sits on a figurative "goldmine"—or perhaps a literal one—and is a vital source of materials or luxuries. Unfortunately, its geolocation is exceptionally difficult to access or is blocked/guarded by a daunting creature, organization, or magical effect.
4	***Plentiful but Vulnerable.*** The city wants for nothing, having rich resources and luxuries within easy reach. But this rich appointment comes at the cost of a poorly fortifiable geolocation. It needs alliances to protect its interests from would-be conquerors.

THE SIX CLIMATES

There are generally five climates, informing the architecture of cities as well as how their citizens respond to weather changes, conduct business and trade, and prepare for natural disasters. These climates are arid, continental, polar, temperate, and tropical. For settings where magic bends the laws of physics to wondrous effect, a sixth is added—the planar climate. In city-centric stories, nature and the climate might be the source of antagonism for characters to combat. How might their heroism show through when they must protect their home from wildfire or a ravaging tornado?

As detailed below, each climate affects cities differently through seasonal weather, potential hazards, and city planning. Climate also affects city culture, though typically only in a broad sense regarding attire, food, and activities.

ARID CLIMATE

In a dry climate, water is the primary concern for communities, driving both industry and social interests. Seasonal differences lean toward slight and gradual rather than the extremes of other climates. Fires are the chief environmental hazard, requiring smothering because of the scarcity of water.

City Planning. Because moisture rapidly evaporates in the dry heat, locals prioritize the conservation and recycling of resources, especially water. They value trees and similar flora for their shade and water retention, despite being more difficult to care for, and set buildings apart to mitigate the spread of fire, contributing to a multitude of long alleyways.

Culture. Citizens prefer loose, lightly colored clothing and reserve physical activity for dawn and dusk to avoid the blistering noontime heat. They respect and often venerate druids and mages who can divine water and summon rain and frequently seek them out for aid and leadership.

Variant Conditions. While hot deserts might be the obvious environment when considering an arid climate, the real distinction is little available water, so other example of arid environments might include high-altitude deserts, which can be quite cold, especially in winter months, and semi-arid steppes.

CONTINENTAL CLIMATE

Located away from large ocean bodies, cities in continental regions experience significant seasonal temperatures. While spring and autumn are enjoyably mild, summer and winter are conversely drastic. Winds strong enough to topple structures or cause tornados are cause for concern throughout the year, while high heat in the summer and blizzards and extreme cold temperatures in the winter create disaster scenarios.

City Planning. Citizens prepare for the cold by prioritizing the mining or importing of salt for melting ice, hunting especially for fur, and stockpiling resources like food and wood for when weather extremes become hazardous. Buildings are typically composed of heavy materials designed to withstand extreme weather. Proper drainage is also a concern to mitigate flooding and freezing.

Culture. Citizens prefer to wear wool and warm fur layered over cotton to combat the cold, and they disrobe in layers in response to summer temperatures and exertion. Because cities in continental regions spend so much effort preparing for winter, their citizenry places a lot of value on local crafting. This can sometimes contribute to a disregard, and even disdain, for outland goods and foreign practices.

PLANAR CLIMATE

Cities on other planes are subject to weather conditions inherent to their location, making extraordinary weather the norm. While on some elemental planes the weather might be predictable, such as constant precipitation and hurricanes on the Elemental Plane of Water or ever-flowing winds, tornados, and thunderstorms on the Elemental Plane of Air, other planar climates can prove dangerously mercurial with unnatural disasters of truly epic proportions. (See also supernatural storms in the *Midgard Worldbook*.)

City Planning. Cities in planar climates need powerful spellcasters trained for the elemental forces that press upon them. Specialized precautions like wards, bound elementals, and guardian constructs are standard protections from planar emergencies.

Culture. As much due to magical travel as to atypical locales, customs in planar cities range from alien to commonplace and everything on that spectrum. Ingredients and materials found nowhere else lend to intricate clothing and complex, otherworldly flavors. Misunderstandings often occur in response to colliding cultures.

POLAR CLIMATE

Cities in polar climates are adapted to the frigid temperatures they experience year-round. Water abounds in these regions, typically frozen but readily available for hardworking and resourceful societies. Magicians and architects use the snow and ice to their advantage, incorporating the elements into their architecture and fortifications. Blizzards and

snowstorms reach devastating levels of ferocity. Sunlight during the day can be blinding when reflected off the snow, but for some of the year, the sun never rises, leaving the region in perpetual night.

City Planning. With rare exceptions, crops fail to grow reliably in polar climates, making hunting and fishing the preferred means of sourcing food and warmth as well as driving trade. Buildings are often packed close together or connected via enclosed passages.

Culture. Furred animal hides coated in fat are preferred over moisture-absorbing fabrics or frigid metals. Survival is so much more vital in these regions than in other climates and drives community togetherness, eschewing personal boundaries in favor of communal warmth.

Variant Conditions. A polar region might have nothing to do with extreme cold and instead be a source of potent magnetic forces. These locales are often of great interest to scholars and mages, prompting entire communities to build upon these sites for life-long arcane study. Cities built in these regions always exhibit a beauty of sharp lines, metallic or ferrous materials, and floating elements in their architecture as magnetic forces push and pull on every structure.

Additionally, the term *polar* here assumes roughly earthlike conditions (that is, among other things, a spherical world with a sufficiently tilted axis and a sufficiently frequent rotation in relation to its starry orbit), which is in turn what causes phenomena like longer/shorter nights. For worlds that drastically differ in shape or cosmology, the details here can still be applied, but any realistic rationale for it is beyond the scope of this book.

TEMPERATE CLIMATE

Cities in temperate climates normally have warm, humid summers and mild winters. While generally considered to be the ideal climate to live in, communities that use thatch and other flammable materials must take caution. Frequent summer thunderstorms bring lightning strikes that promise disaster for the unwary.

City Planning. Due to the fire risks, like those in dry climates, cities place higher urgency in organizing community fire brigades, and buildings are erected apart from one another to prevent fires from spreading.

Culture. Due to the comfortability of the climate, attire can prioritize form over function. This encourages citizens to express their individuality, or patriotism, in a myriad of styles, colors, fabrics, and materials. Fire-wielding performers and spellcasters are sometimes ill-met and distrusted here as well as in dryer climates.

TROPICAL CLIMATE

Tropical climates are zones of heat and humidity, generally possessing year-round warmth and frequent precipitation sufficient to be boons for hyper-diverse flora and fauna. Because this climate impacts coastal regions almost exclusively, cities must contend with storms and hurricanes. When disaster strikes, citizens are confronted with torrential downpours, flooding, and even tidal waves. Fire at least is infrequent as the lush, healthy foliage resists flame. When fires do break out, the smoke is dark and heavily obscuring.

City Planning. Despite an abundance of resources, much of a tropical city's wealth is spent on maintaining the integrity of structures against encroaching plant life and protecting the citizenry from opportunistic predators. Of course, with the right mindset, a city's inhabitants can adapt to live in harmony with the environment, though this requires a greater degree of flexibility in city planning and cost but also a willingness to cooperate that might not be shared among the populace.

Culture. Tropical citizens prefer lightweight, water-resistant clothing to beat the elements, typically wearing little. Superstitions are extensive as dense forests and open seas give cause to all-too-many unexplained phenomena. For those who have a connection to nature and spirits, locals are as likely to regard them warmly as they are to distrust or even shun them.

DETERMINING CLIMATE

Not every type of terrain might naturally be compatible with any given climate. If a climate seems incompatible with the geography, such as a desert oasis in a polar climate, it would be easy to roll again for a more suitable result. Instead—and more interestingly—the question could be asked, "Why would these seemingly incompatible factors occur together?" Perhaps a magical event has altered the face of the world or an exceptionally formidable nonplayer character, such as a fey lord or an ancient dragon, calls the city or nearby lands home and thereby imposes some interesting regional effects.

Roll a d8 and consult the **Choosing a Climate** table or choose a climate.

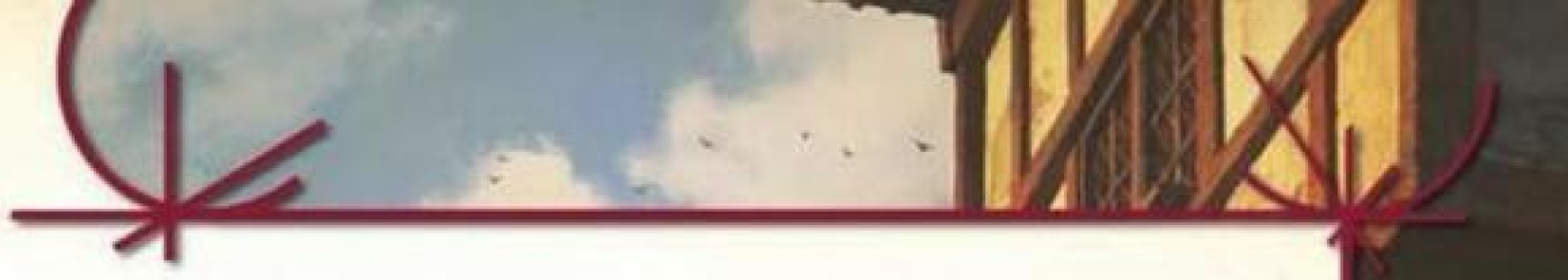
CHOOSING A CLIMATE

d8	Climate
1	Arid
2	Continental
3	Planar, Celestial
4	Planar, Elemental
5	Planar, Fiendish
6	Polar
7	Temperate
8	Tropical

GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE STORY HOOKS

Some of the best stories are of man versus the environment, where surviving nature is the adventure. Natural disasters that threaten the characters' city might include:

- The beasts outside the fledgling city of Calva embolden with each passing day. When the perimeter is broken and people are harmed, the tropical city's leaders are driven to action and post a lord's bounty for dangerous work. Who will round up every last monster threatening Calva's safety?
- Record-setting earthquakes imperil the foundations of St. Elgân, City of Grace. As the city's people are driven to panic, flee, and even loot amid the destruction, a lone patriot, a geomancer of blemished repute, claims the source of the calamity is elemental and seeks brave heroes to venture down into a fissure with them, hoping to save the city in what many say is a suicide mission.
- The mountain outpost of Cololly needs resources only its sister city of Broxminster can provide. But with the last ambassador detained for being "too erudite," Cololly's governor seeks to appeal to Broxminster's more folkish sensibilities by sending a group of beloved adventurers as their new advocates.



ARCHITECTURE

Architecture tells the story of a city, town, or settlement, revealing both its past and its present in a dozen subtle (and not so subtle) ways. The challenges of its people are written on its walls in daub and stains, its history indelibly marked on the stone, wood, and plaster, freshly painted or faded and worn with age. The sharp angles or gentle curves of the roofs, the wide, sunlit windows or shadowed halls, the densely packed earthen foundation or the deep, stone-lined basement . . . all these elements and more tell the tale of the city and its inhabitants. Many aspects influence the way structures are built within a specific settlement: an architectural element of a home might be utilitarian, entirely decorative, or reflect a limitation or advancement in the knowledge and technology of the city.

REFLECTING THE CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY

The climate and geography of a region affects not only the structure of the city itself but also its architectural style. The materials used for building, the style of the walls, the height of the ceilings, the size of the rooms—all these directly relate to climate and geography.

For instance, whether a home is made of clay, stone, or wood is directly related to the availability of the materials and how well they hold up in the region's climate. Finding wood enough to construct a whole home in an arid desert would be a challenge indeed, and a house made of unbaked clay would not survive long in a humid, rainy locale.

A home's shape and design are heavily influenced by the climate and comfort of the inhabitants. No one wants to live in an adobe that's stiflingly hot or freezing cold. An open floor plan with a large, central hearth, low ceilings that help trap heat, and pitched roofs to shed snow might be the norm in frigid climes. Alternatively, places that are hot and dry might have tall buildings with high ceilings, numerous windows, and air catchers for increased ventilation. Hot and dry climates might make use of waterways and evaporation to keep their structures cool. Cities with a rainy season might build their structures on stilts while a location with hard-packed earth might dig deep cellars for cold storage.

REFLECTING THE CULTURE

The construction of the buildings in a settlement directly reflects the society that built it. The values, trade goods, level of wealth, and religions of a city are all apparent in its architecture, from the rooftops to the foundations.

Perhaps a nature-based culture puts a heavy emphasis on living in harmony with the natural world and dislikes killing any living things, be it plant or animal. Anything they kill out of necessity, they replace threefold, planting three trees for every one felled or raising three chickens for every one slaughtered. Such a society likely builds its structures primarily from stone, rather than wood, to avoid having to cut down trees for its lumber, and any decorative trim follows simple yet elegant designs, resembling vines or boughs or flowing water. It might even utilize druids or other magic users to coax the very trees and plants into forming their structures, modified with stone as needed. Their windows are wide to allow natural light and air into every room in their homes. Their temples or churches might be open to the skies above, or they might have no religious structures at all, instead worshiping in a ring of standing stones or in the nearby woods or fields.

In contrast, an industrialized city that subsists on its manufacturing and production might look very different. The population might value productivity and efficiency and shun needless ornamentation and embellishment. Their buildings might be made of stone, like the nature-based settlement, but instead of curved buildings made of rough, stacked stones, their large, square factories and homes would be built from stone blocks, evenly cut and carefully measured. Doors are wide to allow for the entrance and exit of carts, and windows are placed high on the walls to allow for air circulation without the distractions of the outside world. There might even be pipes, connecting to and winding along the exterior of their buildings, to move air around more efficiently. Their buildings are laid out in neat city blocks that form a precise grid with only enough space between them for two carts to pass abreast.

For another example, a polytheistic culture that cherishes art, expression, and frivolity might have no uniform architectural style. A home might be elegant in its simplicity or sprawling with towers and elaborate gingerbread trim. They might have temples scattered throughout the city, each tailored to whichever god or gods it was constructed for or to the taste of a particular priest or the congregation. The designs of the buildings might be constantly changing: the core of each structure is well-constructed and sturdy, but the trimmings are all made from inexpensive materials, made to be crafted and then discarded and replaced as the owner's whims dictate. Beautiful murals cover walls, constantly painted over and repainted. Walking down the same street over the course of several days always presents something new, a fresh work of art or construction in progress.

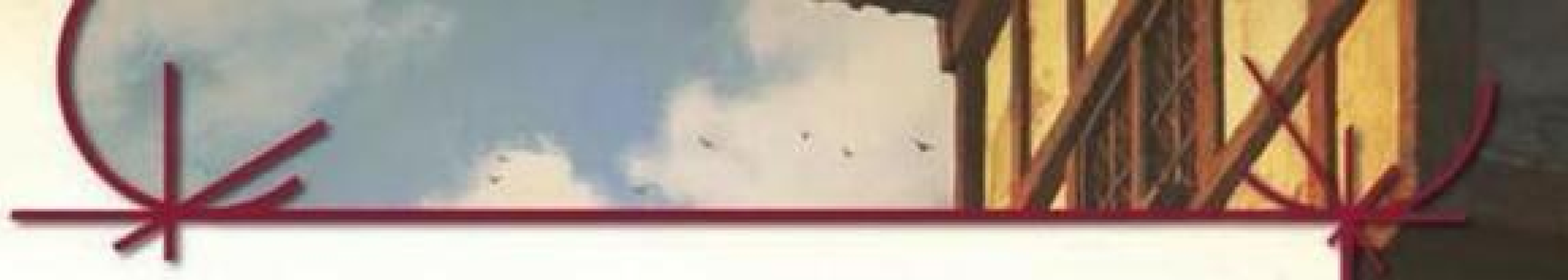
A city's wealth is similarly reflected in its homes and other structures. Better-quality construction with quality materials, larger buildings, and rich ornamentations all typically come with increased wealth. There might be wide disparities within a single city—poor districts composed of ramshackle huts or tents while the upper class enjoys sprawling mansions—which in turn reflects the city's values. A city with a collectivist culture that values tight bonds between family members and the village citizens themselves might have small personal abodes but large, central community buildings where the townsfolk come for meals, celebrations, and socialization. Alternatively, an individualistic culture that values personal accomplishments and wealth might see a greater disparity between each home and likely relies on local businesses like taverns or gambling halls to provide centers for socialization. Civilizations that emphasize worship of their chosen deities but put little importance on personal wealth might have grand temples while their homes are small and humble.

A city that was conquered or that has seen a great influx of immigrants from elsewhere might have no consistent style. The new rulers might destroy and rebuild existing structures to impose their culture, or they might integrate and expand upon the existing style to help the local populace feel less threatened and bring them into the fold of their new rulers. Immigrants often build their houses in the style they are familiar with, bringing their own culture to the city. These new influences might mix with those of the existing populace, or they might congregate in certain districts and isolated neighborhoods.

REFLECTING THE AGE

The age of a city is often evident in its architecture. The age of the buildings themselves, the style of the various structures, and the presence or absence of ruins can all indicate a fresh, new settlement, one that has risen and fallen and risen again or even one that has maintained its status for centuries, never diminishing in prominence and wealth.

A city that has been built atop ancient ruins or that has existed in one form or another for a long period of time might share a mix of architectural styles and ages of the buildings. Old, crumbling homes might be patched or



expanded with little regard to maintaining the original design, which leads to an intriguing mishmash of aesthetics that tells a story all its own. A more traditional culture that honors its ancestors might reconstruct old homes with careful attention to the classic details while still updating the buildings to fit their needs, so older buildings that are no longer structurally sound might be knocked down, leading to new construction (in the modern style, whatever that might be) alongside old (and possibly outdated) buildings.

A new city likely features the most modern styles and designs, or it might feature a modern take on an older style, even if the homes are not very luxurious or very large. A newer settlement or city might still be finding its feet, its homes and buildings constantly being upgraded and expanded as needs grow. The homes might be a simple style that is easy to build even with limited resources and tools, allowing the settlement to grow quickly, or the residents might live in temporary homes while they build grander, more elaborate buildings that better reflect their needs and aesthetics.

A city that was razed by war or natural disaster might be deceiving in appearance, its new buildings belying its age. Some families might rebuild their homes exactly as they were before the catastrophe, while others might take the opportunity to update the style, and still others might not have the means to rebuild from scratch, either reconstructing in a much smaller, less expensive design or leaving a vacant, crumbled home behind and finding a fresh start elsewhere. There might be portions of the city still intact, other districts seeing the most destruction, leading to a patchwork appearance.

REFLECTING THE TECHNOLOGY

The construction of buildings within a city often reflects the level of technology available. Certain technologies—or magics—are required to construct certain types of buildings. This can be as simple as knowing how to create a keystone arch or to smelt metal alloys or as advanced as utilizing gears, cogs, and engines. Mills and other factories that derive their power from wind or water, by necessity, feature numerous windmills and waterwheels, and these might be a primary feature of the town. A city that has progressed to using engines powered by electricity, steam, coal, or internal combustion has more flexibility in design but might heavily feature wires, exhaust pipes, and smokestacks and might be covered in a fine layer of soot or ash. This affects aesthetic design choices and priorities—is it worth painting a house if it will quickly become stained gray and black?

A settlement with a high level of technology might have a much taller skyline than one without: a civilization that utilizes elevators (whether hand-operated, electric, or magical) makes tall structures much more accessible, the use of cranes makes lifting construction materials easier, and even simple machines like pullies, lifts, ramps, and levers make it possible to construct amazing and complex structures. Cities that have the technology (or magic) for flight—be it by airship, ornithopter, glider, dragon or otherwise—needs a place for these vehicles to take off and land. This could mean massive, towering skyports with latticework scaffolding, wide-roofed buildings with reinforced landing pads, or simply open space in an otherwise dense city.

For instance, consider the nature-based city mentioned earlier. While they might value simple, plain designs and might shun complicated machinery, they might still possess the knowledge of simple machines and the know-how for building sturdy structures. They might import stone and other materials from far away, using carts, sledges, or rollers or making strategic use of the nearby waterways. They could use simple aqueducts to channel water into their settlement or might even route the water into homes as a rudimentary form of plumbing.

An industrialized city, on the other hand, might be determined to stay at the cutting edge of technology, constantly improving upon its existing structures and methods. They use motorized machines to create new structures quickly and likely choose their building materials based on what is the most resilient. Cast-metal beams might be utilized often, the better to build bigger and higher and to further support equipment for the ever-expanding industries.

A high-magic setting could work together with existing technology, augmenting engineering accomplishments, or it might supplant portions of it entirely. A civilization that can cast the *create or destroy water* spell at will or that can open portals to the Elemental Plane of Water does not need to worry itself over sourcing fresh water or constructing structures like aqueducts or even digging wells. Their homes might be heated by magically imbued stones built into the walls themselves. They might even build homes that can float in the air or stand up and walk away when the season becomes inhospitable. As discussed in **Chapter 1**, the level of magic in a particular culture or city can vary greatly, which in turn greatly alters the impact that magic has on the average citizen's day-to-day life.

CITY DISTRICTS

Most cities are made up of districts that are divided by walls, natural features of the land, property borders, and roads. Living in a well-maintained district often instills in its citizens pride and a sense of belonging, somewhat akin to tribalism, while other districts—those lacking funding and care from the city leadership—frequently harbor resentment, dissociation, and civil unrest among its people.

Districts typically grow from the habits of the local folks but can also occur during city planning and expansion, fulfilling specific accommodations for unique structures, services, and business needs.

Some district habits are universal in their occurrence:

- Areas not claimed for a specific purpose quickly fill up as residential housing and living spaces. As a city grows, so does its population, and a city's people will find any space to occupy they can, filling unused space both within city walls and beyond them.
- Artisans—especially those whose work creates unpleasant odors, sounds, and byproducts—arrange their workplaces far from residential areas so as not to earn the ill will of the populace and impact their reputations.
- Merchants and markets often stage themselves close to city gates, ports, and docks and along main thoroughfares to catch the eye of as many travelers as possible.
- Military garrisons that protect their cities stage near weak points to shore up any avenues that could be exploited by invaders. Garrison leadership, however, stays more central within the city to remain in power for as long as possible in the event of a conflict. A central position is also favorable for garrisons that focus on policing, though satellite locations throughout the districts are necessary, especially on paths in and out of the city.
- Religious and governmental authorities typically take positions in a central location relative to the city's other districts to best govern.
- Wealthy citizens prefer to stay at higher elevations, viewing their literal position over the rest of the city as a symbol of status and superiority while also enjoying the increased security.

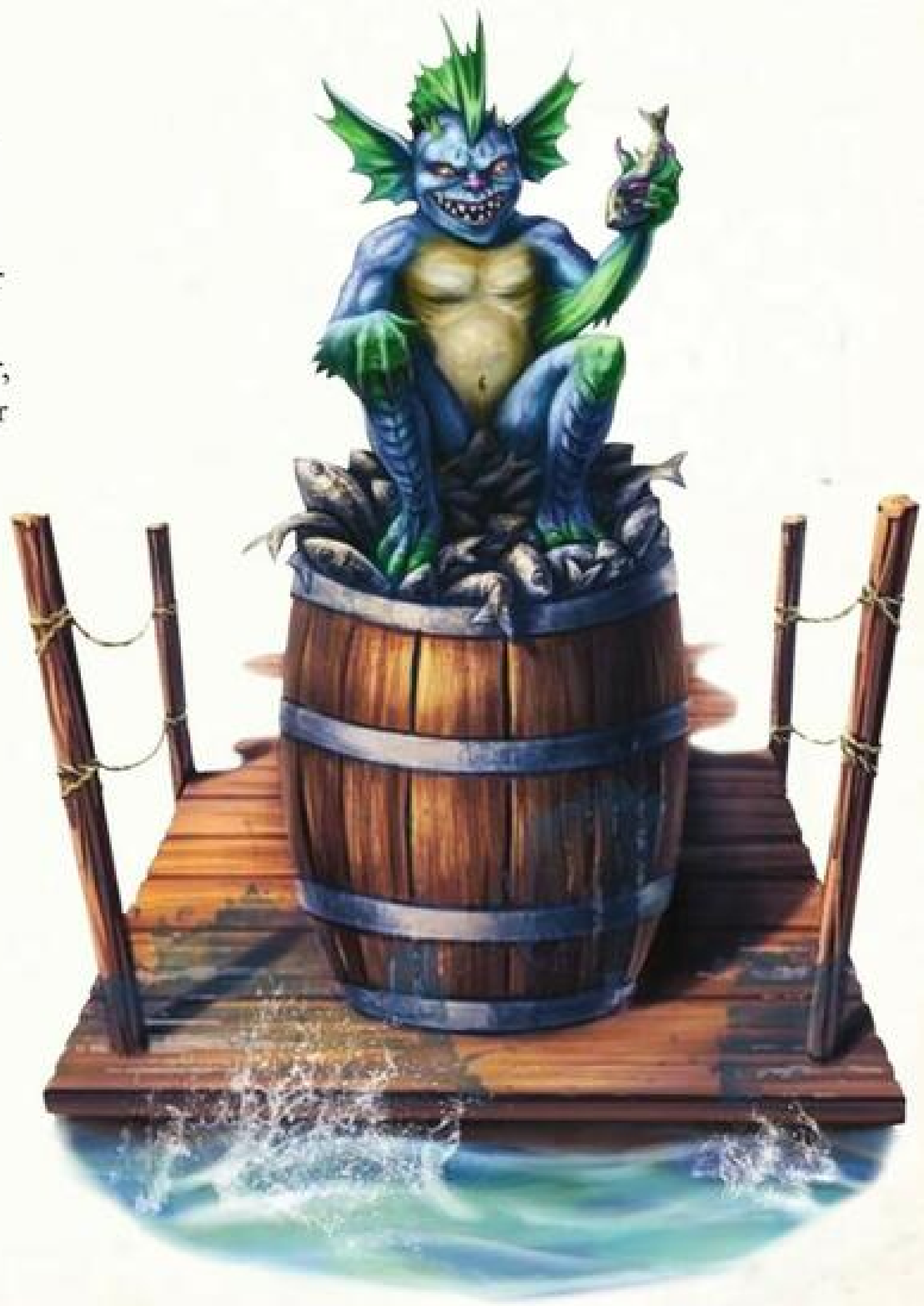
In the sections below, a variety of specific districts are detailed for a city, including what to consider when determining their locations, what might be encountered within them, and plot hooks to draw characters into the district's inherent culture.

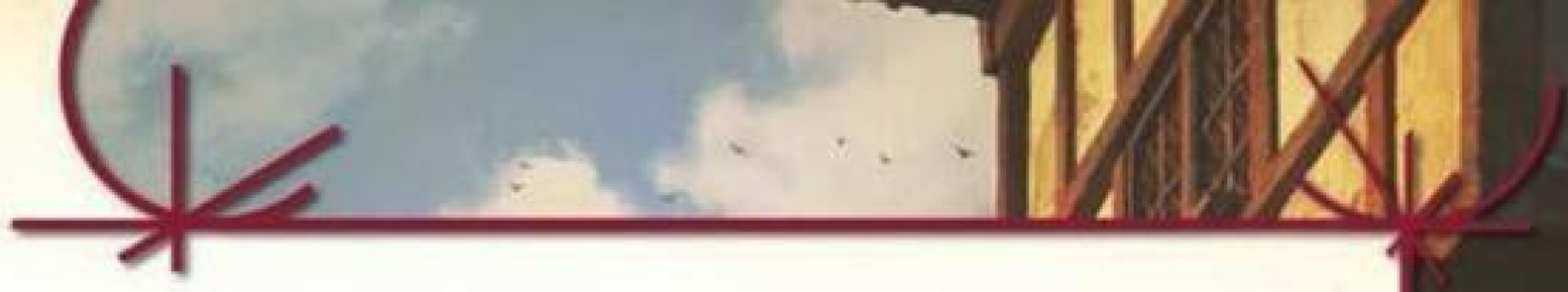
DOCKS DISTRICT

The smell of fish mingles with the salty tang of sea brine and unwashed laborers. Most of the buildings in sight are in poor repair, having suffered from the elements day after sea-soaked day. Ferry bells and foghorns drown out the shouting from the bay. Among the alleyways, shipyards, and ramshackle merchant stalls, townsfolk mill about, keeping to themselves as they go about their routines on the boardwalk.

Whether on a lake, river, or ocean, chances are the city has a coastline and therefore docks district. The docks serve as both a berth for water-going vessels that bring trade and travelers and as a hub responsible for employing a major portion of the city's working class and for importing and exporting goods.

Rather than omit the district in landlocked cities, consider the surrounding geography and how the city's people might adapt. Maybe the city sits on the edge of a vast desert, its sand frequently tossed about by powerful winds. Such a city could make use of sailboat-like skiffs that glide across the sand and require moorings when not in use. Or perhaps the city perches high in the branches of the World Tree where updrafts are





common, and air and fire elementals work under the city's magocracy to power dirigibles and other ships that sail the skies. Or the city could have no need for sea or sky but instead welcomes a heavy influx of caravans daily. A city like that needs a dedicated area to store caravan vehicles and their occupants and would have a district or two purposed just for that.

DISTRICT MAKEUP

Docks districts can be further categorized by purpose, scaling with the level of activity required of them.

Fisher's Wharf. A fisher's wharf is typically the smallest and least funded of docks districts, often only possessing enough warehousing to manage the daily catch and relying on exporting ships to offload the excess. Folks residing here typically live poor, squalid lifestyles and frequently turn to crime when their trade fails to put bread on the dinner table.

Waterfront. These districts have docks that tend to see better upkeep, berthing luxury vessels for the nobility and providing fine dining and leisurely activities for those with the coin to spend on them. Guards and nobles are more common here, prompting more work from criminals to remain discrete if they wish to ply their trade.

Port. The largest of docks districts, ports provide moorings for large ships carrying bulk quantities of cargo and grand companies of tourists, merchants, and travelers. "The sea is the limit" is a common phrase here, offering the promise that, if one desires something, it can probably be found. Criminals are just as common here as any place, taking advantage of all the distractions and multitudes of people to pick pockets, swindle thrill-seekers, and fleece the gullible.

Naval Base. Seaside cities that maintain strong military powers will keep a naval base and prioritize its upkeep and staffing requirements. Nautical forces are staged here, either to repel invaders, combat disaster-bringing sea monsters, or sail off to conquer the ports of sister cities. Smuggling is a problem in these districts since conscripted soldiers and sailors need outlets and vices that their stations prohibit.

WATERFRONT WORK

Docks are epicenters of activity, providing important food resources, imports and exports, and services for the city at large. Many types of businesses might spring up near the water:

- ***Boardwalk or Pier.*** Filled with recreational attractions, food stalls, and entertainers performing for the amusement of the masses, coin flows freely here as citizens and tourists test their skills against circus performers in feats of strength, dexterity, and knowledge. And just beyond, a beach provides an inviting place for respite and play.
- ***Courier Outpost.*** Near where the docks transition to the next district over, whether a single person working diligently to deliver correspondence or larger operations keeping citizens connected and informed, couriers provide a vital service. Without a government-funded postal service, couriers can leverage their services, sometimes inflating prices much to a community's ire.
- ***Fishmongers.*** Hawking the day's catch beneath the shade of lobster pots, netted canopies, and overturned rowboats on stilts, a fishmonger is a reliable source of high-quality cooking ingredients and marine spell components. If one can brave the stench and grease the palms, fishmongers usually know juicy rumors about what happens on and off the water.
- ***Marina.*** The harbormaster keeps a small shack on the pier and, provided they are not busy inspecting docked vessels, can be approached about chartering ships or simply for information. (For more on how to do just that, see **Chartering a Vessel** below.)

A NOTE ON CAPTAINS

Captains of sailing vessels have magnetic, larger-than-life personalities, which is necessary to command the respect, or fear and compliance, of their crews. Highly capable of either heroism or villainy, captains provide an anchoring nonplayer character that can keep players invested in maritime stories, whether focused near the docks or even in forays away from the city and out on the open sea . . . but that's for another place.

If characters develop a deeper relationship with a captain, consider making them temporarily available as a hireling or cohort. But it's critical to consider how much time away from their ship the captain is willing to spend, what their own goals are, and what the price for their personal services might be. Captains primarily make their bones sailing, so any work they perform as a hireling or cohort is at a premium. See **Henchmen and Hirelings** in **Chapter 3** for more details on how to develop the captain into a memorable character with a fun and fitting persona.

- ***Recruiter.*** Wanting to capitalize on a sailor's thirst for adventure, rum, and coin, recruiters might be first mates of noteworthy ships, seeking to replenish lost men after their last run-in with something at sea, naval officers preying upon young adults' naivete and ambition, or even just bargemasters needing to keep up with the increased demand for fish and ferry.
- ***Small Shops and Ramshackle Stalls.*** Selling souvenirs to newly arrived visitors, these vendors often seem shameless, desperate even, to turn a coin and offload their merchandise. The unwary buyer often gets taken advantage of, getting charged more than the last shopper while being served an extra-wide smile.
- ***Street Gamblers.*** The worldly traveler knows these charlatans for what they are, con artists. Rarely do they work alone. Instead, an accomplice hides within the crowd, angling for a pocket or loose bag while a hapless mark is fully engrossed in a game of skill.
- ***Trading Company.*** Dealing in bulk trade goods, acquisition of foreign exotics, and mercantile expeditions, trading companies are often sanctioned by the local government or ruler and typically keep offices separate from the warehouses where they store their shipments. Multiple ships and captains might be on an extended charter with a trading company, further limiting the pool of available vessels.

CHARTERING A VESSEL

The biggest reason someone might visit the docks is because of the ships anchored there. While a sailing vessel can be both workplace and home, it is chiefly a method of travel. Characters sent on far-flung quests, travelers returning to their own cities, merchants exporting their wares, and ambassadors alike have the need for chartering a vessel. Savvy captains know to make their availability known to the city harbormaster and local taverns in the hopes of earning their next commission and keeping the much-needed coin flowing.

Chartering opportunities can vary. Sometimes the only available space is aboard a cargo ship conveying livestock downriver. Other times there are multiple choices, and the buyer has the economic power. Occasionally, no good option exists, requiring travelers to cajole a captain drowning their sorrows in the bottom of a tankard, even performing a little favor for said captain first.

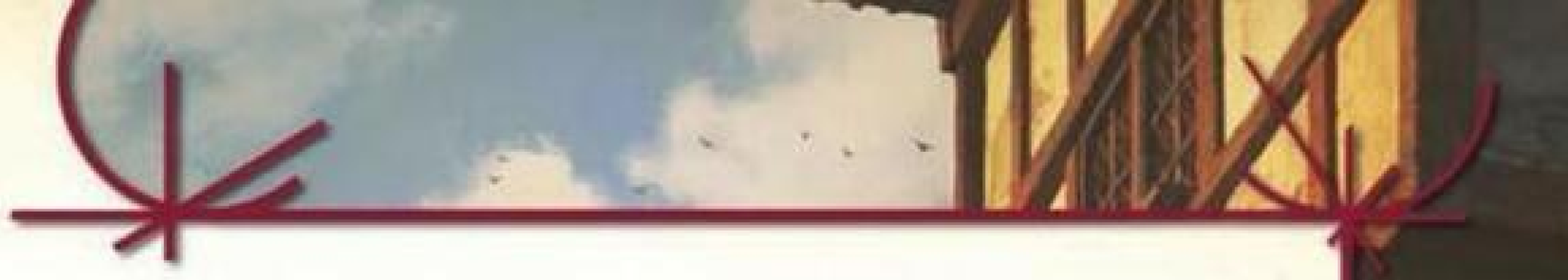
Chartering a sailing vessel is usually a straightforward affair, corresponding with the cost of lifestyle expenses. The nicer an experience one wants to have at sea, the more they must be willing to pay. To calculate how much a trip might cost, first determine the distance of the trip. Seasoned captains are familiar with the common routes to neighboring ports and cities and usually measure trips in weeks rather than miles, to account for rest, routing, and weather. The standard market rate is to charge three times the cost of lifestyle per week, though in tight markets captains often adjust their prices.

Next comes the quality of the ship according to lifestyle and availability. The nicest ships are usually the most difficult to hire as they are often under the direct employ of royalty and thusly off-market. Conversely, wretched and squalid options exist for the desperate, unable to afford a charter and thus often compelled to sneak aboard as stowaways despite the risks of discovery, violence, and disease. The **Sailing Vessel Chartering Costs** table details passage on a ship by lifestyle, cost, and percentage likelihood that one is available for charter.

At any given time, a fisher's wharf might have 1d4 + 1 different options available, a waterfront 1d6 + 1 options available, and a port or naval base 1d8 + 1 options available. Naval bases charge an additional 25 gp for every week and never allow commercial chartering during wartime.

SAILING VESSEL CHARTERING COSTS

Quality by Lifestyle	Cost by Week	Availability
Wretched	—	50%
Squalid	—	50%
Poor	42 sp	50%
Modest	21 gp	40%
Comfortable	48 gp	25%
Wealthy	84 gp	15%
Aristocratic	210 gp (minimum)	10%



CRIMINAL ELEMENT

Though con artists and charlatans are always a concern at the docks, the biggest sources of crime are organized families and smuggling. Organized crime families often maintain ties or even direct power among dockworkers, fishmongers, and trading companies. Not only do docks often have direct access to sewers where many crime organizations keep operational bases, but the water itself provides a great opportunity to offload problematic personnel and incriminating evidence. Slippery as fish, an organized crime family is difficult to outmaneuver. Any legal charges levied against them often fail to stick, prompting long investigations and undercover tactics to bring their injustice to light.

Smuggling, on the other hand, can be a city-wide problem that becomes illuminated in the chokepoint that is the docks district. The city watch, town guard, or investigative law enforcement of the city knows that the docks present their best shot at catching smugglers in the act, and they often employ a customs division to do just that. This prompts ever-escalating methods of creatively hiding illicit goods aboard ships, utilizing every foot of available space to thwart the authorities' efforts.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Questing along the docks can take characters out on the seas to chase after bold pirates, dive into the bay for sunken treasure, and explore the seedy corners of the harbor streets:

- While enjoying some relaxing downtime, the characters fish up an old urn from out of the bay. It isn't long before another interested party makes an aggressive move for the urn, possibly prompting a chase along the bay or the boardwalk. Who are these aggressors and what do they want with the urn?
- A new sailing ship's christening sours when the ship is nowhere to be found. Wet paint and other clues at the ship's mooring suggest something is afoot, and the harbormaster is eager to get the ship back in place before their reputation is ruined.

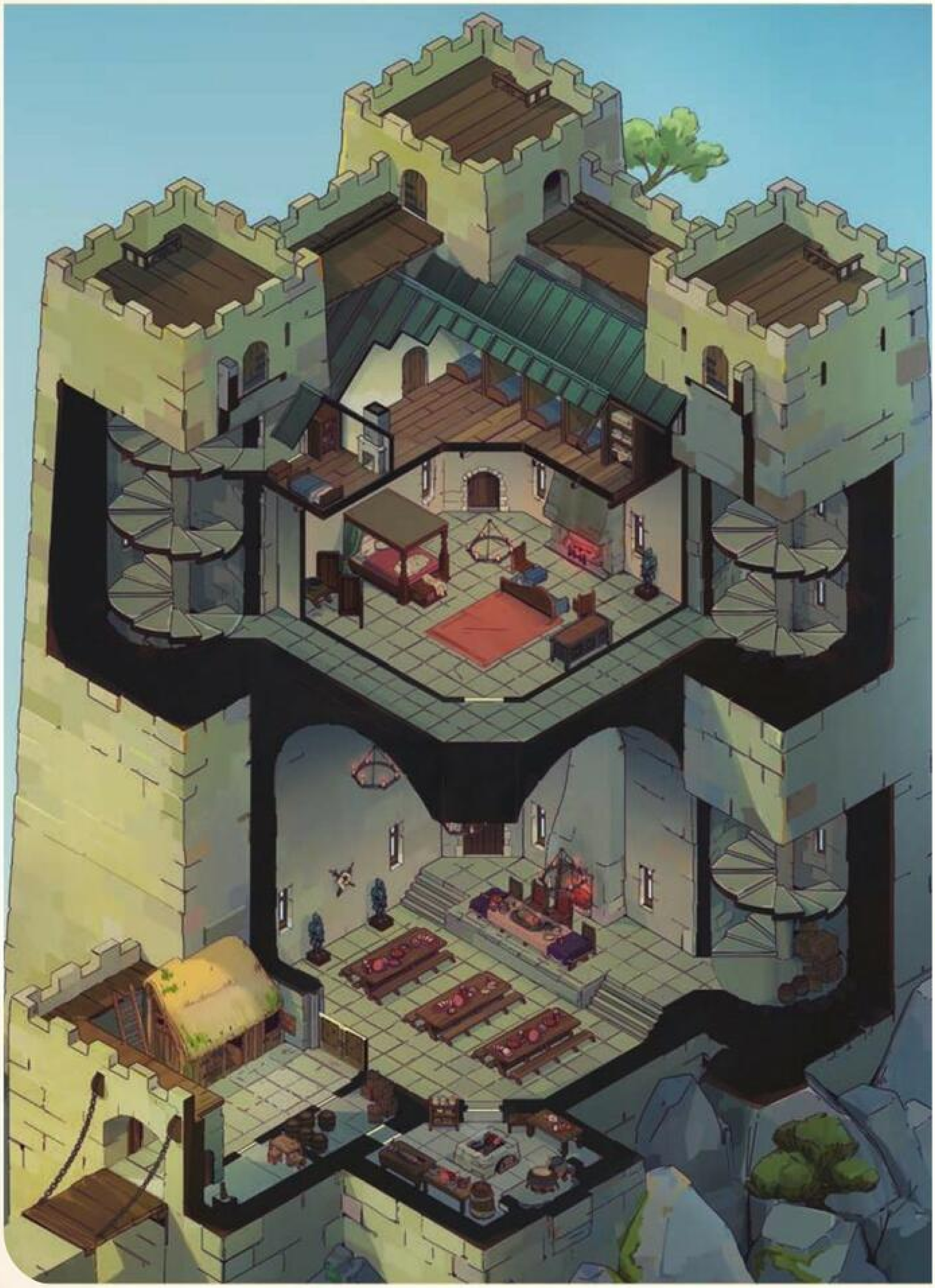
GOVERNMENT DISTRICT

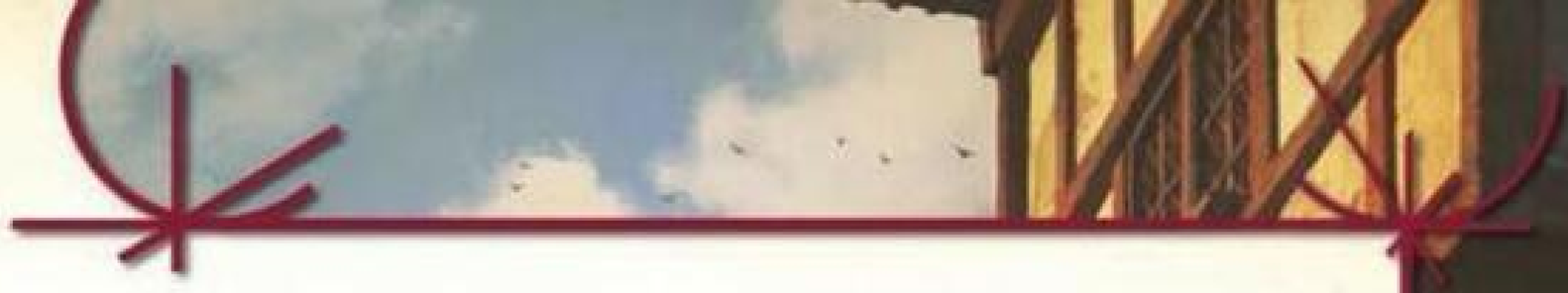
A government district comprises any sections of the city containing institutions where most authoritative policies are legislated, adjudicated, and enforced. The type of institutions established by the city's dominant political structure determines what types of architecture, features, and citizens inhabit the district. For example, individual access to the government district of a city ruled by a tyrannical monarch might be highly restricted. At the same time, an egalitarian merchant oligarchy might have an open government district with shops and homes interspersed with trade houses operated by five major trade princes, each geographically scattered in a different location within the city walls. A typical government district centers on a seat of authority surrounded by municipal buildings, businesses, and private residences.

AUTHORITY

The seat of authority is a general descriptor for the structure from which the city's ruler oversees their charge. In most cities, the leader lives in a fortified structure, such as a castle or keep, which might have additional walls and defenses, a private watchguard, and several hidden passages to allow safe travel in and out. Frequently, the ruler lives at this location along with their family and trusted allies, such as political advisors and bodyguards. The keep stands atop the highest area, so citizens can see it above all other buildings in the city. Castles keep the ruler safe. Architecture typically represents the historically dominant culture and reflects the city's values. Below are six common examples of structures that might serve as a city's seat of authority:

- ***Capitol.*** Egalitarian cities might carry out legislation in a capitol building. The capitol's structure is typically less fortified than other seats of authority and offers few living accommodations beyond those offered to the maintenance staff. Members of the city government only convene at the capitol to debate the city's diplomatic concerns.
- ***Castle.*** These extensively fortified compounds almost function as independent communities. Most have a throne room from where the ruler addresses the citizens, along with meeting chambers, feasting halls, and a private residence for the ruler and their families.
- ***Guild Hall.*** In some cities, the seat of authority might fall under some elite individual's jurisdiction, one who maintains control of the city's economy. For example, a wealthy baron might rule from a trading company, mercantile guild, or a fortified countinghouse.
- ***Keep.*** This fortified stone tower or spire rises from the center of the city. A solitary ruler might favor living in a keep and occupy the upper levels, making public appearances from high in the parapets.
- ***Temple or Ziggurat.*** These structures are slightly less fortified than a keep. The tenets and traditions of





the dominant religion determine who and what lives at a temple. It might house several members of the clergy, all of whom participate in local government.

- ***Trade House.*** A city that expanded around a specific trade or industry might take its leadership from those individuals most influential in the industry. The seat of authority might be a lumbermill, distillery, or whaling fishery. Trade houses might host official meetings in offices while larger congregations meet in warehouses.

DISTRICT MAKEUP

A city's political structure provides the predominant influence on the layout of the government district. When designing a government district, choose locations that best convey the nature of the government and the city's rulers. For example, the Lady of the Gray Veil, the ruler of a small city, might live in a ziggurat carved into the face of the mountain cliffs overlooking the city, and her district could consist of monks that act as guards and advisors that live in caves ascending the cliff face. Conversely, a city run by a council of paladins might center on a castle seated between a temple and a senate house. Both the temple and the senate might compete as advisors to the council.

Use the following guidelines to help determine how the city's political structure might influence the government district's layout. Represent the increase of diversity of power and bureaucracy levels by increasing the number of municipal offices.

Simple Structure. A single ruler runs the city, supported by advisors who are likely related to the ruler. Law is heavy-handed and capricious, subject to the whims and moods of the ruler and enforced by intimidation backed with physical force. Citizens have little to no political representation. Becoming involved in politics requires a blood bond, marriage, or life debt to the ruler. Leadership is hereditary and only inherited by an individual with a close relationship to the ruler or slaying the ruler and assuming the role.

About 2 percent of the population are involved in governing, and 1–4 municipal buildings/offices are required.

Average Structure. An individual governs the city, though they take advice from a council, sage, or former leaders. On rare occasions, the people elect the ruler. However, more often, the ruler inherits the position, entitled through royalty, a sacred bloodline, passed down to heirs by the verdict of the current leader, or as dictated by a code, law, or prophecy.

About 5 percent of the population are involved in governing, and 2–8 municipal buildings/offices are required.

Advanced Structure. A small council of appointed individuals runs the city. The council appoints new members from nominations presented by other council members. In addition, the council takes advice from advisors or representatives of other influential groups and organizations.

About 10 percent of the population are involved in governing, and 3–12 municipal buildings/offices are required.

Complex Structure. Complex structures denote any system of government where several individuals determine the outcome of political decisions. A complex structure might consist of a single leader supported by a council of advisors, a congress, aristocrats, a merchant guild, or clergy. Alternatively, a complex structure might consist of elected officials or councils with multiple leaders.

About 20 percent of the population are involved in governing, and 4–16 municipal buildings/offices (or more) are required.

Businesses

As with any other district, some entrepreneurs make their living operating businesses based on the needs of the residents. However, given the nature and intrigue of politics, several standard businesses offer additional services to clients in a government district:

- ***Information Broker.*** They sell information collected from scraps of dialogue and rumors to those who can afford it. The job isn't legitimate and is considered illegal in some cities.
- ***Inns.*** Nearly all visitors seeking the services of an inn are foreign dignitaries. Therefore, inns frequently cater to the needs of those from specific countries or cultures and can provide specialty items not typically available in the city. They can also provide locals with insight on said foreign clients.
- ***Mendicant Guild Enclave.*** When merchants establish a guild within the government district, their primary intent is to negotiate trade laws and taxation. As a result, they can secure paperwork, often paying hefty taxes upfront to bend later regulations. Merchants also broker deals in advance, though they typically mark up the value in exchange for the convenience they provide. The same can be said of trading corporations.

- ***Representatives.*** Representatives or scribes are hired to write out legal proposals and requests, and sages to research historical documents and legal precedent.
- ***Taverns and Public Houses.*** As government districts tend to shut down at the end of the day, most of the taverns in the district cater their hours to the daytime crowd. As people with shared political agendas tend to stick together, a faction might adopt a tavern over time, giving the place the reputation of being associated with the faction. This relationship often becomes reciprocal, and the staff and tavernkeeper might aid faction members, providing them with tips on things they've heard or seen. They might even allow some longtime patrons to use a back room for covert meetings or provide them with secret escape passages.

Municipal Buildings

Any of the following municipal buildings are commonly found in a government district:

- ***Archive.*** An archive provides a secure space for a government or institution to store historical, political, and financial data.
- ***College.*** Some governments encourage the establishment of institutions to educate the scions of the wealthy in specific fields of studies, such as astrology, history, or politics.
- ***Courthouse.*** Depending on who oversees acts of judgment, a city might have a separate facility for conducting hearings and trials, involving defendants and prosecutors that present testimony before one or more witnesses or judiciaries.
- ***Foreign Embassy.*** If a city maintains political relations with nearby cities or nations, it might establish buildings of political neutrality within its districts. Occasionally, the city's ruler considers a foreign embassy as part of his jurisdiction, but typically, an embassy falls under the city or country's judiciary law. Embassies can therefore offer individuals political asylum within their walls.
- ***Gallows.*** Cities where certain crimes are punishable by death erect gallows. The gallows are located near a square or other prominent location, enabling citizens to witness the consequences of breaking city law. Gallows consist of an elevated wooden or stone platform topped with the device(s) used to perform the execution, such as a chopping block, gibbet pole, or guillotine.
- ***Jail.*** Most government districts have a small jail used to hold prisoners before and after sentencing. Officials only use it to detain petty criminals or those without prior convictions.
- ***Meeting Houses.*** Community-based congregations use these buildings to gather and share concerns and propose solutions for common issues concerning property resources and rights. Most meetings are small affairs open only to community members. After discussing their concerns and voting for proposals, they appoint representatives to present the issues to the seat of authority.
- ***Parliament or Congressional House.*** These large buildings are frequently built to resemble an enclosed amphitheater. The seats all face a central stage from which speakers might address the governing council members to debate political and legal policies.
- ***Public Amphitheater.*** Amphitheaters are typically located near one of the district's judiciary buildings. Members or representatives of the governing body use the amphitheater to formally issue political speeches and proclamations to the public.

Municipal Offices

Municipal offices provide various legal and governmental services. Larger cities might devote an entire building to a single municipal office while smaller cities or those under more authoritarian rule might house multiple municipal offices in a basilica, court buildings, or the lord's keep:

- ***Court Offices.*** Court offices hold court records, wills, treatises, legal documents, and references on law and adjudication.
- ***Currency Exchange.*** Exchanges swap out foreign coins for local currency. They typically weigh the coins to make sure the currency is worth its weight in gold.
- ***Notary Public.*** An official court representative seals letters or notarizes documents such as deeds and trade agreements for a fee.
- ***Pardon Seller.*** Individuals can pay steep fees to purchase official pardons for lesser, non-violent crimes such as tax delinquency, breaking curfew, or lying under oath in some cities. Certain officials might also sell pardons to license activities such as trespassing, breaking-and-entering, search and seizure, assault, and manslaughter that might occur due to a private investigation, debt collection, mercenary work, or bounty hunting.
- ***Property Offices.*** Property offices are responsible for licensing and selling property and for holding deeds, records of land sales, and taxation of property.

- ***Tax Office.*** The office runs the city's tax collection services and processes all paperwork or bookkeeping associated with taxation. They also issue warrants and fines for any unpaid taxes, tax fraud, or evasion.

Residential Homes

Typically, citizens with government jobs reside within the district. Individuals such as nobles or politicians generally live in grand manses. In contrast, service providers such as scullery maids, coachmen, and tavernkeepers reside in smaller homes, tenements, or rooms at their place of employment.

d8	Resident
1	Aristocrat or noble
2	Barrister or lawyer
4	Lobbyist/representative
6	Merchant
3	Politician
7	Service Provider
5	Special interest group
8	Other

PARTICIPATING IN POLITICS

As characters become increasingly involved with city affairs, they might eventually seek an opportunity to influence government policy. They might petition the ear of a government official for support, question the balance of justice, challenge the morality of policies, participate in a trial, propose laws, or take an official position in the city government. This section introduces guidelines and variant rules for enabling characters to participate in city government and act as agents of change, whether they seek to become liberators or tyrants.

Political Influence. Political influence represents an individual's ability to influence individuals of a specific political faction responsible for creating or changing public policy. A character residing in a city might gain proficiency in politics based on their background, connections, race, class, or other factors determined by the GM. This proficiency allows a character to add their proficiency bonus to any ability check made while attempting to influence or dispute political policies with any officially recognized political faction operating within the city.

The character must have a similar viewpoint to a faction to argue its points or influence its members. If the equivalence of the character's political viewpoint is in question, use alignment to establish the ethics and intent of the individuals debating political policy.

Political influence isn't tied to a single ability since there are numerous ways for an individual to exert their influence. For example, the GM might ask for an Intelligence check to recall legal precedent during a debate on foreign policy or a Wisdom check to present a counterargument to a political superior without insulting them.

Political Arbitrations

Political arbitration refers to discourse exchanged between characters and political officials and can vary in importance and complexity:

- ***Simple.*** A simple discourse can be resolved with little effort, especially if both sides agree. The GM can resolve the discourse through roleplay, and it rarely requires rolling dice. However, if parties need to negotiate policies, then a few dice rolls might be necessary to set the terms of the compromise.
- ***Moderate.*** A moderate discourse requires concessions from both sides. It can be amicable but tense, and often neither side is entirely pleased with the outcome.
- ***Serious.*** A serious discourse involves an argument between parties that have contrasting needs.
- ***Heated.*** Heated discourse occurs between factions with diametrically opposed interests, neither seeking nor willing to make concessions. Compromise falls to the responsibility of outside or neutral arbitrators. One side can win, and the other lose, based on distinct policies representing each side.

Running an Arbitration. The representatives meet for arbitration presided over by the ruler or by an assembly that agrees to abide by democratic vote. In each round, one of the representatives makes a statement, and one of the opposing representatives can make a rebuttal. The GM determines the results by rolling ability checks or through roleplay and notes the winner. The faction with the most individual victories wins the discourse.

COURT TRIALS

Trials occur when those accused of committing offenses against their peers, superiors, or governments face a lawgiver, lord, or tribunal whose judgment decides their fate. Trials are conducted per city law, as are any hearings and testimonies, personal representation, and sentencing. A city with strict laws ruled by a single authoritarian tyrant likely has short trials during which the tyrant hears the charges and immediately damns the accused with the harshest possible sentence. More egalitarian cities provide defendants a fair trial and the right to legal

representation. The accused formally pleads their case during a fair trial by presenting evidence to prove their intent or innocence. This section presents some ideas for running trial encounters associated with egalitarian cities, in which the accused is permitted the right to a fair trial. For more totalitarian cities, skip straight to sentencing.

Collect Evidence. When running a trial, the GM should provide characters the opportunity to collect a minimum of three pieces of evidence to present in court while arguing the case or providing testimony. Evidence always appears as information learned about the crime and some physical proof of the validity of the information. Examples of evidence might include the recovery of a monogrammed handkerchief with the murderer's initials and the victim's blood or a pair of boots that match the mysterious footprints behind the shed.

Winning the trial shouldn't depend on gathering all three pieces of evidence, but having multiple options allows the characters to experience failure and doubt associated with missing or damaged evidence. The characters might collect all, some, or none of the evidence. Each time they attempt an argument in court, they can use one piece of evidence to gain either advantage or a partial bonus on the roll. Once presented, an individual cannot present it again, regardless of the die roll.

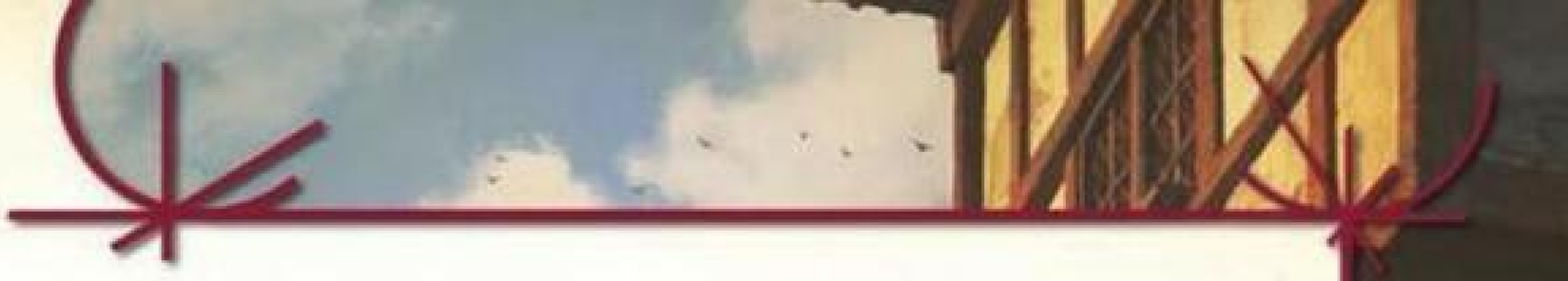
If the characters have a solid piece of evidence, they gain advantage. However, if they only have part of the evidence because some of it is missing or damaged, they only gain a +1d4 bonus to the roll. Characters that fail to recover usable evidence get no bonus.

Presenting Argument. The characters present arguments to an arbitrator or council of arbitrators who serve as a jury. Next, they make a case on behalf of their client or provide convincing testimony if serving as a witness. Participants make a Charisma (Persuasion) check contested by the target's Charisma (Persuasion) check to challenge the testimony of the opposing counsel. The characters can use appropriate evidence to give bonuses to their arguments. The individual with the highest roll wins the argument. If arguments are well performed, a roll might not be necessary, and the GM acts as judge and makes a ruling. The individuals continue until both sides exhaust their arguments.

A jury determines the win by siding with the individual who wins the most arguments. If the jury is impartial, the side with the most votes wins, ties going to the defendant. If the jury favors one opponent, the opposing counsel can only win by a clear margin of votes. If the jury has a strong bias toward one of the opponents, then the opposing counsel can only win by a unanimous decision.

Other than individuals appointed by the court, no participants are permitted to use magic to enhance their arguments, and those using magic in court face contempt or even criminal charges. However, some courts allow barristers access to a court mage or priest. For example, a barrister questioning an individual's legal testimony can request the aid of a court cleric who can cast spells during an interrogation to ensure accurate testimony or to gather information.

In some cases, the GM might want the judge or ruler to override the jury's decision. In such cases, the GM should inform the players at the start of the trial that the judge or ruler possesses this ability. Note, though, that a lost trial isn't necessarily a loss. Poorly or unfairly adjudicated trials can result in arguments, riots, and violence which trigger new plot hooks or encounters.



Below are some additional considerations that might come into play:

- ***Backdoor Deals.*** This situation occurs when a judge or ruler resolves a discourse or verdict prior to arbitration. For example, in a court case, the accused might serve as a pawn, be part of a hostage negotiation, receive a pardon, or be otherwise deemed untouchable by the legal system. In addition, covert thieves' guild members might fix votes in political discourse. A decision based on a backdoor deal overrides the decision of the jury.
- ***Bias.*** Sometimes judges, lawyers, and jury members hold unwarranted negative feelings toward others involved in the trial. Before running the trial, determine which (if any) jury members hold a bias against trial participants. Ability checks made to influence a biased individual have disadvantage.
- ***Bribing Arbitrators.*** It is possible to purchase the decisions of jurors and political arbitrators. Regardless of arguments or evidence presented during the trial or debate, the final decision always favors the briber's position. Bribing a juror is both unethical and illegal.
- ***Hiring Expert Counsel.*** Characters navigating the legal system might seek to hire expert counsel in the form of a political advisor, lawyer, or barrister. Expert counsel can either argue on the character's behalf or help strengthen arguments before a debate or trial. The cost of hiring an expert varies, depending on the odds of winning. Easy arguments require a single consultation. Complex cases require additional consultations. A consultation costs 10–50 gp and provides a +1d4 bonus per argument.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Tensions are typically extremely high in government, and tempers can flare. There are also many high-profile targets for those who seek to attack or undermine rule within the city. Everyone here has an agenda, and conflicts can arise quickly:

- The city's lord has undergone a noticeable change in behavior—now sullen and introverted. He spends considerable time with his new personal advisor, a foreign man from a distant province whose pale skin is covered with strange tattoos.
- A thief arrested for breaking into the royal archives now faces the death sentence. However, a mysterious organization claims the man knows a vital secret that could change the world's fate.
- A foreign dignitary from a neighboring city-state known for its human rights violations receives a death threat while attending a trade summit. Relations between the powers are tense, and if the dignitary dies, it could be grounds for war.
- Parliament is set to vote on a new taxation law that would threaten the economy of the poorest districts. One senator has always been outspoken in his opposition to the new law, but days before the vote, he mysteriously disappears. Unless someone finds the kidnapped senator, he cannot cast his vote against the unjust law.
- The murder of a judge's wife makes him look suspicious. The judge holds much power and has many allies in the legal system, and he possesses potentially incriminating evidence on several barristers. If he is guilty, it seems likely he will not be prosecuted justly.
- An unknown entity leaves mysterious chests at the courthouse and several other municipal offices around the district. The boxes contain animated undead heads from one of the lower planes.
- Officials recover the body of a handsome young bard dumped in a garbage cart just outside the government district. Investigating the body provides clues that lead to a complex network of wealthy aristocrats who belong to an underground social club rumored to indulge in an array of morally questionable activities.
- During the triannual debates, an argument between two senators erupts into bloody violence. The incident sends sparks through an already politically divided senate and threatens to split the district into civil war. With its escalation, the city is soon placed under martial law.
- The eldest child of the previous ruler returns after a ten-year hiatus. Presumed dead, the child had disappeared during a tour of duty while fighting in a war to the south. The heir apparent arrives with a cadre of foreign supporters, tribe members with whom he now shares a blood bond, and demands the city hand him rulership as is his birthright, contesting his younger sibling's current rule.
- A cabal of vampires attempts to assume control of the city council, slowly infiltrating and devouring their way to political control. To legally investigate and root them out, characters must attend office after office to fulfill the legal requirements to obtain a warrant and to present their evidence to the council.

GUARD DISTRICT

A guard district varies greatly depending on a city's size, location, economics, trade goods, and citizenry's disposition toward policing. Smaller towns likely don't have an organized guard, though some might have a local neighborhood watch of volunteers from the community that helps keep the peace, might favor more proactive interventions and public policy, or might hire a handful of soldiers from larger neighboring communities to maintain the safety of the trade roads. Larger cities might have a local guard that functions at the behest of the city's leadership or might host the royal military or a contingent of the queen's guard. In many cases, the more professional guard organizations have a headquarters, a prison, and perhaps even a barracks to house the guard members when off duty.

DISTRICT MAKEUP

Not every city watch is created equal, and not every guard district is the same. Whether the city or town has a single sentry box or a district that spans several city blocks, it is nonetheless an important part of the ecosystem of any settlement:

- ***Family Housing.*** An alternative to barracks, the city might supply guard members with housing nearby, allowing them to live with their family in government-funded lodgings. This might consist of apartments, rowhouses, or even large manors for those who have spent many years in service and have worked their way into high-level positions. Some guards might have the opportunity to work off the cost of the housing and eventually own the residence outright, granting them the ability to sell it when they retire or pass it down to their heirs as part of their inheritance.
- ***Guard Barracks.*** In a city with a particularly large guard population (or a particularly well-funded guard), a guard barracks might be part of the headquarters complex. A building or set of buildings kept for housing the members of the guard, the barracks might include bunk rooms or bunk houses, a mess hall, and a training yard. Guards can be found in the barracks at any time, day or night, either on shift or off. The barracks might be closed to outside visitors, or they might have an open-door policy, allowing escorted guests access to the buildings.
- ***Guard Stations.*** Like sentry boxes, guard stations can be found anywhere in a city, set at high-traffic areas to monitor the populace and discourage ne'er-do-wells. Holding anywhere from one to six guards at a time, a guard station might have a small holding cell for particularly disruptive or violent criminals and magical means of contacting headquarters to call for backup whenever necessary. Citizens can approach a guard station for aid or to report crimes. Guard stations might have overlapping, rotating shifts or, in the case of stations positioned in distant parts of the city, might have a cot and only a few guards that take longer shifts but remain at the station while resting.
- ***Headquarters.*** The main offices for the city guard, the headquarters might consist of a single large building or a cluster of smaller structures, each designated for a different purpose. Typically, the headquarters holds the offices of the high-ranking guards and any administrative members of the organization. Guards might report to headquarters before and after shifts to check in with their superiors or to retrieve or return issued equipment. Any records, such as arrest records, guard rosters, shift rotations, and incident reports are kept at the guard headquarters, and any evidence collected over the course of an investigation can also be found here, likely under lock and key. The headquarters is typically teeming with guards, both on and off duty. Attempting any sort of criminal activity or disruptive shenanigans within or near the headquarters likely results in a quick response from the guard.
- ***Kennels.*** A well-rounded guard keeps trained animals to track down missing persons, culprits, illicit substances, and even illegal magics. Canines are frequently trained for such work, but other creatures might be better suited for any given city and job. The kennels are likely near the headquarters and might even house one or more trainers and handlers on the property. Guards might have specific animals they have trained and bonded with, or they might use whatever creature is available to them when needed.
- ***Military Garrison.*** If the city is home to the royal family or is the capital city of the realm, housing its seat of the government, the city guard might be a dedicated branch of the military tasked with overseeing the safety of the city and its citizens. In this case, the guard district might take up a much larger portion of the city or might even consist of a fort or other heavily fortified complex. The headquarters, prison, barracks, and stables are all part of the military garrison, all kept within (or in proximity to) any protective walls. Hundreds of guards might be found in such a garrison at any

given time, so infiltrating such a stronghold would prove challenging.

- ***Prison.*** The prison might be found in the same complex as the guard headquarters, or it might be stationed in another part of the city altogether. The prison houses both convicted criminals and those accused of a crime but awaiting judgement. Depending on the size of the city, the prison can be as small as a handful of cells with minimal guard presence or as large as a massive, sprawling high-security complex with magical wards, guard animals, and a constant patrol. The treatment of the prisoners within can vary to extremes, depending on the level of corruption within the guard and whether the society values punishment or rehabilitation.
- ***Sentry Box.*** A sentry box is a small structure with a roof and an open side, typically meant for one guard to take shelter from the elements. Sentry boxes can be found in front of important buildings or at the corners of busy intersections. While they do not themselves make up an entire district, they can be places where guards congregate as they change shifts. Sentry boxes are likely simple and mundane, but high-magic settings or wealthy cities might have sentry boxes equipped with magical communication, scrying magic, or even teleportation circles for speedy travel to and from the guard headquarters or prison.
- ***Stables.*** The stables are used to house the guard's mounts (if used). The type of stables varies, depending on the mount: horses and similar creatures are kept in stalls that measure 12–14 feet square. Larger mounts, flying mounts, or mounts with specialized needs require more customized lodgings. The stables can also include a yard for the exercise and training of the mounts, and one or more handlers who are proficient in the care of the mounts might stay on the premises.

SAMPLE SHOPS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

The larger and more inclusive the guard district, the more stores, taverns, and other such establishments pop up in the area to support the needs of city watch members and their families:

- ***Black Iron Forge and Foundry.*** An expansive complex, Black Iron Forge and Foundry takes up nearly an entire city block on its own. Ten years ago, owner and primary blacksmith Leanna Swiftwind (LN elf **thug**) came to an agreement with the captain of the guard to be the sole provider of weapons and armor to the guard. She quickly expanded her shop's footprint, buying and converting the buildings on either side of her forge. Since then, her business has continued to expand, and she often arms mercenary groups and adventurers, though they pay a higher price than the guards. Guards can bring their gear back to Leanna at any time to be repaired or maintained, and she quickly replaces any item she deems unsalvageable.
- ***Lielieu's Enchantments.*** Lielieu's Enchantments is a magic shop located in the guard district. Lielieu (LN tiefling **commoner**) struggles to invoke even the simplest of spells but has a knack for imbuing mundane items with arcane power. She runs her shop out of the front half of a one-story building in the guard district, and she lives in the back half, maintaining a flourishing herb garden in her tiny, high-walled backyard. She keeps a decent supply of enchanted items, like weapons, armor, and rings, but also works on commission, and she loves the challenge of a seemingly impossible enchantment

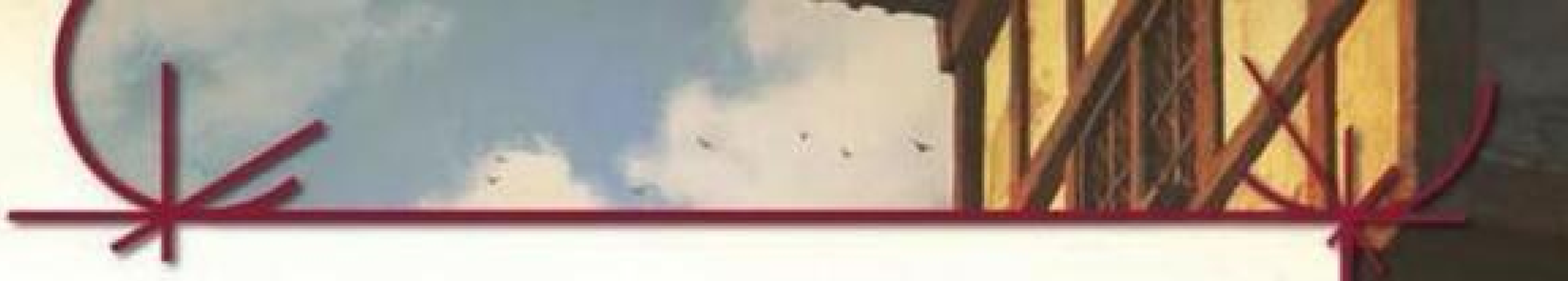
request. The guards often bring their gear to her for some "sprucing up," but she also sees a steady stream of adventurers and even a few members of the local political sphere who are looking for something unique.

- ***Nicola's.*** Nicola's is a tavern within easy walking distance of the guard headquarters, set strategically where most guards must pass by on their way home. Often populated by the off-duty members of the guard, especially just after shift change, Nicola's offers hearty fare, small plates for snacking, and plenty of ale—though they have a strict rule against serving booze to any guards going on duty. Nicola Collins (LG human **veteran**) was a member of the watch for 20 years before she retired. Now middle-aged, Nicola enjoys filling the plates and mugs of those who still walk the beat and keeps a sharp eye on the younger, newer members of the guard. Many of her customers have known her for years and feel comfortable discussing the latest gossip with her—and the latest, most difficult cases, for she offers keen insight or at least comforting words.
- ***Sleeping Soldier Boarding House.*** Tucked catty-corner to the city guard headquarters, the Sleeping Soldier Boarding House provides lodging for those members of the local watch who are looking for a shared living space. With no official barracks, many guard members turn to the Sleeping Soldier for inexpensive housing in a convenient location. Most of the guards who live here are younger, normally newer recruits who have not established themselves financially or have not settled down with a family of their own yet, but it's not unusual to find the occasional veteran who has seen no need to upgrade their living situation. The Sleeping Soldier has 20 bedrooms (most of which can accommodate two, three or even four occupants), a large kitchen, a dining hall (referred to as the mess), and a large sitting room with threadbare carpeting and well-worn but comfortable chairs. It is owned and operated by Iestines Aedobri (NG half-elf **commoner**) who cooks meals for all their residents and employs a small army of housekeepers to help maintain the establishment.
- ***Stonehall Club.*** The Stonehall Club is part social club and part gambling den, located in a three-story house in the guard district. Anyone with enough money to pay the yearly membership fee can become a member. The drinks are plentiful, the dancers lovely, and the house always takes its cut. The main floor houses the bar and a lounge with clusters of fine leather chairs where members can read, relax, and converse. The second floor holds the main gambling hall where tables for various card and dice games are arranged around a dance floor with a balcony at the front, overlooking the main thoroughfare. On the third floor, four private gambling rooms await with closed doors—access is invitation only. Keeza Stonehall (LN dwarf **spy**) runs the Stonehall Club and enjoys the perks and privileges of serving the wealthy and the city watch (current and retired watch members receive steep discounts) as they lose money at his tables.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The guard district might seem like it would be the safest, most boring portion of the city, but like everything else, the city guard is not without its drama, corruption, and politics:

- The new captain of the guard has her suspicions that a handful of her subordinates are corrupt, working with the local criminal cartel. She needs the characters to tail the suspected guards, sniff around the underworld, and otherwise (carefully!) gather whatever actionable information they can.
- Guards have been going missing while on patrol. Even when in groups of two or three, one disappears when the other guards' backs are turned for even a second. The guards have become nervous and jumpy, and some have even resigned out of fear and frustration. One member of the guard approached the party—without the permission of her superiors—in the hopes that someone outside the force might see what's really going on and locate the missing guards.
- A strange illness is sweeping through the city watch, an unfamiliar sickness that seems to have no cure. The captain of the guard thinks it might be magical but has no knowledgeable arcane practitioner at his disposal—at least not one that hasn't fallen ill. He requests the characters interview the guards, tracking down who got sick first, and find the origin of the illness, so they can find a cure.
- A member of the guard (or a friend of the characters) was recently accused of corruption and thrown into jail. She has maintained her innocence and insists she's being set up to take the fall for someone else, though she's not sure who. With her one request, she sent a message to the characters, asking that they investigate and clear her name.



- The city watch is holding a field-day style athletic competition to raise money (and increase goodwill). Games and feats of strength span two days with the winner taking home the purse (half the total entry fees), bragging rights for the entire year, and a medallion declaring them "Friend of the Guard."
- With the town's largest festival upcoming and an influx of locals from the outlying farmlands, the guard is looking to hire provisional members to help patrol the streets and keep an eye out for miscreants looking to cause trouble or capitalize on the crowds.
- Someone has been poisoning the guard's animals. Their trainer is at their wit's end and desperate to protect their charges, but the guards are all too well-known, and no one will talk to them. They wish to hire the characters to do some digging and stop whoever is responsible.
- A young recruit has become the most recent victim of some extreme hazing from a few senior members of the guard. They recently stole a necklace from her—a token of luck that has been in her family for generations—and challenged her to get it back. She needs the characters to break into the barracks at night, retrieve the item, and perhaps even teach the offending guards a lesson.

MARKET DISTRICT

A market serves a very simple but vital purpose: the purchase and trade of goods and services. Whether it is a single general store, a cluster of carts on a street corner, or a sprawling market square, the market is possibly the most universal of all districts, typically found in any city or town, regardless of size or wealth. After all, the residents all need the basics like food, clothing, and tools for their day-to-day lives, and those items must come from somewhere.

DISTRICT MAKEUP

The size and location of the market might vary depending on the needs of the settlement and the surrounding area. Consider the goods produced within the city, the needs of the locals, and how much through-traffic the town sees on a regular basis. An isolated farming community might not need an expansive, permanent market but might have a weekly market day where the local craftsmen and vendors from nearby bring their wares to sell. Alternatively, a bustling and wealthy city likely has a thriving market district to cater to the wealthy's extravagant lifestyles as well as the needs of the poorest citizens.

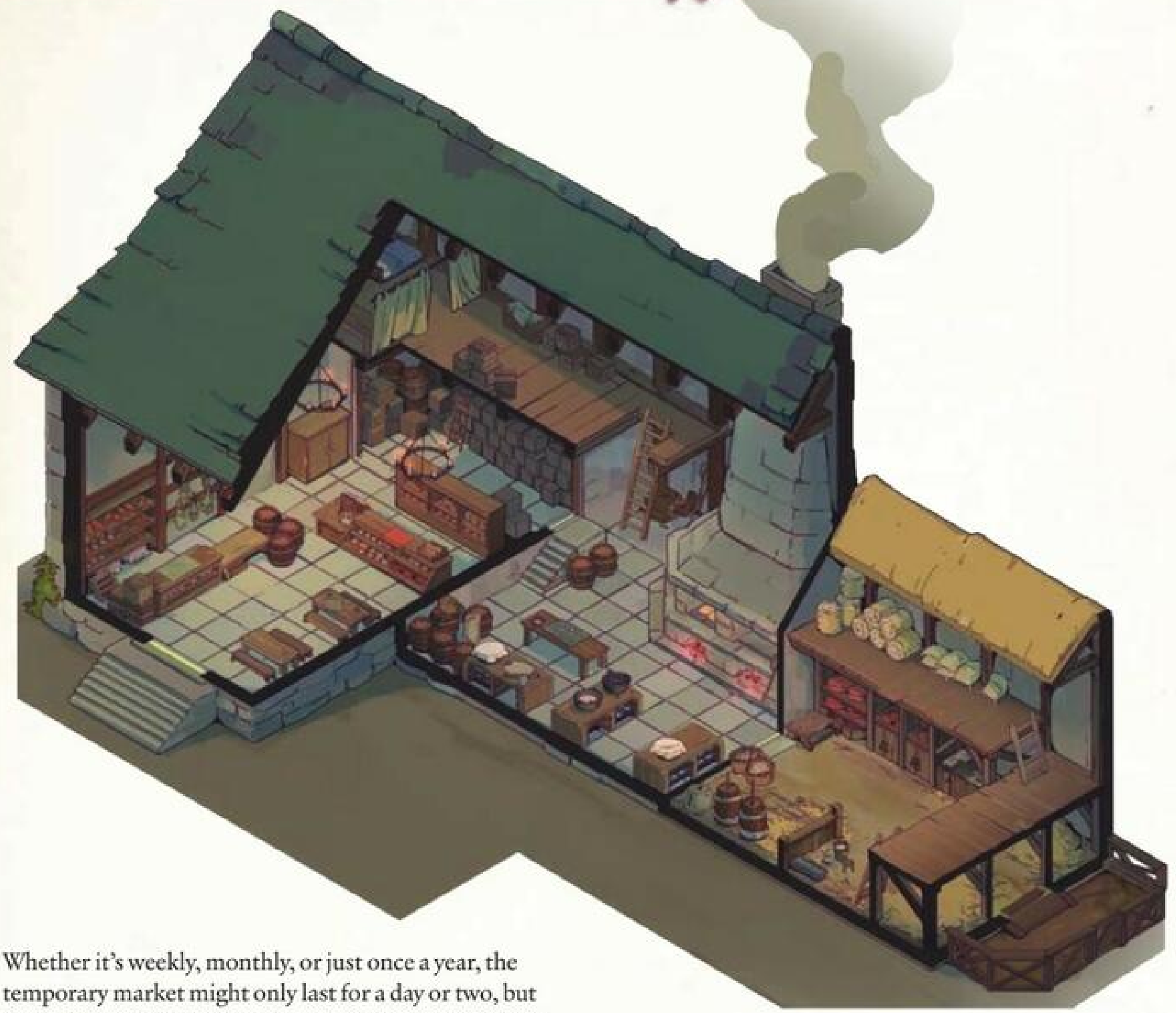
General Goods Store. A small village might have a simple general goods store. This could be a standalone building or might even occupy the ground floor of a row house. The store carries the basics and is often stocked with things like dry goods, salted meats, seeds, animal feed, ink and paper, simple clothing, and tools for crafts like sewing and carpentry. The store might occasionally carry fresh produce, candies, books, and other luxuries, depending on when the last shipment arrived and from where. The store often serves as a communication hub, delivering and receiving letters to and from outside the community. Depending on the nature of the town, the store might function on the barter system, might accept coin, or both. Locals might also have a line of credit, due to the seasonal nature of farming communities.

Permanent Market Stalls. Some cities and towns keep a square or a wide avenue lined with permanent market stalls for daily use. Not all the stalls might be filled every day, or several vendors might have a timeshare arrangement where they each claim a few days a week to sell their wares. This type of market district is likely found in regions with drier, warmer weather where there is little threat of rain or where being outside in the fresh air is better than the alternative.

Alternatively, there might be permanent market stalls alongside permanent shops and storefronts, allowing vendors to have a presence in the market district without the financial burden of buying and maintaining a building. In this case, the stall vendors are likely either newer merchants looking to break into the market or traveling merchants who only spend a few weeks or months in one location before continuing on, though usually on a regular schedule.

Permanent Shops and Storefronts. Most cities or towns of any notable size have a permanent market district made up of shops and storefronts near one another. While there still might be general stores and shops for common goods, these storefronts allow for a much more specialized approach, with shops dedicated to specific, niche markets supporting a much more discerning clientele. These shops might be found clustered around the town square or along the most well-traveled street, and a larger city might have several market districts that cater to different economic brackets. This market district might also include housing, either as flats above the shops themselves (rented out or lived in by the shopkeeper) or interspersed between or behind the shops.

Temporary Market. The temporary market serves multiple purposes and can be found in any city or town, from the smallest hamlet to the largest metropolis.



Whether it's weekly, monthly, or just once a year, the temporary market might only last for a day or two, but it offers products not found regularly in the established local market. In a smaller town, that could simply mean fresh produce, new livestock, flowers, and other seasonal goods from the local farms or from outside the immediate area. In a larger city, a temporary market might be a week-long affair with vendors and craftsmen from far and wide with uncommon goods both mundane and magical.

SAMPLE SHOPS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

The types of shops found in a market district can vary widely based on the needs of the settlement and the expendable income of its inhabitants. Everyone needs the basics, but only the more well-to-do concern themselves with the constant purchase of new hats to catch the eye or baubles to impress:

- ***Broken Plume Haberdashery.*** The Broken Plume resides within the prestigious upper-class market district of the Gold Quarter. It didn't originate there: rather, the owner, Diego (LG half-orc **noble**), originally founded his shop in the lower-class shopping area at the back of a shared commons in a tiny space barely larger than a royal's bathtub. Five years ago though, an illness swept through the shops of the Gold Quarter, closing doors and laying shopkeepers up for weeks. As the largest holiday celebration of the year was quickly approaching, the nobles of the city scrambled to find quality garb where they could—and thus discovered Diego. His hats became the talk of the town, and he quickly found himself in high demand. Shrewd, Diego was able to parlay his popularity into a space in the Gold Quarter and has been riding high on his success ever since. The hats at the Broken Plume are indeed quality, made of vivid dyed felts, silks, and leathers and adorned with bright feathers. The feathers come from a special species of flying snake (ethically harvested, of course) raised by Diego specifically for such a purpose.

- ***Cracked Crystal.*** A tiny magic shop in the basement of the local grocer and marked only with a simple sign in the shape of a cracked amethyst point, the Cracked Crystal is run by a halfling known as Patchouli (CN halfling **mage**). The shop has a low ceiling and is lit entirely by glowing crystals of all colors mounted on the walls in sconces and hanging from fishing wire from the ceiling in a chandelier-like array. The rainbow of hues throws strange shadows on the walls and casts everything in a strange, disorienting light. The floor of the shop is not very large—30 square feet at most—and is crowded with shelves covered in strange objects and cluttered with material components. Patchouli's prices seem to change based on their whim: they might sell rare materials for a fraction of their price one day but then refuse to part with them for less than triple their worth the next. And they often speak in riddles, rhymes, or what seems like cryptic prophesy. No one ever sees Patchouli outside their shop, and indeed the owner of the grocery above, Henrietta Torres (LG human **commoner**), doesn't remember letting out the space, nor does she recall even having a basement in the first place.
- ***Four Bridges General Store.*** Set at the main intersection in the center of the farming village of Four Bridges, this general store has everything a local farmer might need. Run by Judith Byrne and her wife Victoria (LG human **commoners**), the store has been in operation for three generations and was initially established by Judith's great-grandmother, Emma. The building is a simple wooden clapboard affair with a small covered front porch and wide windows to let in the light and air. The store itself carries staple foodstuffs and farming equipment as well as basic adventuring gear like explorer's packs, dungeoneer's packs, healer's kits, and dried rations. They don't carry much in the way of blades and shields, but they do carry utility knives and simple bows and arrows for hunting. During the spring, a lucky adventurer might find herbs for brewing simple potions, though those typically sell at a premium.
- ***Naini's Produce Stand.*** Naini (CN **kobold**) runs a ramshackle produce stand on the remote edge of the market square, wedged in at the entryway to an alley between two buildings. The stand itself is built of scavenged crates and bits of scrap wood, "FRUT!" scribbled across it in dripping white paint. Naini stocks her stand with whatever her "business associates" bring her—these associates being a horde of kobold children who swipe produce that

other, more reputable sellers have set aside to throw away. Occasionally, they "find" a crate of pristine fruits or vegetables, and on these rare occasions, Naini pays the lucky child one whole copper. Naini sells her produce cheaply, though she has a keen eye and inflates the price for any non-kobolds or those who wear nice clothes or shiny things like jewelry or armor. Most non-kobold customers come to Naini's shop not for the fruit but for the information Naini's associates might have overheard while skulking around the market.

- ***Stinging Nettle.*** The Stinging Nettle is an herbalist shop found just off the town square on a smaller side street but still within sight of the sparkling fountain at the center of the market district. Owned and operated by Sylvanor Moonshadow (NG elf **commoner**), the store holds a wide array of both fresh and dried herbs along with herbalism kits and other necessary tools of the trade. Sylvanor prices his goods fairly and is happy to help any customer who treats him with kindness and respect. He lives in the rooms above his shop. Before moving to this city 20 years ago, he worked as a poisoner for the queen of a neighboring realm, but he keeps this secret and has tried to leave that life behind him,

not having mixed poisons in decades. He might be convinced to do so again for the right reason—or the right price.

- ***Temerity's Temptations.*** A confectionery with a rather salacious name, Temerity's Temptations is nonetheless the premiere candy shop in the city. With a storefront along the river in prime tourist territory, Temerity (CG tiefling **scout**) creates delicious and eye-catching candies to fit any budget or occasion. Elaborate chocolate sculptures (magically cooled) share window space with carefully constructed blossoms of fairy floss, and brightly colored pull candies fill glass jars beside gummy owlbears and fizzing candy oozes. With her sweet disposition, Temerity provides treats for the local children every festival season, and no noble would dare host a party without at least one jaw-dropping display created by Temerity herself.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

When people gather in large crowds, the opportunities for mishap and mischief are high. Adventure is often literally right around the corner:

- The local blacksmith's most recent shipment has been waylaid on the road into town, reportedly by a group of bandits operating out of a cavern system in the nearby cliffside.
- The general store owner's cat, Her Ladyship Grand Duchess Eloise Leonora McFluffers (yes, that's her name, thank you), has gone missing, and she's convinced the grocer next door is responsible. She wants to hire someone to break into his shop in the dead of night, recover the cat, and teach that stubborn grocer a lesson while they're at it.
- A popular modiste is certain her competitor is engaging in some less-than-legal trade—how else has he been able to acquire such fine fabrics while selling them at such a low price? She seeks his ledger and any evidence about his wrongdoing.
- The local herbalist has heard rumors that a rare mushroom, typically only found in graveyards, has been spotted among the trash in the district's alleyways and in portions of the sewer. She'd pay well for several satchels worth of the fungus.
- A carriage crashed into the pen at the goatherder's market stall, and in the panic, the goats scattered in all directions. There are now 20 goats roaming the market district, chewing on fine silks, traipsing through shops, and generally causing a scene.
- Rumors and tales swirl about the Glimmering Market, a collection of stalls that appears in the market square in the middle of the night and disappears just as quickly. People argue over whether the market is a trick of the fey, a haunting of spirits, merchants trapped partially in the ethereal plane, or something else entirely. The one thing everyone does agree on, however, is that the market appears when the nights are darkest, and items both strange and wonderful can be found within for those brave (or foolish) enough to enter. The merchants take no gold, preferring to trade in more esoteric currency like locks of hair or memories.
- Items have been going missing from shops all over the market square. There seems to be no rhyme or reason to what is taken—they are of varying value, some nearly worthless—and locked doors and other defenses don't seem to keep the thieves at bay. Even stranger, there is no sign of a break-in, and the thieves only take one or two things at a time. The local watch has been useless.
- A local gang has been extorting shop owners with a basic protection racket. The shop owners are afraid to go to the city watch with the information for fear of corruption or a snitch within the ranks. The magic shop owner, though, has had enough and is seeking outside assistance.

RELIGIOUS DISTRICT

A grand cathedral towers over the rest of the district, casting colorful shadows from stained-glass windows that seem to ward the neighboring buildings like a shepherd over their flock. Priests mill about the gardens and graveyards, bestowing blessings. Parishioners congregate in anticipation of the next sermon.

Religious districts house one or more places of worship, such as churches, temples, cathedrals, and mosques in addition to graveyards, mausoleums and catacombs, parsonage housing for clergy, and services that cater to the masses. Typically unified in a singular faith to a deity or pantheon, these districts often exhibit architecture in motifs most pleasing to a worshipped deity's sensibilities. Trees, lampposts, arches, and memorials are frequently decorated to honor whatever upcoming holiday lies around the corner.

When designing the city's religious district, consider who or what they worship and revere. Use that deity's or pantheon's symbolism to inform the embellishments of the district. A city extolling a god of bacchanalia and excessive physical pleasures might emphasize gathering

spaces, public bathhouses, and frequent feasting, while a sun god's clergy might decorate their grounds with celestial motifs, keep lanterns and candles always lit, and congregate at dawn. To best illustrate a city that serves a god, first answer some questions. What do they value and what do they abhor? What symbolizes their power? What do they expect of their worshippers?

AUTHORITY

A religious district is often one of the most affluent parts in a city, though attending clergy might take vows of austerity. A temple organization likely pours its income—gained through tithes and possibly crusading—into beautifying the grounds, building up temples and adjacent structures, and spreading their beliefs to gain influence, reputation, and converts.

Artwork is common here with sculpture, painting, and musical works venerating religious leaders, messiahs, and saints, depicting scenes out of scripture, and glorying divine beings.

Priests maintain the daily routines of strengthening wards, blessing sacramental wine and water, performing rites for all sorts of ceremonies, and providing services for the sick—probably for a donation, though maybe not. Acolytes fulfill most of the other temple functions: delivering sermons to the congregation, leading community programs, keeping the grounds and chapel, and providing scribe services.

Religious services are frequent, ranging from small prayer circles and scripture meditations to sermons that fall upon hundreds of ears and appeal to core values and tenets of faith.

CRIMINAL ELEMENT

Criminals in religious districts prey upon peoples' fears, crises of faith, and grief while working convoluted cons and grifts of misdirection. Religious doctrine can be confusing, and con artists know how to weave their lies with just enough scripture and false holier-than-thou authority to sweep easily manipulated people into situations where their coin purses open as easily as their hearts. Affinity church scams are especially insidious, where con artists insinuate themselves into peoples' lives by using shared faith as common ground before seeking "donations" to a goodly cause while secretly pocketing the money for themselves. Especially gullible marks often end up doing the hard work for the con artists, reaching out to friends and family for further unwitting investment into the money scheme.

Secretive cults occasionally reside in these districts as well. Often splintered away from the religious organizations themselves, cult leaders and their followers avail themselves of the churches' resources and of underground passages and clandestine meeting places. Indoctrination of congregation members to weaken local religious powers is a common tactic, borrowing from the con artist's playbook by building confidence and common ground before splintering people away from mainstream faiths with misinformation, fearmongering, and isolation tactics.

MONUMENTS TO THE DIVINE AND THE DEAD

Structures in a religious district typically have purpose couched in symbolism. The buildings and sculptures are designed to extol virtues important to the local faith, the saints and heroes, and the glories of the locally worshipped gods. Artists and crafters are regularly commissioned by authorities, both temple and royal, to add tasteful touches to existing structures, though occasionally an expensive installation can cause disappointment or even anger when the artist carries out their own agenda. When populating this district with monument features, consider the story behind each of them. Are they designed by the same person or organization? What is their purpose and how is the theme of the district reflected in the art of the monuments?

Roll a d8 and consult the **Religious Monuments** table or choose a monument.

RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS

d8	Monument
1	A water fountain occupies the center of a quiet park. Depicted like an angelic man kissing the brow of a dying soldier in holy vestments, the stonework of the structure appears clean and cared for.
2	An ancient, ornate mausoleum stands in the back of the city cemetery, taller than the rest of the monuments in the area. An iron gate bars access.
3	A row of six columns supports a large overhang in the roof. Each is carved in the shape of a heroic figure, holding an unfurled scroll before them, etched with the trials and tribulations of each saint's pilgrimage.
4	Frescos depict the religious history of the temple, detailing the works of the patron deities, the sins and successes of the common folk, and celestial bodies.
5	The city's first tree, as old as the first building's first brick, stands resolute and fenced in. Several branches show signs of withering, but young shoots show promise of continued life.
6	A deeply patinaed statue of a humanoid prophet, styled in rags and proselytizing from a scroll of scripture, stands in the park. The statue has been defaced with its hands painted red and a cloth bag drawn over its head with the word "false" stitched into it.
7	The gravestone memorial of a famous deceased bard who left their prized instrument to the church as a final tithe is a popular site. Fans frequently visit to lay offerings there while former lovers, alleged offspring, and the admittedly obsessed kiss the stone in hopes of a muse's creativity in reciprocation.
8	An old iron bell cracks the flagstones with its bulk. An adjacent plaque offers insight into the bell's history.

PIOUS PROCESSIONS

Religious districts are beehives of activity despite serene first impressions. Whether it's a holiday celebration in the streets or a prayer circle in a park, one can always find some sort of active worship.

Roll a d10 and consult the **Religious Activities** table or choose an activity.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

d10	Activity
1	A ring of people, in white linen clothing and standing barefoot in the grass, hold hands. Someone calls out a structured prayer, and the rest of the congregation reply with practiced responses.
2	A long line of raggedly clothed beggars winds through the streets, leading to the front steps of the chapel where acolytes hand out soup and bread from a swiftly dwindling stack of bowls.
3	A trio of **scholars** (see **Chapter 3**) follow behind a striding **sage** (see **Chapter 3**) in gaudy vestments. The scholars furiously write on slates and scrolls while the sage leisurely dictates doctrine to her followers.
4	A young squire polishes armor and weapon while kneeling beneath the monument of a powerfully depicted holy warrior.
5	A street preacher of a non-dominant faith and clothed in a potato sack stands on a crate and shouts dogma to passersby. Several church officials stand to the side, faces contorted in rising anger.
6	A handful of weeping townsfolk in black shrouds follow a coffin held aloft by chapel acolytes.
7	A line of sickly people await with hopeful expressions as a crier walks up and down the waiting line, calling for all to come and be healed by a paladin who isn't asking for tithes.
8	A line of acolytes in hair shirts shuffle about, chanting in unison as they whip each other with scourges and swing censers that burn with foul incense.
9	Several **monks** (see **Chapter 3**) practice flowing movements and ki harnessing techniques in a park.
10	An **artist** and a **crafter** (see **Chapter 3** for both) heatedly discuss how their respective projects best exalt and uplift the holy order that commissioned them.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Religion often means different things to different people, but clashing beliefs and divine magics can make life interesting within the district:

- The temple's gargoyle guardians are preventing everyone from entering the temple, even the priests. The temple is trying to figure out what has set off the gargoyles.
- A mob marches on the cathedral's steps, protesting the church's latest tithe while a group of harried priests tries in vain to quell the uprising from behind the ranks of city guards.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Residential properties occupy most of any given city or town, and three factors divisively determine their distribution—income, culture, and heritage.

In most populations, a dominant people determine the city's culture, ethics, and value systems. They also maintain control over access to city resources and wealth. As a result, those individuals and communities with the most access to resources quickly gain the most power, leverage, and influence over the remainder of the city population, determining individual neighborhoods' social and financial economics. The resulting division of a city's communities by income and other factors, called social stratification, plays a significant role in a city's overall layout and influences individuals, resources, shops, industries, homes, and services in various residential districts. A framework for social stratification can be created using one of the two models presented below.

Closed. In this model, social structure divides the city's various populations into specific districts based on their social class. In addition to wealth and privilege, other factors such as familial bloodlines, culture, religion, and heritage might drive these divisions. The divisions create a caste system supported by the ruling class and upheld by the beliefs and social programming of the dominant

city culture. A closed model provides little (if any) possibility for social mobility. Typical social movement tends to be only horizontal in nature or downward as individuals or families lose wealth and privilege.

Examples of a closed system include feudalism or a caste system.

Open. An open class system allows for social mobility based on the earned value of individuals. Theoretically, individuals can increase their social value by gaining wealth and power while suffering from minimal social restrictions (which could be based on almost anything and likely be completely arbitrary and established by those with power). In actuality, those born with advantages such as wealth and privilege still tend to dominate the higher levels of social stratification while those born into poverty often never increase their social status. As a result, upward mobility remains the exception, not the norm.

DISTRICT MAKEUP

Members of the dominant community own most of the city's wealth and income and set the cultural norms for behavior, laws, and any restrictions—the model for social stratification. In most cities, individuals that fall outside the scope or expectations of the dominant power rarely can gain influence or social status. A dominant community's population consists of the ruling class and the nobility, the elite, the wealthy, and the entitled. They can afford the luxury of academic education that includes more intense study in music, mathematics, art, geography, astrology, religion, politics, and magic.

Subdominant Communities

The members of subdominant communities sit between the wealthy ruling class and any subordinate classes. These neighborhoods can consist of a few subclassifications, but two common ones are noted below. While both groups fill a similar economic niche, they play dramatically different social roles.

Middle Class. These individuals possess independent means of generating personal wealth, owning property, and having education access. They acquire wealth through their business dealings, and in robust economies with extensive trade, they are synonymous with the merchant class. Many entrepreneurs finance or own several businesses, such as three or four taverns, a large inn, or a block of property in the butcher's corner, which they lease to shopkeepers. They might own shares in a large trade company or holdings outside the city, each farmed, mined, or forested for resources by subordinates, or own a thriving industry, such as a winery, stables, or lumbermill. They also include those with specialized education in a profitable but socially stigmatized field, such as a mortician or sage. There is some opportunity for education, typically apprenticeships in trades, including those requiring bookkeeping, measuring, and specialized skills.

Working Class. These individuals exchange labor for wealth. They might own property, such as a small shop or tavern, and their education is frequently limited to apprenticeships and trade skills. Most of them work in trades overseen by a guild or specialized trade organization. Examples of working-class jobs include carpenters, cartwrights, furriers, glassblowers, shoemakers, tanners, tinkers, tinsmiths, and weavers. Unfortunately, education remains limited to apprenticeships available only to those with the money or who possess an unusual amount of natural aptitude for a given skill or profession.

Subsistent Communities

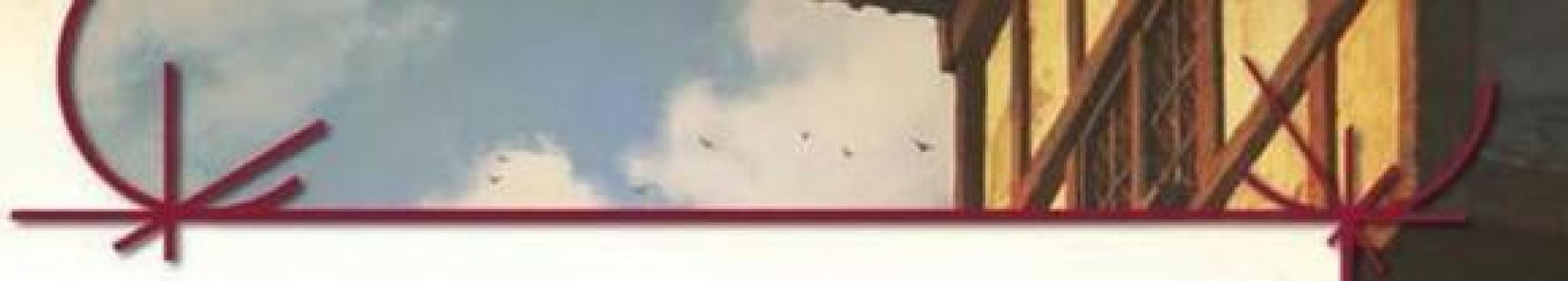
Subsistent communities rely upon the welfare or residuals of the dominant and subdominant powers. A subsistent community's population consists of peasants, serfs, indentured laborers, and beggars. Members of the community struggle to ensure they have access to necessities, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Unfortunately, necessities aren't a given, and most individuals must beg or panhandle, busk, visit places that offer welfare, or seek shelter by squatting in abandoned or vacant buildings. Others might work as serfs, farming land on the city's outskirts, or take any available work.

Those with steady jobs deal with filth and disease, hard labor with long hours, or extremely high-risk jobs with short life expectancies. Examples of peasant jobs include dung collector, fetcher, grave digger, peat gatherer, rag seller, rat catcher, stone collector, and well-crank.

Residential District Models

Residential districts can vary greatly due to a variety of factors:

- ***Closed District.*** In this model, residential districts isolate themselves by class. Individuals of a similar social stratification occupy each district, creating upper-class, middle-class, and lower-class districts. Clear lines of demarcation call out district borders, which are often enforced by walls and city watch.
- ***Culturally Divided Districts.*** City districts might divide sharply along cultural lines, with some cultures being congregated into certain neighborhoods. Some share or pool economic



resources, allowing them to remain fiscally competitive within the larger city structure.

- ***Neighborhood Structure.*** Rather than have specific wards or districts, some cities have zones of wealth and disparity. In this model, gatherings of social communities inhabit numerous stylized neighborhoods throughout the city. Members of different social groups commonly interact, and at times, individuals might find it difficult to tell one neighborhood apart from another. A community's ability to provide residents with food, clothing, and shelter determines its capacity. While income and wealth influence this capacity, they might not be the dominant factor. Alternate economies can influence the capacity, as can the availability of space for housing, independent food production, potential resources, and potential for economic growth.
- ***Neotribal Structure.*** Neotribalism refers to tribe-like social structures formed on shared values and beliefs, not economic status. The social structure can be an actual tribe, such as of orcs, an ethnic group from a foreign country, or a devout religious sect.
- ***Rooftop Dwellers.*** High atop larger city structures, clock towers, and bridges, these communities of outcasts, rebels, and thrill seekers live in reinforced hide tents strung between eves and spires. Because of their fearlessness, many shun them. Nevertheless, the precarious seclusion of the spires appeals to individuals, such as information sellers, cleaners, fixers, and mercenaries, whose lives require privacy.
- ***Shantytowns.*** These communities line the fringes of the city, cobbled from scraps and heaped upon undesirable property. A shantytown might consist of mud huts along the polluted riverbanks just south of the city or a quarter-mile stretch of scrap-wood shacks that crowd the city's exterior walls. Shantytowns have no resources and survive on what they can beg, steal, and salvage from the rest of the city.
- ***Squatterholds.*** These communities consist of peasants and other unfortunates forced to seek shelter in abandoned or unoccupied properties. For example, an abandoned salt warehouse might hide a squatter village on the second floor, accessed by a crooked stairwell. An old water cistern might serve as a home for a similar group of peasants. Squatters that become organized often aid each other in the daily race for survival and defend each other no matter what.
- ***Subterraneans.*** These communities can consist of various peoples. If they weren't before, they quickly acclimate to life in darkness and confined spaces and filth. Rumors often surface of powerful druids in these communities capable of commanding swarms of rats, roaches, and other vermin.

Social Qualifiers

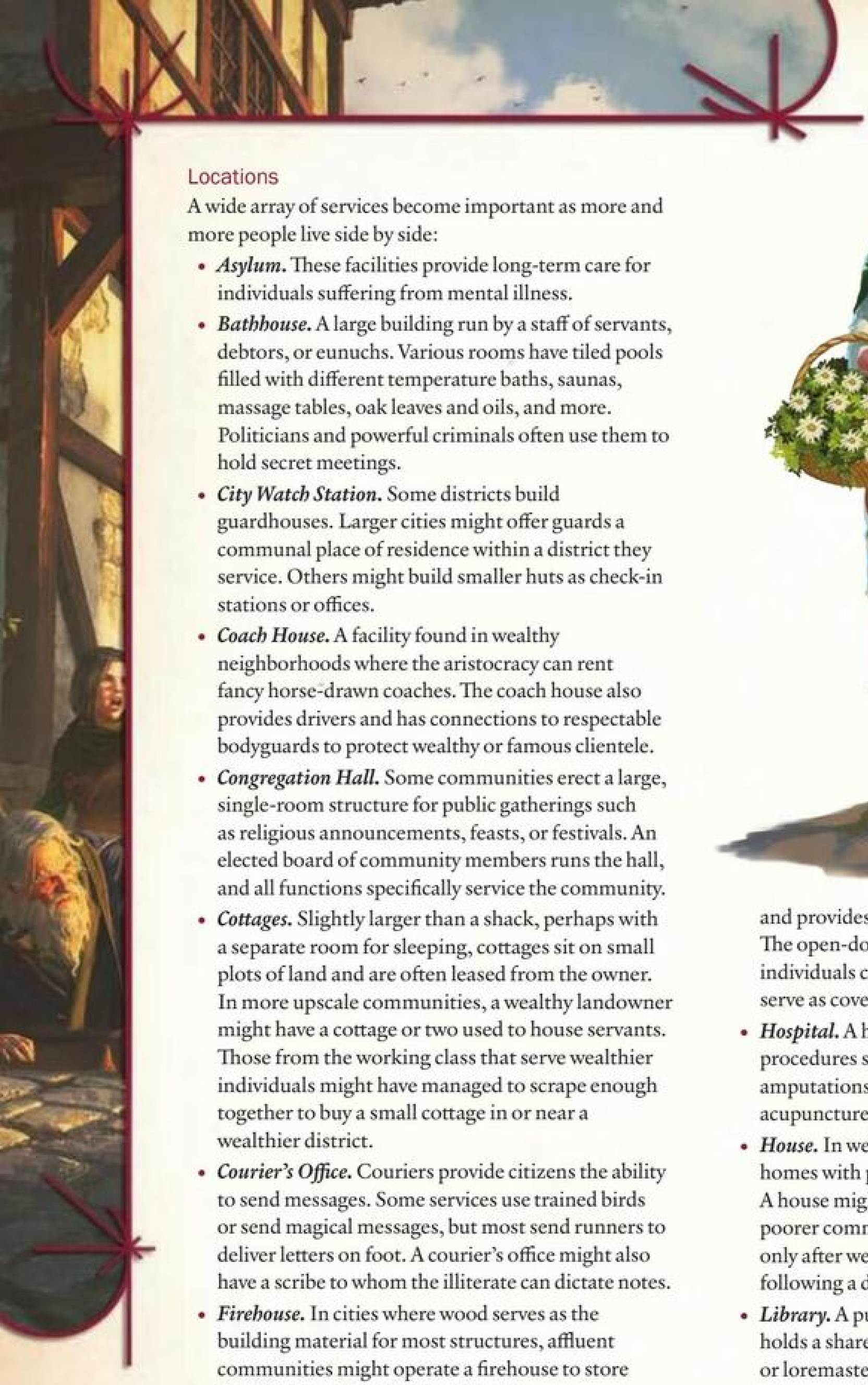
Social qualifiers are unwritten requirements that certain groups of people might use to screen outsiders. They limit an individual's access to certain areas of residential districts based on specific factors, such as race, education, or wealth. For example, community members of a wealthy district might forbid beggars and peasants from panhandling on their block, or a group of tradespeople might close their guild house doors to anyone outside their profession. Similarly, affluent individuals might have difficulty using their wealth and power in specific communities, especially in poor neighborhoods that perceive them as greedy and abusive. When traveling in these areas, they either take guards or go incognito to avoid being hassled, insulted, or mugged.

Roll a d8 and consult the **Social Qualifiers** table or choose a qualifier.

SOCIAL QUALIFIERS

d8	Qualifier
1	***Educated.*** They must have achieved a certain level of formal education.
2	***Formal Title or Landowner.*** They must have a title, either hereditary or appointed, and/or own land.
3	***Neotribal.*** They must be a member of a specific social group.
4	***Profession.*** Only allows individuals of a particular profession, or bars individuals of a specific profession.
5	***Royal.*** They must be a noble or of a specific bloodline.
6	***Street Credit.*** Proficiency in a specific slang and culture.
7	***Wealth.*** Only individuals of a specific social status are permitted.
8	Roll again.

Characters can attempt to bypass social qualifiers by using skills such as Disguise, Intimidation, and Persuasion. Certain social circles might allow exceptions based on other arbitrary factors, such as attractiveness, a warrant, or blackmail.



Locations

A wide array of services become important as more and more people live side by side:

- ***Asylum.*** These facilities provide long-term care for individuals suffering from mental illness.
- ***Bathhouse.*** A large building run by a staff of servants, debtors, or eunuchs. Various rooms have tiled pools filled with different temperature baths, saunas, massage tables, oak leaves and oils, and more. Politicians and powerful criminals often use them to hold secret meetings.
- ***City Watch Station.*** Some districts build guardhouses. Larger cities might offer guards a communal place of residence within a district they service. Others might build smaller huts as check-in stations or offices.
- ***Coach House.*** A facility found in wealthy neighborhoods where the aristocracy can rent fancy horse-drawn coaches. The coach house also provides drivers and has connections to respectable bodyguards to protect wealthy or famous clientele.
- ***Congregation Hall.*** Some communities erect a large, single-room structure for public gatherings such as religious announcements, feasts, or festivals. An elected board of community members runs the hall, and all functions specifically service the community.
- ***Cottages.*** Slightly larger than a shack, perhaps with a separate room for sleeping, cottages sit on small plots of land and are often leased from the owner. In more upscale communities, a wealthy landowner might have a cottage or two used to house servants. Those from the working class that serve wealthier individuals might have managed to scrape enough together to buy a small cottage in or near a wealthier district.
- ***Courier's Office.*** Couriers provide citizens the ability to send messages. Some services use trained birds or send magical messages, but most send runners to deliver letters on foot. A courier's office might also have a scribe to whom the illiterate can dictate notes.
- ***Firehouse.*** In cities where wood serves as the building material for most structures, affluent communities might operate a firehouse to store water and assemble bucket brigades.
- ***Flophouse.*** Established by a church or other source of welfare, a flophouse provides shelter for the downtrodden. Some supplement their meager funds by renting rooms. Rooms are shared, and they might have one or more common rooms. The house asks no more than a paltry copper or two to enter and provides shared meals of watery soup or gruel. The open-door policy makes it difficult to track individuals coming and going, so some flophouses serve as cover for criminal activity.
- ***Hospital.*** A hospital provides a variety of medical procedures such as minor surgeries, lobotomies, amputations, leech treatments, cauterizations, acupuncture, and shock treatments.
- ***House.*** In wealthy communities, individuals own homes with properties that accommodate families. A house might serve as a multifamily dwelling in poorer communities. Such homes become available only after wealthy individuals vacate a neighborhood following a downward shift in the community.
- ***Library.*** A public or privately owned building that holds a shared collection of books overseen by a sage or loremaster and a small collective of apprentices.
- ***Livery Stable.*** A facility dedicated to the renting of horses or other animal-drawn transport, which might also care for and stable privately owned horses.
- ***Manse.*** Upper aristocracy frequently built grandiose, ostentatiously decorated homes with multiple rooms. In addition to family members, a manse requires a bailiff and other house staff to maintain.

Most rest on equally impressive grounds with elements such as bathing pools and topiary guards.

- ***Museum.*** Some communities might have public or privately funded buildings that display cultural, historical, or political artifacts.
- ***Nursing Home.*** Funded by churches or welfare provided by donations, nursing homes provide care for elderly folk without sufficient means for caring for themselves.
- ***Orphanage.*** Established to provide long-term care for orphaned children, these facilities are usually funded through welfare provided by a church.
- ***Row Houses.*** These homes share external walls, though they have separate facades and private entrances. A row of homes runs the length of the block. They are common in many wards in large or overcrowded cities.
- ***Sanatorium.*** A sanatorium houses individuals suffering from long-term chronic illnesses. Officials often place sanatoriums in remote districts to limit the spread of contagions.
- ***Shacks.*** These buildings have a single multifunction room and are situated on a communal property owned by a wealthy landowner. Residents pay the landowner by providing a service or tribute for the plot on the shared property.
- ***Shrine.*** In places where churches are forbidden or too expensive to maintain, devotees sometimes erect a statue or effigy, at times no more than a holy symbol painted on the wall or hovel or shack occupied by a penniless but devoted hermit who tends to the shrine. A small coin box is set for donations.
- ***Tenements.*** Tenements consist of large stone or brick multifamily dwellings too-often owned by greedy aristocrats whose residents pay their leases with indentured labor or garnished wages and commodities. The civic structure sets the standards for lease agreements and regulates them with law enforcement.

Alternate Economics

While gold is a primary factor in determining individual wealth, it is not the sole economic resource in the city. Those lacking access to traditional wealth or the ability to participate in an economy develop alternate ways of creating importance or wealth, ethical or not.

Roll a d6 and consult either the **Bartered Items** table or **Illegal Economies** table or choose an item or economy.

BARTERED ITEMS

d6	Item
1	Animal byproducts like dung, fat, feathers, hides, horns, or organs
2	Crafted items such as lye, pottery, soap, or whitewash
3	Domesticated animals such as chickens, dogs, or goats
4	Resources like clay, peat, stone, straw, wood
5	Scrap metals from collecting things like discarded nails and other hardware
6	Storable food like flour, grain, root vegetables, or salt

ILLEGAL ECONOMIES

d6	Economies
1	***Black Market.*** The community acquires its wealth by buying and selling stolen goods, shaving coins, or melting down silverware.
2	***Body Parts.*** In this ward, the dead do not stay buried long. A network of grave diggers, morticians, and couriers works with a small but well-organized group of necromancers seeking help preparing and selling body parts to buyers beyond the city walls.
3	***Illicit Substances.*** The sale of unregulated illicit substances (typically addictive narcotics) subsidizes much of the community's wealth. Other illicit substances might include alchemical enhancers, explosive powders, or poisons.
4	***Occult Lore.*** The neighborhood masks the presence of an ancient occult society that teaches the secrets of their dark arts to those foolish enough to barter with their souls.
5	***Secrets.*** In the allies of this district, clever spies collect and sell whispered secrets of scandal, intrigue, and murder to the wealthiest bidders.
6	***Violence.*** The community hides members that make money by violence-backed intimidation or even murder. The hidden members are highly skilled, almost artful in their practice, and use their earnings to provide for the rest of the community.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

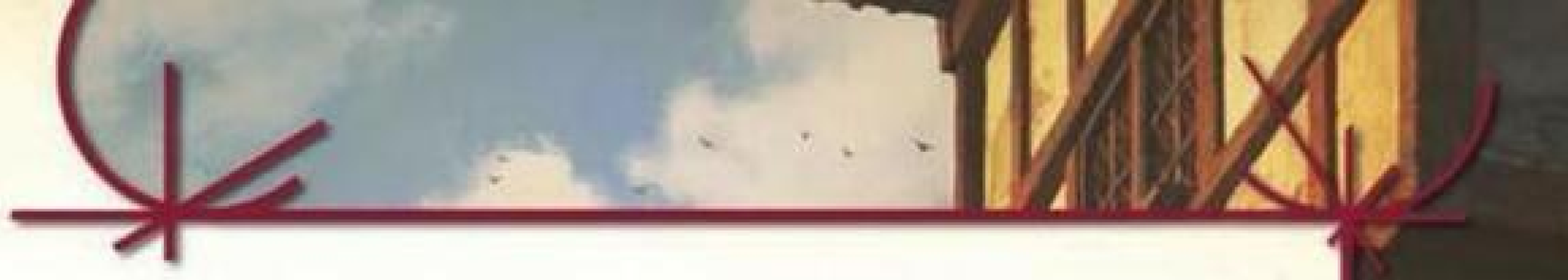
These are people's homes, and there is often a lot of personal identity tied up in that. Communities can be powerful drivers of both good and evil:

In Lower-Class Communities.

- A curious stillness afflicts the Laughing Souls Orphanage. Lights go dim earlier, the children have taken to reclusiveness, and it seems some time since anyone has seen the house matron Madame Veroise at the market. Investigating the strange changes, the characters discover Madame Veroise has been dead for some time, her body propped in her cozy chair, perfectly preserved by a *gentle repose* spell. No longer do children live at the orphanage, but instead, a group of stunted, evil fey have assumed control of the building for their deviant purposes.
- The winding alleys of the Mudflat District are infamous for the violent and bloody wars waged there by local street gangs. Queen Esther, leader of the Hogshead Street Choppers, believes she has finally discovered a way to end the wars—by infecting herself and her allies with lycanthropy.
- Suffering from a sudden shortage of workers, the ratcatchers guild desperately seeks recruits. Catch-boss Dally Coppers claims a whole lot suddenly up and quit and blames it on a recent drop in the price of whiskey. However, anyone seeking out the catch-boss's former employees soon learns all of them went missing while on the job. The investigation leads to the horrific discovery that their routes exposed them to toxic sludge from an alchemist's shop, which slowly turned all of them into monsters.
- The folks of Gristleward frequently praise the humble generosity of Father Dowan, whose several soup kitchens provide food and shelter for the downtrodden. Few suspect Dowan's covert devotion to the demon lord Qorgeth, though vagrants whisper warnings to keep away from Gristleward, lest one be fed a bellyful of worms to devour the soul.

In Middle-Class Communities.

- Up until last week, disbarred behavioral scientist Professor Fladrith Proos has worked diligently to prove the validity of his research to the college board. Now he is doing his best to cover up all evidence connecting him to the mysterious appearance of the lobotomized hill giant that bursts from an abandoned warehouse and rampages through the streets.
- For several years, Alavro Marrows, the butcher of Swineback Alley, has secretly been dumping waste down an abandoned well behind his property. The well connects to an underground water source, and a tribe of ravenous creatures from the depths are lured by it to the surface. Unfortunately, effectively dealing with the creatures requires more effort than simply sealing the well.
- A disabled mercenary of dubious reputation uses his last savings to purchase a house to live his final days in anonymity and seclusion. Unfortunately, his past attracts some old enemies that seek vengeance and don't care about collateral damage. After the first attempt on his life, the mercenary calls in the aid of old friends to defend the property. Characters need to choose sides and end the conflict quickly before the entire neighborhood becomes a warzone.
- Jeweler Eliser Wrud recently purchased a curious gemstone nearly the size of his fist. Eliser broke apart the stone and crafted shards into several pieces of jewelry. As it turns out, the stone was recently stolen from a high temple and possessed magical properties. The temple hires adventurers to retrieve the gem, requiring the tracking down of all buyers to get the jewelry back. Complicating the situation, one of the temple's rivals discovers the situation and now races to get the parts for itself.
- It was some time ago that the infants went missing. Terror raced through Cobblestun Alley District, and families posted desperate pleas for the return of their missing babies. Then, miraculously, all the babies returned, arriving swathed in baskets upon doorsteps in the middle of the night. Now, precisely 13 years later, the true horror has arrived as the first of over a dozen of these children inexplicably and horrifically morphs into a hag.
- After years of clever bookkeeping for the city's wealthiest trading company, Flenden Page has managed to embezzle several thousand in gold into a half-dozen unnamed accounts throughout the city. Soon to retire, he plots a final job to steal and destroy records and trade contracts to sever relations and spark vendettas between the shareholders. Seeking help in his plan, Mr. Page foolishly hires the aid of a powerful thieves' guild. The guildmaster is now poised to drain Mr. Page's secret accounts and use the stolen records to force a legal takeover of the trading company.



In Upper-Class Communities.

- Upon finally confronting her lothario husband, Baroness Wiesthrone killed him, buried the remains in the basement, and sold the property. She lost her family's signet ring during her attempt to hide the evidence, symbolizing her authority and power. For a few months, she felt confident in her success. However, a recent rash of court rumors has spurred her paranoia, and she believes some individuals know of her deed and seek to expose her. She uses her extensive wealth and influence to recover the ring and quash rumors of her involvement.
- Aristocratic séance participants become possessed. On auspicious nights, the spirits use the aristocrat's mortal forms to wander the streets and steal lifeforce from the unwary. To stop the possessions, the seer who performed the séance must be found.
- Markus Tobroth, grandson of famed occultist Nethorion Tobroth, inherited the deeds to the long-vacant family mansion. Markus's mother abandoned the mansion after his grandfather's mysterious death, and she adamantly refused to return. The passing years spawned countless local rumors that condemned the mansion as cursed. Tales depict howling, unseen hounds, possession, and cursed secret doorways that open into the void. With his mother's passing, Markus wishes to reclaim his family home. However, his uncertain wife refuses to move in until she is confident the dark rumors hold no truth.
- As the sole heir to her parents' properties, the magnificent Lady Gwynith Arippas stands to inherit extreme wealth and political leverage. The night before the Grand Masquerade, Gwynith receives a death threat, prompting her parents to hire the characters to attend the masquerade in disguise and protect their daughter. Their suspicions fall upon Gwynith's former lover, whom she unceremoniously dumped during her public proclamation that she intended never to marry anyone. Still, many would stand to benefit from the untimely death of the Arippas' sole heir.
- During a warm spring night, Baron Arthaud left his windows unshuttered. The following day, he discovered minute puncture wounds on his wife's throat. Fearing the worst, he seeks someone to help him find the vampire that bit Angelica. Nevertheless, unwilling to soil his reputation, he stipulates that no one can be told of the incidents. He doesn't want to risk seeking a cure from anyone of a prominent position.
- Upon learning Lord Balthizog constructed a secret escape tunnel beneath his keep, his long disgruntled personal guard formulated a plan to kidnap their lord for a considerable ransom. Saving Lord Balthizog requires the exploration of the secret tunnels to track down and defeat the guards.

SEWER/UNDERBELLY DISTRICT

A labyrinthine complex of tunnels, sunken foundations, and repurposed caverns sprawls far beneath the city streets. Rusty sewer grates allow pale slivers of sunlight to cut into the gloom, illuminating murky cesspools and mold-coated masonry. The stench of waste created by the city's ten thousand souls pervades the air, while the pitter-patter of tiny paws echoes through winding tunnels.

The larger and older a city, the more likely it has a sewer, using foundations from ruins and older buildings as well as the labor of multitudes to form the sewage lines that convey waste away from the populace. The older the city is, the more weathered sewer tunnels can get. Sometimes the masonry can be prone to crumble from age and erosion. A sewer walkway that falls away can spell swift disaster for the careless, especially when the impending water is murky with sewage, veiling predators, hazards, and even swift-flowing currents.

Engineering Marvels. Cities founded on hard stone, settled far from active water sources, built on stilts or in trees, or located in low-rainfall climates typically lack the resources for sewers and must instead rely on manual labor for waste and runoff. Younger cities too lack developed sewer systems, having to prioritize other amenities and fortifications. In those cases, simple ditches are dug around a city's perimeter, allowing excess rainfall to at least be conveyed away from the city proper.

Cities on flat plains have the added difficulty of affecting the flow of water. Civil engineers solve this problem by erecting water towers that provide literally tons of pressure to push water down drains and out through pipes and aqueducts. The maintenance of these systems is an important job that most citizens take for granted as well as a weakness that can be exploited easily by villains seeking to hold the city hostage or simply wreak havoc.

Repurposed and Reclaimed. Sewers provide a roadway of sorts, following the paths of the streets and buildings above. Beggars, thieves, and monsters take advantage of this, utilizing sewer pipes and manhole access to travel unseen. Observant trekkers can pinpoint their way with a successful Wisdom (Survival)

check (DC at the GM's discretion) by making note of how the water flows and drawing upon their knowledge of the city above. Those versed in sewer function know that polluted water flows downhill while clean water is driven upward with intricate pipe design and hydrostatic pressure, robust clockworks powered with steam and hydropower, or magic apparatuses.

Cities built on ruined foundations integrate their tunnels with sunken buildings and ancient masonry, creating a network with access from municipal building basements, chapel undercrofts, and layers of construction. Locked doors, portcullises, and iron bars hold back most subterranean denizens.

Sometimes there are other dangers besides aggressive beasts and nefarious criminals. Sewer systems are constantly working, and the flowing water takes its toll, exhausting pipes, wearing-out fittings, and overloading containment subsystems. Emergency repairs become a risky prospect as one must weigh the risks of monsters, catastrophic structure and equipment failure, and other dangers. While cities need skilled labor to manage sewer equipment, funding the work is often the last priority for those in power for reasons they prefer not to debate with the public. Understaffed as they become, these custodial skeleton crews must often hire adventurers to protect them from oozes, alligators, and worse while they work.

Mold and fungus notably thrive in sewers, having all the resources available to propagate. If a city's sewer district contains particularly virulent waste, wandering through the muck might take its toll on one's health as well. For every hour spent in the sewers, a creature must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or contract sewer plague (or another sickness of the GM's choosing).

Spontaneous Sewer Situations. Though dark and hidden from the world above, all sorts of things can be found in the sewers—from useless trash to hidden treasure, interesting finds one might stumble across in the oft avoided bowels of a city. Roll a d20 and consult the **Things Found in the Sewer** table or choose an event/experience to enhance the atmosphere of a sewer trek.

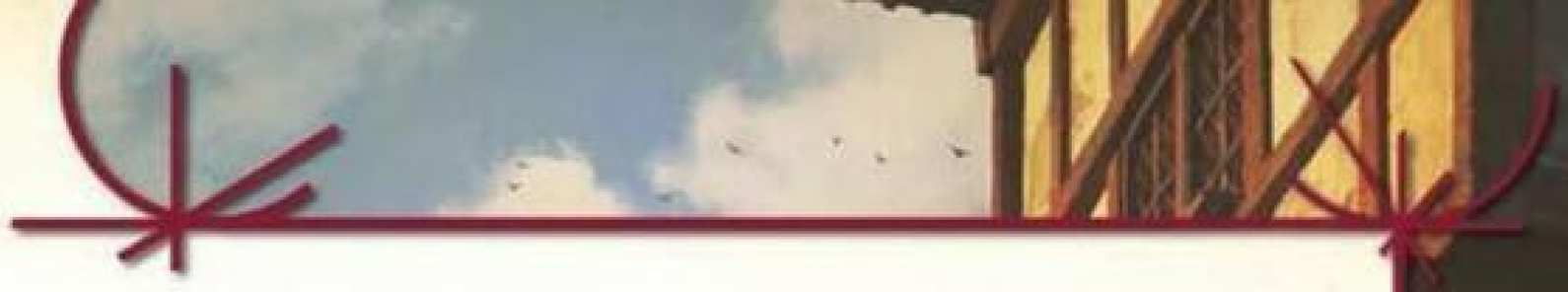
CRIMINAL ELEMENT

Here in a city's underbelly, criminal activity runs rampant, fueling a community that follows its own code of conduct based on violence and on who possesses the most power. In this way, the underbelly mocks the city above with black-market deals, criminal organizations, shadow cults, and even associations with monsters, mirroring all the vices the citizenry above are forbidden.

Sewers provide an ideal place for thugs and thieves to conduct illegal activities. The environment's many deterrents mean authorities, eavesdroppers, and grudge-bearing marks are disinclined to interrupt business. Even if a city lacks a sewer district, a "seedy underbelly" is still almost certain, and whether occupying a sewer system, a residential district turned slums, or a literal undercity, criminals always find a way to eke out their existence.

An underbelly district sustains a constant contest of strength, cunning, and sheer numbers, creating a tension that weighs heavily on every decision made by the underbelly's inhabitants. This tension is what drives those at the bottom to rise beyond their circumstances and heroes to blur the lines of their morality. Gangs, crime families, illicit guilds, and clans of monstrous humanoids keep the district in a locked tumult as they vie for supremacy and for the spoils of their unlawful acts.

Despite all the vices and trappings of crime, criminals are people too, and they need all the same resources more scrupulous citizens do—food, water, shelter—though they are less choosy about how to get what they need. Theft and extortion can cover food and drink most of the time, but shelter is a tricky thing to come by in the underbelly.



THINGS FOUND IN THE SEWER

d20	Item
1	A sudden surge in water sends a rippling wave through the sewer tunnel, gathering trash and sewage as it goes. Each creature in its path must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone and unable to breathe until it stands up, unless it can breathe water.
2	A sticky jar labeled "Honey?" floats in the water. The label is still clearly legible and marked three years out of date. A torn corner of a soggy page sticks to the jar, but the handwriting on it is in some type of code.
3	Loose sheet music is scattered about, notations crossed out in red ink before being torn apart and soiled. Initials in a corner of the pages read "MH," and the paper bears the watermark of a bardic college in the city above.
4	A drenched, mewling kitten or puppy lies curled up in a pile of trash beneath a sewer grate. It wears an expensive-looking collar attached to a broken leash. The name "Precious" is engraved on a golden panel on the collar.
5	A pack of **giant rats** piles around what appears to be a body, though the only objects visible are a pair of shoes and a bulging sack sticking out from the mass.
6	A long stretch of tunnel is full of orange eggs, softly glowing within sticky membranes. The eggs are slightly translucent, and small, gently wriggling creatures can be seen inside. The creature that laid the eggs does not appear to be present . . . yet.
7	A dozen **kobolds** argue over who must dive into a pest-infested pipe to retrieve their tribe's lost relic, the Goblet Idol of Cheeng. Most of them have splintered into two groups with their own schools of thought, though one kobold remains undecided. Until that kobold makes up their mind, the group appears unable to act.
8	A corridor with dozens of pipes running through the walls shows signs of a recent, partial collapse. Many of the pipes are crumpled, and hissing steam punctuates the situation.
9	The passage ahead appears entirely sunken in with the exact depth obscured in the muck. Each creature that moves through the muck must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for an hour.
10	An altar sits in a dead-end offshoot from the main thoroughfare. Fire and lights held close to it seem to dim, and the symbols stained on the altar's smooth stone face are nigh-impossible to discern.
11	The 20-foot-long shed carapace of a large arthropod fills the passage.
12	Iron bars and locked gates prevent entry to a room full of chests, barrels, and storage trunks. A set of steps inside the room lead a short way up to a closed door.
13	A large, vertical pipe sports a hole affixed with a small slide. Several large baskets sit underneath and around the slide, all partially filled with the carved stone appendages of local monuments.
14	A clutch of crabs picks at the body of a fallen adventurer floating in the muck. The adventurer's latched satchel floats beside it, still hanging from the adventurer's arm.
15	A broken wand sparks in a shallow pool of water surrounded by dead insects, rats, and other vermin. It bears the symbol of a local arcane college.
16	Bioluminescent fungi dot the nearby walls and support pillars, gently lighting the way. Other varieties of fungi also dot the area, filling the area with an earthy aroma.
17	A single tree, illuminated from a fortunately placed sewer grate, grows from a pile of rotten produce and bodies. The tree appears at least a couple of decades old and seems close to breaching the sewer grate within the next few years.
18	A line of ants follows a winding path around several corners and through many pipes, leading to a bucket full of melon rinds.
19	A tunnel wall has begun to crumble away to reveal an old passage, separate from the sewers and not listed on any map.
20	A **giant poisonous snake** thrashes unpredictably through the water, entangled in constricting trash. Something gleams among the trash as the snake moves.

A Rogue's Favorite Hangout

A dive bar is often the preferred spot for criminals and ne'er-do-wells to gather: a place where they can conduct business, hatch nefarious plots, drink away their woes, and engage in leisurely, if sometimes cruel, activities. A bar in a sewer or underbelly might be a repurposed cistern, a well-hidden speakeasy guarded by monstrous bouncers, or even a topside tavern's boarded-up basement. All manner of vices can be found there if one's prepared to pay and doubly prepared for the risks. Even if not prepared, fly-by-night crooks usually won't mind, offering their services with honeyed words and wild-eyed cheer.

For under-the-table services and risky propositions to give an establishment an unscrupulous veneer, roll a d6 and consult the **Underworld Meetups** table or choose an option.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Few venture into the sewers willingly, making such underground labyrinths ideal for lairs, clandestine meetings, and hidden treasures. But sometimes, there's just no other way:

- Lower elevation districts have been troubled with flooding for weeks now, weakening foundations and making those already living poor, squalid lifestyles ill. When the city's oracle claims a great storm will come with the dawn and wipe out half the city, the local council is called to action. The city needs brave souls to delve into the sewers and open the valves to a long-out-of-use aqueduct before the city is swept away.
- Tomas the Tooth (NE human **assassin;** see alternatively **thief lord** in *Creature Codex*), capo of the local crime syndicate, has sent one of the characters a message that they've upset the "family," cutting into profits with their recent escapades. Tomas extends one opportunity to make amends to avoid spilling blood: find his "pet" in the sewers for him, and he'll consider the debt square. Rumors mention the sort of company Tomas keeps down in those dark halls, and a visit to the butcher first might be in order.

UNDERWORLD MEETUPS

d6	Meetup
1	A sunken-eyed **merchant** (see **Chapter 3**) sits in the back of the bar, trading in black-market goods, services, and secrets for those who are willing to pay the price. The dealer doesn't haggle and charges a premium to those that try. Someone versed in Thieves' Cant might have luck or might just make a deal worse. Anyone seeking the dealer's services are guaranteed to get their hands on want they want or something adjacent to it, though all risks of complications associated with the service are doubled and the cost is rarely so simple as gold.
2	Several **thugs** huddle at a corner booth, talking in hushed tones over a makeshift map devised from shot glasses, loose snacks, and game pieces. Occasionally, one of them points at someone in the bar, and always, the apparent leader seems to subtly shake their head, much to the group's growing frustrations.
3	The evening's entertainment, a quartet of musicians, has the bar's patrons on their feet cheering, toasting, and singing along to bawdry tunes. A **footpad** (see **Chapter 3**) weaves through the crowd while the patrons are distracted, interacting with people's pockets, bags, and coin purses.
4	A heated argument breaks out over a game of cards, dice, or darts, and it seems evident that a violent conflict is on the verge and the word *cheating* gets thrown around. The entire bar tenses, waiting to see how the situation resolves but unwilling to intervene, lest a brawl (see alternatively **bar brawl** in *Creature Codex*) occurs.
5	A red light hangs over a staircase beyond the bar while several scantily clad persons (of mixed gender and ethnicity) lean over the balustrade and work at attracting attention from barflies and passersby. Occasionally, someone strides down the steps to hand something to one of the bartenders.
6	A side room of the tavern contains a small, cheering crowd packed around a 10-foot-deep pit. Most nights, this is a backroom boxing ring, but right now, a bookie is taking bets as the crowd cheers on a pair of dueling cockatrices. Crates of more **cockatrices**, muzzled and blindfolded, are tightly stacked against the wall on the far side of the crowd.

3 CITY INHABITANTS

A proud blacksmith stands firm on the price of a quality blade as a sharp-eyed halfling examines the blacksmith's work in the day's fading light.

As centers of commerce, governance, and even religion, cities attract a wide variety of residents from all walks of life and in all shapes and sizes. Some of these residents govern, while others maintain trade or religious organizations—both legitimate and illicit. Characters within a city can easily find any number of goods and services from these residents, such as obtaining work from one of a city's guilds or hiring a skilled carpenter to remodel their new base of operations. This chapter also contains statistics for inhabitants that the characters might encounter while within the city, from the courteous groom to the devious sewer jinni.

RULERS

The type of government a city or town has (see also **Chapter 1**) determines what kind of rulers and officials wield power in the city and how much influence the nobility—or even the citizenry at large—has over decision-making. There is much to consider. For good or for bad, through windfall and disaster, those in charge steer a community through history.

CITY RULERS

There are many types of ruling bodies. Here are some of the most common.

CITY COUNCIL

Alternative Titles: Assembly, Senate

City councils govern with or without a mayor at their head. They can be legislative, responsible for determining city laws and policies, or simply advisory.

Councilors or speakers can be nominated by powerful guilds, noble families, and other groups or elected by the people for a term, typically 4–10 years. As with the mayor, all citizens or just a subset might have the right to vote to elect the representative for their district or ward.

Characters who are skilled orators with an interest in politics might decide to run for the city council when a vacancy arises.

FEUDAL LORD

Alternative Titles: Duke/Duchess, Earl, Prince/Princess

If the city isn't the capital of a nation, a monarch often appoints a duke or another important noble to govern the city in their name. The feudal lord treats the city as part of their fiefdom but almost certainly gives nobles from other families a voice on the city council to court their favor.

MAGES (MAGOCRACY)

It's rare—but not unheard of—for a council of mages to rule. Wizards often don't want to give up their magical studies to concern themselves with the mundane matters of governing a city, but magocracies are sometimes formed when a group of adventuring arcanists retires or when an ambitious cabal of wizards bands together to conquer neighboring lands. (Well-known cities run by mages in the Midgard campaign setting include Bemmea, capital of the Magocracy of Allain, and Akxuum, City of Eyes, in the Southlands.)

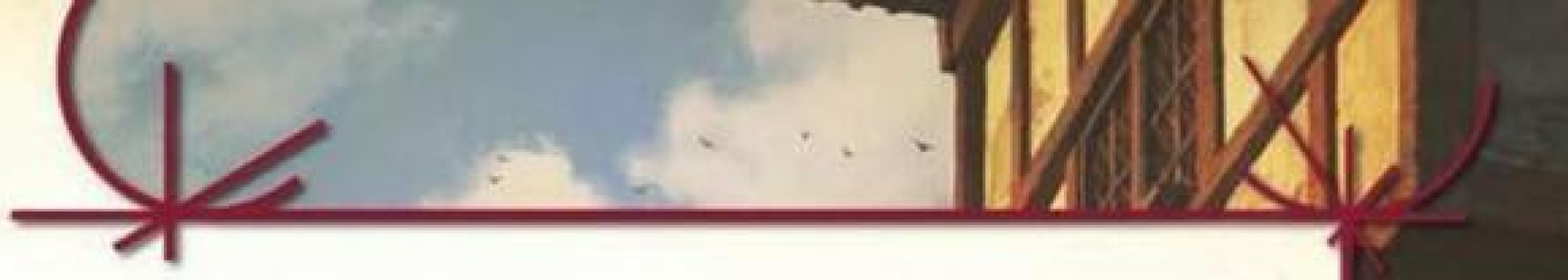
MAYOR

Alternative Titles: Burgomaster, Consul, First Citizen, Governor, Prefect, Provost

Probably the best-known type of city ruler is the mayor. The mayor might be picked by the nation's monarch, chosen by a small group of influential citizens (such as guildmasters or the heads of noble families), selected as successor by the previous incumbent, or elected by the city's entire population or a subset of it, such as property owners or dwarves.

The mayor acts as the head of the city council, if there is one, and employs aides and officials to carry out the tasks needed to administer the city. Good relationships with the guilds, temples, noble families, and other organizations are vital to keeping things running smoothly, and a shrewd mayor does whatever needs doing to keep everyone happy—or at least not too annoyed. This is often a tricky juggling act.

Sample Mayor. Alphons Greycastle (N tiefling **noble**) is the jowly, balding, middle-aged mayor of the city, a preening peacock dressed in the latest fashions, custom-made by the best tailors to accommodate his large girth. Alphons owes his position to the heads of the wealthy glassworkers and metalsmiths craft guilds and to the merchant guild, something these organizations are constantly reminding him of whenever taxes and trading laws are up for review. Someone is blackmailing Alphons for his recent indiscretions at one of the city's "red houses," and the amounts have grown so large that he is considering embezzling city funds to pay off the blackmailers.



MONARCH

Alternative Titles: Basileus, Czar, Dictator, Emperor/Empress, King/Queen, Overlord, Rajah, Sultan/Sultana, Tyrant

A single figure—or sometimes a royal couple—rules the city, which is likely the nation's capital. They might have inherited the throne, seized it in war or after assassinating their predecessor, or been swept into power on a tide of popular opinion. However they got there, the monarch has absolute control over the city.

If they also have a whole kingdom to rule, a monarch usually decides to appoint a chancellor to manage the day-to-day minutiae of government and likely has a chamberlain or vizier to offer advice. Less hands-on monarchs install a mayor or one of their loyal dukes or other subjects to run the city in their place (see also **Feudal Lord** above).

Sample Monarch. Queen Davcinabati (LG aasimar **monarch**, see **City Inhabitants** below) rules both her city and its surrounding lands with a strong hand. She declared herself queen after liberating the city-state and its people from rule by a league of tyrannical slavers following a swift victory on the battlefield. Although the city's people still have little in the way of personal freedoms, Queen Davcinabati enjoys popular support from most of the inhabitants, as their wellbeing has improved considerably under her aegis. Nonetheless, a small but vocal section of the population has begun to agitate for a say in the government of their homeland. So far, the queen's agents have swiftly silenced these rebellious sentiments.

OLIGARCHS

A small group—representatives from the major craft and merchant guilds, the heads of the major noble families, or both—typically appointed for life, rules the city. Together, they wield absolute power in managing the city's affairs. Since no single member of the oligarchy holds a dominant position, it is usual for a simple or two-thirds majority to agree on a policy before it is enacted.

PRIESTHOOD (THEOCRACY)

Usually the clergy of a single god, though sometimes the high priests of each of the major deities in a pantheon, the priests of a theocracy use their religion to inform how they govern the city and enforce their god's tenets among the populace, whether they like it or not. Prayers and temple attendance might be decreed mandatory while worship of other gods might be outlawed and driven underground. Because only the priests get to make decisions on city government, merchants, guilds, and nobles must lobby for their interests by making regular donations to the faith.

OTHER RULERS

Not every city ruler fits into the types described above. Some are combinations of two types. For example, a pharaoh (such as in Nuria Natal in the Midgard campaign setting, and in other desert lands) is both a monarch and a religious leader who acts as the earthly representative of their deity. An oligarchy could be made up of crime lords who employ a puppet mayor to maintain a veneer of respectability.

Monstrous city rulers are also not unheard of (such as the vampire King Lucan, ruler of the Blood Kingdom, and his appointed vampire nobles in the Midgard campaign setting). A lich, celestial, fiend, or dragon might instead rule the city.

CITY OFFICIALS

Governing a city or town is a complex task, so rulers appoint officials to key roles to manage the day-to-day affairs. Some of the most important jobs are listed below.

CHAMBERLAIN

Alternative Titles: Steward, Vizier

The chamberlain combines the roles of chief advisor, confidant, and indispensable personal assistant to the ruler. Since the chamberlain typically advises in private, they have unparalleled access. Expected to speak truth to power, a chamberlain with less-honorable intentions can cause considerable trouble.

CHANCELLOR

Alternative Titles: City Manager, Secretary

The larger the city, the bigger its bureaucracy and the more important the position of chancellor. Reporting to the mayor or other ruler, the chancellor is responsible for the smooth running of the city—managing its civil service, its courts, and the maintenance of its infrastructure.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Alternative Titles: Chief Magistrate, Judge, Justice of the Peace, Praetor, Qadi

The chief justice presides over the courts, which try and punish criminals and rule on civic disputes. This position is responsible for appointing and overseeing magistrates and acts as a final line of appeal to ensure justice is always done. The chief justice employs bailiffs to collect fines imposed by the courts.

LORD OF THE TREASURY

Alternative Titles: Chancellor of the Exchequer, Finance Minister

One of the most important positions in government, the lord of the treasury controls the purse strings, collecting taxes and duties and allocating funds. Customs officers, tax collectors, and bookkeepers all report into the lord of the treasury.

WATCH COMMANDER

Alternative Titles: Sheriff

The watch commander is responsible for maintaining law and order (see also **City Watch** below).

NOBLE FAMILIES

In many cities, the nobility plays an important role, whether as rulers or as wealthy citizens who influence how the city is run by ensuring those in government are looking after their family's interests. Sometimes, the heads of noble families sit on the city council themselves. In other cities, they handpick the speakers or fund the electoral campaigns of their preferred candidates.

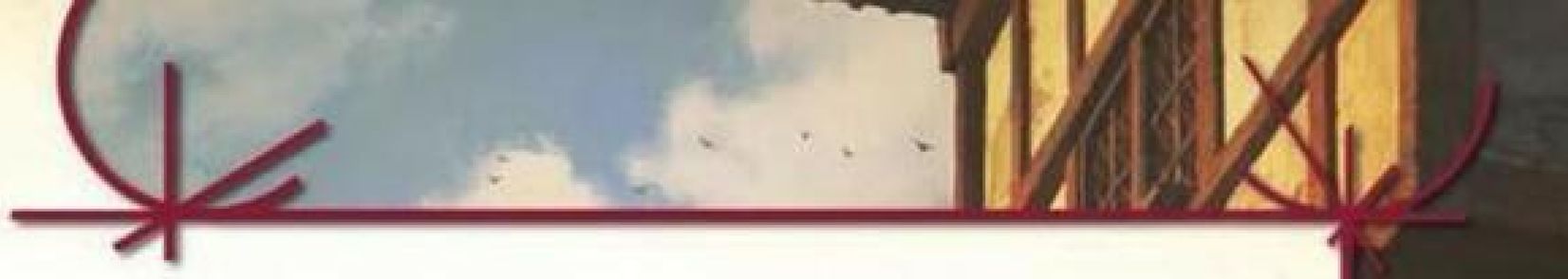
The oldest noble families can often trace their ancestry back to the city's founding while others will have joined the ranks of nobility more recently, perhaps granted their titles and lands by the city's ruler for their loyalty in war or simply by becoming extremely wealthy through trade or other means, fair or foul.

Each family keeps a residence in the city, ranging from a smart town house in an upper-class district for a minor family to a huge mansion and gardens inside the walls of a well-guarded compound for the largest and most powerful. Landowning families also have estates in the surrounding countryside.

Characters might belong to a noble family if they take the appropriate background. During the campaign, they might instead become members of a house by marrying into the family or by being adopted into the family as a special reward for loyal service. More commonly, noble families make great patrons (or opponents) for adventurers.

FAMILY SECRETS

d20	Secret
1	The family has fallen on hard times and is on the verge of bankruptcy.
2	Doppelgangers replaced the elders of the house 13 years ago.
3	The family are founding members of a bizarre cult or secret society (see **Cults and Secret Societies** below).
4	The head of the house is having a steamy affair with the head of their bitterest rival.
5	Senior members of the family are conspiring to overthrow the city government.
6	The family made its fortune through the slave trade or other criminal activity.
7	The outcast of the family is blackmailing the head of the house for past improprieties (roll again).
8	The family poisoned the leaders of their biggest rivals at a wedding feast.
9	Disguised devils or vampires lead the family.
10	Many priceless jewels were lost in the most recent heist by the Midnight Parliament (see **Illicit Guilds** below).
11	The heads of the family sacrificed their youngest child to a demon in exchange for worldly goods.
12	After being mercilessly lampooned in the latest popular play, the family matriarch had the playwright responsible murdered.
13	The family has avoided paying the correct taxes for decades and owes a fortune to the city treasury.
14	An innocent commoner was hanged for stealing a loaf of bread after the house demanded justice.
15	The family bluffed their way into the ranks of the nobility with forged documents and winning smiles.
16	The heir to the house's fortune is a drunken idiot with a penchant for starting street brawls, and they killed the eldest son of another family in a duel that went wrong.
17	The family keeps a gibbering mouther named Xhun'zath the Consumer in the basement of their mansion.
18	The ghost of the house's founder haunts the family home from dusk until dawn.
19	The family owes a small fortune to the Waverider Trading Consortium with no current means to pay it back.
20	After breaking a promise to a fey lady 50 years ago, the family fell under a curse.



To add color to the noble houses in a city, roll a d20 and consult the **Spheres of Interest** table to determine through what business interests and other activities a family gains and maintains their status and wealth (or fritters it away). And any family certainly has a few skeletons in the closet, so roll a d20 and consult the **Family Secrets** table to determine those dark or embarrassing bits. Alternatively, choose something appropriate from either table.

SPHERES OF INTEREST

d20	Interest
1	Academic studies
2	Banking and moneylending
3	Caravan running
4	Cattle ranching or sheep farming
5	City government and politics
6	Criminal masterminds
7	Curio collectors and sponsors of archaeological expeditions
8	Dabblers in the occult or masters of the arcane arts
9	Gladiator stables and chariot racing
10	Horse breeding and racing
11	Hunting and trapping
12	Mercenary companies
13	Military tradition or service in the army or navy
14	Mining for gold, silver, or gemstones
15	Patrons of the arts
16	Pious worshippers of a deity
17	Rare spices and ingredients; fine cuisine
18	Rearing and training exotic beasts
19	Shipping or shipbuilding
20	Vineyards and fine wines

MISSIONS

Characters belonging to or affiliated with a noble family are often asked to carry out missions for the house:

- Guard the funeral cortege of Dino Capponi until it reaches the Grand Necropolis. Ensure his body is safely entombed in the family vault, still wearing his gold death mask.
- Raid the compound of House Qalat and let all their prize horses loose from the stables. Leave evidence implicating House Bladedance in the attack.
- Retrieve the long-lost family heirloom known as the Signet Ring of Tammuz the Watcher from the Sunken Pit of the Accursed, deep in the Sarklan Desert.
- Steal the journal of Padmini Yatash from the locked and fiendishly trapped chest she keeps in her office and spill its juicy secrets to the city's most infamous gossips and rumormongers.

GUILDS

Guilds are associations of artisans, merchants, or workers from a particular profession who have come together to champion and sometimes regulate the goods and services provided by their members.

Guilds fall into four main types: craft guilds (who skillfully make and sell goods), merchant guilds (who sell goods and services but don't make them), illicit guilds (who are up to no good), and others, such as arcane or laborers' guilds, which don't fit readily into the other three types. Each is covered in the sections below. While not every guild will be of interest to characters, adventurers who join a guild can enjoy its benefits and get tangled up in guild politics or undertake missions for their guild.

Guilds range in size from a small society, of perhaps less than a dozen members that meet in the back room of the local tavern, to a large guild with up to 100 members and its own guildhall, to a powerful organization with guildhalls in multiple towns and cities and a membership numbering in the hundreds, perhaps even the thousands. The bigger the guild, the more power and influence it has over its field of enterprise—and even over the city itself. Guildmasters of powerful guilds can play a key role in how a city is run, either by sitting on the city council themselves or by choosing those who best represent the guild's interests to sit in their stead.

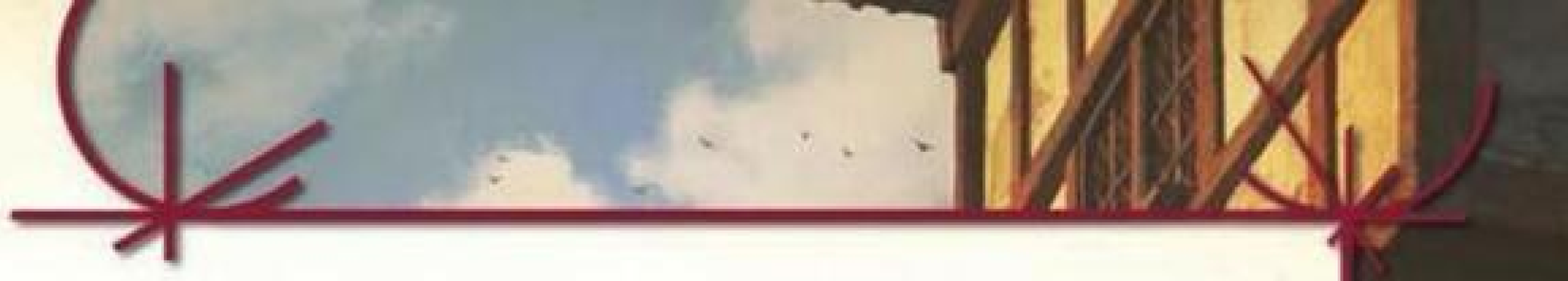
A strong guild with the legal backing of the city government can command a monopoly, forbidding anyone from practicing a trade or profession without being a member of the guild. Guilds can set minimum and maximum prices and rates of pay, stipulate quality standards, and establish rules to prevent fraud or unfair competition between members. In cities where not every craftsperson or merchant is required to belong to a guild, displaying a guild's badge is a mark of quality, allowing the trader to charge 10–15 percent more than the non-guild price for their goods and services.

CRAFT GUILDS

Craft guilds are the most common type of guild. Guild members are typically self-employed crafters or manufacturers of a particular type of good, either running their own business or working for a master who has been granted a franchise by the guild.

Although each is different, guilds usually have four ranks: apprentice, journeyman, master, and senior master. Apprentices start at a young age and spend a minimum of three years learning their trade from a master in exchange for room and board. Once they have completed their apprenticeship, they are promoted to the rank of journeyman and are paid a small wage, a percentage of which they must give to the guild as dues. Journeymen are encouraged to travel to other cities to pick up new techniques and can either set up on their own or work for a new master to further develop their skills. After at least one year as a journeyman, the crafter can apply to become a master. If their work is deemed to be of sufficient quality, they are promoted to the rank of master and are entitled to display the guild's badge. Senior masters are the most experienced and highly skilled artisans, having practiced their craft for over ten years. Each guild chooses a guildmaster from among their number to lead the organization, though the selection methods and terms of office vary.

Depending on the size of the city, a craft guild can represent several related professions under a single umbrella. For example, a small town might be home to the Guild of Master Builders, a single guild with members who are architects, carpenters, engineers, masons, plasterers, stonecutters, and roofers. By contrast, in a larger city, there are two guilds—the Proud Company of Carpenters and Roofers and the Venerable Order of Stonemasons. In a huge metropolis where guilds play a major role, things might be further subdivided, creating even more guilds, each with a narrower focus. This can create more problems than it solves. Overlaps or ambiguity in guild portfolios are often a major source of disagreements and tension and can even lead to fighting in the streets if things get out of hand.



Below are some of the most common examples of craft guilds that might thrive in a city:

- ***Apothecaries.*** This is a guild of herbalists, physicians, and makers of non-magical potions, infusions, poultices, and ointments. The Apothecaries' Guild sometimes sends adventurers in search of rare herbs and other exotic ingredients, such as dragon's blood and other monster parts, for use in their medications.
- ***Armorers and Weaponcrafters.*** Members of this highly respected guild design and manufacture all kinds of weapons and armor. Many of its artisans work in metal, but the membership also typically extends to bowyers and fletchers as well as makers of leather armor.
- ***Bakers and Chefs.*** Bakers and pastry makers are by far the most numerous members of this guild, but its ranks are open to all chefs and cooks, whether they run their own eating establishment or serve in a noble's kitchen.
- ***Bookbinders, Calligraphers, and Scribes.*** This guild makes and sells books, inks, parchment, quills, scrolls, and vellum and provides writing services for those who need it as well as copying and illuminating valuable manuscripts.
- ***Brewers, Distillers, and Vintners.*** Members of this guild make good quality beers, ciders, spirits, and wines for sale to inns and taverns and to the public.
- ***Carpenters and Roofers.*** This guild plays a vital role in the construction and repair of the city's buildings. Carpenters manufacture the timber frames for buildings and craft wooden furniture and cabinets. Roofers build and maintain both thatched roofs and those tiled with more expensive clay shingles. The latter work can lead to tension with the potters and tilemakers if the roofers fail to use their tiles.
- ***Cartographers and Surveyors.*** Cartographers make and sell maps and are sometimes hired by adventurers to turn their scrappy, bloodstained sketches of ancient ruins and deadly dungeons into suitable records of successful plundering expeditions. Surveyors are more adventurous individuals, accompanying expeditions into uncharted territory to draw accurate maps *in situ*.
- ***Chandlers and Lampmakers.*** Chandlers and lampmakers craft every manner of candle, as well as producing wicks, lamp oils (scented and not), lamps (both functional and decorative), and snuffers.
- ***Cordwainers and Cobblers.*** Members of this prosperous guild make and repair leather shoes and boots as well as felt or silk slippers. The Cordwainers and cobblers keep a close eye on the leatherworkers to make sure they are not treading on their members' toes.
- ***Glassworkers.*** This guild makes and sells glass items, including perfume and potion vials, wine bottles, and various art objects as well as plain and stained-glass windows for those who can afford them.
- ***Jewelers and Gemcutters.*** Members of this guild create beautiful objects from gold, silver, other precious metals, and gemstones. Master craftsmen in the guild are sometimes called upon to make coins for the city or royal mint.
- ***Leatherworkers.*** This guild covers skinners, tanners, and all who work with animal hides of different types to produce leather goods. Some members specialize in the manufacture of bridles, harnesses, and saddles for horses and other riding animals.
- ***Locksmiths and Artificers.*** Locksmiths manufacture, install, and repair locks and keys of all types as well as building secret doors, panic rooms, and vaults for those who want to go the extra mile to protect themselves or their wealth. Members might also include trapsmiths and gearworkers. Trapsmiths who use poison in their traps must purchase a license from the city government, typically costing 50–100 gp.
- ***Masons.*** Often one of most powerful guilds in the city, the masons are usually charged with overseeing the construction of all buildings within its walls. Members include architects, engineers, masons, stonecutters, and even some sculptors.
- ***Metalsmiths.*** This guild is made up of blacksmiths and metalworkers who produce a wide range of metal items, including bells, belt buckles, cutlery, horseshoes, scabbards, and tools. They are not permitted to manufacture armor, weapons, or jewelry, which are the provinces of the Armorers and Weaponcrafters' and Jewelers and Gemcutters' Guilds, respectively.
- ***Painters.*** Members of this guild include artists and portrait painters as well as sign makers.
- ***Perfumers.*** This wealthy guild has a monopoly on the manufacture and sale of incense, perfume, and soap. Their perfume formulas are closely guarded secrets.
- ***Potters and Tilemakers.*** Potters produce ceramic goods, including cups, oil lamps, plates, pots, and other wares, as well as clay shingles for roofing and colorful glazed tiles for decoration.

- ***Shipwrights.*** The members are experts in designing and building all types of ships and boats. The best rope-makers are also members. This guild is usually only found in cities and towns on the coast or on a river (although there might be shipwrights' guilds that construct desert-traveling sandships, such as in the Southlands of the Midgard campaign setting).
- ***Tailors and Clothiers.*** Makers of all kinds of clothing, from gloves and hats to cloaks, robes, and shirts, customers of the Tailors and Clothiers' Guild are usually the wealthy middle class and nobility who are prepared to pay for good-quality, bespoke garments of cotton, linen, or wool and perhaps even fur or silk.
- ***Tinkers.*** This humble guild is made up of tinkers and tinsmiths who repair broken metal objects. Most guild members do not have a workshop and instead wander from door to door to ply their trade.
- ***Toymakers.*** Members make toys using a wide array of materials, from wood to metal—and even clockwork and alchemical devices.
- ***Wagonmakers and Wheelwrights.*** The guild's monopoly includes the manufacture of carriages, wagons, and wheelbarrows for use by merchants, teamsters, and travelers as well as repairing and replacing broken axles and wheels.
- ***Weavers and Dyers.*** The Weavers and Dyers' Guild manufactures textiles and dye cloth for use by tailors and clothiers (with whom they often have a fractious relationship). They also make fine carpets, rugs, and tapestries.
- ***Woodcrafters and Coopers.*** Members of this large and important guild produce a wide range of wooden goods, including furniture (which can upset the carpenters) and barrels, chests, and ladders.

To generate suitably grandiose names for the city's craft guilds, roll a d12 twice and consult the **Craft Guild Name Generator** table for Adjective and Noun, then roll percentile dice and consult the **Guild Portfolio** table. (For larger cities, if a selection has multiple trades listed under Portfolio, pick just one to create a more specialist guild.) Or choose something appropriate for a name.

CRAFT GUILD NAME GENERATOR

d12	Adjective	Noun
1	Benevolent	Association
2	Diligent	Brotherhood/Sisterhood
3	Distinguished	Collegium
4	Honorable	Company
5	Loyal	Council
6	Proud	Federation
7	Solemn	Fellowship
8	Steadfast	Guild
9	Tireless	League
10	Upright	Order
11	Venerable	Society
12	Worshipful	Union

GUILD PORTFOLIO

d100	Portfolio
1–4	Apothecaries
5–8	Armorers and Weaponcrafters
9–12	Bakers and Cooks
13–16	Bookbinders, Calligraphers, and Scribes
17–20	Brewers, Distillers, and Vintners
21–24	Carpenters and Roofers
25–28	Cartographers and Surveyors
29–32	Chandlers and Lampmakers
33–36	Cordwainers and Cobblers
37–40	Glassworkers
41–44	Jewelers and Gemcutters
45–48	Leatherworkers
49–52	Locksmiths and Artificers
53–56	Masons
57–60	Metalsmiths
61–64	Painters
65–68	Perfumers
69–72	Potters and Tilemakers
73–76	Shipwrights
77–80	Tailors and Clothiers
81–84	Tinkers
85–88	Toymakers
89–92	Wagonmakers and Wheelwrights
93–96	Weavers and Dyers
97–100	Woodcrafters and Coopers

JOINING A CRAFT GUILD

Although joining a craft guild is not as exciting as joining a criminal gang or mercenary company, the guilds appeal to those characters who enjoy spending downtime crafting items and running a business or who want to make useful contacts in the city. They are also less demanding than some of the other types of organization detailed in this chapter, meaning obligations are less likely to get in the way of adventuring. However, the guilds do value having adventurers in their ranks with specialized skills who can carry out missions on their behalf.

To join a craft guild, a character needs to be proficient in the appropriate type of artisan's tools and must visit the guildhall and pay an initial fee, usually 20–25 gp. Some guilds might also insist on a practical demonstration of the character's crafting skills, an interview with the guildmaster to determine that they are of good character, or an eccentric initiation ceremony before agreeing to admit new members.

DUES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Once the character is a member of the guild, they must pay monthly dues of 5 gp and make a 10-percent contribution from any income created while practicing their craft. Members who forget to pay their dues for three months in succession, fail to attend guild meetings, or neglect their business and thus bring the guild into disrepute might find themselves expelled from the guild.

BENEFITS

Characters who belong to a craft guild gain the following benefits:

- A guild badge, allowing the character to practice their trade in the city and charge guild prices for their wares.
- An introduction to one or more influential figures in the city.
- Fellow guild members have an attitude of friendly when the character meets them for the first time.
- Free room and board at the guildhall, which also serves as a place for members to do business and socialize.
- The ability to call upon the guild in times of need, such as for an emergency loan or for an advocate sent by the guild to defend the character in court. Gaining the guild's assistance requires a successful Charisma (Persuasion) check (with a DC at the GM's discretion).

MISSIONS

Characters belonging to the guild might be asked to carry out missions that make use of their adventuring skills. This could involve resolving a dispute between guild members and artisans belonging to a rival guild in a nearby town or putting a stop to goblin raids on a mine that supplies vital ore. Here are some sample missions:

- Escort the guildmaster across the desert to the conclave of the Weavers and Dyers' Guild in the oasis town of Wadi Mitraq.
- Investigate the mysterious death of Senior Master Ignatius, who drowned in his own tanning vat.
- Protect guild members working on the construction of the city hall's new roof from attacks by disgruntled stonemasons.

ADVANCEMENT

A character who completes at least three missions for the guild and spends a minimum of six weeks of downtime taking part in crafting activity becomes favored in the guild.

The character's enhanced reputation earns them access to better raw materials for crafting, reducing the time needed to manufacture an item by 10 percent. Once per week, the character gains advantage on Charisma checks made during a meeting with a member of city government or an important guild official.

SAMPLE CRAFT GUILD: EFFULGENT COMPANY OF CHANDLERS AND LAMPMAKERS

This craft guild operates from its headquarters at Lucent Hall, by day an unremarkable two-story building in the less affluent part of the merchant district. Its guild badge, a bronze sunburst, hangs outside. When darkness falls, the hall becomes illuminated by dozens of lanterns and candles, either hanging on the exterior of the building or situated in each window, giving off a warm glow visible from several blocks away.

Members of the guild manufacture candles, from beeswax and tallow, as well as clay oil lamps, metal lanterns, and wooden torches, and they provide a lamp-lighting service for the city, sending out teams of young apprentices at dusk to light the lanterns atop lampposts on the main streets and in wealthier districts. Sometimes, these lamplighters run into hot-headed apprentices from the rival Potters and Tilemakers' Guild, leading to bad-tempered scuffles between the two groups.

Members

Jozefina Greybrow (NG half-orc **priest**) is the company's genial and excitable guildmaster. Although her duties as leader of the guild take up most of her time, she still makes the occasional magical candle, and she owns several chandleries—shops selling candles, oil, and general goods—throughout the city. Jozefina knows the guild's contract for keeping the streets lit is up for renewal shortly and has launched an early charm offensive, sending boxes of fine scented candles to decision-makers on the city council.

Master Oghrim Copperbrand (LN human **artist**, see **City Inhabitants** below) is an irritable perfectionist who runs an upscale workshop where he makes magnificent chandeliers suitable for the dining halls and ballrooms of the very wealthy. He is running out of what little patience he has with Shabban, his newest apprentice, and is considering letting him go.

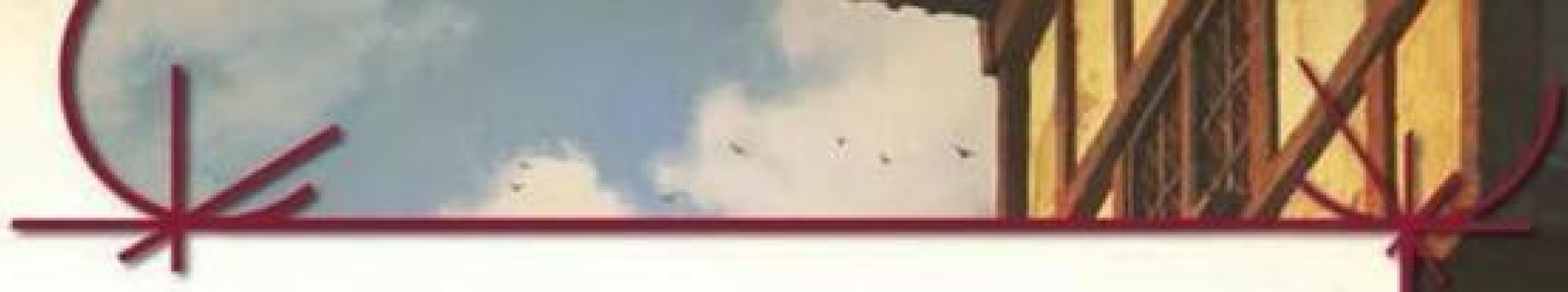
Shabban (CG half-elf **commoner**) is a tall and gangly fourteen-year-old who is fine at lamp lighting but terrible at making candles. Nothing ever seems to be good enough for Master Oghrim, who berates Shabban from dawn to dusk. A few nights ago, the mistreated apprentice took out his frustration on an apprentice potter and broke her arm in a street brawl. He nervously awaits the inevitable ambush and beating from her guild comrades each evening he goes out to light the lanterns.

MERCHANT GUILDS

Merchant guilds are made up of traders and business owners who sell goods but don't make the goods themselves. In the past, merchants would travel from place to place to conduct their business, but once they began to base themselves in cities and towns, they formed guilds to protect their interests, whether that be long-distance trade with other settlements or selling to the town's inhabitants.

As with craft guilds, merchants might need to join the local merchant guild before they can set up shop, and they often compel traders from elsewhere to pay a fee if they want to conduct business inside the city walls. Some foreign merchants might even be prohibited completely from trading in the city.

Members of a merchant guild are typically the wealthiest citizens in the city and can end up wielding considerable influence over the city council, making sure that any laws or regulations relating to commercial activity are in their best interests. Disagreements with the less wealthy but more numerous craft guilds are common, particularly when both groups compete for control of the city government.



To determine the goods in which a merchant deals, roll a d20 and consult the **Merchants and Shopkeepers** table or choose appropriate goods.

MERCHANTS AND SHOPKEEPERS

d20	Goods
1	Adventuring gear
2	Antiques and curios
3	Books and scrolls
4	Cheese
5	Fine clothes
6	Furs
7	Gems
8	Gold or silver
9	Horses
10	Livestock
11	Meat or fish
12	Rugs and carpets
13	Salt
14	Silk
15	Spices
16	Timber
17	Weapons or armor
18	Wine
19	Wool
20	Magic items

JOINING A MERCHANT GUILD

Characters who enjoy wheeling and dealing or hobnobbing with the rich and powerful are often drawn to the local merchant guild, as are those who are interested in buying and selling trade goods while on their travels. A character who wants to open a shop or other permanent place of business in the city or to trade with other cities by running a caravan might be invited to join the merchant guild, and in many cities, such membership is compulsory.

DUES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Merchant guilds are expensive to join, with initial fees of between 100–250 gp, depending on the size of the town or city and the influence of its guild, and monthly dues of 10 gp, plus a 10-percent contribution to the guild's coffers based on the merchant's monthly income. Members who fail to pay their dues or monthly contributions are charged interest on any overdue payments. These high membership costs price street traders and market-stall holders out of the guild. Smaller sellers instead pay a daily or weekly fee to the city for their locations and a percentage of their income in taxes.

BENEFITS

Characters who belong to a merchant guild gain the following benefits:

- A merchant certificate entitling the character to buy and sell trade goods in the city and to conduct trade with allied merchant guilds in other cities.
- A private audience with an important member of the city government.
- An invitation to a lavish dinner held monthly at the guildhall and attended by important members of the city government, wealthy nobles, and the like.
- Discounted prices on warehousing, on road and river transport, and on security, negotiated by the guild for its members.

MISSIONS

Characters belonging to the merchant guild are sometimes asked by their fellow merchants to use their adventuring skills to resolve problems with the flow of trade. This could involve dealing with bandits or gnolls attacking caravans, investigating a series of arson attacks on guild warehouses, or traveling to a dangerous, remote location to retrieve a valuable item. Here are some sample missions:

- Lead an expedition to discover a faster overland trade route to the lucrative markets of the five Elkwood cities.
- Put a stop to the constant pilfering from the stalls by driving the local gang out of the tunnels beneath the market.
- Steal the latest crop report from the safe in the minister of agriculture's office to corner the orange market.

ADVANCEMENT

A character who completes at least three missions on behalf of the guild and spends a minimum of six weeks of downtime running their business becomes favored in the guild.

The character's reputation as a respectable merchant brings in extra profits. Each week of downtime the character spends running their business generates an additional 3d6 × 5 gp in profits. In addition, once per month the character and their associates can use the guild's permanent *teleportation circle* to travel to a merchant guildhall in a friendly town or city.

SAMPLE MERCHANT GUILD: PLATINUM LEAGUE OF UPSTANDING MERCANTYLERS

Based in a magnificent stone building complete with a pillared entrance of white marble, situated on one side of the city's main square, the Platinum League of Upstanding Mercantylers has over 150 extremely wealthy citizens as members. Four members of the city council are long-standing members of the Platinum League while several others have previously served in the city's government and remain well-connected to those in power.

The guild has funded a splendid temple to the merchant goddess Ariadne in the city and does charitable work for the poor, particularly struggling street traders and peddlers, in the name of its patron saint Nicombo. Despite these good deeds, the guild acts primarily in its own interest and has used its influence to pressure the Cordwainers and Cobblers', Leatherworkers', and Weavers and Dyers' Guilds into paying high prices for the raw materials they need to manufacture their wares.

Members

Bornum Ashbrand (N dwarf **noble**) sits on the city council and possesses the largest personal fortune of any member of the Platinum League. Bornum made his money selling wines to the nobility and is the owner of several vineyards on the verdant hillsides overlooking the city. Bad-tempered and mean-spirited, he has been forced to give up wine because it causes his gout to flare up, and he now spends his every waking moment studying his ledgers, looking for new ways to increase his wealth.

Rosario Fontanella (LN human **merchant,** see City Inhabitants below; see alternatively **merchant captain** in *Tome of Beasts 3*) is a proud, middle-aged fur merchant who deals in exotic pelts, bringing them into the city from all points of the compass and selling them to the Tailors and Clothiers' Guild to be turned into coats or used to trim the robes of the city councilors. Rosario has a long, faded scar down the side of his face and neck, dating back to his youth when he took a hands-on approach to obtaining his wares and was nearly gutted by an owlbear. Today, he is unwilling to take such risks, hiring adventurers to bring him the pelts of dangerous monsters.

Janitza Gleamhand (NG halfling **merchant**, see **City Inhabitants** below) is a rosy-cheeked, excitable cheese merchant with a penchant for terrible puns and unfunny jokes, usually about cheese. She buys her cheeses from local producers in the farms surrounding the city and sells them in the Cheesy Smile, her fragrant shop in the merchant district. Janitza used to sit on the city council but quit because she found her fellow councilors too serious and dull.

ILLICIT GUILDS

Not all guilds in the city are made up of honest craftsmen and legitimate business owners. Despite operating in the shadows, local thieves' guilds and organized crime groups can be among the city's most powerful.

Illicit guilds come in many different shapes and sizes, ranging from small gangs of a dozen or so hoodlums to city-wide organizations of a hundred or more members to large guilds masterminding criminal activity across several cities.

In smaller towns, a single guild might control nearly all the crime within its limits, but in larger cities, there could be several different guilds, each focusing on different types of illegal activity or controlling one or more neighborhoods, such as the docks or the merchant district. These guilds can be bitter rivals, battling with

each other in bloody turf wars, or putative allies, operating under the overall leadership of a "boss of all bosses" or godfather. Sometimes, both things are true!

Larger guilds typically put someone in charge of each strand of criminal activity, so a single guild might have a master of footpads, a master of second-story folk, and a master of grifters, each answering to the grandmaster who leads the whole guild. Alternatively, the gang's boss might put each of their lieutenants in charge of certain streets or city blocks within the territory the guild controls.

Depending on the city, freelance thieves might be allowed to operate on guild turf if they hand over a percentage of their income as tribute, usually 10–15 percent. Those that try to avoid paying their dues face a severe beating at the hands of guild enforcers the first time it happens. The guild is not so understanding the second time around.

To determine an illicit guild's specialized criminal activity, roll a d20 and consult the **Criminal Specialties** table or choose an appropriate focus for members. If the guild has a more diverse criminal portfolio, simply roll again.

CRIMINAL SPECIALTIES

d20	Guild Members
1	Assassins/cutthroats
2	Beggars
3	Blackmailers
4	Brothel keepers/pimps
5	Cat burglars/second-story folk
6	Con artists/grifters
7	Corrupt officials/bent coppers
8	Counterfeiters/forgers
9	Enforcers/street toughs
10	Fences/black-market merchants
11	Footpads/street robbers
12	Highway robbers
13	Loan sharks
14	Lookouts
15	Pickpockets/cutpurses
16	Pit bosses
17	Racketeers
18	Safecrackers
19	Slavers
20	Smugglers

To generate suitably shady names for the city's illicit guilds, roll a d20 twice and consult the **Illicit Guild Name Generator** table, first for Column A and then for Column B, or choose a combination appropriate for a name.

ILLICIT GUILD NAME GENERATOR

d20	Column A	Column B
1	Alley	Band
2	Catching	Cats
3	Cunning	Claws
4	Dark	Collectors
5	Gallows	Cousins
6	Gilded	Crew
7	Heavy	Dancers
8	Light	Dogs
9	Low	Feet
10	Nameless	Gang
11	Night	Hands
12	Pick a Color (Black, Red, etc.)	Hoods
13	Quick/Swift	Kestrels
14	Quiet	Men/Women/Folk
15	Rooftop	Poachers
16	Rowdy	Rats
17	Shadow(y)	Runners
18	Under	Shadows
19	Unseen	Sparrows
20	Wayward	Whispers

JOINING AN ILLICIT GUILD

Rogues and other characters who want to spend downtime engaged in criminal activity in the city would be well advised to join the local illicit guild, both to make useful contacts and to avoid violent repercussions.

Although some illicit guilds are powerful or brazen enough to operate in plain sight, tracking down the location of a guild's headquarters or finding out who to approach about joining is much less straightforward than for a craft or merchant guild. Many illicit guilds hide behind seemingly legitimate businesses, such as brothels, gambling halls, taverns, or merchant offices and warehouses. Others are even harder to track down, running their operations from secret lairs beneath the city streets or in seemingly abandoned housing tenements or crumbling temples in unsavory parts of the city.

Finding an illicit guild's headquarters requires a successful Intelligence (Investigation) check with a DC of 10–25, depending on how secretive the guild. The character has advantage on the check if they talk to suitable contacts or buy drinks in the right sort of tavern in the wrong part of town.

Once the character has learned where to go, they need to make one or more Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) checks with a DC of 10–20 to gain admittance to the headquarters or access to the right person to talk to about joining the guild. Bribes or clever roleplaying might give advantage on the check.

Prospective guild members must pay a one-time fee and take part in an initiation test. The size of the one-time fee depends on the wealth of the guild but is typically 10–25 gp × the character's level. The test is usually to commit a crime appropriate to the guild's criminal portfolio, so an illicit guild focused on burglary and pickpocketing might set the challenge to steal items worth at least 500 gp in a single night without being detected, while a nasty gang of enforcers, loan sharks, and racketeers have the character pay a visit to a shopkeeper behind on his weekly payments, administer a beating, and recover at least 100 gp in goods. And the Guild of Assassins assign a target for the character to track down and murder. Additional tests could include making it unscathed through a trap-filled gauntlet in the guild's headquarters or a period of intense questioning while under the effects of a *zone of truth* spell.

If the character passes the test, they are admitted to the guild, usually on a probationary basis for the next few months, until the guild is convinced they can be trusted—at least as much as the next criminal.

DUES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Once the character is a member of the guild, they must pay dues equal to 10 percent of any income generated through criminal activity. This is usually paid weekly, but some guilds insist that this is paid to the master or grandmaster at dawn each day.

BENEFITS

Characters who belong to an illicit guild gain the following benefits:

- A license to conduct criminal activities of a particular type or types, as agreed to with the guild. This could be pickpocketing, burglary, robbery, smuggling, or running an illegal gambling den.
- A local criminal grapevine that gives the character advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks to uncover useful information about potential targets.
- Access to black-market goods, including forged documents, poisons, sewer grate keys, and other criminal gear at competitive prices.
- Access to one or more fences who pay 60 percent of the value for "hot" art objects, jewelry, and other valuable items.
- Shelter in a guild safehouse for a 50-gp nightly fee.

MISSIONS

Characters who belong to an illicit guild might be offered the opportunity to carry out potentially lucrative jobs for the organization. These jobs could involve disposing of a troublesome enemy, bribing or blackmailing an interfering official, or stealing from a wealthy target. Depending on the job, the guild might offer a fee or, in the case of a targeted burglary or robbery, offer a 20- to 25-percent cut of the haul rather than the usual 10 percent. The guild is often able to supply useful intelligence such as the best time to carry out the job, which guards have been bribed to look the other way, and what obstacles the character might face. Here are some sample guild jobs:

- Break into the secret vaults beneath the Ironmasters Trading House and steal the Sapphire Shard of Gnor-Kelar.
- Kidnap the Countess of Rothvin and bring her unharmed to the Tigerclaw Alley safehouse.
- Set fire to the Seven Swans Tavern while the Gallows Street Boys and the Amber Blades are meeting inside. Make sure no one gets out alive.

ADVANCEMENT

A character who completes at least three guild jobs and spends a minimum of six weeks of downtime taking part in criminal activity becomes a favored member in the guild or "one of us."

As well as being offered bigger, high-paying jobs, once per month the character can spend a week of downtime and use their guild connections to help them track down a magic item to purchase. There is a 75-percent chance of locating a specific common magic item, 50-percent for uncommon, 25-percent for rare, and 10-percent for very rare. The GM should set an appropriate asking price for the item, which almost certainly is stolen goods. A character who purchases such a magic item runs the risk of arrest if someone recognizes it.

In addition, a favored character can lie low in a guild safehouse for up to a week free of charge.

SAMPLE THIEVES' GUILD: EARNEST FOLK

This understated guild is an unusual partnership between those in the working class and professional thieves, cooperating to ensure mutual profit while minimizing risk. The working-class folks act as spies and informants, providing their criminal partners with information and reconnaissance in exchange for a cut of the profits. New Earnest Folk are recruited from those in positions to provide such information. The guild targets those that are disgruntled with their current situation, feeling underappreciated and, more importantly, underpaid by their employers. The guild offers them a chance to strike back against those they feel slighted by and improve their station in life in the process. Any time tips from one of these informants results in a profitable crime, the informant is rewarded with a set percentage of the take. This encourages the passing of solid information that leads to successful and profitable scores. The crimes of the Earnest Folk are strictly high-profile and high-profit. They don't stoop to pickpocketing or petty theft, except when it leads to bigger profits, such as pickpocketing the keys from the warehouse manager while she downs a few at the tavern in order to make off with a shipment of rare spices, or stealing the ledger of a merchant skimming profits from his guild to set up his blackmail. It's the big scores the guild is after, and their targets are ones that can afford the losses: merchant guilds, nobles, people with money to spare.

Leaders

Petra Menza is the leader of the guild known as the Earnest Folk. Petra is of noble blood, the illegitimate offspring of an illicit affair between her human father and elven mother. Her father refused to recognize Petra as his blood. A marauding dragon killed Petra's mother when Petra was still a child, and none of her mother's family was willing to take her in, so she was adopted by a pair of traveling merchants and raised in the city she now calls home. When she was a teenager, a rich merchant house bought out her adoptive parents' holdings, folding the business into their own. She wanted to continue

working the trade she'd been raised in, but the new owners turned her away. Her parents were content to retire on their profits, but Petra was angry that her life could be so casually diverted by those with more money than her. She moved in revolutionary circles for a time but couldn't help having her personal grievances and desire for money overshadow more charitable notions. She eventually fell in with the criminal element of the city, raising her status to the point that she took over a significant portion of the criminal activity in the area. While she tells herself she's doing good by redistributing wealth from the undeserving to the hardworking, she's hardly discerning when it comes to who the Earnest Folk rob, so long as the information received is good and the payout stands to be worth the risk.

Petra has appointed a group of experienced members of the guild to advise her, simply referred to as the Council, which consists of eight members—four experienced thieves and four former informants who have been loyal to the guild since its inception. They provide their expertise in the day-to-day operations of the guild as well as consult with Petra on particularly difficult or unusual jobs that come the guild's way.

Standard Operations

The thieves of the Earnest Folk regularly contact the clerks, servants, warehouse workers, and other various working-class folks that make up the other branch of the guild. If the informant has information they believe valuable, they greet the thief with a prearranged code phrase and await the proper phrase in response. Then the information is passed on, typically in the form of a coded note, and the informant is given a small amount of coin in exchange. For more detailed tips, the informant delivers coded messages to drop sites where novice thieves come and collect them at regular intervals and return them to the guild house. Payment to the informant is dropped off later, during regular visits. The information is then taken back to the guild, where the higher-ranking thieves, who plan the jobs, evaluate its usefulness. Any potential jobs presenting unusual circumstances or difficulties are delivered to Guildmaster Menza and the Council for evaluation. If it is determined the information could lead to a worthy heist, the job is assigned. Low-risk jobs are given to less-experienced members with one senior thief to oversee operations. High-risk jobs deemed worth it are reserved for the Earnest Folk's best and brightest. If a job is successful, the informant receives 2 percent of the value of the take off the top before those who pulled the job and the guild receive their shares.

The Earnest Folk don't have an active protection racket. That is, they don't shake down businesses for protection money in exchange for immunity from the guild's activities. Most of the people they steal from are well-connected and more likely to pursue a vendetta against the Earnest Folk than to capitulate. However, Petra and her Council consider offers from merchants or guilds that seek to make a deal. The price for such protection is not cheap, for Petra would prefer that they simply pay their employees more. Happy workers mean no informants, and thus the business does not become a target. Any money that is paid for protection is divided. A portion of it is funneled to the workers of that business (or servants of that noble house), and it is made clear that such money is coming to them from the Earnest Folk via their employer. The rest goes to the guild's coffers.

Rules and Regulations

Among the Earnest Folk, Petra Menza's word is law, and she has the final say in all guild business. There are only two main rules, but they are ironclad and punishment for their violation is swift and harsh. The first rule of the guild is to treat the common folk with respect and earn their trust. Members caught mistreating the working class or the poor—or even worse, stealing from them—are brought before Petra for a tongue-lashing before being reassigned to some onerous duty for several months and being made to pay recompense to those they've wronged. Anyone caught violating this rule a second time is no longer a member of the Earnest Folk.

The second rule of the Earnest Folk is to not talk about business with anyone not an Earnest Folk. Potential informants are considered fellow Earnest Folk until they prove otherwise. Any informant can decide they no longer wish to work for the guild and are allowed to bow out with no repercussions. However, if a member of the guild, whether thief or informant, speaks of guild business to outsiders—the law or the merchants they rob—the punishment is death. This sentence is carried out as swiftly as possible. The betrayer's tongue is cut out and returned to Petra as evidence the job is done and as a warning to others. When the subject of giving away the guild's secrets comes up, one often hears the phrase, "A loose tongue comes out."

Benefits of Guild Membership

Being one of the Earnest Folk has its perks, no matter in which branch of the guild one works. For the informants, they receive supplemental income over and above what their bosses pay them. If their information does lead to a heist, there is also the satisfaction that they still hold some power over the people in charge, able to tweak

their noses a bit and earn a bit more coin on the side.

For the thieves, they belong to a guild that ignores pickpocketing and other petty theft, focusing on high payouts and jobs where they have associates on the inside that provide valuable information to make things easier. Since the guild ignores petty theft, they require thieves with more training and finesse, so they are willing to provide that training to ensure a higher rate of success.

Guildmaster Menza's attitude toward the working class and the poor also means that being one of the Earnest Folk isn't a social stigma, except for in the view of the upper classes. Their good treatment of the lower classes and lack of threat to their possessions and livelihood mean those folks are less likely to turn them over to the law and might even help them out of a scrape, especially those who are friends and family of an Earnest Folk informant. That means that, unlike the average thief, a large portion of the city's inhabitants looks upon members favorably—or at least does not look upon them unfavorably.

SAMPLE THIEVES' GUILD: MIDNIGHT PARLIAMENT

Founded five years ago by Feathershine, a former ravenfolk merchant who was driven out of business by her unscrupulous rivals, the Midnight Parliament is a guild of pickpockets, con artists, forgers, and jewel thieves. Based in a rundown tenement block known as the Rookery, the Midnight Parliament is responsible for some of the most spectacular heists the city has ever seen. The guild has around 60 members, including a dozen or so young street urchins who create distractions, gather information on potential marks, and steal purses, as well as highly skilled cat burglars, grifters, and safecrackers.

Those who wish to join the Midnight Parliament must prove their skills at hoodwinking wealthy members of the nobility or middle classes in their initiation test. For her initiation, the gnome con artist Florivel Hollyglade tricked the Baroness of Jerriberg into parting with an eye-watering sum to buy the mayor's pleasure barge, and she still holds the record for the biggest prize to this day.

Members

Feathershine (CG ravenfolk **merchant;** alternatively see **thief lord** in *Creature Codex*) is the octogenarian former merchant who runs the Midnight Parliament. Thin and stooped with graying blue-black feathers, Feathershine stands just over 4 feet tall and walks with a pronounced limp. Motivated by a desire for revenge on the greedy merchants and nobles who bankrupted her modest jewelry business, she is on a near-evangelical mission to liberate the rich and arrogant from their bothersome wealth. She looks after the members of the Midnight Parliament—her "little flock"—like a doting grandmother.

Evlyne Roofrunner (CN human **spy**) is a first-rate cat burglar who was drawn to the Midnight Parliament by her own unhappy experiences. This young woman dresses all in black, has short-cropped, spiky hair and blue eyes, and has a scar down one side of her face—a souvenir from her master's whip when she served as a kitchen maid in the local lord's castle. She is still full of fury at the treatment she suffered as a young girl, and although Feathershine disapproves, she is not afraid to use her throwing daggers if she is interrupted while on a job.

Ansel Foxglove (N half-elf **spy**) is a tall and handsome dark-skinned half-elf with a winning smile and a warm and charming personality. Ansel is also one of the city's cleverest con artists and a skilled safecracker and jewel thief. Born into a poor family, Ansel's witty conversation and flamboyant wardrobe enable him to fit seamlessly into high society. He is invited to all the top parties where he flirts with men and women alike before switching their priceless jewelry with convincing fakes and disappearing into the night.

OTHER GUILDS

In many towns and cities, there are several types of guilds that don't fit into the categories of craft guilds, merchant guilds, or illicit guilds covered in the previous sections. Most of these will be of little interest to characters, but nonetheless, they fulfill important roles in the life of the city.

ARCANE GUILDS

Wizards and other arcane spellcasters, as well as alchemists and students of occult lore, form arcane guilds, usually—but not always—in larger cities. These guilds tend to be loosely organized societies where the members enjoy access to shared libraries and well-equipped laboratory facilities to conduct magical research. Their common rooms are often thick with pipe smoke as gray-bearded mages swap ideas for spells with young and energetic spellslingers.

Joining an arcane guild might require the donation of an interesting spell scroll or magical curiosity to the society's collection rather than a monetary fee. Monthly dues are around 10 gp per level to keep the guild's wine cellars and other facilities fully stocked. Characters that join their city's arcane guild can use the library for research during downtime, gaining

advantage on Intelligence checks to learn useful lore, and can purchase arcane spell components at 10 percent less than the standard cost.

ENTERTAINERS

Groups of performers, big and small, come together to form guilds to exchange ideas, train and develop new talent, and negotiate better rates for their members with dance halls, taverns, and theaters. Some entertainers' guilds are composed solely of bards, musicians, and singers, while others might be acting troupes or diverse crews of acrobats and tumblers, dancers, jesters, and storytellers. Larger guilds might have a theater as their guildhall where they stage spectacular shows featuring the best entertainment their members have to offer. Members are expected to share their talents with the guild at least one or two nights a week by helping their fellow performers on stage.

LABORERS

In some cities, unskilled manual laborers band together in their own guilds to safeguard their interests. City governments and businesses are not always happy when ordinary laborers do this though, worried that these workers will demand higher wages or better working conditions, and have been known to make things difficult for laborers' guilds. Sometimes when this happens, the nascent guilds end up allying themselves to local criminal gangs or illicit guilds to avoid being pushed around.

Laborers' guilds have lower initial joining fees than other guilds, usually 5 gp or even less, and monthly dues are typically 1–2 gp. In return, guild members can command 5- to 10-percent higher wages than unaffiliated laborers.

Common laborers' guilds include the Dockworkers', Dungsweepers', Gravediggers', Launderers', Ratcatchers', Sewer Workers', Teamsters', and Watermen's (boatmen who ferry passengers across and along canals and rivers) Guilds.

PROFESSIONS AND SERVICES

These guilds represent the interests of those who belong to a particular profession or offer a service but are not making crafts or selling trade goods. Joining fees and monthly dues vary but are like those levied by craft guilds. Characters looking for hirelings from one of these professions can usually obtain a list of practicing guild members or establishments from the relevant guildhall:

- ***Advocates and Litigators.*** This influential and wealthy guild is made up of legal experts. Advocates defend the accused in court, arguing their case before a judge or magistrate. Litigators draw up contracts, deeds, and wills and act on behalf of their clients, often guilds or nobles, in court in the event of a dispute.
- ***Barbers and Barber Surgeons.*** Members of the Barbers' Guild look after the personal grooming needs of their clients, offering haircuts, shaves, and even baths as well as pulling teeth and performing first aid. Some are deft enough with their blades to perform bloodlettings and minor surgeries or even to amputate limbs. Barbers hear a lot of useful gossip in the course of their work but prefer to remain tight-lipped to avoid upsetting their clients rather than sharing their secrets.

- ***Courtesans.*** Members of this guild are not common prostitutes. Instead, these men and women offer companionship, sophisticated conversation, and other personal services to wealthy clients at their elegant, luxurious establishments. These "red houses" serve fine food and wine to their guests, often accompanied by performances from talented musicians and singers. Visiting a red house is always expensive, and the most famous courtesans command a high price for their affections.
- ***Innkeepers and Taverners.*** Characters who end up running an inn or tavern might want to join this guild. It protects the interests of its members by regulating prices and enforcing the often-blurred distinction between an inn, which offers hot food, sleeping accommodation, and stabling for mounts, and a tavern, which is supposed to serve only drinks and cold platters.
- ***Money Changers and Pawnbrokers.*** Guild members include money changers, who exchange coins from other cities and countries to the local currency (and vice versa), and pawnbrokers, who offer secured loans, using valuable personal items as collateral. In cities with more advanced economies, membership extends to money lenders and bankers.
- ***Pilots.*** Pilots' Guilds are usually only found in port towns or cities, whether situated on the coast or on the banks of a major river. Members are skilled navigators who chart courses from one port to another and ensure that a vessel reaches its destination safely. Pilot guildhalls keep their libraries of accumulated nautical knowledge under lock and key, often protected by sophisticated traps or magical wards.
- ***Sages and Scholars.*** Often headquartered in a library or university, guilds of sages and scholars are dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and likely have members from a variety of different academic fields of study. Bookish characters might wish to join the guild to conduct research during downtime or ask their fellow guild members for information relevant to their latest quest. Members are expected to contribute to the guild's shared collection of knowledge, so characters can either spend time writing their own academic papers or donate interesting new tomes found on their adventures to the library.

ORGANIZATIONS

Aside from the government bodies, noble families, and guilds detailed earlier, urban centers are home to a huge variety of other organizations. Some are civic institutions, like the city watch, while others are made up of individuals who share a common purpose or interest, such as adventuring and mercenary companies or even cults and secret societies. These groups might be altruistic or downright evil, or more likely, they might fall somewhere between these two extremes.

Some organizations have a high profile in the city, maintaining an ostentatious headquarters and throwing extravagant social events, while others operate quietly in the shadows, unknown to all but a few well-informed citizens. Groups can also vary hugely in size, from a dozen or so members to several hundred. Unlike guilds, size is not necessarily an indicator of an organization's power and influence. A sinister cabal of six very wealthy, devil-worshipping nobles wields significantly more sway over what happens in the city than a loosely run adventuring fellowship with a hundred members.

Characters are likely to encounter many such factions over the course of their adventures and might end up joining one or more of these groups. Some organizations might become useful allies, sources of information, or potential employers of the characters, and others might end up becoming thorns in their sides—either as rivals, bitter foes, or irksome foils they love to hate.

ADVENTURING AND MERCENARY COMPANIES

Most cities are home to several adventuring and mercenary companies, both big and small. These organizations hold an obvious appeal to characters.

ADVENTURING COMPANIES

Adventuring companies range in size from typical adventuring groups of four to six individuals to a larger fellowship or guild with a membership of several dozen or more. These larger companies maintain a central headquarters where members can meet up, share tall tales of their exploits over flagons of ale, and swap rumors of sinister cults and ancient crypts beneath the city streets.

Most have a jobs board, advertising current adventuring opportunities. These jobs are open to existing groups belonging to the larger company but also allow individuals to band together on a

temporary basis to undertake one of these missions. This model where everyone belongs to the same overall organization allows for a different lineup of characters on each adventure and works particularly well for GMs running a city campaign for a pool of players where everyone doesn't always turn up each week.

Adventuring companies in the same city are often rivals, competing for the same missions or mounting expeditions into the same dungeons and ruins. Such rivalries are often friendly, but angry altercations and violence can also occur, particularly when large hoards of loot are at stake.

The city government might be pleased to have adventurers on hand to solve its troubles, or it could see them as a menace or as an opportunity to raise extra funds (sometimes both). Such cities insist that an adventuring company has an official charter, typically costing 50–300 gp per year, before it is permitted to operate within the city walls. Members of chartered companies must wear a badge with the company's symbol while adventuring in the city to demonstrate their approved status or face fines or arrest.

MERCENARY COMPANIES

Professional soldiers who fight other people's battles in exchange for gold often belong to mercenary companies. The smallest of these might number as few as a dozen or so warriors while the largest companies are made up of several hundred. Colorful, memorable names are preferred, such as the Clanking Legion, Hogar's Horribles, or the Blood Hawks.

There are two main types of mercenary company: standing companies that stay together all year round and recruited companies that are formed when the need arises. Standing companies might go through lean periods, particularly in the winter, when they are between major jobs. Outside of the fighting season, their members take contracts as caravan guards or take up adventuring to keep the money coming in. Recruited companies often keep a small core of veterans together throughout the year and then hire extra muscle to boost their numbers when needed to fight a war or defend a city. The company might turn up at a city where conflict is expected and set up a pavilion outside the walls to conduct recruitment.

Although each mercenary company is different, most are organized along military lines and use army ranks, such as commander, captain, sergeant, and so on. Each company establishes articles to set down its name, the name of its captain, its emblem, and its rules, including how spoils are to be divided, the causes it fights for, and how long members are expected to serve. Motivations vary among mercenary companies. Some fight for whoever is picking up the tab, and others adhere to their own moral code, fighting only if they believe the cause is just.

Sometimes a company specializes in certain weapons or fighting styles and is made up entirely of archers, cavalry, highly mobile skirmishers, or heavily armed pikemen. Others have arcane spellcasters, rogues, and priests in their ranks or employ monsters, such as trolls, giants, and drakes. Companies might also be organized along racial lines (such as the Argent Rats of the Crossroads region of the Midgard campaign setting, who are mostly short folk, including kobolds, ratfolk, and dust goblins, while Hrothgar's Marauders are gnolls from the Rothenian Plain). The sinister Brotherhood of Night's Embrace is a notorious company of undead mercenaries led by a mummy lord.

Adventurers who join mercenary companies often operate as elite troops or take part in special missions. While most sign up willingly, adventurers might be press-ganged. Coldhearted, ruthless mercenary companies like the Daughters of Slaughter (see below) make great enemies for characters who seek to defend their home city, families, and friends from raids, sieges, or even all-out war.

JOINING A COMPANY

It's very hard to make a living (or survive for long) as a solo adventurer or sellsword, so it's usually better to band together with other like-minded souls in an adventuring or mercenary company. Characters who are already members of an adventuring party can also benefit from being part of a larger organization.

Joining an adventuring company usually requires being proposed and seconded by two existing members in good standing. Membership fees are typically 20 gp per year.

Prospective members of mercenary companies must visit the company's headquarters or pavilion where they are asked to outline their previous fighting experience, including the number of enemy soldiers they've killed in battle. Depending on the circumstances and how discerning the company is, the character might need to succeed on a Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check with a DC of 10 or higher (at GM's discretion) to convince the recruiting sergeant they are up to the job. Some very prestigious mercenary companies require a fee to buy in, but this is the exception rather than the rule.

Once a character has joined a mercenary company, they are expected to spend at least four days each week on missions or patrols as directed by their captain, more in times of war. Pay is typically 1 gp per day for a soldier.

Things are much more relaxed in adventuring companies, where a character can respond to postings on the jobs board at the company's headquarters but is under no obligation to undertake such missions. If they do take a job arranged by the company, the character might be required to donate 10–20 percent of any found treasure to the organization.

BENEFITS

The benefits of belonging to an adventuring or mercenary company vary depending on the organization, but can include some or all the following:

- A 10-percent discount in local shops selling weapons or adventuring gear
- A company badge that confers a level of respectability on the character, indicating they are more than an anonymous (and potentially unreliable) sword for hire
- Access to a list of trustworthy hirelings
- Access to maps and notes on local dungeons and ruins compiled by past explorers (adventuring companies only)
- Discounted healing from priests of the god of war (mercenary companies only)

MISSIONS

The types of jobs posted on an adventuring company's board are often standard fare, such as dealing with the giant, human-faced rats lurking in the cellar of the Frantic Firbolg or accompanying the wizard Dolharis Firestarter on his quest to study the Arcane Scriptorium in the Scarlet Citadel.

Here are some typical missions for characters belonging to a mercenary company:

- Ambush and eliminate the six darakhul spies before they make their reports to the Bone General.
- Infiltrate Castle Hawkscrag and learn its layout and defenses ahead of the company's planned assault in five days' time.
- Raid the underground armory of the Merciful Shades and destroy their reserves of alchemical weapons.

ADVANCEMENT

A character who completes at least three jobs advertised on the adventuring company's jobs board and spends a minimum of six weeks of downtime carousing with members of the company becomes a favored member in the organization. If a favored character fails to return from a dungeon expedition or other adventure, members of the company will attempt a rescue. If the character is dead, their body is retrieved and taken to a temple to be raised if the character has deposited the necessary funds with the company.

A character who spends at least one season fighting as part of a mercenary company becomes a favored member in the organization. Their pay increases to 5 gp per day, and they are entitled to use the company's well-defended headquarters as a haven from their enemies.

SAMPLE MERCENARY COMPANY: DAUGHTERS OF SLAUGHTER

Bloodthirsty and heartless Daughters of Slaughter are a mercenary company of women who enjoy killing almost as much as earning big bags of gold. Led by a lamia named Somayeh, a follower of a dark god of the hunt, the company has their headquarters in an abandoned temple to the local god of war, near one of the quieter city gates. The building's imposing exterior is adorned with menacing, foot-long iron spikes, and the company's banner, a grinning medusa's head above two crossed axes, hangs over the entrance. The company has 21 permanent members, mostly humans, dwarves, and gnolls, and they recruit more from among the city's lowlife as needed.

Only the most unprincipled city residents hire the Daughters of Slaughter—ruthless nobles who wish to brutally crush a peasant rebellion in their fields or break up a strike at the docks, or greedy merchants who seek to bankrupt their rivals by raiding their caravans or burning down their warehouses. If the job the company is hired to carry out is illegal, they are careful not to leave living witnesses behind.

Members

Somayeh (NE **lamia;** alternatively see **matriarch serpentine lamia** in *Creature Codex*) established the company five years ago and has been using her abilities to tempt potential clients into hiring the company to solve their problems ever since. She uses *disguise self* to appear as a dark-skinned human warrior woman in shining black leather armor when moving around the city. Somayeh has gathered enough blackmail material on the city's most powerful inhabitants not to worry about the authorities clamping down on her operation.

Zirag (CE **ogre;** alternatively see **corrupted ogre chieftain** in *Tome of Beasts*) is Somayeh's right hand, always at the forefront of any assault with her trusty pair

of giant meat cleavers. Zirag has an Intelligence score of 10 and an armored hide of dull green scales that gives her resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons. She is fiercely loyal to Somayeh, has grudging respect for Hunra Buto, and treats everyone else in the company with contempt.

Hunra Buto (N dwarf **gladiator**) joined the company after winning her freedom in the gladiatorial arena by defeating 17 other fighters in single combat, becoming the biggest draw in the process. Having the famous Hunra Buto in the company has helped Somayeh find clients, and the dwarf enjoys fighting alongside like-minded warriors. Shaven-headed and only 3-1/2 feet tall, Hunra is a fierce and showy fighter who likes to deliver her killing blow as dramatically as possible.

CITY WATCH

The city watch serves as the city's police force, responsible for maintaining law and order and keeping its inhabitants as safe as possible. They patrol the city streets, dealing with wrongdoers, breaking up arguments, reuniting lost children with their parents, giving directions to visitors, and so on.

The watch commander, or sheriff, is in overall charge of the city watch. Larger cities then have a major or inspector running each district or ward. Beneath them are the watch captains who have control of a single neighborhood and command the local watchhouse. Each watch captain has a lieutenant serving as their deputy and is typically in charge of up to a dozen watch sergeants and up to 50 constables (the lowest rank). If the city government is interested in solving crimes with no obvious perpetrator, as opposed to just punishing those caught red-handed, there might also be a detective or investigator based at the watchhouse under the captain's command.

Watch officers (**guards**) patrol the city during the day and at night in groups of 2–12, depending on how dangerous the district is and the time of day. Some parts of the city might be considered no-go areas after dark—or even during the daytime. Affluent areas might have next to no crime, but the watch likes to maintain an obvious presence to reassure its wealthy inhabitants that their taxes are being put to good use. If they know they are going up against magic-using criminals (or adventurers!), the watch sometimes calls upon the local arcane guild or temple for assistance and be joined on patrol by a **mage** or **priest**. Technologically advanced cities might make use of **animated armor** or **shield guardians** (alternatively see **clockwork watchmen** in *Tome of Beasts*), for these tireless constructs can patrol the city day and night with only occasional pauses for routine maintenance.

Watch patrols respond as quickly as they can to shouts for help or pot-banging from citizens in distress. In some cities where crime is a constant problem, alarm bells are hung on street corners to be rung when a crime is being committed (if the bell hasn't been stolen). Watch officers carry horns or tin whistles to summon reinforcements if they need assistance from another patrol. Weapons and other equipment vary from city to city, but typical arms and armor consist of a steel helmet, studded leather or chain shirt and a shield, a club, a dagger, and a crossbow.

Corruption can be a problem in the watch. Recovered stolen goods or contraband might disappear from the watchhouse, or a constable might pocket a nice-looking gold ring from the finger of a murder victim or a drunk they've arrested. Occasionally, a watch captain or lieutenant takes a bribe to divert that night's patrols away from the warehouse where a burglary is taking place, or a corrupt officer tips off a criminal gang that a local jewelry merchant has come into a large sum of money recently. Maybe a watch sergeant with a gambling problem starts up their own protection racket to fund their habit or moonlights as an enforcer for the neighborhood thugs.

JOINING THE CITY WATCH

Being part of the city watch is a demanding job, making it unattractive to adventurers who enjoy the freedom of being able to drop everything to run off and explore an ancient ruin on a whim. However, characters possess many of the skills the city watch values, and the watch is sometimes keen to hire adventurers on short-term or part-time contracts, particularly when the city is facing an existential threat or if crime is getting out of hand.

The rigor of the recruitment process is influenced by how short-handed the city watch is, the caliber of its existing watch officers, and how carefully its recruiting officer selects candidates. A desperate city watch accepts anyone who can stand up more or less straight and wave a truncheon around. More demanding organizations insist on a lengthy interview to establish that the potential recruit is joining the watch for the right reasons or ask them to take a series of physical and mental tests, resolved with Strength (Athletics) and Wisdom (Perception) checks. Others only consider recruits vouched for by an existing watch officer.

A character that is accepted into the city watch receives a 20-gp signing bonus, weapons and armor, a surcoat with the city emblem, and a pair of sturdy boots. The first two weeks are spent in training, typically under the beady eye of a grizzled watch sergeant who decides if the character has what it takes. Those deemed too soft or too dim are sent packing and must return their equipment and half the signing bonus.

If the character successfully navigates training, they become a watch constable, working four days on, one day off, in tiring shifts of 8–10 hours, during which they go on at least one 4-hour patrol of the neighborhood. Pay is 1 gp per day with free room and board available at the watchhouse. While some watch officers return home at the end of their shift or on their days off, many live here full time.

To generate neighborhood events, roll a d20 and consult the **On the Beat** table or choose an event for while on patrol.

ON THE BEAT

d20	Event
1	A dog grabs a string of sausages from a nearby butcher's stall, and the angry butcher demands you give chase.
2	A fire breaks out in a nearby house. A small child is trapped on the top floor.
3	A drunken noble steals your helmet and runs off with it.
4	A little boy bombards you with constant questions about what it's like to be in the city watch, the worst criminal you've arrested, and so on. He won't go away.
5	You find a sewer grate left open. There is blood smeared on the ladder.
6	You find a dead body.
7	You spot one of your fellow watch officers steal something from a market stall.
8	Someone throws a cabbage at your head as you push your way through a crowd.
9	You spot two figures scurrying across the rooftops on the other side of the street.
10	A noblewoman's coach gets stuck in the mud, and the occupant insists you help pull it free.
11	A gang of urchins surrounds you, asking for coppers or something to eat. When they disperse, your whistle is missing.
12	You hear a loud splash from the river.
13	Someone screams from a dark alley.
14	It's pouring rain, and you realize there are holes in both of your boots.
15	A black cat meows pitifully from the top of a tree at its distressed owner.
16	Someone flies through a window and lands at your feet as a full-scale bar brawl breaks out in the nearest pub.
17	A lady or gentleman of the night propositions you.
18	A grifter invites you to play a game of "find the lady."
19	A man chases a woman down the street and shouts, "Stop thief!"
20	A blissfully uneventful shift.

ADVANCEMENT

Once a character has made at least 50 patrols of the neighborhood and at least ten arrests, they receive a commendation from the watch captain and are in line for promotion to watch sergeant as soon as a position becomes available. Since many city watches have a rapid turnover of staff, this is likely to come sooner rather than later.

The character becomes a well-known figure in the local area and gains advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks when talking to law-abiding citizens. When dealing with local criminals, they have disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks but gain advantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks.

SAMPLE CITY WATCH: FISH STREET WATCHHOUSE

Located on the corner of two main thoroughfares in the city's docks district, the Fish Street Watchhouse is a tall, three-story wooden building that has seen better days. While the city council makes sure the watchhouses in the wealthier districts are spruced up with a fresh coat of paint every year, it has yet to find the funds to fix the leaky roof at Fish Street, let alone repaint it. A sign depicting a grubby white lion on a faded green background hangs outside. Several torn and faded Wanted posters have been pasted to the exterior wall.

Inside, the ground floor consists of the main hall and guardroom, where concerned citizens can report crimes to the duty officer, a mess hall with small adjoining kitchen, an armory, and the watch captain's office. There are also four jail cells on this floor to lock people up for a night or two until they can be taken to the courthouse to face trial. The two upper floors hold barracks for the three dozen or so watch officers stationed here.

Members

Vito Broadfoot (NG dwarf **veteran;** alternatively see **watch captain** in *Tome of Beasts*) is the world-weary, disheveled watch captain of Fish Street. Overlooked many times for promotion to major for refusing to ingratiate himself with his bosses and for speaking home truths to the city council, Captain Broadfoot is nonetheless an excellent officer with an uncanny ability to determine when something is "off." Although he doesn't always have the best watch officers to work with, Broadfoot is respected by his subordinates, and his pragmatic approach to policing has kept the monthly murder rate in one of the city's roughest neighborhoods down to single figures.

Neoma Dusksong (LG human **veteran**) has been a watch sergeant in the city watch for nearly 20 years and knows the streets, alleyways, and wharves of the docks district like the back of her hand. She joined the watch after her younger brother fell in with the Flame Blades, a local criminal guild, and was killed in a nasty turf war with a rival gang. In the two decades she's been in the watch, Neoma has tried to steer as many youngsters away from a life of crime as she can, but poverty is rife in the neighborhood, and the chance to make money with the gangs is tempting. Although she still sees the watch as a force for good, the years have taken their toll on Neoma, and she's become increasingly jaded.

Norrick Bonegnaw (N **wererat;** alternatively see **ratfolk mercenary** in *Creature Codex*) is a scruffy, flea-ridden watch constable with finely honed survival instincts. A feckless coward who has been known to fall asleep while out on patrol, Norrick has an unerring ability to sense trouble and usually runs in the opposite direction. A scrapper when cornered, he is tolerated by Captain Broadfoot for his dogged loyalty and encyclopedic knowledge of the local hoodlums.

Perrin Goodfellow (LG half-elf **guard**) recently transferred to the Fish Street Watchhouse from an upper-class district, so he could arrest "proper criminals." This over-eager young constable with blond hair and blue eyes comes from noble stock and carries a finely crafted magical truncheon (treat as *club +1*; alternatively see *tipstaff* in *Vault of Magic*) purchased with his father's money, which he is very eager to try out.

CULTS AND SECRET SOCIETIES

Every urban center needs one or two—or more!—cults and secret societies lurking in the shadows or operating in plain sight in the corridors of power. These groups come in all shapes and sizes and provide allies, antagonists, and a fantastic source of adventures for characters.

The lines between cults and secret societies are very often blurred, and both types of organization are described below.

CULTS

Cults are social groups whose members share a set of religious or philosophical beliefs, or they are devoted to a particular being, creature, or animal type or to a concept, such as death or the apocalypse. These beliefs and rituals are usually unorthodox and can be disturbing to non-believers, so cults tend to operate in secret or behind a seemingly innocent front. Cults often have charismatic individuals as their leaders, and their followers are frequently fanatical in their devotion to both their leader and the cult's precepts.

Although many cults are religious, the objects of their worship are typically forgotten or obscure gods or supernatural beings such as demon princes, arch-devils, and elemental lords rather than mainstream deities.

To determine a cult's focus for their worship, roll a d20 and consult the **Cult's Focus** table or choose what it is they worship.

CULT'S FOCUS

d20	Focus
1	Aboleth
2	Animal lord
3	Apocalypse
4	Arch-devil
5	Arch-fey of the Shadow Realm or Summer Lands
6	Celestial lord or archangel
7	Dark druidism
8	Death
9	Demon prince
10	Dragons or undead dragons
11	Fallen titan
12	Forgotten god
13	Ghoul emperor, mummy lord, or vampire prince
14	Great Old One
15	Prince of Elemental Air, Earth, Fire, or Water
16	Rats
17	Saint
18	Snakes
19	Spiders
20	Sun, moon, or stars

SECRET SOCIETIES

Secret societies are private groups of like-minded individuals who hide their activities and membership from others and might even conceal their existence from outsiders. Depending on their ethos, membership might be illegal.

There are several types of secret societies. Some are focused on collecting ancient artifacts or gathering esoteric or scientific lore that is only to be shared with other members. Examples include the Hermetic Brotherhood of the Sapphire Prism and the Inscrutable Philosophers of Leng.

Other groups focus on subversive political goals, such as overthrowing the emperor, emancipating slaves, stopping foreigners from practicing arcane magic, or improving the lot of the common folk. Notorious political secret societies include the Jade Unicorn Society and the Solemn Knights of the Oaken Staff.

A third type of secret society exists solely to advance its members' interests, increasing their power and influence in the wider world, such as the Gnomish Benevolent Society and the inaccurately named Fellowship of Humble Scholars.

Membership in a secret society is usually by invitation only and might be restricted by wealth, class, gender, race, or religion. For example, the Hyacinth Nieces are a group of dwarven women who use the power of second sight gained from purple crystals to guide their clan's destiny. There are secret societies whose members are all werewolves (Conclave of the Blue Moon), shapechanged dragons (The Wyrms Within), and liches (Cabal of the Withered Hand).

To generate suitably strange or ominous names for the city's cults and secret societies, roll a d20 and

consult the **Cult and Secret Society Name Generator** table's Column A and then again for a result from either Column B or Column C, getting results such as the Cursed Cabal or the Iron Kingdom. Or roll for both Column B and Column C, adding the words *of the* between the two to create names like the Cursed Cabal of the Damned.

Alternatively, roll once for Column B, once for Column A, and again for Column C, arranging them with the words *of the*, *for the*, or something similar between the results from Column B and Column A. (So for example, Watchers for the Shining Dawn.)

For even more variety, consult a dictionary and/or thesaurus to find a synonym for one of the terms. (For example, perhaps *scarlet* rather than *crimson*.) Or add an additional descriptor or adjective to improve upon the name, so perhaps Emissaries of the Great Beyond works better than just Emissaries of the Beyond.

CULT AND SECRET SOCIETY NAME GENERATOR

d20	Column A	Column B	Column C
1	Black	Acolytes	Apocalypse
2	Blessed	Apostles	Beyond
3	Blood(y)	Band	Chalice
4	Broken	Cabal	Damned
5	Burning	Children	Dawn
6	Crimson	Chosen	Elegy
7	Cursed	Creed	Forsaken
8	Gold(en)	Disciples	Guileless
9	Iron	Emissaries	Haven
10	Languishing	Eyes	Icon
11	Lost	Fellowship	Jewel
12	Misty	Flock	Kingdom
13	Noble	Followers	Lady/Lord
14	Obsidian	Guardians	Moon
15	Perfect	Hallowed	Night
16	Pristine	Keepers	Obelisk
17	Refulgent	Order	Queen/King/ Monarch
18	Ruby	Sect	Shadow
19	Shining	Wardens	Sky/Sun
20	Wild	Watchers	Talisman

JOINING A CULT OR SECRET SOCIETY

Characters might want to join a cult or secret society because they believe in the organization's ethos or goals, because they wish to learn the esoteric knowledge it possesses, or because they see the organization as a means of increasing personal power or status. Adventurers might also try to infiltrate a cult or secret society to put a stop to its activities.

Joining a cult or secret society is typically by invitation only. Cults, particularly religious ones, are generally easier to join than secret societies and might even actively recruit new members, sending their smiling adherents out into the city streets with printed flyers and warm invitations to come along to the temple to find out more about the Lord of Rats or whoever their patron is. Other groups are harder to track down, requiring a character to succeed on one or more Intelligence (Investigation) checks with DCs from 10–25 (at GM's discretion), depending on how secretive the organization is, followed by a successful Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check with a DC from 10–20 to convince a member to invite them along to an initial meeting. Advantage might be granted on these checks for good roleplaying or if the character has relevant contacts they can approach.

At their first cult or society meeting, the character might need to swear an oath of secrecy or loyalty to the organization or be invited to take part in an initiation ritual. These rituals are sometimes bizarre or sinister.

To determine what a character must face to be accepted into a cult or secret society, roll a d12 and consult the **Initiation Rituals** table or choose an appropriate initiation.

INITIATION RITUALS

d12	Character Must . . .
1	Harm or kill an enemy of the organization.
2	Sacrifice a small animal.
3	Be thrashed with birch branches.
4	Burn a straw effigy in front of a 40-foot-tall giant owl statue.
5	Walk across hot coals.
6	Spend a week in the wilderness with the other initiates, singing campfire songs and sleeping under the stars.
7	Drink red wine from a human skull.
8	Learn a funny handshake.
9	Eat a bowl of hallucinogenic mushrooms and spend the night in the woods.
10	Dance with the skeleton of the organization's founder.
11	Sacrifice an innocent person.
12	Wear a special hat in public for a week.

Once the character has been accepted into the organization, they are expected to attend regular cult ceremonies or society meetings. Depending on the nature of the group, these gatherings could involve animal or human sacrifices, more bizarre rituals, or the consumption of excessive amounts of food and drink.

In exchange for the basic privileges of being a member and learning the organization's secret rites and central tenets, the character must look out for their fellow members, protecting them from harm if called upon to do so, and might be asked to recruit more cultists, to deal with enemies of the group, or to carry out other missions. They might also have to make regular donations to the cult or secret society, typically 5–10 gp per month, though exclusive secret societies with wealthy and powerful members expect at least ten times this amount.

Joining a cult or secret society is often easier than leaving—some organizations use enchantment spells or other magic to keep their members from quitting. Evil groups make threats of physical violence and even resort to murder to protect their secrets.

ADVANCEMENT

Until a character becomes a trusted member in the cult or secret society, they won't learn the organization's most treasured secrets. Once they have completed at least three missions for the group and spent a minimum of six weeks of downtime taking part in ceremonies or other duties, the character is admitted into the cult or society's inner circle in a special ceremony.

Members of the inner circle gain access to the cult's sacred scriptures, the society's occult library or secret plans to overthrow the government, or other suitable benefits appropriate to the organization's nature, and are invited to private ceremonies and meetings for senior members only.

SAMPLE CULT: CRIMSON WAKE

This cult venerates Hriggala (see *Tome of Beasts 2*), demon lord and servant of the Unsated God, Vardesain. The Crimson Wake pays lip service to Vardesain when necessary, but their focus is the great, crawling worm itself and its message of unmitigated gluttony and the power it provides. The cult is composed mainly of members of the city's middle class, upper-middle class, and a smattering of nobility. Hriggala's teachings assert the primacy of those who feast over those who serve and those who are feasted upon. Thus, the Crimson Wake attracts the worst of those who hold power over others. Members of the Crimson Wake seek out the corrupt and evil among their social class, the bullies and the sadists, drawing them in with promises of greater power and the chance to indulge their gluttony and darker natures without fear of reprisal.

What might be surprising to some is that the cult shuns known criminals and those who make their living by illegal activities. This is done to protect those within the cult who hold good standing within the city. They indulge their appetites in secret while maintaining the façade of civility. If the curtain is pulled back on the Crimson Wake, it is easier to allay any fears if suspected criminals are not among their ranks. (Though some criminal types are brought into the ranks of the Misguided, see **Special Ceremonies** below.) If all the members are merely established members of society, hard-working citizens, then the case can be made for misinterpretation and overreaction. And after all, aren't these accusers simply folks jealous of the providence of their betters, seeking to besmirch their good names?

This is, of course, hypocrisy of the worst sort. These supposed pillars of the community feed on those weaker than themselves, both metaphorically and literally. By day they lord their positions over those they deem their inferiors and milk every last bit of profit they can from their toil. By night, they give thanks to Hriggala for their fortunes with excessive feasting and drinking. On special occasions, these drunken feasts feature human sacrifice and cannibalism. During these feasts, members boast about gains in wealth and the ways they have exercised power over their underlings, reveling in the cruelty. This is the way the Crimson Wake conducts itself, at least until comes the day when Hriggala is unleashed upon the world to feast. Then the masks can be cast aside, and the faithful will stand tall and eat their fill, traveling in the bloody wake of the worm.

Leaders

The leader of the Crimson Wake is Lord Niketas Kydonas (CE human **noble**), patriarch of an influential noble family in the city. Once athletic and strong, his excesses have sheathed his muscles in a softer, more fleshy form, and he suffers various ailments due to his excesses. He walks with the aid of a cane, bone-handled and set with carnelian, which hides a rapier within. Niketas is well-connected and considers himself untouchable, though he puts on a veneer of calm reserve and thoughtful action in public in order not to draw attention to the cult and its activities or his involvement with them. He also has contacts with ghouls from the underworld, fellow adherents to the worship of Hriggala. He curries their favor in the hopes that one day he will be gifted with undeath and be able to indulge

his appetites without the suffering of his mortal form.

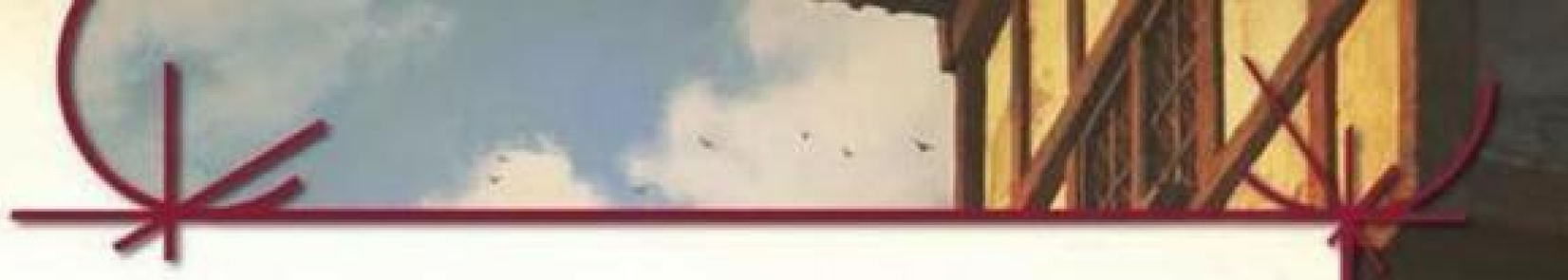
In addition to Lord Kydonas, a few other members of the city's elite serve as an elder council of sorts, making decisions by majority vote, though Kydonas has final say in anything the cult does. These include Cort Thyssen, the city's harbormaster; Vivia Lukko, high-ranking member of the textile guild; and Osto Darkhold, who runs the Darkhold Mining Consortium. In keeping with the idea of the strong deserving to rule, openly challenging the final decision of the cult's leader is inviting a duel, and none of the other leaders wish to face the wolfish noble in open combat.

Cult Goals

The Crimson Wake has no grandiose goal like dominating or destroying the world. They are a band of sadistic hedonists who seek to maintain and increase their personal power. They wish to revel in their excesses and in their ability to direct and dominate the lives of others, enjoying the suffering they cause. They perform their rituals and continued obeisance to Hriggala, hoping for a prophesied day when the demon lord manifests in the mortal world, at which point they will serve the great worm directly and be able to publicly display their fealty to Hriggala and indulge their worst natures to the fullest without restraint or reason to hide.

Special Ceremonies

Every new moon, a victim is ritually sacrificed and feasted upon in the cult's secret halls. This victim is someone who has been fattened up over time after being "sponsored" by a Crimson Wake member and mislead into believing they are to be inducted into this exclusive group. The cult's secrets are never fully divulged to the victim, and they're simply told that the group is a club exclusive to certain elite members and those they feel are promising enough to sponsor for membership. Sponsors typically choose someone they believe is unlikely to be missed, or at least one whose disappearance won't cause much of a stir in the public



eye. Often it is one who has, perhaps unknowingly, slighted a member of the cult. That cultist then pretends to befriend the person, setting them up for vengeance by serving them to the Crimson Wake as the next main course of their monthly high feast. The cult refers to such sacrifices as the Misguided: ones who reach above their station and pay the ultimate price for their folly.

At lesser feasts, members engage in a boasting contest, where they share what they call tales of iron will. Each member that participates indulges the others with a tale about a situation in which they exerted their will over another, forcing the other person to capitulate and do what they wished them to. The more unlikely the situation and the more humiliation put upon the person forced to do their will, the more prestige the story receives among the members of the Crimson Wake. The assembled members then vote to determine which tale was the best. The winner gains the right to be served first, along with the elder council, at their cannibalistic feast on the new moon.

Cult Benefits

When using the cult in the city, one thing to consider is applying special benefits for cult membership. Perhaps their ritual cannibalism bestows magical abilities upon the feaster. It might provide extra strength or vigor, granting a blood frenzy that provides some or all the advantages of a barbarian's rage when in combat. Or perhaps it increases their predatory nature and makes them more menacing, providing advantage when attempting to manipulate or intimidate others. These powers might be greater (or have a longer duration) for those who are served first, as befits the nature of their cult. Hence why the cultists vie for the honor, for it offers a material benefit rather than simply prestige among their peers. This would also explain the hesitation of other members to challenge Lord Kydonas, whose martial prowess is increased by this cannibalistic vitality.

SAMPLE CULT: LEARNED CIRCLE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Some folks gather knowledge to improve their understanding of the world around them and their place within it, happily sharing it with others. Others greedily hoard the lore they have learned or use what they have uncovered to coerce those with something to hide into revealing yet more intimate secrets. The Learned Circle of Enlightenment professes to be a group of curious scholars but is actually a cult dedicated to the arch-devil **Parzelon**, King of Secrets, Lord of Nakhol, the Vanishing Hell of Ignorance (see *Creature Codex*).

Based in a dusty old library close to the city's university, the cult allows anyone prepared to pay the hefty 20-gp daily fee access to its collection of tomes on a wide range of subjects, from history and geography to nature and religion. The librarians are members of the society and take part in weekly ceremonies in the library's chapel dedicated to the Patron Saint of Scholars, but only a handful are cultists who have been initiated into the cult proper and know its true nature.

The cult of Parzelon meets in the labyrinthine restricted section in the library's basement where a disquieting statue of the arch-devil looms over an altar in the cult's hidden shrine. Parzelon is depicted with a leonine skull for a head and a rippling physique, and he holds a horn in one hand and a snake-headed whip in the other. Here, the cult hoards hundreds of books of esoteric lore and forbidden secrets, including dangerous volumes like the *Ineffable Tome of the Yawning Void* and the much sought-after *Nine Chthonic Papyri of Heknusret the Temerarious*.

The restricted section also holds six large volumes known as the *Black Ledgers*, which record the secrets and dark deeds of dozens of city residents. The cult uses these books to blackmail the city's inhabitants into revealing the weaknesses, fears, and peccadilloes of everyone they know and to force them to obtain rare books to be donated to the Learned Circle of Enlightenment's collection. Anyone who stands up to the blackmailers soon regrets it as their darkest secrets spread like wildfire through the taverns and salons of the city.

Members

Alberic Silkbinder (LE half-elf **cult fanatic;** alternatively see **emerald order cult leader** in *Tome of Beasts*) is the gray-haired head of the Learned Circle of Enlightenment. Alberic comes across as a bumbling, absent-minded academic, but this is a façade. He stops at nothing to fill the restricted section with unique tomes, so the knowledge they hold becomes the sole province of the cult and no one else. Alberic has recently become obsessed with tracking down a *staff of Parzelon* (see *Vault of Magic*) and has taken to reading the innards of human sacrifices to locate the item.

Osgarda (LE **succubus;** alternatively see **spawn of Parzelon** in *Creature Codex*), a leonine devil born from one of Parzelon's blasphemous mortal liaisons, can often be found in the library in human guise. Wearing half-moon spectacles with her silvery-blond hair in a bun, Osgarda potters around, shushing anyone talking in the stacks. The devil watches over the door leading to the restricted section like a hawk and deals quickly and efficiently with any would-be intruders.

Byblos Ironbrand (NE human **cult fanatic**) is the cult's chief blackmailer. Flamboyantly dressed and accessorized with a gold pocket watch, feathered hat, and walking cane, the oily and loathsome Byblos visits the great and the good and whispers in their ears that he knows all their secrets. As the blackmail victims react in horror, the smirking Byblos hands them a note listing the cult's demands before heading out the door, whistling merrily to himself.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

There are a few other types of organization that can be found in cities and towns that haven't already been covered in this chapter. Here are some brief suggestions to expand on if featuring one of these groups.

ACADEMIC

Universities, schools, and other organizations focused on mundane learning can play an important role in the city. A formal education is often the province of the wealthy, but some academic institutions offer free or affordable scholarships to talented students from less privileged backgrounds. These groups sometimes enlist adventurers to obtain unusual artifacts for study or to exhibit in their museums.

KNIGHTLY ORDERS

These fighting orders of knights and paladins are often religious in nature and, unlike mercenaries, fight without payment in the service of their god or for a "just cause." Each order is based at a chapterhouse where they take part in constant drills, ready for when the call comes to defend their host city or embark on a crusade against evil.

MILITARY

Only the biggest cities are large enough to support a standing army or navy—most hire mercenaries (see **Adventuring and Mercenary Companies** above) or enlist the support of knightly orders when they need to defend their town against attackers or fight a battle against a rival settlement. Many do maintain a city guard though. Distinct from the city watch (see **City Watch** above), these soldiers patrol the city walls, defend the gates, and guard the ruler's castle or palace. Elite aerial troops ride drakes, griffons, or hippogriffs.

RELIGIOUS

This category includes churches and temples of the major and minor religions in the city as well as monastic orders. Different sects of a major religion might be considered heretical or even a cult if they differ too much from the mainstream faith, leading to conflict and, potentially, violence.

SOCIAL

Social groups include organizations such as artists' salons, gentlemen's clubs, women's associations, and ethnic societies. These groups get together simply to enjoy each other's company and don't shroud themselves in secrecy or take part in weird rites.

HENCHMEN AND HIRELINGS

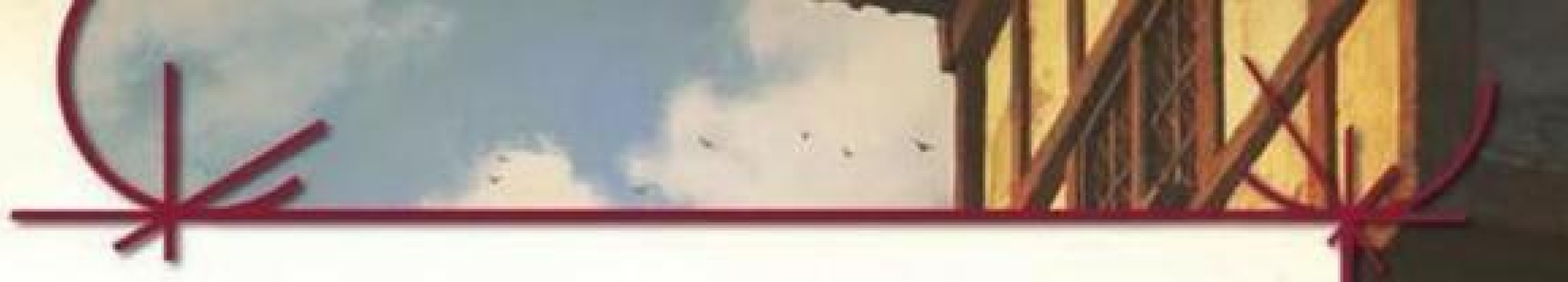
At its most basic level, henchmen and hirelings are non-player characters who provide a service to the player characters in exchange for payment in coin or other remuneration.

WHY A HENCHMAN OR HIRELING?

Even the greatest heroes need assistance occasionally: a strong back to haul chests of treasure, a wise historian to pinpoint the location of a lost city, an innkeeper to mind the adventurer's tavern, some muscle to help take down a ring of thieves, even a talented coiffeur to prepare the hero for their audience with the king. These individuals do not have the spark of greatness that separates adventurers from the rest of the population, but they do provide important services that the heroes might seek out, be it for a single task, longer periods, or permanently.

As a Foil for the GM. At a basic level, anyone hired by characters can be considered a henchman or hireling. They are nonplayer characters who provide some service the heroes can't or don't want to do themselves. These individuals rarely prove to be important to the campaign's goals, and their personalities are not immediately as important as what they can do and how much their services cost.

Still, for a clever GM, henchmen and hirelings can be a useful arrow to have in the quiver. A timely letter from an ally or foe delivered by a trusted hireling allows the GM to pass important information. A kidnapped henchman can provide a thrilling side-quest or let a hated foe strike a hit close to the characters' hearts. Even the acquisition of items or spells can be made easier with



the help of a mage-smith working on a special magical sword while the heroes go off on adventures.

FINDING THEM

Within the walls of a city or town, the characters can find all manner of henchmen and hirelings. Certainly, the larger the community, the more choices the heroes have, though very specialized individuals might require additional time to track down. In general, they are found in locations common to their trade. The search for a woodcarver would lead to the artisan district, and those wishing to hire a navigator for their ship end up near the wharves or docks. Finding such an individual should not be a difficult proposition, and a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) or Charisma (Persuasion) check is usually sufficient to locate a few possible candidates.

Larger communities offer more options for henchmen and hirelings than smaller ones, and their increased population produces multiple choices at a variety of skill levels and cost. For GMs who desire a bit more complexity, consult the **Locating Henchmen and Hirelings** table to adjust the chances of locating a henchman for various locations.

LOCATING HENCHMEN AND HIRELINGS

Community Size	DC
Village or smaller	18
Small town	16
Large town	14
Small city	12
Large city	10
Metropolis	10

QUALITY OF HIRE

Individuals are considered either skilled or untrained. The skilled have proficiency in a skill, weapon, or tool appropriate to their area of expertise, while those who are untrained have no bonus. The following optional rules provide a more nuanced range of expertise and an easy way to calculate their proficiency bonuses.

Individuals fall into the following talent groups:

- ***Untrained.*** These are individuals who perform menial work requiring no particular skill or ability and might include laborers, porters, and custodial staff.
- ***Apprentice.*** The most numerous of the groups, those at apprentice level have basic training in their chosen professions because either they never advanced beyond this point, or they are new to the craft.
- ***Journeymen.*** Of greater talent than the apprentice, the journeyman continues to develop their skills and can charge higher rates for their services.
- ***Master.*** Acknowledged by their peers, an expert is a mature practitioner of their craft, often sought by patrons, and they typically train their own apprentices.
- ***Senior Master.*** These individuals demonstrate the pinnacle of skill in their fields. Some start their own training schools while others prefer to work individually with journeymen and apprentices. Senior masters are well-paid for their craft and count nobility and individuals in positions of power among their customers.

Consult the **Bonuses and Costs** table for relevant proficiency bonuses and costs.

BONUSES AND COSTS

Talent Level	Proficiency Bonus	Cost per Day*
Untrained	+0	2 sp per day
Apprentice	+2	1 gp per day
Journeyman	+3	2 gp per day
Master	+4	5 gp per day
Senior master	+5	10 gp per day

(*) this cost does not include materials, specialized requirements, or components.

STREAMLINED ABILITY CHECKS

GMs can build the statistics for henchmen or choose an existing nonplayer character. Either way though, this can take time and divert attention from the player

ADJUSTING THE COMMONER

Many henchmen and hirelings are based on the **commoner**, but it doesn't mean they all need to be identical. GMs can choose to increase their ability scores to reflect the individual's specialty. A smith might be stronger than a scribe, for example. As a general guideline, increase one ability score by 1 for each of their talent levels. (This adjustment is already factored into the proficiency bonus in the **Bonuses and Cost** table.) So a senior master acrobat might have a Dexterity score of 15. These rules can be applied to anyone (at GM's discretion).

characters. To streamline matters, the specifics of the henchman can be abstracted to encourage quick and easy gameplay.

Streamlining ability checks gives each a simple proficiency bonus to represent their skills at various talent levels as indicated in the **Bonuses and Costs** table. The bonus is applied to all ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that involve their area of expertise. So journeyman sellswords have a +3 proficiency bonus to their attack rolls while senior master masons have +5 proficiency bonus to rolls using their stone-carving tools. Using this optional rule allows GMs to quickly roll without having to work out the full statistics.

COSTS

The fees shown in the **Bonuses and Costs** table reflect the cost to hire an individual to perform basic tasks (or to craft items less than 50 gp in value). Performing non-basic tasks and creating items above 50 gp in value fall under the normal downtime and item creation costs, with the characters needing to spend the required amounts. Talent levels above senior master can certainly exist, and some individuals might require higher fees than listed, depending on their skills and the complications or dangers involved in the job.

Long-Term Employment. Hiring someone to perform a single task or create a single item is merely a simple transaction. Hiring the same person to work for the characters over a longer period requires a few different considerations. Most would expect a daily wage as indicated in the **Bonuses and Costs** table, payable every week or month. In exchange for the guarantee of long-term employment, many give a 5–10 percent discount. Individuals at higher talent levels usually insist on a written contract, often witnessed by a guild or city official, detailing the particulars of the employment arrangement. The potential perks of long-term employment with adventurers involve bonuses in coin or treasure, access to rare components, and contacts with important figures.

Hiring Guild Members. In communities where not every craftsperson or merchant is required to belong to a guild, an individual with guild membership can charge 10–15 percent higher than a non-guild member. Moreover, once per day, the guild member has advantage on one check related to their area of expertise.

Hiring Spellcasters. Characters typically hire mages and clerics to cast specific spells and are charged per spell (an amount that usually considers the time spent, spell slot expended, and the cost of any components).

LOYALTY

Typically, henchmen and hirelings are motivated primarily by money. It is how they make their living, after all. Of secondary concern for non-combat-oriented roles (like soldiers and mercenaries) is personal safety. The common scribe expects to face down a tricky bit of calligraphy, not ancient evils.

Loyalty is a factor of payment and treatment. Under normal conditions, if an individual is paid on time and not mistreated, they are loyal. Otherwise, they quit the character's employ once they are in a non-hostile community. When faced with an unhappy individual, a character must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to get them to remain, but if the negative conditions do not improve within 1d4 weeks, they depart.

It is critical to stress "normal conditions." This reflects the expected day-to-day aspects of the individual's trade or craft and does not include intimidation by the character's foes, blackmail, threats of violence, extreme bigotry, magical coercion, or any other aspect of the strange lives of adventurers. How one reacts to those decidedly abnormal conditions is at the GM's discretion.

Optional Complex Loyalty Rules

In general, the loyalty considerations described above are sufficient for most games, but if a more complicated loyalty system is desired, consider using the following optional rules.

Starting Loyalty Score. All henchmen and hirelings begin with a base loyalty score of 2 plus half the proficiency bonus of the character (minimum of 1) who hired them. Half of the hired individual's proficiency bonus (as determined by their talent level; see above) can also be applied if desired. A high score reflects someone satisfied and loyal, while a low score reflects someone ready to leave.

Consult the **Loyalty Score** table for the DCs needed to convince a henchman or hireling to obey an obviously dangerous order and the percentage chance they might flee from combat or quit the character's employ.

Obeying Dangerous Orders. Henchmen and hirelings do not casually throw their lives away and refuse orders that obviously lead them to unacceptable levels of risk or danger. These rules are an abstraction that assumes an "unacceptable risk" is in relation to their expertise since, faced with the threat of a monster, a sellsword and a scribe have much different views of the risk involved. An individual forced to obey a dangerous order might begin to question their loyalty.

LOYALTY SCORE

Loyalty Score	Loyalty Condition	DC to Obey a Dangerous Order	Chance of Flight or Departure
1	Hatred	20	75%
2	Actively complaining	18	50%
3	Poor morale	17	25%
4	Mildly discontented	16	–
5	Average loyalty	13	–
6	Pleased	12	–
7	Happy	11	–
8	Confident and trusting	10	–
9	Idolizing	–	–
10	Fanatical loyalty	–	–

To convince them to obey a dangerous order, the character must succeed on a Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check, rolling equal to or higher than the number indicated in the **Loyalty Score** table. Those at loyalty score 9 or higher automatically obey dangerous or suicidal orders, gladly exchanging their lives for the characters.

Chance of Flight. Hirelings with a loyalty score of 3 or lower must roll percentile dice at the beginning of each of their turns during combat, fleeing the encounter if the result is lower than the percentage indicated in the **Loyalty Score** table.

Chance of Departure. At the end of a long rest in a non-hostile community, roll percentile dice for any henchman or hireling with a loyalty score of 3 or lower. If the result is lower than the Chance of Flight or Departure listed in the **Loyalty Score** table, they leave the character's service.

Loyalty Adjustments. During gameplay, various events and actions can raise or lower one's loyalty score. A positive adjustment event can occur once per week, unless the GM approves more frequent events, although multiple negative ones are possible in the same week. No adjustment event (positive or negative) can be repeated until a month has passed.

The following events increase a loyalty score by 1:

- Attain a critical success on a Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check while interacting with them.
- Complete a quest important to them (saving a loved one, defending their town, and so on).
- Gain renown in their homeland (at GM's discretion).
- Gift with a valuable treasure or beneficial magic item.
- Reward with a bonus equal to a half-share of divided party loot.
- Reward with a bonus equal to at least double their daily pay.

The following events decrease a loyalty score by 1:

- Force them to obey a dangerous order.
- Refuse to pay them their wages.
- The characters' reputation in an area reflects badly somehow on the henchman or hireling.
- They are poisoned or affected by malicious magic.
- They are reduced to 0 hit points or are knocked unconscious during combat.
- They are verbally or physically mistreated (decrease by 2 if by the player characters).

EXPANDED RULES

The following tables list various professions that can be found throughout urban areas. Along with each entry are the most important skills or tools used by those individuals. An asterisk (*) denotes a nonplayer character included in **City Inhabitants** below.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Animal trainer, groom, shepherd	Animal handling, Nature	**Commoner**
Farmer, gardener, herbalist	Herbalism kit, Nature	**Commoner, druid**
Fisher, forester, hunter	Nature, Survival	**Commoner, scout**

ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Architect, engineer	Calligrapher's tools, Investigation	**Sage*, scholar***
Brickmaker, stonemason	Mason's tools, Perception	**Crafter***
Carpenter	Carpenter's tools, woodcarver's tools	**Crafter***

ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS

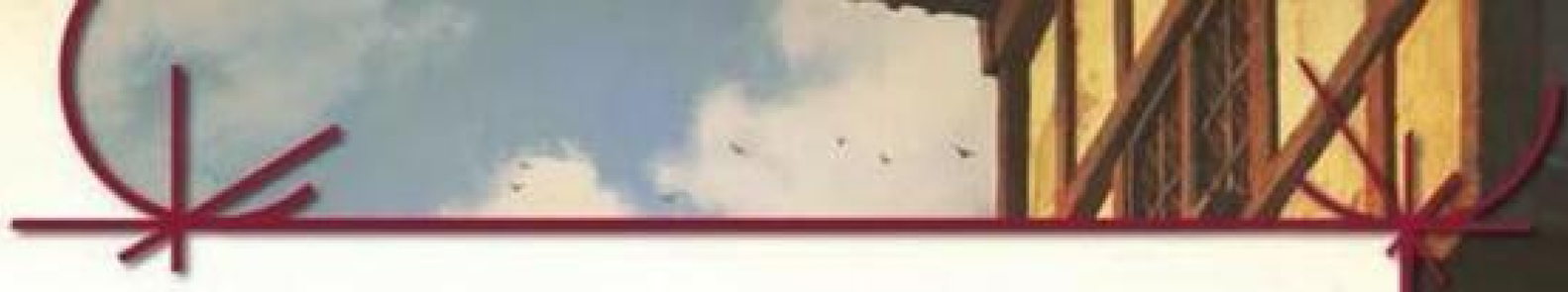
Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Acrobat, dancer, tumbler	Acrobatics, Performance	**Performer***
Actor, jester, jongleur, storyteller	Acrobatics, Performance	**Performer***
Artist, painter, sculptor	Painter's tools, Performance	**Artist***
Bard, minstrel, musician, singer	Performance, Persuasion	**Performer***
Clothier, coiffeur, stylist	Disguise kit, Insight	**Artist***
Duelist, gladiator, wrestler	Athletics, Performance	**Gladiator, thug, veteran**
Playwright, writer	History, Performance	**Performer*, scholar***

BUSINESS AND TRADE

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Accountant, actuary, bookkeeper	Insight, Investigation	**Scholar***
Guild official	Intimidation, Persuasion	**Crafter*, merchant***
Merchant	Insight, Persuasion	**Commoner, merchant*, trader***
Money changer, pawnbroker	Deception, Insight	**Merchant*, spy**
Peddler	Glassblower's tools, Nature, tinker's tools	**Crafter*, trader***

CLERICS AND CULTISTS

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Cleric, priest	Medicine, Religion	**Acolyte, druid, priest**
Cultists	Deception, Religion	**Cult fanatic, cultist**
Friar, martial artist, monk	Acrobatics, calligrapher's supplies	**Acolyte, monk***
Oracle, prophet	Deception, History	**Mage, sage*, spy**



CRAFTSMEN AND ARTIFICERS

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Apothecary, chemist, dyer	Alchemist's tools, Nature	**Alchemist***, **sage***, **trader***
Armorer, blacksmith, metalworker	History, smith's tools	**Crafter***, **trader***
Bowyer, fletcher	Tinker's tools, woodcarver's tools	**Crafter***, **trader***
Brewer, vintner, winemaker	Brewer's tools, herbalism kit	**Crafter***
Cobbler, leatherworker	Cobbler's kit, leatherworker's tools	**Crafter***
Cooper, woodworker	Carpenter's tools, woodcarver's tools	**Crafter***
Furrier, skinner, tanner	Leatherworker's tools, Nature	**Crafter***
Gemcutter, goldsmith, jeweler	Jeweler's tools, tinker's tools	**Artist***, **crafter***
Haberdasher, mender, weaver	Tinker's tools, weaver's tools	**Crafter***
Instrument maker (musical or scientific)	Carpenter's tools, woodcarver's tools	**Crafter***
Miller	Nature, tinker's tools	**Crafter***
Perfumer, soapmaker	Alchemist's tools, herbalism kit	**Crafter***
Shipwright, wagon wright, wheelwright	Carpenter's tools, tinker's tools	**Crafter***

CRIMINALS AND COMMONERS

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Assassin	Poisoner's kit, Stealth,	**Assassin**
Beggar, commoner, peasant, urchin	Perception, Survival	**Commoner**
Burglar, con artist, rogue, thief	Sleight of hand, thieves' tools	**Bandit**, **bandit captain**, **footpad***
Fence, loan shark, smuggler	Deception, Persuasion	**Commoner**, **spy**

DROVERS AND SAILORS

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Drover, caravanners, wagoner	Animal Handling, vehicles (land)	**Commoner**, **trader***
Navigator, ship pilot	Navigator's kit, vehicles (water)	**Commoner**, **scout**
Ship captain	Nature, vehicles (water)	**Bandit captain**, **noble**
Ship crew	Survival, vehicles (water)	**Commoner**

FINANCE AND LAW

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Accountant, banker, clerk	Calligrapher's tools, Investigation	**Scholar***
Advocate, barrister, litigator	Insight, Persuasion	**Scholar***
City official, tax collector	Insight, Intimidation	**Commoner**, **spy**, **thug**
Judge, minister	Calligrapher's tools, Insight	**Noble**, **scholar***, **spy**
Notary, scribe	Calligrapher's tools, forgery kit	**Scholar***

GOVERNMENT, NOBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Chancellor, mayor, steward	Calligrapher's tools, Insight	Noble, scholar*, spy
Courier, guide, messenger	Persuasion, Survival	Scout
Diplomat, spy	Calligrapher's tools, Insight	Noble, scholar*, spy
Emperor, king, monarch	Intimidation, Persuasion	Monarch*, noble
Footman, page, valet	History, Persuasion	Commoner
Herald, orator, spokesperson	History, Performance	Performer*, scholar*
Interpreter, linguist, translator	Investigation, Insight, Perception	Scholar*
Noble (various ranks and titles)	History, Intimidation	Knight, noble, spy

HOSPITALITY AND LABOR

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Baker, chef, cook	Cook's utensils, herbalism kit	Artist*, crafter*
Barkeep, tavern owner	Insight, Persuasion	Commoner, veteran
Butler, domestic servant, maid	Insight, Persuasion	Commoner, guard
Companion	Deception, Persuasion	Performer*
Dockworker, porter, teamster	Animal Handling, Athletics	Commoner
Dungsweeper, gravedigger, sewer cleaner	Athletics, vehicles (land)	Commoner
Governess, nanny	Intimidation, Perception	Commoner
Lamplighter, torchbearer	Acrobatics, Athletics	Commoner
Miner	Nature, Survival	Commoner

LEARNING AND MEDICINE

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Barber, barber surgeon	Herbalism kit, Medicine	Scholar*
Cartographer	Cartographer's tools, Nature	Sage*, scholar*
Healer, midwife, physician, surgeon	Healer's kit, Medicine	Acolyte, alchemist*, scholar*
Librarian, researcher, sage	Calligrapher's tools, History	Sage*, scholar*
Professor, student, teacher	Specific Intelligence or Wisdom skills	Sage*, scholar*

MAGICAL ARTS AND MERCENARIES

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Alchemist, apothecary, dyer	Alchemist's tools, Nature,	Alchemist*, sage*, trader*
Arcanist, mage, spellhawk, wizard	Alchemist's tools, Arcana	Archmage, mage, spellhawk*
Druid, herbalist	Herbalism kit, Nature	Druid
Mercenary, sellsword	Athletics, Survival	Sellsword*, thug, veteran

MILITARY AND SECURITY

Henchman/Hireling	Skills and Tools	NPCs
Archer, scout	Athletics, Nature	Bandit, scout
Army officer, soldier	Athletics, dice set	Thug, veteran
Bailiff, jailer, magistrate	Insight, Perception	Guard, veteran
Cavalry officer, knight	Athletics, History	Knight, noble, veteran
City guard, constable, gatekeeper	Investigation, Perception	Guard, thug

HIRELING CHARACTER AND BEHAVIOR

Coming from all walks of life, henchmen and hirelings have a wide variety of characteristics, mannerisms, and quirks. Some GMs might prefer to treat them as silent servants, reducing interactions to downtime activities only or just glossing over them. Other GMs want the characters to roleplay with them. The following guidelines can help make a one-dimensional nonplayer character feel like a real person.

Memorable henchmen and hirelings are formed from three aspects—agenda, mannerism, and personality. Keep in mind, these are usually not meant to be fully formed characters with complex characteristics, deep backgrounds, and lengthy plotlines. They are the fun, quirky folks who lay out the characters' clothing in the morning, forge armor in the characters' castle, or research the esoteric bits of information the characters need:

- ***Agenda.*** Choose a few words to describe their agenda. This can also be described as drive, goal, or motivation. Sometimes, this can refer to what makes them want to do what they do or what makes them want to work for someone like the characters. Other times, their agenda has nothing to do with their craft and is a product of their past, present, or future. Agendas can be as simple as "does it for the coin" to as complex as "needs to atone for past crimes."
- ***Mannerism.*** Choose one simple, physical action they are known for. This should be something they do often: has a thick accent, scratches chin, never remembers names, perpetually sharpens knife. The best mannerisms are ones the GM can do easily but are memorable enough for the characters to notice.
- ***Personality.*** Choose two words to sum up their attitude, character, and general demeanor. These words should be enough to evoke a sense of them. Perhaps the halfling bartender is "warmly gruff" or the wizened sage is "adorably goofy."

Roll a d10 three times and consult each of the **Agendas**, **Mannerisms**, and **Personalities** tables, or choose appropriate aspects for the henchman or hireling. The aspects listed are by no means the only ones possible.

AGENDAS

d10	Agendas
1	Be an adventurer one day.
2	Earn forgiveness.
3	Earn money.
4	Focus on craft.
5	Hide from old enemies.
6	Prove themselves the best.
7	Seek lost art or lore.
8	Serve the characters.
9	Uphold a tradition.
10	Work for the characters' foe/rival.

MANNERISMS

d10	Mannerisms
1	Absently picks at scars
2	Annoyingly overeager
3	Has a very thick accent
4	Has an irrational fear or prejudice
5	Is always eating
6	Painfully shy
7	Quotes religious texts
8	Talks too much (or not enough)
9	Tugs on ear, braid, or mustache
10	Voice is very soft or loud

PERSONALITIES

d10	Personality
1	Absently distracted
2	Angrily aggressive
3	Bluntly parental
4	Charmingly chaotic
5	Cruelly petty
6	Dedicated hedonist
7	Hidden fanatic
8	Impressively arrogant
9	Secretly frightened
10	Superstitiously gullible

MONSTROUS CITIZENS

Citizenship is always a touchy subject, even when everyone involved is the same species with a roughly similar physiology. Things get stranger in fantasy settings where dragonborn, elves, dwarves, and countless others are commonly citizens of *somewhere* alongside the more familiar humans. It's even more complicated when considering that many monsters are intelligent and social so are liable to seek citizenship as well, and while most Humanoids can be assumed to have a roughly similar body plan and physiological needs, monsters can get weird in ways that a society needs to accommodate.

But first, some definitions are needed.

WHAT IS A MONSTER?

For these purposes, a "monstrous citizen" is a demographic that is large enough that a city or town must keep their needs in mind to function, that is a recognized and integrated part of the local population, and that is physiologically or psychologically different enough from the dominant culture (presumably Small/Medium Humanoids) that their presence impacts the social structure, culture, or architecture in a way that the "non-monstrous" majority of citizens wouldn't. In short, they are intelligent creatures without the Humanoid type that are a significant demographic in a given population.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT MONSTROUS CITIZENS?

Depending on the citizen, everything!

Awakened animals might not have thumbs or grasping limbs. Quadrupeds might have serious issues with stairs. Elementals might require elemental reservoirs or hazard-proofing to stay healthy, while some fey might require tended groves. Diminutive creatures have a vastly reduced cost of living and living-space requirements. Subterranean creatures present the possibility of cave-ins, sinkholes, and subterranean flooding. A sizable population of enormous citizens requires tremendous amounts of space, food, and waste disposal. . . .

Each species of monstrous citizen comes with its own quirks when brought into a more diverse population, and the society must adapt. While the sections below are non-exhaustive, they provide examples of adaptations to a city in response to its citizenry.

DIVERGENT BODY PLANS

Monstrous citizens can have wildly variant body plans with knock-on effects for construction and culture.

Take the worg, regularly presented as living alongside goblins. Though intelligent and capable of speech, the worg has no thumbs, is quadrupedal, and is comparable in size to a very large wolf or even a horse. For a worg citizen, hallways need to be larger, doors need to be manageable with a maw instead of a hand, tables and benches need to be low—plus they need bowls for water and food, accessible ramps, and maybe tools or a writing system that can be managed with jaws and paws. Even in species possessing workarounds like the ability to cast spells, such as *mage hand* or *telekinesis*, there are often still limitations: concentration, weight limits, loss of manual dexterity, and the like.

An outsider to such a city would see wide, low benches, decorated drinking bowls, wide doors with low, lever-like doorknobs, and a tendency toward either ramps or staircases with shallow, wide steps. Tall bookcases or shelves are rare and have ramps to help citizens reach higher levels or rolling platforms in place of ladders. If citizens have spellcasting abilities, items might be marked to indicate that they're safe to pick up magically.

Wings are another common feature of would-be monstrous citizens. The wings are of necessity often quite bulky, and their use makes demands of the region's airspace. In a city with winged citizens, homes might have dedicated landings: spacious balconies, interior courtyards, or just a living room with a very wide door for citizens to touch down, take off, and stretch their wings without smacking against the walls. Most birds have wingspans wider than they are tall, and winged citizens are likely to match that trend. There might be guides and banners hung from rooftops to designate landing areas or acceptable flight paths and bright lights hung from towers at night to avoid collisions.

Arboreal and some serpentine citizens might need fewer amenities than bipedal humanoids. The ability to simply climb walls, especially while carrying a load, means that stairs and ladders aren't as important for common construction. Textured walls, carved handholds, or dedicated climbing pillars take their place, providing easy grips to climb and rest on. Chairs and benches might see little use by citizens used to coiling upon themselves or who would be more comfortable on a cushion.

ISSUES OF SCALE

Accommodating massive citizens like giants or diminutive ones like sprites have dramatic impacts on city planning.

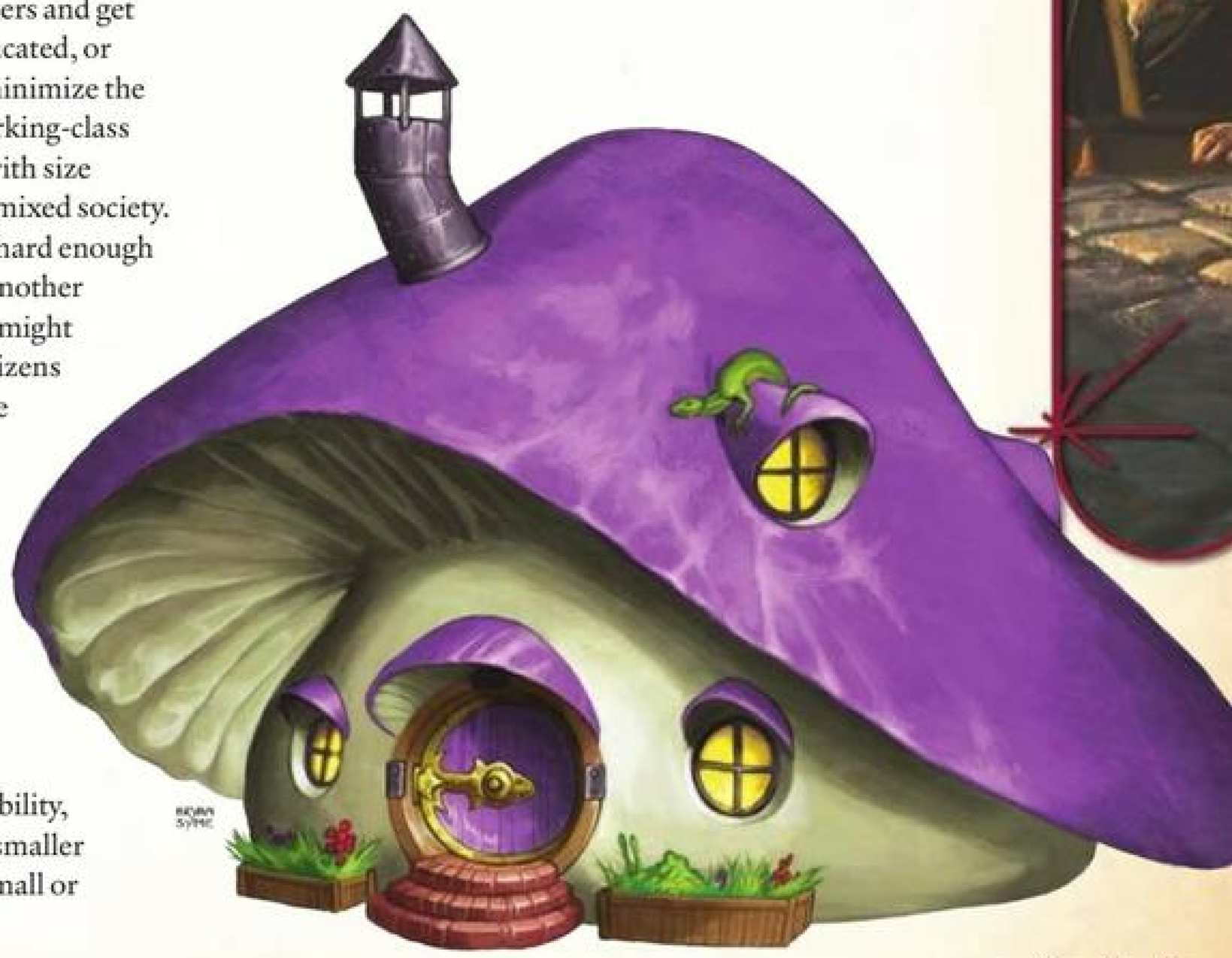
Massive citizens are resource intensive—in utilization of space, upkeep, and infrastructure. Mass increases far more quickly than height does, increasing with it food and sewage requirements, the material and labor that goes into clothing, the size of homes and public spaces, and the construction effort that goes into the same. In addition to needing wider, larger roads, massive citizens require tougher roads. Like rhinos or heavy vehicles, a dozen ogres heading down main street are going to wear down the road far more quickly than humans would, while a second floor that comfortably supports the weight of Medium creatures might not hold Large or Huge creatures. Sewers that function for humanoid inhabitants might quickly run into issues of blockage and overflow with the added demands. A "mega-sewer"—complete with adventuring parties and monster lairs—becomes far more understandable if 10 percent of a city's population weighs as much as an elephant.

Meanwhile, the cost of living for such citizens is higher than it is for smaller folks since they need more material and labor for their clothes and belongings, more space for their houses, and more food. This might affect the jobs they take: a giant in manual labor can do the job of many smaller workers and get paid appropriately while a noble, well-educated, or landowning giant has enough wealth to minimize the impact of cost differentials. However, working-class professions whose income doesn't scale with size might be a problem for large citizens in a mixed society. Sustaining oneself as a small merchant is hard enough without needing to sell twice as much as another merchant to make a living. As such, there might be notable gaps in society where larger citizens mostly don't work because it doesn't make sense for them.

With diminutive citizens, factors move in the opposite direction. They need less space, infrastructure, food, and material, but they face serious accessibility and safety issues that get worse the smaller one gets. A recurring issue in many modern cities is that they are designed to be safe for Medium adult humanoids, such as with accessibility, visibility, and other features that don't account for smaller builds. With a significant population of Small or smaller humanoids, signs, railings, doorknobs, chairs, roads, and wagons need to be redesigned for increased usability, so diminutive citizens can use them easily and not worry about being trampled by wagon-drivers who can't see them or falling off balconies with poorly designed railings.

Diminutive citizens live less-expensive lives than their larger counterparts. They need less material for clothing and personal goods, less space for housing, less food, and are less individually intensive on the local infrastructure. Most diminutive citizens are just as capable as their larger counterparts at most jobs. Smaller laborers might have some issues, where limitations of carrying capacity and height could see them with fewer options, but most tend toward professions where this isn't an issue or where the ability to enter small spaces is an advantage.

Significant scale differences in the citizenry are going to affect housing plans. A system wherein manor-like estates for larger citizens or compact quarters for smaller ones are clustered together in enclaves provides an easy solution to the problem and simplifies architectural issues. However, there's a lot of potential in pointedly mixed districts. A city block might have a courtyard and several houses sized for its largest citizens, and the space between houses—or even within the largest houses themselves, for particularly dramatic differences—would be filled with smaller abodes and



attendant infrastructure. A giant lord might house staff in the margins of his home, or a sprite queen might rest her resplendent palace atop those of her subjects.

EXOTIC PHYSIOLOGY

Monstrous citizens might have physiologies that significantly impact those around them: blazing bodies, petrifying gazes, spellcasting, water breathing, and a dizzying variety of other factors can change the shape of a population.

Aquatic citizens require both somewhere to live and ways to interact with their air-breathing compatriots. Amphibious citizens might have an easier time of it and could even live in entirely terrestrial housing so long as appropriate tubs or baths are provided. Truly aquatic citizens might have magically engaged airlocks, partially flooded transfer rooms, or elaborate aquarium-like setups so they can interact with air-breathers. Additionally, they'll need to restrict water use from those above ground: dumping waste into a river or bay becomes littering and a clear health-hazard to those living in it. Boats need guides to avoid beaching themselves on sunken buildings, but water rescue is likely much easier in such a community.

Citizens who are an active risk to the environment around them need that environment to be hardened against accident and sabotage. Fires are a serious threat to any city, requiring largely stone construction when even small portions of the population consist of flame-bodied citizens. Even citizens with the ability to control their dangerous physiology, like dragons or creatures that cast spells, require a degree of hardening, since even a small scuffle could turn into a city-wide calamity. Materials resistant to the specific threat would be omnipresent in construction, and emergency shelters might be common, depending on how threatening the physiology is for everyone else in the city.

Alternate methods of movement, like teleportation, gaseous forms, and tunneling, all come with their own opportunities. Tunneling citizens and subterranean buildings can cause building collapses aboveground, instability, sinkholes, and more if tunnels aren't charted and reinforced. There might be regulations regarding private tunneling or a team of engineers and specially equipped citizens dedicated to preventing such calamity. Teleporters and similar abilities don't strictly need doors and might have small portholes or windows to facilitate travel to and from their homes. However, most such effects limit what a citizen can take with them, and doors might be necessary for moving furniture around, even if they don't care for non-casting guests.

WHY ARE THEY CITIZENS?

When designing any population, keep in mind how any monstrous citizens might have become such a significant demographic. Different backstories have different adaptations for the same problems and different cultural attitudes for those adaptations.

A nation where people have lived alongside worgs since before they had written language would have accessibility for large, four-legged predators with no thumbs baked into their culture and architecture. A city that brought in a legion of ogre mercenaries after a big war might still be working out the finer details of living alongside giants, though those ogres might still have the prestige and wealth of serving in the Big War to push further change. A city of arboreal snake-folk with a new humanoid refugee population would be entirely designed around convenience for tree-climbing snakes with few and begrudging concessions to ground-bound bipeds.

The suggested city adaptations above are not mandates but goals. The degree to which that goal is integrated changes from culture to culture and city to city. Newer integration would be incomplete, often begrudging, and occasionally privately implemented instead of societally expected. Older integration would be more "natural" to everyone involved. In a city where humanoids are the "monstrous" exception, things normally taken for granted might be new and inconsistently implemented accommodations for a minority.

CITY INHABITANTS

Urban environments offer a wide variety of different peoples as well as monstrous challenges for adventurers to encounter. This section describes just a few.

NPCS

Here you'll find statistics for various types of citizens who can be found in many urban environments, from the humble groom to the charismatic monarch.

ALCHEMIST

Fingering various vials of indecipherable fluids and faintly smelling of reagents, the alchemist stands ready with potions, salves, and unguents.

Creating Something from Nothing. Driven to push the limits of their knowledge and the capabilities of alchemy, alchemists can be found buying and selling alchemical wares in shops, experimenting in personal laboratories, or wandering the lands in search of rare ingredients. Their potions and unguents are often in high demand no matter where they find themselves.

Alchemist

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 12

HIT POINTS 52 (8d8 + 16)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (–1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

SKILLS Medicine +2, Nature +4, Sleight of Hand +4

SENSES passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES any two languages

CHALLENGE 2 (450 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Tools of the Trade. The alchemist is proficient with alchemist's supplies and doubles its proficiency bonus for any ability check it makes with alchemist's supplies.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The alchemist makes two Hasty Concoction attacks.

Hasty Concoction. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) acid, cold, fire, or poison damage (the alchemist's choice).

Explosive Flask (Recharge 5–6). The alchemist throws a flask of something bubbling at a point it can see within 30 feet of it. Each creature within 10 feet of that point must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Healing Unguent (1/Day). The alchemist rubs a greasy unguent on a creature's wounds. The target regains 5 (2d4) hp.

BONUS ACTIONS

Protective Draught (3/Day). The alchemist drinks one of its brews and gains resistance to acid, cold, fire, or poison damage until the end of its next turn.

ARTIST

Wielding paint brush, chisel, quill, or similar implement of art, the artist views the world through a unique lens and brings it to life in new ways. Artists create or manipulate physical objects, often selling or displaying the pieces upon completion. They prefer to leave art focused on entertainment to **performers** (see below), typically eschewing large public appearances or rejecting calls for creating their art in front of an audience.

Art Anywhere. While artists can be found using a wide variety of tools, they use those tools primarily to create aesthetically pleasing works. For example, an artist that uses smith's tools might create children's toy horses out of recycled horseshoes or sculptures out of broken armor rather than crafting farming implements or armor and weapons.

Artist

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 11

HIT POINTS 9 (2d8)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

SKILLS Sleight of Hand +3

SENSES passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 0 (10 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Tools of the Trade. The artist is proficient with one set of artisan's tools and doubles its proficiency bonus for any ability check it makes with that set of tools.

ACTIONS

Implement of Art. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 feet or range 15/30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) damage of a type determined by the artist's tools. For example, a painter might splash paint on the target, dealing acid or poison damage, a sculptor might jab with a chisel, dealing piercing damage, a glassblower might lob molten glass, dealing fire damage, or a wood carver might slice with a straight draw, dealing slashing damage. The artist can't deal force, psychic, necrotic, or radiant damage with this attack.

CANNY BEGGAR

While nearly all cities have those desperate enough to beg on the streets, the canny beggar does so by choice. A con artist, the canny beggar pretends illness and injury in an attempt to solicit compassion and coin from passersby.

Unseen Agents. Some canny beggars are low-level agents of the city's thieves' guild or of unscrupulous nobles wanting to keep tabs on rivals' movements. Their guise often makes them dismissed and overlooked, and it allows them to eavesdrop for information or scout out easy targets for the guild.

Canny Beggar

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Non-Lawful Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 11

HIT POINTS 13 (3d8)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

SKILLS Deception +5, Insight +2, Perception +2

SENSES passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Thieves' Cant plus any one language

CHALLENGE 1/8 (25 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Beggar's Invisibility. If the canny beggar remains motionless and silent for at least 1 minute, creatures have difficulty noticing it. A creature within 30 feet of the beggar can determine the beggar is present with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. A creature that moves within 5 feet of the beggar automatically succeeds on the check. This effect ends if the beggar moves or speaks.

Savvy Observer. The canny beggar has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Wisdom (Perception) checks to decipher gestures and notice objects passing between two creatures. In addition, the canny beggar can read the lips of any creature speaking a language it knows, and it can accurately recall anything it has seen or heard within the last 8 hours.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Nimble Escape. The canny beggar takes the Disengage or Hide action.

CRAFTER

Festooned with the tools and implements of their trade, crafters take pride in creating, and sometimes selling, quality goods, and they have a keen sense for those trying to swindle them.

Function Over Beauty. While crafters can add artistic flourishes to their work, such as embossing heraldry on a breastplate, they use their tools primarily to create more utilitarian or functional works. For example, a crafter that uses woodcarver's tools might sculpt beams, banisters, and chairs in the local architectural style or with the local lord's emblem, but they aren't likely to carve elaborate, decorative thrones for the nobility or intricate sculptures for a temple.

Crafter

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 10

HIT POINTS 16 (3d8 + 3)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

SKILLS Insight +4, Investigation +2

SENSES passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 1/8 (25 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Tools of the Trade. The crafter is proficient with one set of artisan's tools and doubles its proficiency bonus for any ability check it makes with that set of tools.

Trader's Eye. The crafter has advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks to determine if goods are of poor quality or a forgery, and it has advantage on Insight (Wisdom) checks to recognize when a creature is attempting to sell the crafter poor-quality or forged goods.

ACTIONS

Crafting Tool. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) damage of a type determined by the crafter's tools. For example, a smith might splash a caustic slurry of fluxes on the target, dealing acid or poison damage, a cobbler might stab with an awl, dealing piercing damage, a potter might throw a wad of clay, dealing bludgeoning damage, or a chef might chop with a cooking knife, dealing slashing damage. The crafter can't deal force, psychic, necrotic, or radiant damage with this attack.

CURATOR

Cities often hold collections of rare and valuable things. Art galleries, historical archives, and museums collect, catalog, and preserve cultural artifacts, and curators oversee and run such places. Curators are educated individuals who are knowledgeable about and protective of the items under their purview. Those in search of knowledge about such items, seeking to sell them, or wanting to authenticate their veracity often turn to a curator for aid.

Magical Protectors. Curators learn minor magic to help them maintain and protect the items in their care, most often from wear, tear, and time. They tend to hire guards to protect particularly vulnerable or valuable items, but they aren't above getting their hands dirty if the items in their care are in danger.

Curator

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Lawful Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 11

HIT POINTS 36 (8d8)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

SKILLS History +6, Investigation +6, Perception +4, Religion +4

SENSES passive Perception 14

LANGUAGES any two languages

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Dedicated Protector. While the curator is within 60 feet of the collection of items under its care or within the structure where they are stored, it has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects, and it can't be charmed or frightened.

ACTIONS

Authoritative Shout. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 2) thunder damage.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, or 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Spellcasting. The curator casts one of the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12):

At will: *mage hand*, *mending* (as an action), *prestidigitation*

3/day each: *alarm* (as an action), *detect magic*

1/day: *locate object*

BONUS ACTIONS

Curator's Order. The curator speaks with authority at a creature it can see within 60 feet of it. If the target is friendly, it has advantage on the next attack roll it makes before the start of the curator's next turn. If the target is hostile, it must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or drop one object of the curator's choice that it is holding and be unable to move on its next turn.

FOOTPAD

Footpads are light-fingered individuals with a loose understanding of personal property, and they are adept at relieving people of such property. Consummate thieves, they resort to violence only if necessary. They tend to operate alone or on the fringes of gangs, preferring the easier, solitary scores that allow them to live comfortably and without attracting too much attention.

Thief by Necessity. Though most footpads learned their skills by growing up alone on the streets of cities and stealing to survive, many skilled artisans, laborers, or even merchants turn to the life of a footpad when oppression, economic strain, famine, or war deprives them of their normal means. Such footpads might even maintain a veneer of their previous life, using their ill-gotten gains to keep up their social status or prevent their business from foundering.

Footpad

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Non-Lawful Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 16 (studded leather)

HIT POINTS 55 (10d8 + 10)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

SKILLS Acrobatics +6, Perception +5, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6

SENSES passive Perception 15

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Burglar. The footpad has proficiency with thieves' tools and has advantage on ability checks made to pick locks, open doors and windows silently, or detect or disarm traps.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The footpad makes two Cut Purse or Poisoned Dart attacks.

Cut Purse. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 5 (2d4) poison damage. Instead of dealing damage, the footpad can steal one item the target is wearing or carrying, provided the item weighs no more than 10 pounds, isn't a weapon, and isn't wrapped around or firmly attached to the target, such as a shirt or suit of armor.

Poisoned Dart. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage plus 5 (2d4) poison damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Cunning Action. The footpad takes the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

GROOM

A groom is in charge of the care and handling of horses in a stable. Grooms can be found working in public stables, the private stable of a noble's estate, or the stables of a specific organization or guild. They ensure the animals in their care are healthy and ready for service at a moment's notice.

Groom

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 11

HIT POINTS 9 (2d8)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

SKILLS Animal Handling +5, Medicine +5

SENSES passive Perception 11

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 0 (10 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Veterinary Skill. The groom has advantage on Wisdom (Medicine) checks to stabilize, diagnose, or treat Beasts.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Lasso. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 10/30 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target is grappled if it is a Large or smaller creature, and the target and groom can move no further than 30 feet from each other. A creature, including the target, can take its action to detach the lasso by succeeding on a DC 12 Strength or Dexterity check (the target's choice).

LAMPLIGHTER

City life goes on long after the sun goes down, and its denizens need light for their nocturnal activities. Lamplighters are civil servants that go about the city streets each evening to set the lamps burning and extinguish them again come the dawn. Due to their thankless work, the city streets stay lit, signs for nighttime businesses remain visible, and the criminal element has fewer shadows in which to lurk.

Hooked Staff. Lamplighters carry a long staff with a hook on one end. The hook has fittings for a wick or a snuffer, allowing the lamplighter to light or extinguish high-hanging lamps. Under duress, a lamplighter uses this staff for self-defense.

Lamplighter

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 10

HIT POINTS 11 (2d8 + 2)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

SKILLS Perception +3

SENSES passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 1/4 (50 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Street Smart. The lamplighter never gets lost in its home city. The lamplighter has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Wisdom (Perception) checks made in its home city or against locals of that city.

ACTIONS

Lamplighter's Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 2 (1d4) fire damage. Instead of dealing damage, the lamplighter can knock the target prone.

BONUS ACTIONS

Light or Extinguish Lamp. The lamplighter can ignite a Small or smaller flammable object within 10 feet of it that isn't being worn or carried. Alternatively, the lamplight can extinguish a Small or smaller fire within 10 feet of it that isn't being worn or carried.

MERCENARIES

Mercenaries can be found across the lands, offering their services as guards, adventurers, and temporary soldiers. Martial mercenaries are often called sellswords, and magically inclined mercenaries prefer to be called spellhawks. Typically, spellhawks take longer-term contracts, leaving the scribing of scrolls to more sedentary spellcasters, though they won't begrudge coin offered for the quick casting of a spell or two.

Dangerous Lives. Though mercenaries diligently care for their equipment to protect their livelihood, it is often well-worn and stained by sun, battle, and road. Future-thinking or particularly skilled sellswords and spellhawks eventually become veterans and mages, respectively, with more expensive and well-maintained equipment. However, most mercenaries live day-to-day, enjoying the now. They know the fellow sellsword or spellhawk they drink with tonight might be an enemy tomorrow or fallen to some danger by next week.

Sellsword

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 14 (leather armor, shield)

HIT POINTS 32 (5d8 + 10)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

SKILLS Athletics +5, Survival +4

SENSES passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The sellsword makes one Longsword attack and one Shield Bash attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Dirty Trick (Recharge 5–6). The sellsword kicks or throws dirt into the face or eyes of one creature within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of its next turn.

Spellhawk

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

HIT POINTS 27 (5d8 + 5)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

SKILLS Arcana +5, History +5, Perception +3

SENSES passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES any three languages

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

ACTIONS

Burst of Magic. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +5, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) force damage.

Spellcasting. The spellhawk casts one of the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

At will: *mending, message, prestidigitation*

3/day each: *detect magic, locate object, mage armor* (self only)

1/day each: *levitate, shatter*

REACTIONS

Arcane Repulsion. When a creature enters a space within 5 feet of the spellhawk, the spellhawk can magically push the creature away. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away from the spellhawk.

MERCHANT

Unlike crafters who create and often sell their own goods, merchants focus on trading in goods produced by others. Unlike traders, merchants tend to stick to one city or town or to a collection of cities and towns near each other. Some merchants are simple shopkeepers, tending to wares crafted by family members or running small businesses that sell services rather than goods, such as a bathhouse or an inn. Some merchants operate as the business arm for a group of crafters selling a specific type of product, and still other merchants run their own merchant guilds, where they coordinate the buying and selling of a variety of goods across multiple cities.

Business with a Smile. Merchants are people of business, but they rarely hide behind their counting books and scales. Most merchants are friendly, clever, and charming, which serves them well when buying and selling goods. Even those merchants who spend more time focused on running a guild than interacting with crafters have skill in dealing with people and a keen eye for a quality product.

Merchant

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 13

HIT POINTS 55 (10d8 + 10)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (−1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

SKILLS Deception +5, Insight +3, Investigation +3, Persuasion +5

SENSES passive Perception 11

LANGUAGES any two languages

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP) PROFICIENCY BONUS +2

Trader's Eye. The merchant has advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks to determine if goods are of poor quality or a forgery, and it has advantage on Insight (Wisdom) checks to recognize when a creature is attempting to sell the merchant poor quality or forged goods.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The merchant uses Best Bargain. It then makes two Rapier or Quip attacks.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Quip. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) psychic damage.

Best Bargain. The merchant charms a creature it can see within 30 feet of it with soothing, persuasive language and convincing arguments. The target must make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw. On a failure, the target is charmed for 1 minute. On a success, the target takes 7 (2d6) psychic damage. The charmed target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the merchant's Best Bargain for the next 24 hours.

REACTIONS

Call for Aid (1/Day). When the merchant is reduced to below half its hp maximum while in a populated area, it can shout for help. On initiative count 20 of the following round, 1d4 bandits or guards (the merchant's choice) arrive, acting as allies of the merchant, attacking the merchant's attackers and defending the merchant to the best of their abilities. The called allies remain for 1 hour, until the merchant dies, or until the merchant dismisses them as a bonus action.

MONARCH

Regal-looking humanoids, monarchs wear the finest garments and bear unmistakable auras of leadership and command.

Highly Trained. A monarch (also called czar, emperor, pharaoh, raja, sheik, or sovereign, depending on the region where it rules) receives an extensive education in all aspects of rulership and command. They are equally adept at political, diplomatic, and martial power, and they even receive some minor magical training to better defend themselves.

Empowered Figurehead. Much like deities receiving power from the strength of their followers' faith, monarchs receive some measure of power from the faith, love, fear, loyalty, and adherence of their citizens. Monarchs can call upon this power to imbue their weapons with magic and to summon the monarch's royal creature, typically a creature associated with the monarch's land or people.

Monarch

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 16 (Regal Presence)

HIT POINTS 121 (22d8 + 22)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

SAVING THROWS Wis +6

SKILLS History +5, Insight +6, Intimidation +7, Persuasion +7

SENSES passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES any three languages

CHALLENGE 6 (2,300 XP) PROFICIENCY BONUS +3

Aura of Royalty. The monarch and friendly creatures within 10 feet of it can't be charmed or frightened while the monarch is conscious.

Mental Fortitude. The monarch is immune to any effect that would sense its emotions or read its thoughts. In addition, it has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks made to ascertain a creature's intentions or sincerity.

Monarch's Weapons. The monarch's weapon attacks are magical. When the monarch hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 2d6 force damage (included in the attack).

Regal Presence. While the monarch is conscious and wearing no armor and wielding no shield, it adds its Charisma modifier to its AC and saving throws.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The monarch makes three Longsword attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 7 (2d6) force damage.

Call Symbol (1/Day). The monarch magically calls 1d4 Beasts, Dragons, or Monstrosities of CR 1 or lower or one Beast, Dragon, or Monstrosity of CR 3 or lower. The called creatures must be significant to the monarch's

rule, typically a creature that appears on the monarch's regalia, heraldry, or other symbology associated with the monarch's land or people. The called creatures arrive in 1d4 rounds, acting as allies of the monarch and obeying its spoken commands. The creatures remain for 1 hour, until the monarch dies, or until the monarch dismisses them as a bonus action.

BONUS ACTIONS

Imperial Inspiration. The monarch inspires up to two friendly creatures it can see within 30 feet of it. Each target has advantage on the next attack roll or saving throw it makes before the start of the monarch's next turn.

REACTIONS

Escape. When the monarch takes damage while below half its hp maximum, it can move up to half its speed away from the attacker without provoking opportunity attacks.

Resilient Leader (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When the monarch fails a saving throw, it can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

ARCANE MONARCHS

Some monarchs eschew martial training for arcane understanding and use this mastery to watch and manipulate their subjects or enemies. Such arcane monarchs lose the Monarch's Weapons trait and have the following action options in place of the monarch's Multiattack and Longsword actions:

Multiattack. The arcane monarch makes three Burst of Magic attacks, or it makes two Burst of Magic attacks and uses Spellcasting.

Burst of Magic. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 120 ft. one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) force damage.

Spellcasting. The arcane monarch casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *mage hand*, *message*, *thaumaturgy*

3/day each: *charm person*, *command*, *hold person*

1/day each: *arcane eye*, *haste*

MONK

In their simple robes, monks often look like a mendicant or simple religious adherent, but their movements belie years of disciplined physical training.

From East to West. Sometimes called friars, lamas, hermits, or anchorites, monks can be found across the world. They forgo most weapon training in favor of unarmed combat to hone their bodies as well as their minds.

Seekers. Monks are often found in dedicated monasteries or wandering the streets and roads. They believe inner knowledge to be the key to unlocking a stronger connection to a hidden power within themselves. Some believe they channel this power from a deity, others say they harness a spiritual link to the world, their own bodies, or a dedicated philosophy.

Monk

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 15 (Unarmored Defense)

HIT POINTS 38 (7d8 + 7)

SPEED 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	9 (–1)

SAVING THROWS Dex +4

SKILLS Acrobatics +4, Athletics +2, History +2, Insight +5

SENSES passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Ascetic. The monk's personal training and abstention from indulgence has hardened it against most mortal needs. The monk requires only half the amount of air, food, and drink that a typical Humanoid of its size needs.

Physical Refinement. The monk's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start. In addition, the monk has advantage on Strength (Athletics) and Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks made to climb, maintain balance, or escape a grapple.

Unarmored Defense. While the monk is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The monk makes two Unarmed Strike attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Soothing Touch (1/Day). The monk calls on the power of its deity, rights the flow of energy within a body, or calls on its own personal energy to soothe pain and mend wounds with a touch. The target magically regains 5 (2d4) hp and is freed from any disease or poison afflicting it.

BONUS ACTIONS

Martial Fluidity. The monk takes the Dash, Disengage, or Dodge action.

PERFORMER

Bowing to the audience, the performer is ready to entertain, amaze, and delight. Similar to **artists** (see above), performers view the world through a unique lens and bring it to life in new ways.

Performance Art. Unlike artists, performers adore entertaining crowds and create their art with their bodies, voices, or musical instruments. They might use dyes, makeup, and wigs to adopt various personas for their performances or eschew such tools entirely, focusing on mastering athleticism for performing bounding leaps, balancing acts, or other similarly impressive physical feats. Performers are so accustomed to performing for audiences that even when defending themselves against attackers, their movements are captivating.

Performer

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 12

HIT POINTS 22 (4d8 + 4)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

SKILLS Acrobatics +4, Athletics +2, Performance +4

SENSES passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 1/2 (100 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Tools of the Trade. The performer is proficient with one musical instrument or a disguise kit and doubles its proficiency bonus for any ability check it makes with that instrument or kit. Alternatively, the performer can choose its body as the tool of its trade and double its proficiency bonus on either Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks (the performer's choice) made to entertain an audience.

ACTIONS

Captivating Strike. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) damage of a type determined by the performer's performance style. For example, a dancer might twirl and kick the target, dealing bludgeoning damage, a singer or musician might sing or play a shrill melody, dealing thunder damage, or an actor might set off a pyrotechnic prop, dealing fire damage. The performer can't deal force, psychic, necrotic, or radiant damage with this attack.

If the performer hits a creature with this attack, a creature of the performer's choice within 30 feet of the performer and that can see the attack must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or be charmed until the end of its next turn.

REACTIONS

Stage Recovery (3/Day). When the performer fails a Charisma (Performance) check, it can reroll the check and must use the new roll.

RAT CATCHER

With the abundance of people, goods, and animals, cities inevitably hold large stores of food and large amounts of refuse, both of which attract vermin. A person with the right skills and mindset can make a living reducing the vermin population in a city. Such people are referred to as rat catchers, though they exterminate all types of vermin. While not a glamorous job, it is a secure one, as a city is unlikely to ever run out of vermin.

Animal Assistant. Rat catchers often train small terriers (use the statistics of a jackal) and cats to help them track and kill vermin. These animals are able to find and catch vermin in places the rat catcher can't reach and are often happy to subsist on their catch, making them valuable and inexpensive companions.

Rat Catcher

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 12 (leather armor)

HIT POINTS 52 (8d8 + 16)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (−1)

SKILLS Perception +3, Stealth +4, Survival +5

DAMAGE RESISTANCES poison

SENSES passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 2 (450 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Hardy. The rat catcher has advantage on saving throws against poison and disease.

Vermin Hunter. The rat catcher has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) and Wisdom (Survival) checks to notice, find, and track rats, mice, insects, and other Small or smaller verminous Beasts and to recognize signs of their presence or passage in an area.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rat catcher makes one Rat Catchpole attack and one Rapier attack, or it makes two Rapier attacks.

Rat Catchpole. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12) if it is Small or smaller. Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and the rat catcher can't use its Rat Catchpole on another target.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

SAGE

Surrounded by tomes and scrolls, sages are studious folk, often with ink stains on their fingertips and clothing.

Broad Researcher. Unlike scholars who focus on a single area, sages attempt the impossible task of learning everything, and they even learn some minor control of magic. Knowledge to the sage is worth more than gold, though they will surely accept coins in exchange for their lore. Many sages support themselves and their research by working as teachers at arcane universities or advising monarchs and other officials in various matters.

Obsessive Collector. Sages tend to accumulate knowledge, organizing and labeling tidbits of lore as others might a cellar of fine wines. Apart from information, sages also amass archeological relics, ancestral artworks, historical documents, and other items significant to the sage's studies.

Sage

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 14 (Clever Defense)

HIT POINTS 78 (12d8 + 24)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)

SAVING THROWS Int +6, Wis +4

SKILLS Arcana +6, History +8, Investigation +8, Medicine +4, Nature +6, Religion +6

SENSES passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES any five languages

CHALLENGE 4 (1,100 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Clever Defense. While the sage is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Intelligence modifier.

Encyclopedic Mind (2/Day). If the sage fails an Intelligence check or saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The sage makes two Burst of Magic attacks.

Burst of Magic. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) force damage.

Blather (Recharge 5–6). The sage uses a litany of mind-boggling formulae and complicated metaphors to befuddle up to three creatures it can see within 60 feet of it. Each target must make a DC 14 Intelligence saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 17 (5d6) psychic damage and is befuddled until the end of its next turn. On a success, a creature takes half the damage and isn't befuddled. A befuddled creature has disadvantage on attack rolls, and its speed is reduced by 10 feet.

BONUS ACTIONS

Obscure Knowledge. The sage calls out a little-known fact about the weaknesses of a creature it can see within 60 feet. The next attack roll against that creature before the start of the sage's next turn has advantage. Such obscure knowledge might be that most behirs are ticklish behind their third pair of legs, that the fifth head of a hydra typically has limited peripheral vision, or similar.

REACTIONS

Arcane Assessment. When a creature the sage can see casts a spell of 2nd level or lower while within 60 feet of the sage, the sage critiques the creature's spellcasting methodology and form, countering the spell with a successful ability check. This works like the *counterspell* spell with a +4 spellcasting ability check, except the sage must make the ability check no matter the level of the spell. The sage can use Arcane Assessment only if the spell being cast has somatic components.

SCHOLAR

Scholars are intellectuals that dedicate themselves to the study of a particular area, such as banking, engineering, or law. While their breadth of study is not broad, they put their knowledge to practical use, often earning high salaries in their communities as guild accountants, royal architects, city barristers, and similar learned positions.

Wide Contacts. The scholar maintains a network of contacts from many walks of life in their communities and abroad, often utilizing these contacts in the practice of their focus. For example, a barrister might have trusted acquaintances in the local constabulary, among high-ranking nobles, and even in the criminal underworld.

Scholar

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 10

HIT POINTS 22 (4d8 + 4)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)

SAVING THROWS Wis +5

SKILLS Intimidation +5, Insight +5, Investigation +4, Persuasion +5

SENSES passive Perception 15

LANGUAGES any two languages

CHALLENGE 1/4 (50 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Focused Study. The scholar has advantage on ability checks related to or involving its area of study, such as an architect making a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to maintain balance while traversing the rooftops of a building in the local style or an accountant making an Intelligence (Investigation) check to survey a ledger for illicit spending.

ACTIONS

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Scholar's Authority (Recharge 6). The scholar calls out with an authoritative voice or mentions its connection with particularly influential or powerful people to a Humanoid it can see within 30 feet. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or it doesn't move or take actions until the end of its next turn. A flying creature stays aloft, provided that it is able to do so. If it must move to stay aloft, it flies the minimum distance needed to remain in the air.

TRADER

Carrying a pack full of odds and ends, the trader is always ready to buy or sell whatever it finds in its travels.

Traveling Merchant. Traders enjoy experiencing new locales, collecting unique objects, and sharing those objects with people they meet—for a price, of course. As constant travelers and naturally curious people, traders are also adept at patching up, repairing, and tinkering with objects. As they wander from community to community, they earn their keep by repairing small objects or selling the trinkets and curios they find or buy.

Trader

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

ARMOR CLASS 12

HIT POINTS 26 (4d8 + 8)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

SKILLS Insight +3, Investigation +2, Persuasion +4, Sleight of Hand +4

SENSES passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES any one language (usually Common)

CHALLENGE 1/2 (100 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Tinkerer. The trader has proficiency with tinker's tools and doubles its proficiency bonus for any ability check it makes with tinker's tools. In addition, with 1 minute of work, the trader can repair a Small or smaller nonmagical object that has at least 1 hp, restoring all the object's hp. If the object has more than half its hp maximum, the trader can repair the object as an action instead.

Trader's Eye. The trader has advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks to determine if goods are of poor quality or a forgery, and it has advantage on Insight (Wisdom) checks to recognize when a creature is attempting to sell the trader poor-quality or forged goods.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The trader makes two Dagger attacks.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Throw Oddities. The trader throws a handful of odds and ends, such as scraps of armor, shards of broken weapons, or curios from its travels, at a creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage (the trader's choice) on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

MONSTERS

Here you'll find the more monstrous denizens of urban environments, such as the dangerous labspawn golem and the odd-but-cute pet mimic.

ALLEY SPRITE

This tiny humanoid figure sports dragonfly-like wings, though they are blackened and curling slightly at the ends like dead leaves. It wears armor crafted of detritus and castoffs and wields a long, sliver needle like a rapier.

Alley sprites are quite similar to their sylvan cousins. However, their lives are now bound to the beating heart of a city rather than untouched nature. Sometimes they are refugees from the wilds displaced to an urban environment. Sometimes they are the original inhabitants of the land, who stubbornly remained as they watched their wilderness give way to a village and farmland, then to a walled town, and eventually a sprawling metropolis.

Protective and Territorial. The alleys, courtyards, and cul-de-sacs claimed by alley sprites are considered sovereign territory. They tolerate local traffic, especially if passersby leave small gifts behind to pay for their trespass. Despite having little love for their mortal neighbors, alley sprites are fiercely protective of their city. They join forces with other inhabitants to defend against outside threats, and they often come to the aid of locals under attack from obvious outsiders.

Scavengers. Alley sprites comb the streets for materials they use to craft all manner of tools and weapons and to hoard as "treasure." They cherish objects that produce pleasant sensations for any of the senses, no matter their actual value among other creatures. Fake gems and bits of colored glass hold pride of place next to actual gemstones, as long as they sparkle and gleam. Scraps of cloth with pleasurable textures and colors lie piled with valuable furs. Canny city folk can often gain valuable items by trading with alley sprites, though the sprites recognize when one of the big folk has a special interest in something and adjust their demands accordingly.

Alley Sprite

Tiny Fey, Neutral

ARMOR CLASS 15 (armor scraps)

HIT POINTS 14 (4d4 + 4)

SPEED 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (−4)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

SKILLS Perception +3, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +8

DAMAGE RESISTANCES poison

CONDITION IMMUNITIES poisoned

SENSES passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES Sylvan plus any two languages

CHALLENGE 1/4 (50 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

City Magic. Three or more alley sprites within 10 feet of each other can tap into their innate connection with a city to find a specific creature or object within it. By spending 1 minute in contact with the same structure, road, or wall of a city and picturing the creature or object they seek, the alley sprites can sense the direction to that creature or object for 1 hour. This trait works like the *locate creature* and *locate object* spells, except the sprites can sense the direction to the target regardless of distance, provided the target remains within the city.

Makeshift Tools. While in a city, the alley sprite can spend 10 minutes cobbling together any kit or set of tools from nearby materials, which lasts for 1 hour. It has proficiency with any kit or set of tools made this way. Alternatively, it can gift this kit or set of tools to a friendly creature, which gains proficiency with the kit or tools while they last.

ACTIONS

Needle Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Throw Dirty Scrap. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage (the alley sprite's choice), and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also incapacitated while poisoned in this way.

Invisibility. The alley sprite magically turns invisible until it attacks or until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the alley sprite wears or carries is invisible with it.

BOOKWORM

The bespectacled worm bursts out of the bookshelf with pages stuck in its many sharp teeth. The words on the pages slowly bleed toward its gullet, leaving the pages blank as they go.

Bookworms are long, worm-like creatures that subsist on the ink commonly used for writing. Their unique physiology also allows them to consume magical inks and writing infused with magic, such as that found on scrolls or in spell books.

Draconic Origins. Bookworms were once the tiny larvae of some paper- and wood-pulp-eating insect. After prolonged exposure to a particularly stubborn infestation of living spells (see **sigilians** in *Creature Codex*) in a dragon's massive library, the larvae began to change, increasing in size and shifting to consuming the ink and magic on the paper rather than the paper itself. The dragon was slain after clearing out the insects but before noticing the changes they wrought in the larvae. The larvae were carried across the world in the books, scrolls, and spellbooks looted from the dragon's library in the years following its death, where they eventually grew into bookworms.

Bookworm

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

ARMOR CLASS 16 (natural armor)

HIT POINTS 136 (13d10 + 65)

SPEED 40 ft, climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	5 (−3)	12 (+1)	8 (−1)

SAVING THROWS Dex +7, Wis +5

SKILLS Perception +5, Stealth +7

DAMAGE RESISTANCES bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES poison

CONDITION IMMUNITIES poisoned

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

LANGUAGES understands all languages but can't speak

CHALLENGE 9 (5,000 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +4

Greater Cognivore. The bookworm can pinpoint the location of any book or scroll within 60 feet of it. If a creature carrying a spellbook or scroll starts its turn grappled by the bookworm, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or the spellbook or scroll loses the highest-level spell written on it as the bookworm eats the magical writing. The bookworm regains 2d6 hp per level of the spell. The spellbook page or scroll then becomes a nonmagical blank page or scroll.

Tome Stride. Once on its turn, the bookworm can use 10 feet of its movement to step magically into one book within its reach and emerge from a second book within 60 feet of the first, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second book. Both books must have at least 100 pages.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bookworm makes two Bite attacks or one Bite attack and one Constrict attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (5d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15), if it is a Large or smaller creature. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns, and the bookworm can't use Constrict on another target.

Parchment Breath (Recharge 5–6). The bookworm exhales a flurry of razor-sharp paper shards in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 36 (8d8) slashing damage and, if it isn't a construct or undead, it has disadvantage on attack rolls on its next turn as the pain of hundreds of paper cuts distracts it. On a success, a creature takes half the damage and doesn't suffer the pain from hundreds of paper cuts.

FULGOVORE

The horror has a crocodilian body with two long tentacles extending from its back, each ending in a glowing spike.

The fulgovore is often mistaken for a crocodile until it extends its twin spiked tentacles. At home in city sewers and swampland near cities, some speculate the fulgovore was a failed and foolish attempt to breed a new type of crocodile.

Lurking Hunter. The fulgovore's preferred hunting grounds are damp environments, such as sewers, swamps, lakes, or rivers, where it can lie in wait below the water to grab drinking prey with its long tentacles. In urban areas, fulgovores hide

in canals and sewers, using their tentacles to seize prey above ground and drag it down into the darkness.

Lightning Lures. The spikes on the fulgovore's tentacles are metallic and attract lightning. Fulgovores exit their watery and sewer homes during thunderstorms, sprawling and basking in the lightning the way many reptiles bask in warm sun.

Fulgovore

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

ARMOR CLASS 14 (natural armor)

HIT POINTS 66 (7d10 + 28)

SPEED 20 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	2 (–4)	13 (+1)	5 (–3)

SKILLS Perception +3, Stealth +4

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES lightning, poison

CONDITION IMMUNITIES poisoned

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES —

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Hold Breath. The fulgovore can hold its breath for 30 minutes.

Lightning Absorption. Whenever the fulgovore is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The fulgovore makes two Tentacle Spike attacks.

Diseased Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d10 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or contract a disease. Until the disease is cured, the target is poisoned, and every 24 hours that elapse, the target must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hp maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. The disease is cured on a success. This reduction lasts until the disease is cured. The target dies if the disease reduces its hp maximum to 0.

Tentacle Spike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13) if it is a Large or smaller creature. If the fulgovore has taken lightning damage in the past minute, the target also takes 3 (1d6) lightning damage. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained. The fulgovore has two tentacles, each of which can grapple only one target.

KACKERLACK

The hound-sized insectoid creature fades into view, scuttling on its six legs with its claws and pincers raised in attack.

The kackerlack derives its name from the goblins that first discovered it, the Cackle Crack tribe, who were known for their unique laughter. Though none of the goblins survived the discovery, their efforts to combat it brought the existence of the creature to the attention of many others.

Insectoid Blend. Kackerlacks resemble a cross between a roach, mantis, and beetle. Whether this melding is the product of natural adaptation, magical corruption, or intentional breeding is not known. However, they are a young species and began appearing in urban and underground environments in the past few decades.

Kackerlack

Small Monstrosity, Unaligned

ARMOR CLASS 13

HIT POINTS 44 (8d6 + 16)

SPEED 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	1 (–5)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

SKILLS Perception +3, Stealth +5

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 13

LANGUAGES —

CHALLENGE 2 (450 XP) PROFICIENCY BONUS +2

Adaptive Invisibility. The kackerlack's carapace adapts to its current surroundings. The kackerlack has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in nonmagical, natural terrain. In addition, if the kackerlack remains motionless in nonmagical, natural terrain for at least 1 minute, it is invisible.

Spider Climb. The kackerlack can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The kackerlack makes one Claw attack and one Mandibles attack.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Mandibles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage plus 4 (1d8) poison damage.

Snatch (Recharge 6). The kackerlack makes one Mandibles attack against a creature it can see within 10 feet of it. If the attack hits, the target is pulled up to 10 feet closer to the kackerlack and knocked prone.

LABSPAWN GOLEM

This crude parody of a human seems fashioned from the parts of other humanoids. It stumbles forward with eyes wild and unfocused, reaching out with blood-soaked hands.

Alchemists, wizards, sages, and other learned individuals often have laboratories where they perform experiments, whether malevolent or benign. Learning, especially through scientific or magical experimentation, never progresses without failure. Some types of creature-creation failures are so common that they are known as "labspawn" in many wizarding or scholarly circles. One of the most well-known and dangerous labspawn is the labspawn golem, a failed attempt at creating a flesh golem.

Agony Filled. Incomplete and disconnected from its creator, the labspawn golem lives in constant pain from a fractured mind absent its creator's grounding presence and from each and every stitch holding it together. Its pain often sends it on rage-filled rampages of destruction that provide temporary relief from the pain followed by long periods of dormancy as the pain steadily rebuilds.

Impossible to Control. By a quirk of their creation, labspawn golems can't be magically or mentally controlled. However, a labspawn golem befriended during its dormancy might direct its next rampage at its new friend's enemies, or it might delay a rampage to spend time with its friend, finding some comfort from its pain in the bonds of friendship.

Labspawn Golem

Medium Construct, Neutral

ARMOR CLASS 15 (natural armor)

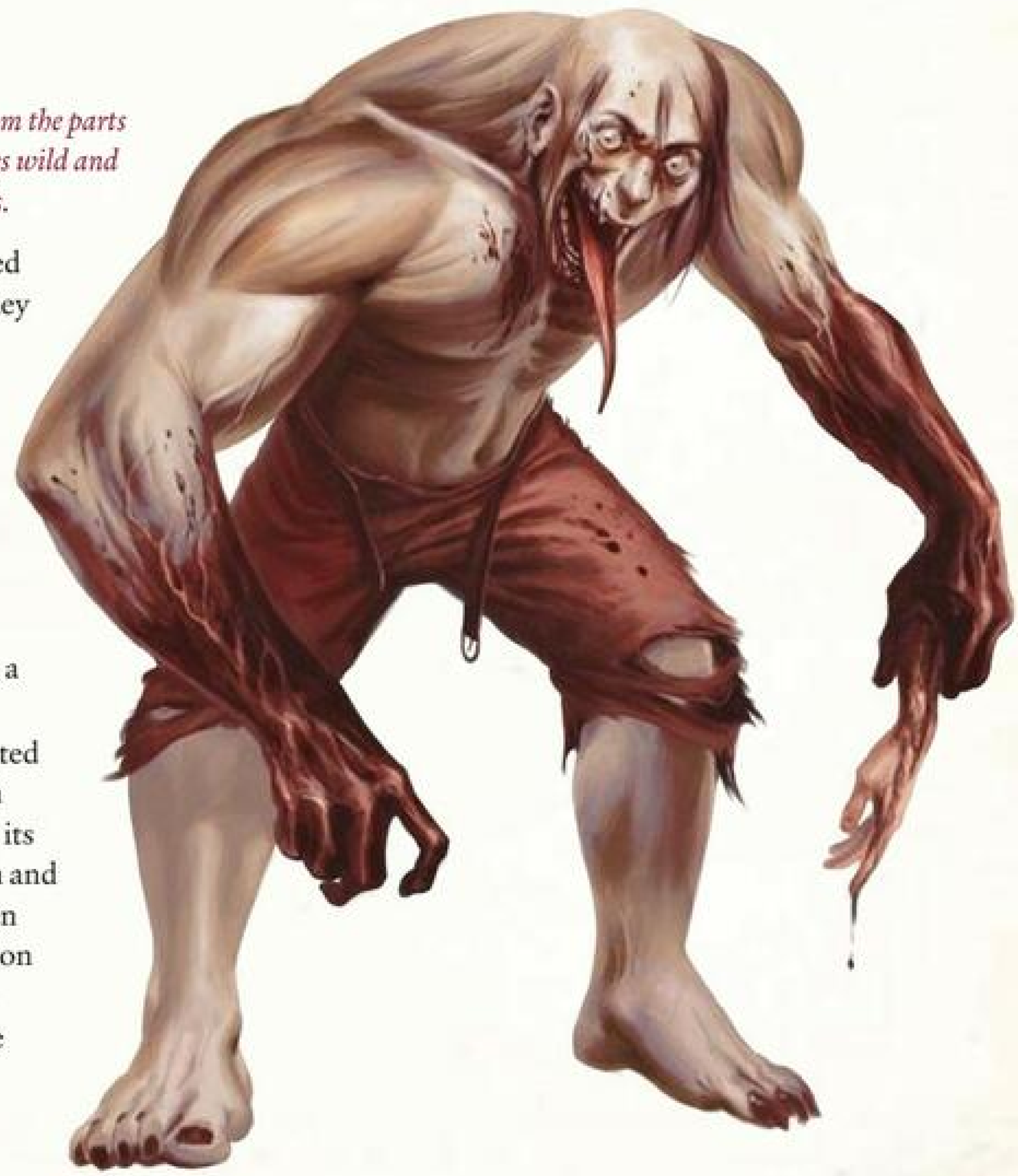
HIT POINTS 142 (15d10 + 60)

SPEED 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	9 (–1)	18 (+4)	5 (–3)	12 (+1)	5 (–3)

SAVING THROWS Dex +2, Wis +4

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantine weapons



CONDITION IMMUNITIES charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

LANGUAGES understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

CHALLENGE 8 (3,900 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +3

Construct Nature. The labspawn golem doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

Immutable Form. The labspawn golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The labspawn golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The labspawn golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Rogue Construct. The labspawn golem can't be controlled, even by its creator. It is immune to any spell or other effect that would dictate its actions, such as the *command* or *confusion* spells. It can still be subjected to effects that cause it to be unable to act, such as the incapacitated condition.

Siege Monster. The labspawn golem deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The labspawn golem makes three Slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the labspawn golem scores a critical hit, the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or the labspawn tears off one of the target's limbs. A creature is immune to this effect if it is immune to slashing damage.

Agony Broadcast (Recharge 5–6). The labspawn golem psychically transmits its own pain and agony into the minds of those nearby. Each creature within 15 feet of the labspawn must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, taking 32 (5d12) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

REACTIONS

Partial Absorption. When the labspawn golem takes acid, cold, fire, force, poison, or thunder damage, it can reduce the damage by 2d6 and regain hp equal to that amount.

LEGION PIGEON

The large pigeon coos quietly as it pecks along the ground. A sudden movement startles it, and it splits into a flock of ghostly pigeons that fly away.

Pigeons are so ingrained in cities that locals often feel the birds are simply part of the cities. This feeling is particularly accurate for the legion pigeon.

Spiritual Origins. In cities with widespread magic, wisps of the magic eventually seep into every aspect of the city. When pigeons in such a city die, fragments of their spirits remain connected to the city, becoming part of the magic permeating it. After dozens of pigeons have died within the city, a legion pigeon forms as a collected vessel for the spirit fragments.

City Protector. A legion pigeon spends most days acting as a standard, if large, pigeon. However, when an overt threat comes to the city, typically in the form of a warband or army, the city's legion pigeons rise up to defend their home. As long as at least one building stands, legion pigeons remain bound magically and spiritually to their city, even if the city loses its magic or is abandoned.

Legion Pigeon

Small Undead, Neutral

ARMOR CLASS 13

HIT POINTS 54 (12d6 + 12)

SPEED 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	5 (–3)	10 (+0)	4 (–3)

SKILLS Stealth +5

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES poison, psychic

CONDITION IMMUNITIES charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, stunned

SENSES darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES understands one language (usually Common) but can't speak

CHALLENGE 2 (450 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Many as One. The legion pigeon can't regain hp or gain temporary hp.

Undead Nature. The legion pigeon doesn't require, air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Peck (Pigeon Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or contract a disease. Every 24 hours that elapse, the infected creature must repeat the saving throw. On a failure, the creature suffers one level of exhaustion. On a success, the creature recovers from the disease. The exhaustion lasts until the creature finishes a long rest after the disease is cured.

Withering Talons (Spectral Flock Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage, or 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the flock has half its hp or fewer.

Ghostly Dive (Recharge 6, Spectral Flock Form Only). The legion pigeon flies up to 20 feet in a straight line and through the space of Medium or smaller creatures in the path without provoking opportunity attacks. The first time it enters a creature's space during this move, that creature must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 14 (4d6) necrotic damage and is frightened until the end of its next turn. On a success, a creature takes half the damage and isn't frightened.

BONUS ACTIONS

Split or Coalesce Form. The legion pigeon splits into a Large flock of spectral pigeons or coalesces back into its Small pigeon form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form.

While in spectral flock form, it can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and it can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object. In addition, it has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage, and it can't be grappled or restrained.

REACTIONS

Disperse (Pigeon Form Only). When a creature moves within 10 feet of the legion pigeon or when it takes damage, it can split into its spectral flock form.

LOCK MIMIC

This heavy, brass padlock is old and spotted with green patches of verdigris. At a touch, the keyhole splits open, revealing rows of sharp teeth and a fleshy, serpentine tongue.

Lock mimics are the bane of thieves, lying in wait for those who would try to pick a lock. Even those familiar with mimics often overlook a lock mimic, expecting instead that the chest or door the lock protects may be a predator in disguise. Lulled into a false sense of security after determining the larger object is safe, they are ambushed by the lock mimic.

Cunning Subspecies. Smaller and weaker than the common mimic, lock mimics are specialized predators. A lock mimic will use its digestive juices to dissolve a lock, then mimic and replace the lock, awaiting the prey it knows will eventually come to it. Lock mimics can recognize objects that might normally have a lock, such as chests, gates and other portals, or loops of chain or rope, and attach themselves to such objects to draw in prey.

Unusual Diet. While carnivorous, lock mimics also dissolve and digest metals. This allows them to better mimic their chosen objects and provides them with a dense, protective outer layer to fend off attacks.

Lock Mimic

Tiny Monstrosity (Shapechanger), Neutral

ARMOR CLASS 15 (natural armor)

HIT POINTS 36 (8d4 + 16)

SPEED 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	5 (−3)	13 (+1)	8 (−1)

SKILLS Stealth +5

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES acid

CONDITION IMMUNITIES prone

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

LANGUAGES —

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Adhesive (Object Form Only). The lock mimic adheres to anything that touches it, attaching to the target. While attached to the target, the lock mimic can automatically hit the target with its Bite attack, and, if the target is a creature, the target can't use one of its limbs, such as an arm or a leg, to wield a weapon or shield or to perform tasks that require the use of that limb, such as loading a crossbow or balancing on a beam. A creature, including

the target, can use its action to detach the lock mimic with a successful DC 13 Strength check.

If the lock mimic is attached to a nonmagical ferrous metal object or to a creature wearing or carrying such an object, the mimic can choose to corrode the object at the start of each of its turns rather than make a Bite attack. If an object is either metal armor or a metal shield, it takes a permanent and cumulative −1 penalty to the AC it offers. Armor reduced to an AC of 10 or a shield that drops to a +0 bonus is destroyed. If an object is a metal weapon, it takes a permanent and cumulative −1 penalty to damage rolls. If the penalty drops to −5, the weapon is destroyed. All other nonmagical metal objects take 7 (2d6) acid damage.

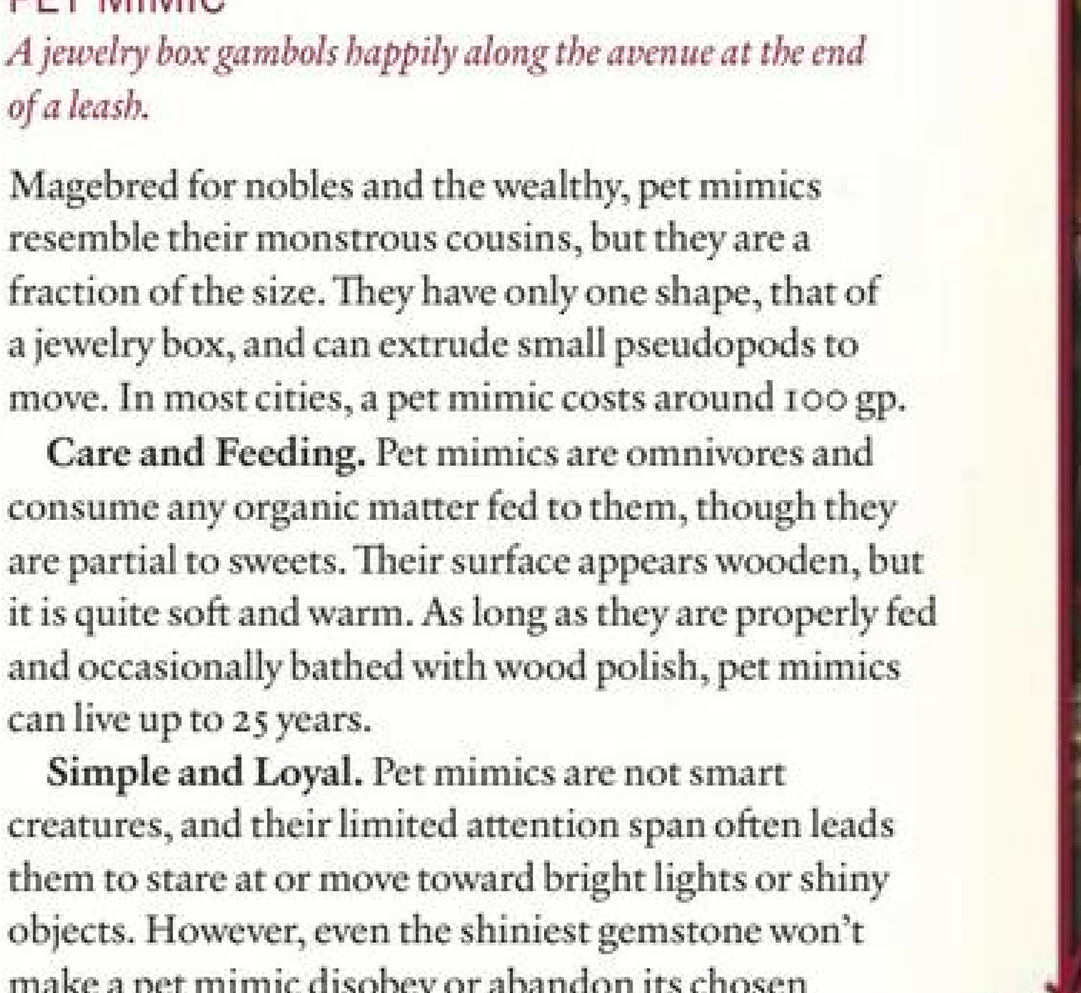
False Appearance (Object Form Only). While the lock mimic remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary metal object or lock.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage. If the lock mimic is in object form, the target is subjected to its Adhesive trait.

BONUS ACTIONS

Change Shape. The lock mimic transforms into a metal object or back into its true, amorphous form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.



PET MIMIC

A jewelry box gambols happily along the avenue at the end of a leash.

Magebred for nobles and the wealthy, pet mimics resemble their monstrous cousins, but they are a fraction of the size. They have only one shape, that of a jewelry box, and can extrude small pseudopods to move. In most cities, a pet mimic costs around 100 gp.

Care and Feeding. Pet mimics are omnivores and consume any organic matter fed to them, though they are partial to sweets. Their surface appears wooden, but it is quite soft and warm. As long as they are properly fed and occasionally bathed with wood polish, pet mimics can live up to 25 years.

Simple and Loyal. Pet mimics are not smart creatures, and their limited attention span often leads them to stare at or move toward bright lights or shiny objects. However, even the shiniest gemstone won't make a pet mimic disobey or abandon its chosen person. They bond with humanoids and are very friendly, affectionate, and loyal companions.

Pet Mimic

Tiny Monstrosity, Unaligned

ARMOR CLASS 12

HIT POINTS 9 (2d4 + 4)

SPEED 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (−5)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	3 (−4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES acid

CONDITION IMMUNITIES prone

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES —

CHALLENGE 0 (10 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Cuteness. If the pet mimic hasn't attacked a creature in the last 24 hours, creatures that can see the mimic must succeed on a DC 10 Charisma saving throw or be compelled to hold, pet, admire, praise, or give treats to the mimic for 1 minute. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the pet mimic's Cuteness for the next 24 hours.

False Appearance. While the pet mimic remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary jewelry box.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

RED URCHIN

The small, thin child pulls back its ragged hood revealing not a face but a rasping oval maw of jagged fangs.

Red urchins are fey creations set loose in cities or other densely populated communities to help stem the spread of humanoids and their civilizations into wild areas. Created to look like common street waifs, red urchins easily slide into the lower rungs of a population, where they can hunt undetected.

Periodic Hunters. Red urchins lurk in abandoned buildings, old sewer systems, and other seldom-used places within cities. They leave these lairs every few weeks to feast on an unsuspecting citizen before retreating to their lair for another month. To avoid raising suspicion, they typically prey on the often-overlooked members of society, though some red urchins develop a taste for specific types of people, such as drunkards or well-fed nobles, and hunt them exclusively.

Chattering Charm. Imbued with fey magic, red urchins can emit a quiet chattering that subtly affects the minds of humanoids, making their victims more pliable. They use this to lure prey closer to them and to assault the minds of those who resist.

Red Urchin

Small Monstrosity, Neutral Evil

ARMOR CLASS 16 (natural armor)

HIT POINTS 97 (13d6 + 52)

SPEED 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

SAVING THROWS Wis +5

SKILLS Deception +7, Stealth +6

SENSES darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Common

CHALLENGE 5 (1,800 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +3

Innocent Façade. The red urchin looks like a Humanoid street urchin or waif of the most prevalent race in the city it inhabits. If a creature is more than 10 feet away from the red urchin, it must take an action to visually inspect the urchin and succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discern the urchin is actually a monstrous

creature and not a normal Humanoid. A creature within 10 feet of the red urchin or a creature that has seen it attack automatically discerns the truth.

Standing Leap. The red urchin's long jump is up to 30 feet and its high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The red urchin makes one Chattering Bite attack and two Claw attacks. It can replace Chattering Bite with a use of Charmed Thirst or Charming Call.

Chattering Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Charmed Thirst. The red urchin pulls vitality from a creature it can see within 30 feet of it that is charmed by it. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The urchin regains hp equal to the damage dealt.

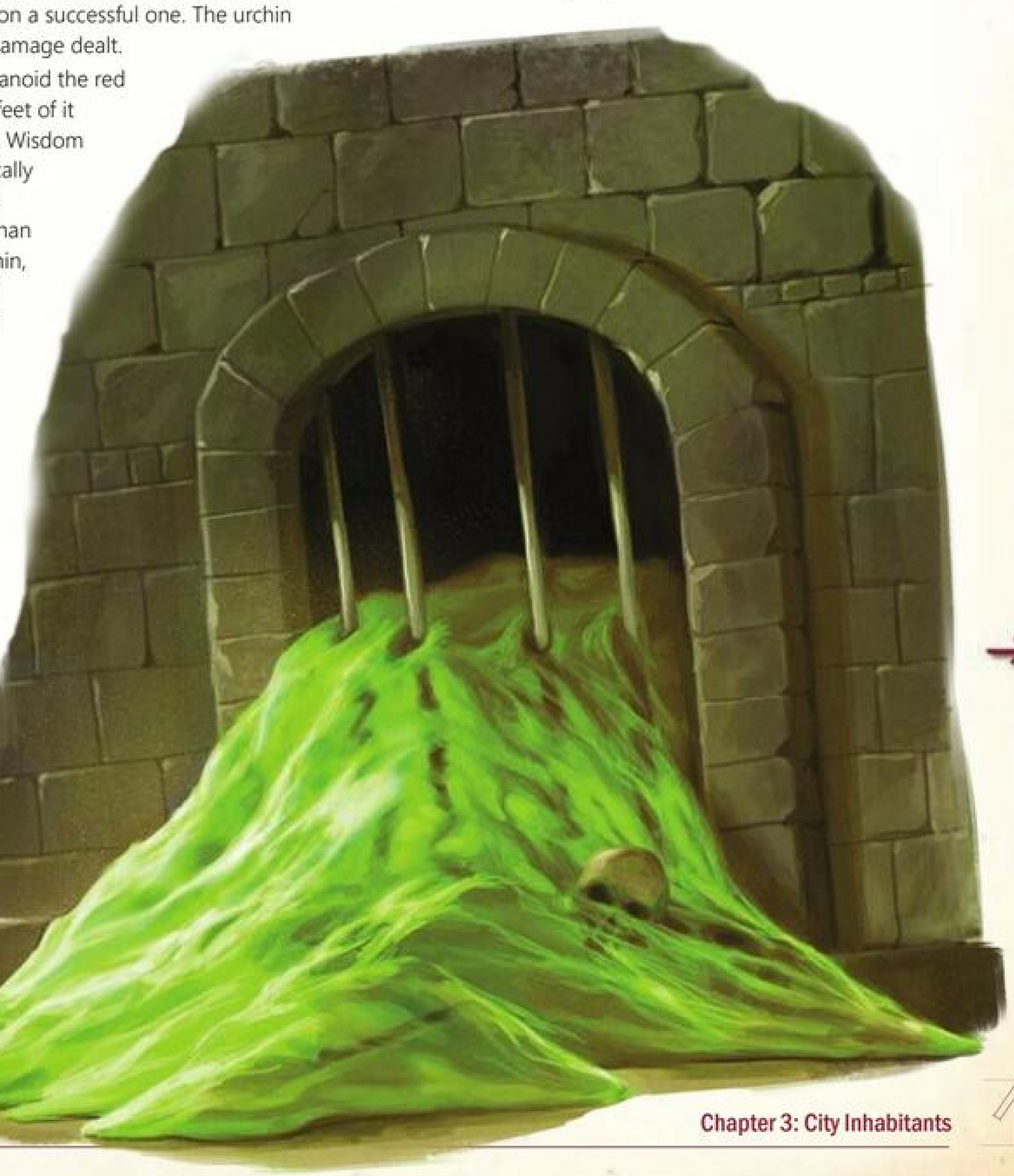
Charming Call. One Humanoid the red urchin can see within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed for 1 hour. If the charmed target is more than 5 feet away from the urchin, the target must move on its turn toward the urchin by the safest available route. If the target takes damage from any source other than the red urchin's Charmed Thirst, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. The target can also repeat the saving throw at the end of each minute. If the saving throw is successful, or if the effect on it ends, the target is immune to the urchin's Charming Call for the next 24 hours.

The red urchin can have only one target charmed at a time. If it charms another, the effect on the previous target ends.

SEWER BLOB

A flesh-like, semi-translucent amorphous mass oozes out of an impossibly narrow opening, flailing with dripping pseudopods toward its next meal.

Sewer blobs generate from areas of magical pollution, usually in cities or large communities where potions or alchemical solutions are haphazardly thrown away. They spontaneously spawn in sewers or in waste pits and don't naturally reproduce.



Picky Eater. Sewer blobs crave the flesh of living creatures, which not only sustains them but also allows them to quickly recover from their injuries. They strip their victims of flesh, leaving fleshless husks in their wake. Many of the less-palatable or tough-skinned sewer denizens, such as alligators and insects, follow the oozes for easy meals.

Sewer Blob

Huge Ooze, Unaligned

ARMOR CLASS 8

HIT POINTS 126 (11d12 + 55)

SPEED 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	7 (–2)	20 (+5)	1 (–5)	6 (–2)	1 (–5)

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES acid

CONDITION IMMUNITIES blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

SENSES blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

LANGUAGES —

CHALLENGE 5 (1,800 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +3

Amorphous. The sewer blob can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Amphibious. The sewer blob can breathe air and water.

Ooze Nature. The sewer blob doesn't require sleep.

Spider Climb. The sewer blob can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The blob makes two Pseudopod attacks. It can replace one Pseudopod attack with a use of Excorticate Flesh.

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 9 (2d8) acid damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained. The sewer blob can have up to four creatures grappled at a time.

Excorticate Flesh. One creature grappled by the sewer blob must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The sewer blob then regains hp equal to that amount.

SEWER JINNI

This woman's skin is an unwholesome yellow in color, and her hair hangs lank and dripping with viscous sludge. A greenish haze of smog rises from her head and shoulders.

Cousins of water genies, sewer jinn have adapted to life in the noxious waterways that lie beneath city streets. Creatures of a corrupt element, their forms have adapted to the pollution and toxins contained in the sewer. Smaller and less mighty than their kin, sewer jinn have developed their own magics, powered by corruption and rot, and are often as cunning and devious as other genie-kind.

Sellers of Secrets. A sewer jinni's realm is a web of tunnels running beneath the entire city. This gives them access to the city's whole breadth, and they keep their ears open to chatter on the streets above. Their use their charm to interrogate passersby for any juicy gossip or valuable knowledge. If one is seeking hard to come by information, a sewer jinni may have it. They trade their secrets freely among one another so they can ruthlessly barter with whomever enters their realm seeking knowledge.

Sewer Sickness. Creatures that succumb to a sewer jinni's charms display physical distress, including fever and a flushed complexion, impaired motor skills, and difficulty forming coherent thoughts and speaking. City folk call this "sewer sickness," attributing it to contact with noxious matter beneath the city streets. Those knowledgeable about sewer jinn can recognize the condition as a side-effect of their charms and counteract the problem accordingly.

Sewer Jinni

Medium Elemental, Chaotic Neutral

ARMOR CLASS 14 (natural armor)

HIT POINTS 68 (8d8 + 32)

SPEED 30 ft., fly 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

SAVING THROWS Con +6, Cha +5

SKILLS Arcana +4, Deception +5, Perception +4, Stealth +4

DAMAGE RESISTANCES acid, cold, lightning

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES poison

CONDITION IMMUNITIES poisoned

SENSES blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

LANGUAGES Common, Aquan

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +2

Amphibious. The sewer jinni can breathe air and water.

Speak with Beasts and Plants. The sewer jinni can communicate with Beasts and Plants as if they shared a language.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The sewer jinni makes two Spear or Sewer Sludge attacks. It can replace one attack with a use of Spellcasting.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, plus 3 (1d6) poison damage.

Sewer Sludge. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) poison damage.

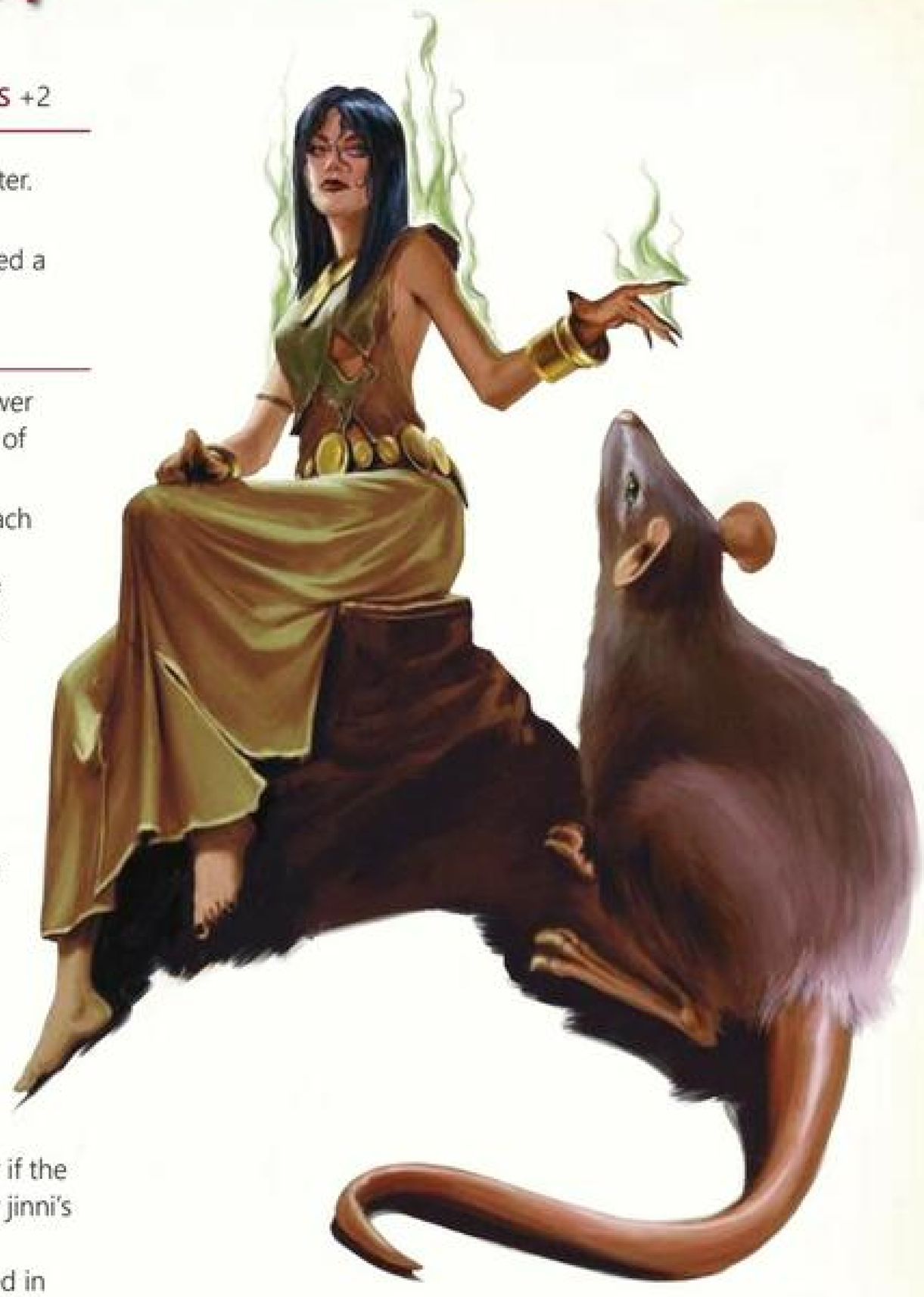
Beguiling Miasma (Recharge 5–6). One creature the sewer jinni can see within 30 feet of it is enveloped by noxious vapors and must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 day. While poisoned in this way, the creature is magically charmed and obeys the sewer jinni's verbal commands. If the target suffers any harm or receives a suicidal command, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the charmed condition (but not the poisoned condition) on a success. If the target successfully saves against this effect, or if the effect on it ends, the target is immune to this sewer jinni's Beguiling Miasma for the next 24 hours.

The sewer jinni can have only one target charmed in this way at a time. If it charms another, the effect on the previous target ends.

Spellcasting. The sewer jinni casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

At will: *create or destroy water, fog cloud, minor illusion*

1/day each: *disguise self, invisibility*



UNDEAD FACTOTUM

The pleasant-looking gentleman sporting the fine clothes and exquisite demeanor wanted to talk about a business proposition outside of the heat of the sun. But my, what sharp teeth he has!

Undead factotums are external servants of vampire courts. They are created through a careful process of feeding and training. Those victims (or volunteers) of the process emerge as undead creatures with some of the powers of unlife, but they do not succumb to exposure to the sun's cleansing rays.

Emissaries and Assassins. Vampires send undead factotums into urban areas to do their bidding. Some act in the open as official representatives of the vampire's court, while others attempt to infiltrate organizations of power within the city. They often receive their instructions through a series of messengers that are difficult to trace back to the courts, then subtly manipulate situations to benefit their vampire masters.

Unsubtle Means Are Sometimes Required. They can channel their necromantic power through their specially designed daggers, which temporarily incapacitates a victim, making them easy prey to bring back to the courts. Occasionally, an important or influential individual disappears without a trace, turning up at a lavish dinner party at a vampire's court the next day. Whether they are a guest or an entrée at the party depends on how useful they might be to the party's host.

Undead Factotum

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

ARMOR CLASS 15 (studded leather)

HIT POINTS 78 (12d8 + 24)

SPEED 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

SAVING THROWS Dex +6, Con +5

SKILLS Deception +6, History +4, Intimidation +6, Persuasion +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6

DAMAGE RESISTANCES necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Common

CHALLENGE 6 (2,300 XP) **PROFICIENCY BONUS** +3

Regeneration. The undead factotum regains 10 hp at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hp. If the factotum takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the factotum's next turn.

Undead Nature. The undead factotum doesn't require air.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The undead factotum makes one Bite attack and one Swooning Dagger attack, or it makes three Swooning Dagger attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature or creature that is surprised, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage. The target's hp maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the undead factotum regains hp equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hp maximum to 0.

Swooning Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be incapacitated until the end of its next turn.

UNDEAD FACTOTUMS IN MIDGARD

The Pallid Court holds sway from an island palace that juts into the River Nuria west of Per-Bastet. At its center is Lady Alasha al-Zania (see ***City of Cats***), vampire and master schemer. While the blazing sun keeps her and her court from gaining a true foothold of power in the city, she creates and uses undead factotums to spread her influence. When the slow and patient portions of her plans are not working well, she also calls upon her factotums to assassinate important targets.

Vampire nobles in the Blood Kingdom regularly use undead factotums when interacting with neighboring nations. Undead factotums are less unnerving to most mortals, and their ability to tolerate sunlight makes them excellent stand-ins.

4 CITY CAMPAIGNS

Urban centers are great stopping-off points for characters to resupply and pick up a side quest or two, but they can also be at the heart of story arcs or even entire campaigns. There are a variety of ways to use them in a game with endless fun for the characters. This chapter presents guidance on the role of urban centers and on the encounters and stories they bring to the table.

Two guards stand alert with bows at the ready after receiving reports of burglaries in the area, unaware of the vigilante on the rooftop above who seeks the same burglar.

ROLE OF THE CITY

When designing an urban center, whether for short-term or long-term use, consider the following four points:

- How do the characters relate to the city?
- How can the city be useful to the characters?
- Where can the characters set up their base of operations?
- When and how the characters might move on from the city to find new adventure?

Answering these questions cements the city's role in the game world, building upon the foundation already established to bring it to life while providing characters with incentive, intrigue, and opportunity.

NEWCOMER ENCOUNTERS

d8	Encounter
1	A fellow adventuring group, pack of mercenaries, or troupe of entertainers stands nearby, consulting a map while discussing where to go next and whether they want to visit the same shop they resupplied at last time, or if they want to try somewhere else that didn't charge an arm and a leg.
2	A mounted courier speeds past, too fast to catch, dropping a wrapped parcel and a list in their haste. The list details several locations in the city, as well as directions on how to get to them, the first being city hall.
3	A wooden stand nearby has a top-down map of the city, listing its districts and points of historic interest. Next to the map is a bulletin board full of the latest decrees, city ordinances, advertisements for local shops and events, and job postings. A flyer pinned over the rest announces live entertainment for this very evening.
4	Three laborers work around a sewer entrance while commiserating about the city's recent policies and what they would do if they were in charge for a change. One off-handed remark suggests that civil unrest is growing among the common folk.
5	Two guards at the gates address newcomers, asking for identification papers and reasons for visiting. Without good answers to either, entering the city could become a challenge of its own. Characters must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check to reveal one of the guards taking a bribe to allow someone else inside.
6	A low-ranking city official greets newcomers, asking if anyone needs directions or would like to participate in the upcoming holiday festivities. Though they lay on thick the lure of competition, they are disinclined to describe the prize until its unveiling during the festival.
7	A merchant, tourist, or friendly local who entered the city at the same time stops by to ask if traveling together for a spell to explore the city would be helpful. The first stop on their list is the public baths.
8	The vantage that the characters step up to surveys most of the city. Rooftops, balconies, and bridges dot the cityscape, marking the direction of important buildings and attractions, if not clearly showing how to get there.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CITY

When it comes to characters in an urban campaign, there are two types: characters that live in the city, likely familiar with some of its inner workings, and outsiders. Unless the players have been involved in the design of the city or have invested in learning about it, they will be outsiders to the city, even if their characters might not be. For this reason, as well as for keeping the adventure moving forward, new visitors to the city need to meet someone already familiar with it shortly after taking their first steps within.

A helpful nonplayer character that greets new arrivals at the gates might be cliché, but it's an effective one that addresses the aimlessness characters might experience in an environment as sprawling and open-ended as a city. Information kiosks, reception departments, and centrally posted maps are all relatively modern ideas that are nonetheless useful resources for those who are unfamiliar with the area. For a more natural way of introducing characters to the city, roll a d8 and consult the **Newcomer Encounters** table or choose an appropriate encounter.

GMs shouldn't feel rushed to have the characters experience all a city has to offer. Visiting all the districts, meeting nonplayer characters one after another, and running through descriptions of every skyline and street sign can get overwhelming while feeling watered down as each new impression glazes over the last. Isolating the first few play experiences to just a district or two in a bigger urban environment helps to maintain the veracity of the campaign and allows the characters to build upon what already exists. Once they have experienced enough of what a district has to offer to be familiar with the area and have won the hearts of a few locals with their exploits, then it might be time to branch out and see more of what the city has to offer.

As characters grow in power and reputation, they invariably gain the attention of the people in power. Crime bosses might send a few thugs to pick them up for a little chat in a bar backroom while politicians, nobles, and royalty might extend invitations to public gatherings and formal events or even private audiences. Escalating public interest in the characters is a great way to highlight their own growth in power and success. Bringing them together with higher-authority nonplayer characters is also a great way to show how the local areas are governed and who calls the shots. Anyone of importance looking to meet with plucky heroes can be counted on to either have a problem with them or have a problem for them to solve.

QUEST HUBS

Every group of aspiring heroes, coin-following mercenaries, and unlikely misfits needs a place to regroup, resupply, and replan. At its core, a quest hub is a meeting place where deals are made, earnings are collected, and plots are hatched—but they can be so much more. When designing a quest hub, or any gathering place for the characters, it's important to consider the following points:

- Quest hubs should be in a centralized location to provide characters with a solid starting point for any direction they choose to go. If the quest hub is located in a secluded corner of the sewers—hours of maze-like slogging and away from every interesting place in town—the GM should be prepared to gloss over transitions from one area to another.
- Quest hubs can be revolving doors of opportunities. Quest givers and other NPCs should be able to come and go as their routines dictate and new quest hooks should be easily accessible by word of mouth or job postings.
- Breathe life into the quest hub by allowing it to change over time, ebbing and flowing with the failures and successes of the characters. Triumphs against strong foes could mean trophies on display, new methods of travel and trade that are made available, personalized touches that the players collaborate on, and perhaps even proficiency or feat trainers or other hirable nonplayer characters that provide unique, game-changing services.
- Be consistent about respecting the sanctity and safety of the quest hub. The characters need a place where they can relax their suspicions of all the doors, chests, traps, and nonplayer characters that are out to get them. If playing the game is about managing tension, then the quest hub should be where the tension is released. Once a quest hub is assaulted by bad actors and monsters, its safety is compromised, and characters will start considering how to escalate the situation to regain control or move somewhere else.
- Consider providing a new, better quest hub as the characters get stronger. Perhaps the first quest hub is a humble campsite or local bar. As players grow in power and reputation, they might move on to an inn or tavern open to a town square. A general's war room, court of the fey, or newly inherited or purchased land would also make excellent quest hubs and impart their own flavor of adventure to the game.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Every community has some level of law and order to help keep the peace. Crimes are defined by the ruling class, and punishments are put into place to prevent anarchy and chaos. For an urban campaign, not every law and punishment needs to be defined, but it's important to answer a few basic questions and develop some structure for how the populace (or the leadership) protects itself from the depredations of fellow citizens. The particulars of the laws can be as vague or as detailed

QUEST HUBS IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF PLAY

A quest hub is an excellent reason to utilize set-piece miniatures. It creates a sense of continuity and familiarity, allows players to delight in a sense of scale as well as visual and tactile cues, and gives those who collect miniatures a great reason to get repeated use out of them. Even just a flat map with a few tokens to represent characters is a great way to build up the atmosphere and encourage players to immerse themselves in the game.

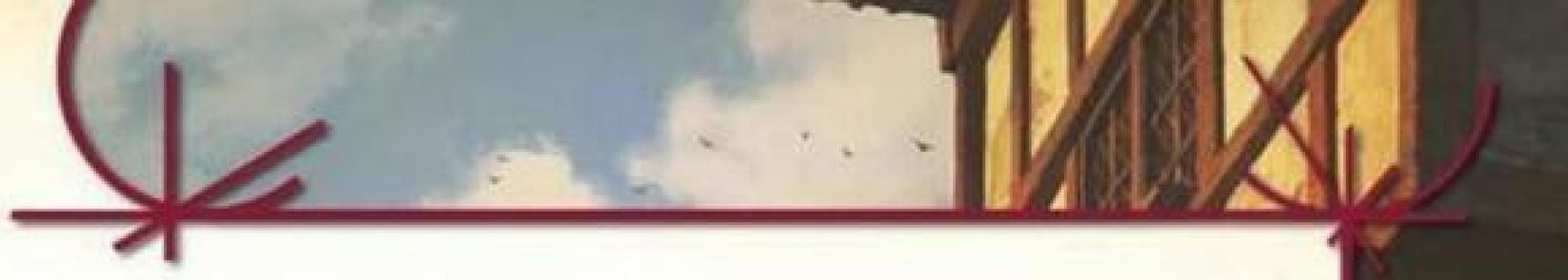
In virtual tabletops (or VTTs), a quest hub is even more valuable as it gives players a home to go back to after adventuring, and a wide range of digital assets can be acquired to add personal touches. Create a dedicated tab, page, slide, or image to return to whenever the characters finish a quest or need to relax. Make it special and unique to the party and their exploits and encourage players to play in the space, letting their imaginations inform how it comes to life.

In "theater-of-the-mind" gameplay, a quest hub can seem like a tricky thing to pull off without visual or other sensory cues, but GMs and players who enjoy this playstyle can still find the use in a quest hub. Keep a list of what makes the quest hub special, and both the GM and the players should add to it. Be descriptive about what resides there and keep notes. And most importantly, collaborate. By allowing players to add to the design, the imagery conjured during every visit will be all the more vivid.

as wanted, but two things should be kept in mind. First, defining crimes and punishments and playing them out should add to the fun, not detract from it. If the characters get accused of committing crimes, it should be because they willfully disregarded the laws or because it's part of the set-up for a quest. Second, make sure the characters (and by extension, the players) are aware of what the local laws are before they get too far along in the adventuring. Players will quickly become annoyed at constant trips to the magistrate to pay fines for petty and nonsensical acts they had no idea were illegal.

Crimes. A ruling body codifies acts against others that cause harm as crimes. The usual crimes are those most people are familiar with in their own societies today: theft, smuggling, destruction of property, kidnapping, injury, murder, sedition, and treason. There are also religious bodies that may institute certain laws, such as outlawing worship of certain deities, dressing inappropriately, blaspheming, and so forth. In a fantasy setting, additional acts related to magic might be criminal, such as scrying or mind control against someone's will, summoning malevolent beings from other planes, or—in some societies—use of any magic at all. Sometimes, a city or town might have laws on the books that are seemingly odd, nonsensical, or no longer truly necessary but have never been eliminated. For example, there might be laws against building structures higher than the palace. Or maybe a certain color is forbidden for garments (like purple, which is traditionally reserved for royalty). Or maybe no singing is allowed in public on certain days of the week. Such bizarre crimes can add a bit of flavor to the setting, so long as it's not overdone.

Punishments. Typically, lesser crimes are punished through fines or community service. More severe crimes might call for imprisonment, maiming, or death. Imprisonment might be as brief as an afternoon spent in the stocks, a night spent in a cell, or a few months or a lifetime toiling in a salt mine. Individuals who can't pay fines can be sent to debtors' prison until they (or someone else) can pay off the debt. In some fantasy societies, banishment is an apt punishment, as is being



forced to fight in an arena. Thieves might have one or both hands chopped off, blasphemers and liars might have their tongues cut out, and spies might have their eyes gouged out. Of course, with magical healing and restoration, such crimes might not be as permanent as they once were in the real world, but most citizens cannot afford such, and the prospect of receiving such a punishment should still give most characters pause.

Adjudication. There are a variety of ways for communities to determine innocence and guilt. The most common is through trials and witnesses. Typically, a judge or magistrate hears charges and evidence and rules on the outcome. Sometimes, the clergy serves as arbiters and dispenses verdicts, and other times, a lord or guild leaders are given that authority. Occasionally, individuals with strong, charismatic personalities—like cult leaders or mysterious entities—convince or coerce others to grant them the power of judgement. In a fantasy setting, magic is quite an effective tool for determining innocence, through scrying, lie detection, and divine auguries and prayers. Some societies find creative ways to determine guilt through superstitious beliefs or strange pseudoscience.

Enforcement. For most common folk, the threat of physical coercion is sufficient to convince them to obey the laws. Most communities rely on some kind of armed policing organization to enforce the laws and punishments for breaking them. This might be as simple as the retired mercenary in the village or as large and complex as the city watch and court system. Regardless, most citizens know there are individuals larger, more powerful, and better armed than themselves who will do whatever is physically necessary to mete out punishments.

Finding a way to force elite criminals to serve sentences for their crimes can get tricky in a society with powerful warriors and magic. The typical city watch squad can't hope to subdue characters with exceptional martial training or spellcasting prowess. In smaller, more rural communities, those types usually *become* the law. In cities, law-abiding citizens may need to band together to overcome powerful lawbreakers who refuse to come quietly. The kind of campaign being run has a significant impact on how this gets handled. When the characters are behaving heroically, enforcing the rules just might become a part of the questing. If the characters are the ones expected to misbehave though, a conversation at the beginning of the campaign is necessary to determine if that's how the group desires to play or if there are misunderstandings between one or more players and/or between them and the GM. Making it clear up front that everyone has agreed on a certain style of adventuring saves a lot of wasted effort and hurt feelings later.

RESTOCKING SUPPLIES

Questing expends resources. And though some things are replenished simply with rest, others, like potions, scrolls, food, and supplies, need to be restocked after a dungeon delve. Nearly anything can be found in a large city, so locating the desired item might be a nonissue unless the GM decides otherwise.

After consecutive sessions of tense play where the stakes are life or death, an occasional shopping episode might be a much-appreciated palate cleanser. In such a situation, the stakes are more relaxed, costing only coin and dignity. At worst, finding the right magic item draws forth a complication that doesn't get resolved until much later.

GMs and players shouldn't get overly concerned about the functional economy of the game world (unless that is the primary objective of the adventure). Whether magic items are rare or as readily available as the backpacks characters often forget they stash them in, their value is best treated as subjective rather than objective (see also **City Wealth** below).

In most campaign settings, magic items won't have a manufacturer's suggested retail price standardized across the nation. No, prices for expensive items typically start with the phrases, "How much do you want for it?" and "How much are you willing to pay?" This is the art of haggling at its core. Haggling is all about starting high, recognizing subjective worth, and manipulating the emotions of one's opponent to get the desired result. Skill checks are ideal for this, allowing characters to make contested checks to get the seller to find a price everyone agrees on. Be warned though, for if characters push a merchant too far for too long or insult them too much, the opportunity might be lost entirely as they decide it's all more trouble than the coin is worth.

CITY WEALTH

Sooner or later, the question of how much wealth a community has will arise. The characters might intend to buy or sell goods, raze the place and steal everything, or borrow coin for some endeavor. Attempting to realistically determine the amount of fungible wealth and capital assets a locale possesses is a complicated endeavor, but here are some guidelines for reasonable assumptions about the wealth level in a given community.

COMMUNITY WEALTH LEVELS

Size	Fungible Wealth	Magic Item Rarity (number available)
Thorp	25 gp	Common (1d4)
Hamlet	50 gp	Common (1d8)
Village	100 gp	Common (2d6)
Town (small)	500 gp	Uncommon (1d6)
Town (large)	5,000 gp	Uncommon (3d6)
City (small)	100,000 gp	Rare (1d10)
City (large)	500,000 gp	Very Rare (1d10)
Metropolis	1,000,000+ gp	Legendary (1d10)

Fungible Wealth. Small, rural places, like thorps, hamlets, and villages, are obviously going to be poor in coin. Those folks have their wealth in resources, such as crops and livestock, businesses and shelter, and labor and tools. Often, they barter among themselves rather than trading goods and services for coin. The handful of businesses in these communities likely have some coinage for dealing with non-local customers and traders, but by and large, gold, silver, and gemstones are scarce.

Towns, cities, and metropolises are quite the opposite. In such large urban centers, coin is the primary medium of exchange and often comes from many realms. Precious stones are likewise used as a more easily transported source of wealth, and entire industries exist for the exchange of both foreign coin and gems. In addition, trade bars of gold and silver, small-but-valuable resources such as spices, and even letters of credit might be employed as forms of currency.

Accessibility of Magic Items. Similarly, the presence and availability of magic items varies greatly by community size. In the smallest locales, enchanted items of all but the most common and minor types are likely nonexistent. An alchemist or herbalist in the local hamlet probably makes potions, but no one is selling magical blades (unless, for some very specific story reason, the blacksmith has that ability, and in that case, consider the interesting consequences of someone like that living in some rural, out-of-the-way place). In contrast, large cities have most of the typical magic items available for purchase. Only truly rare and unique items are not likely to be found. Even so, many items are not available on the average street corner or market shop, but rather work must be put into the endeavor. (The core rules contain systems for buying and selling magic items as part of downtime activities.)

Community Wealth Levels. If the characters want to buy, sell, steal, or borrow wealth or magic, consider the **Community Wealth Levels** table for some quick guidelines. The Fungible Wealth column indicates how much actual coinage characters could collect, through selling items, borrowing, or stealing, without putting undue strain on the community's economy. The Magic Item Rarity indicates the highest level and the number available of that rarity category (noting that more common categories of items than the entry listed are readily available and in practically unlimited supply, so in a small city, for instance, while only 1d10 rare items might be found, an unlimited supply of common and uncommon items are also available).

OPTIONAL RULE: TAXATION

Whether owning a smithy or tavern, heading a crafting guild, or keeping membership in a mercenary company, a citizen can expect to be taxed. Governments, monarchs, and countries tax their subjects to fund infrastructure, civic programs, or war, to combat inflation in the local markets, and often, to increase their own wealth.

Taxes are typically levied three times per year at the changing of the seasons, followed by a fourth and final tax and audit in spring, when all accounts are settled. When taxes are due, a tax agent sets up a booth or temporary office in a main district and meets with each taxpayer to verify records before collecting the tax. If a taxpayer fails to report for a review, a tax agent is authorized to track down the citizen, often with members of the city guard or other muscle in tow.

Why Include Taxes at All?

The taxation rules presented here are optional rules for expanding the game beyond the Lifestyle Expenses presented in the core rulebooks. They are best suited for characters spending long periods of time as

citizens of a city or characters running a business or owning property within a city. In most cases, traveling adventurers wouldn't need to pay taxes themselves, but they might still feel the impact of taxes on the local populace when traveling through urban areas. The following are a few ways to use taxes in an adventure.

Indirect Taxation. Indirectly taxing the characters can help expand the narrative. Characters staying at an inn might find that the usual rate has gone up since the innkeeper must increase prices right before tax season. Similarly, a regime change that results in a greedy lord taking power might initially go unnoticed by the characters, but the local shopkeepers suddenly charging higher prices is sure to catch their attention. In this way, taxation can still have an impact on traveling characters without such characters directly paying the taxes.

Shared Complication. Savvy GMs know that nothing elicits more reaction from players than someone coming for their spoils. Including taxes in the game is an opportunity to do just that—or at least build up a little conspiratorial grumbling. With taxation,

TAXATION PROCESS: SIMPLIFIED

To include taxes in an adventure while focusing on the fun of rolling dice and avoiding all the calculations presented in this section, treat the taxes as a flat monthly or annual increase to the characters' standard lifestyle expenses without determining the exact value of the characters' assets or forcing them to file taxes. To quickly determine how much a character owes in taxes, roll a number of d6s equal to that character's proficiency bonus and roll additional d6s for each magic item the character possesses, based on the item's rarity: 1d6 for common, 2d6 for uncommon, 3d6 for rare, 5d6 for very rare, and 8d6 for legendary. Then, multiply the result by 50 gp, or 100 gp if the character owns property. The character owes that amount plus the annual geld tax (defined under **Types of Taxes**).

characters' assets might require itemizing and weighing against eligible deductions, culminating in a social encounter with an auditor.

Verisimilitude and Worldbuilding. Taxing the characters can be an additional way for them to spend earned coin, to mitigate the wealth that often comes from adventuring and selling off loot, or to give back to the characters' communities in a meaningful way. Gold-laden characters paying taxes to a community might be a great way to introduce new NPCs, businesses, guilds, or even whole districts to the city or town as their regular contributions allow the location to grow and better support its citizenry.

Taxation Process

When the characters owe taxes, they must calculate how much they owe by determining which types of taxes they must pay, the value of their assets, and which tax deductions they might have. They must then decide how they plan to pay these taxes.

The modestly and upward-living typically pay silver and gold coinage for their taxes, but other options exist. Trade goods, manual labor, conscription, and even indentured servitude can be accepted as payment for taxes, depending on the government, the citizen's lifestyle, and the general needs of the people. For example, a city struck with a food shortage might readily accept taxes paid in foodstuffs. Spellcasting citizens might also pay their taxes in magical services to the people or government. Many rulers seize on any opportunity to bolster their bastions with arcane reinforcement, illuminate their halls with magically burning torches, and awaken their furniture to serve as maids, cooks, and footmen, and governments in the middle of a war might accept a spellcasting citizen's tax payments in the form of quarterly enchantments to military equipment.

Paying Taxes. Citizens paying in coin and trade goods pay the government's local tax agent, while those paying in services must report to the agent's superior at the seat of government, such as a city's master of coin or the monarch's financial advisor. That individual can then direct the citizen to the appropriate military, labor, or magical leadership for determining the exact nature of the services based on the amount owed.

Types of Taxes

Even the poorest of citizens are expected to pay taxes of 32 sp by the end of the year. The entire tax system is based on this expectation, with those living better lifestyles paying proportionally more.

The Geld. Each taxpayer is required to pay the flat rate, called the geld, in either quarterly amounts at every season's change or in a lump sum during the spring's annual audit. The total quarterly geld is always more than the annual geld, but it allows the citizen to pay in smaller amounts over time rather than a lump sum. Tax agents are exceptionally dogged about collecting quarterly gelds, for the extra coin can often be overlooked by their superiors and thus expended at their own discretions. The geld a citizen owes is based on the citizen's lifestyle, as noted in the **Taxes by Lifestyle** table.

The Pelf. In addition to the geld, sometimes the government or ruler imposes a pelf tax. Citizens are required to pay this tax only when the government or ruling body publicly announces it, usually by decree or writ and typically only once in a year, during the annual spring audit.

To determine how much pelf tax is due, the full and fair market value of all a citizen's assets is determined in the final audit (see **Appraising Assets** below), then multiplied by a percentage based on the citizen's lifestyle, as noted in the **Taxes by Lifestyle** table.

Tithe Tax. In addition to geld and pelf taxes, sometimes churches and religious organizations

TAXES BY LIFESTYLE

Lifestyle	Quarterly Geld Due	Annual Geld Due	Pelf Tax Percentage
Wretched	—	—	—
Squalid	9 sp	32 sp	2%
Poor	17 sp	64 sp	2%
Modest	11 gp	40 gp	4%
Comfortable	23 gp	81 gp	6%
Wealthy	45 gp	166 gp	9%
Aristocratic	106 gp	416 gp	12%

might tax people who work on their lands or reside within their walls and protection. This church tax, called a tithe tax, is always levied as a divine mandate, so it never qualifies as a charitable contribution for deduction purposes. Tithe taxes are standardized at 10 percent of a citizen's total assets, though extraordinary circumstances, such as during a religious crusade or a month-long anniversary celebration, can cause churches to call upon the faithful for more. Tithe tax is taken only once a year, and it is collected by the church, not a tax agent.

Other Taxes. For the purposes of brevity and streamlined play, geld, pelf, and tithe taxes are treated as if covering the entire breadth of taxes. A monarch or government can, of course, impose taxes on just about anything, provided they are willing to deal with the declining morale—or even ire and aggression—of their subjects. Governments or ruling bodies might impose extra taxes for owned land, military expenses in times of war, being unwed or childless in times of declining population, receiving inheritance, purchasing goods at auction, and similar specific taxes. Typically, these taxes are "fixes" for temporary situations or to encourage particular behaviors in the populace, and they never amount to more than 5 percent of a citizen's total wealth or item's total worth. Be sure that any tax added on top of geld and pelf taxes furthers the narrative or some important aspect of the game world since few players enjoy additional math simply for the sake of math.

Appraising Assets

If the characters have an item or asset with an unknown value, the tax agent can appraise said item according to rarity. Rather than offer a detailed price for each individual item, tax agents offer a general, government-established appraisal of all items based on rarity in order to remain brief and impartial. Tax agents are mostly concerned with income, real estate, vehicles, livestock, magic items, and luxury items like works of art, fancy furniture, and suits of plate armor. They are less concerned with mundane tools and equipment. For example, a tax agent would assess the value of a blacksmith's income, forge, and property where the shop sits, but the agent wouldn't assess the value of the blacksmith's tools or the table used in the display of the smith's craft unless those tools or that table were of exceptional quality or value or were magical.

Consult the **Assessed Item Value** table to determine the tax agent's assessed value of each item. For the purposes of this assessment, *common* refers to magic item rarity, not mundane or commonly found items.

ASSESSED ITEM VALUE

Item Rarity	Assessed Value
Common	75 gp
Uncommon	250 gp
Rare	2,500 gp
Very rare	25,000 gp
Legendary	50,000 gp

Determining Deductions

Wise taxpayers can reduce their owed taxes by taking advantage of a variety of deductions. An eligible deduction is applied after pelf tax is calculated, offsetting the owed balance. Though a wide variety of deductions can exist in any government system, the following categories cover the deductions most relevant to characters. When adding deductions to this list, keep in mind that governments typically issue deductions for services and assets that contribute to shared civic prosperity, and the government typically doesn't waive more than 10 percent off an individual's pelf tax wealth in one deduction. The following deductions and their values are summarized in the **Itemized Deductions** table.

ITEMIZED DEDUCTIONS

Deduction	Amount Reduced
Academic Enrollment	10% of the pelf tax, up to 500 gp
Charitable Contributions	Full amount donated or up to half the fair market value for an object gifted in the taxable year
Dependents	10% of the pelf tax per dependent, up to 750 gp for each
Heroic Deeds	10% of the pelf tax per deed in the taxable year, up to 500 gp for each
Scutage Fees	Full amount paid or up to half the fair market value for an object gifted to the ruling body in the taxable year
Temporarily Indisposed	10% of pelf tax, up to 750 gp

Academic Enrollment. Bards belonging to colleges, ascetics residing in temples, wizards enrolled in schools, and monks in monasteries are all eligible for this deduction. The character must present proof of attendance to the tax agent to earn this deduction. If a church takes a tithe tax, the church might waive that tax for those regularly providing services to the church or its supplicants. In these situations, such a character can't claim this deduction.

Charitable Donations. Sums provided to orphanages and nonprofit organizations, wondrous items of art and magic returned to museums, and gifts to monarchs and persons of high nobility all count for this deduction. If the character is part of a group that made the donation, the donation's value is split evenly between them as a partial deduction for each member of the group.

Dependents. Characters who have spouses or children who have not yet come of age, or characters who care—financially or otherwise—for chronically ailing family members within their household benefit from this deduction.

Heroic Deeds. Heroes of the realms who perform extraordinary deeds of service to crown and country often find that their selfless acts of heroism are rewarded come tax season. A vanquished foe or resolved quest must be of challenge rating 6 or higher or must be of great importance to the community to qualify for this deduction. If the deed is too obscure for the tax agent to know (or for local authorities to corroborate), the character can't earn this deduction. If the character is part of a group that performed the heroic deed, each participant can claim this deduction.

Scutage Fees. Knights, paladins, and soldiers who pay scutage, or shield money, to commute military service all find that such fees are tax-deductible, provided that the lord or monarch who received the fee provides a writ of satisfaction declaring the commuter's good standing. The character must present the writ to the tax agent to earn this deduction.

Temporarily Indisposed. Spending extended periods (more than two weeks) suffering a grievous disease or malady or recovering from grievous wounds and the act of being resurrected all count for eligibility for this deduction. This is the most frequently claimed deduction for adventurers and mercenaries, whose dangerous lives often leave them bedridden for weeks, recovering from their exploits.

Example of the Taxation Process

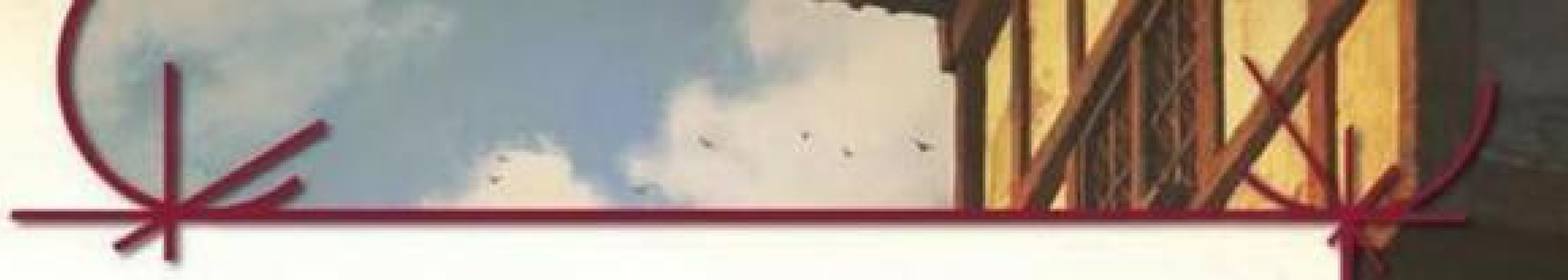
Yakalin Bernhardan lives a modest lifestyle and in the annual audit has learned that his total assets—a small family farm and an heirloom (an uncommon magic item)—have been appraised at 2,000 gp. Due to his modest lifestyle, he owes 80 gp (4 percent of total asset value) in pelf tax plus geld. As Yakalin has already paid taxes for the last three quarters (33 gp paid of 44 gp total quarterly geld owed), he must pay only the pelf tax (80 gp) and one quarterly geld (11 gp) during this year's spring audit for a total of 91 gp to the tax agent.

Sample Tax Agents

A wide variety of people might take up the life of a tax agent, traveling the city or countryside and collecting the taxes. Here are a few sample tax agents to include in an adventure.

Gormit Bluntbuckle. Gormit (N dwarf **noble**) is a civil servant not by choice but by sentence. As punishment for an act of cowardice he prefers not to discuss, Gormit serves partway through a 30-year sentence, collecting taxes and other duties. Though he longs for a way to commute his punishment, he is impeded by his own laziness. His one talent, the ability to read and manipulate people, serves him well enough in his assigned role. Gormit is always accompanied by two mean-spirited ogres who are tasked to watch him as much as to watch out for him.

Valeria Blücher. Valeria (LE human **spy**) is a woman of considerate personality but shrewd methodology.



Middle-aged with silvery-blue eyes, her proper title is seneschal, though she finds that she must often take a direct hand in collections when tax season arrives. She has a talent for treating people kindly while remaining entirely uncompromising. Valeria has had to fight hard every step of the way to get where she is now and isn't shy about wielding her authority. She doesn't let anything get between her and her goals, even something as minor as a tax-delinquent peasant.

Adareiox the Tax Drake. Adareiox (LN **bronze dragon wyrmling;** alternatively see **pact drake** in *Creature Codex*) is a small drake well into adulthood with warm, yellow-red scales, dark horns that curve up and inward, and a curly white goatee. His teeth poke upward from his bottom jaw, which increasingly impedes his speech with age. Adareiox hoards rules, coveting them beyond all things. His love of regulations and the rule of law is what drew him to tax auditing after decades of handling mediations between domineering patrons and desperate artists. He sees taxes as just a different form of pact, delighting in the transaction.

Adventure Hooks

Few look forward to the requirements of tax season, but one can find adventure even in civic duty:

- A tax agent has gone missing while collecting taxes, and their widow asks the characters for help. By tracing the agent's last steps, they soon learn the agent was carrying a large sum of collected taxes, and at least one other group of local, greedy adventurers was seen celebrating a large, recent haul.
- The party receives advance warning delivered by courier that they are to be audited and are instructed to have their affairs documented for review. The warning lists the time and place of the audit in addition to naming the presiding tax agent, providing characters with time to research and prepare.
- While carousing, recovering from wounds, or offloading goods over the course of several weeks in the city, the nightly rates for the rooms the characters are renting increase. When confronted about it, the innkeeper states a new tax agent has been assigned to their district. After investigating, the characters learn the new agent has been charging more than is necessary to support their vices.

EARNING REWARDS

Besides hitting the local bar, fraternizing with the locals, and clearing out an apothecary's stock of healing potions, characters are also drawn to incentivization. Gold goes a long way and is often the main reason adventurers take up adventuring. But rewarding characters can go beyond gold. Here are a few examples of suitable rewards for completing quest objectives:

- Gold and other forms of currency such as trade goods.
- Items, whether just potions, scrolls, and other "standard" fair or wondrous magic items of great rarity. Be generous with the former and judicious and measured with the latter.
- Feats, or rather trainers who can teach feats, or proficiencies, for a price. Not everyone plays with feats, and for those who don't offer them upon leveling up, offering feats as a reward can be a tidy way to really give the players a sense of achievement. Be warned, too many feats can bloat and slow down gameplay by creating option paralysis for players in tactical situations.
- Experience points. While the primary way of gaining experience is by defeating creatures, offering experience for completing objectives is a great way to incentivize players to stay goal-oriented and stay open to solutions other than combat. There is no easy answer for how much experience to award for completing an objective. When evaluating, the GM must look at what encounters were used as obstacles in completing the objective and base any awards on the challenge rating for those encounters, adjusted when experience was also awarded directly for completing an encounter. For this reason, among others, many GMs and players prefer to use milestone leveling instead of experience points, and that is fine too. Completing a hefty quest objective is often a great time and place to reach a new level milestone.
- Reputation, also known as status, opens some doors and closes others, and it drives much of how characters are regarded. While an optional rule, status provides a tangible benefit without directly impacting how strong or wealthy a character is, preventing imbalances that contribute to unfair and unfun gameplay.

OPTIONAL RULE: CHARACTER STATUS

In the court of public opinion, little matters more than a character's reputation. Some are born fortunate and are regarded well for it, while others must earn their place in the social hierarchy. This social standing is represented by the optional Status attribute. Aspiring heroes must take heed. The good graces of neighbors, and the prestige that comes with it, are fickle and can fluctuate with every careless step. Status is more difficult to earn than lose and is even harder to earn back when lost.

Each character's Status can be determined by using the information below, first to generate a starting value and then to adjust it according to the actions of the character. As a rule, Status determines to which character most nonplayer characters will defer: the one with the highest is the default party leader in the eyes of others.

The **Effects of Status** table expands on the concept and treats it as a spectrum, spanning infamy and fame. The more generous, good, and lawful deeds a character performs, the more their Status increases, earning the benefits of a good reputation and the admiration of the public. But if a character instead commits selfish, destructive, chaotic, or evil acts, they lose Status. If a character's Status ever drops to or below 0, they become infamous and gain notoriety among the crooks and villains who might approach them with job opportunities—or just to eliminate the competition.

Determining Status

A character's beginning Status is equal to 1d6 + 1 plus the character's Charisma modifier. That value is then subject to further change because of class and background. For any background not listed, creatures are regarded as either locals (no bonus or penalty) or outsiders (–1 to beginning Status), as determined by the character's backstory. Any class not listed has no adjustment to a character's beginning Status.

A character's Status in one city or country might be different in the next and might also differ depending on the cultural norms of the local citizenry. A theocratic city, for instance, might hold clerics and paladins in especially high esteem unless they're followers of a rival god or the religious ruling class of the city are tyrannical.

The **Starting Status Modifiers** table lists bonuses and penalties for standard above-ground cities with a morality that bends toward lawful good. If a city differs from that, such as an underground necropolis

EFFECTS OF STATUS

Status	Standing
–15 or lower	***Infamous Villain.*** You cannot show your face in public without garnering the swift attention of the authorities, upstart heroes, and greedy competitors (at the GM's discretion). Criminals, outlaws, and villains will take an interest in you, seeking to recruit or compete with you. Once per day, you can use an action to recruit nearby ne'er-do-wells to perform an unlawful task, provided you make a compelling enough bargain.
0 to –14	***Notorious Outlaw.*** City officials and members of law enforcement will periodically (at the GM's discretion) act to hinder you. Most civilians will shun you. Other persons of infamy might be willing to open their illicit services to you, though always for a price. Once per week, you can give up something valuable that you are carrying to whip bystanders into a greedy frenzy, causing a chaotic and distracting scene.
1–10	***Untested Outsider.*** You are largely ignored as you conduct your business, though law enforcement is unlikely to be lenient with you if you break a law. Civilians are indifferent to your presence.
11–20	***Familiar Local.*** You have established yourself as a member of the community. Most civilians are friendly to you and are willing to hear you out if you need something of them. You are more likely to be let off with a warning from law enforcement.
21–30	***Favored Figure.*** Your actions have benefitted the city, and its people thank you for it. Once per week, you can use an action to call upon nearby civilians to aid you in difficult situations. Additionally, some members of law enforcement might look the other way if you violate a law that doesn't harm others.
30 or higher	***Famous Hero.*** You have shown time and again that the city is under your protection, and the citizens regularly act to stand with you. Once per day, you can use an action to call upon them for aid. Additionally, while you act on behalf of the city, its government officials might aid you of their own volition. But with your fame sometimes comes unwanted attention. You are twice as likely to gain the jealous eye of rivals, get unwanted advances from obsessed fans, and earn the ire of jilted villains.

run by ghouls, consider inverting some of the bonuses and penalties for the backgrounds listed. (See also *Midgard Worldbook* and *City of Cats* for some other ways of determining Status.)

A character's Status fluctuates whenever the character performs certain acts, increasing or decreasing the value. See the **Gaining and Losing Status** table for examples.

Effects of Status

A character's Status in a city affects how the inhabitants regard them, creating opportunities and denying others. Refer to the **Effects of Status** table, moving up or down as the character gains or loses Status.

Roll a d12 and consult either the **Benefits of Fame** table or the **Hindrances of Infamy** table or choose how status benefits or hinders a character.

SAMPLE STARTING STATUS MODIFIERS

Background/ Class	Status	Background/ Class	Status
Acolyte	+1	Paladin	+2
Appraiser*	+1	Public servant*	+2
Barbarian	−1	Ranger	+1
Bard	+2	Rogue	−1
Cleric	+2	Sorcerer	+1
Druid	−1	Vigilante*	−2**
Fighter	+1	Warlock	−1
Midwife*	+2	Wizard	+2
Monk	+1		

(*) see Chapter 5; (**) or as secret identity.

BENEFITS OF FAME

d12	Effect
1	A citizen trips a pursuer chasing you, forcing them to succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.
2	A street vendor offers you a free sample of food or a beverage, and you regain 1 hit point.
3	The perfect spot to rest your weary feet always seems to be just around the corner. Once within the next 24 hours, you can reroll one of your Hit Dice when taking a short rest.
4	Domestic and wild animals are uncharacteristically curious of you. For the next 24 hours, you have advantage on Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks that target beasts in the city.
5	Signage is abundant, always reminding you of familiar little details. For the next 24 hours, you have a +2 bonus to Intelligence (History) checks in the city.
6	Friendly citizens clear the way before you, opening shortcuts and unblocking obstacles. While traveling, your party covers an additional 1 mile per hour.
7	Columns, monuments, walls, and fences break up sightlines and provide you with ample protection. For the next 24 hours, at the beginning of a combat encounter, you have at least half cover until the end of your turn.
8	Civilians leave out ladders and clear railings for you. For the next 24 hours, you have a +2 bonus to Strength (Athletics) checks to climb in the city.
9	Friendly civilians look out for you and cause distractions when you are trying to escape notice. For one encounter within the next 24 hours, you have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide.
10	Other locals trust and want to discuss the daily gossip with you. Once within the next 24 hours, you hear a random rumor.
11	Kindly craftspeople and apothecaries sometimes top you off and replace small spent items. Once within the next 24 hours, roll a d6 when expending a single-use item of common or uncommon rarity such as a *potion of healing* or vial of acid. On a 6, you do not expend that item.
12	You are under the watchful eye of the city guard. Once within the next 24 hours, a **guard** or **spy** might join your side in a combat encounter with the goal of protecting you and diffusing the conflict.

GAINING AND LOSING STATUS

Action	Status
Cast *earthquake*, *fire storm*, *meteor swarm*, *storm of vengeance*, or other wide-sweeping, destructive magic.	−4
Damage public or personal property worth 1,000 gp or more.	−3
Destroy, thwart, or defame a beloved figure.	−3
Violate a law or decree or commit an evil act that harms others.	−2
Steal 1,000 gp or more worth of currency, art objects, or wondrous items from a public institution.	−1
Cast *control weather* to beneficial effect.	+1
Defeat an intelligent undead or fiend of at least CR 5.	+1
Perform a civil service that benefits an entire city district.	+1
Save someone from harm.	+1
Donate 1,000 gp or more worth of currency, art objects, or wondrous items to a church or museum.	+2
Protect the city from an imminent threat.	+2
Restore a damaged portion of the city.	+2

HINDRANCES OF INFAMY

d12	Effect
1	Merchants know that, with your reputation, you have little choice in who you buy from. The next item of common or uncommon rarity you purchase costs you twice as much as it would normally.
2	Construction, rubble, and inconvenient activities seem to await you around every corner. While traveling, your party covers 1 fewer mile per hour than normal.
3	There is a bounty on your head. When given the opportunity to flee or attack, most groups of people who outnumber you try to apprehend you with the goal of turning you over to law enforcement.
4	Your path always seems to be littered with trash, caltrops, or rubble. For the next 24 hours, when you begin an encounter, you are considered to be standing in difficult terrain that covers an area of 1d4 × 5 feet.
5	Your foes outmaneuver you among the city's structures. During your next combat encounter, your foes have at the least half cover until the end of their first turn.
6	Miscreants look to hamper your goals. When you take the dash action, you must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity check to avoid tripping over a stuck-out foot or broom and falling prone.
7	Shadows and strange sounds are everywhere, confusing your senses. For the next 24 hours, you have a −2 penalty on Wisdom (Perception) checks in the city.
8	Posters with your likeness seem to plaster every city wall, making people more likely to recognize and draw attention to you when you are trying to be discrete. For the next 24 hours, you have a −2 penalty on Charisma (Deception) checks in the city.
9	You have law enforcement's attention. Once within the next 24 hours, a **guard** or **spy** might join in a combat encounter with the goal of apprehending you.
10	The very city seems against you, needling at your wellbeing with little cacophonies of sounds and disruptive sensations. Once within the next 24 hours, you must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion.
11	Beasts and other small creatures can sense all the negativity of your person, always preferring to attack you even when given the opportunity to flee.
12	Railings are slippery or out of reach and brick walls have been weathered smooth. For the next 24 hours, you have a −2 penalty on Strength (Athletics) checks to climb in the city.

URBAN ENCOUNTERS

Characters wandering through the city can interact with potentially hundreds of different individuals. Minor interactions resolve quickly through roleplaying or perhaps a simple ability check. Other times, complications arise that give such interactions more depth. This section explores ways to create more elaborate encounters.

TYPES OF ENCOUNTERS

Encounters can fall into one of the following three different types: investigative, physical, and social.

INVESTIGATIVE

Investigations are one of the most common types of city encounters, and they often combine naturally with both social and combat encounters:

- ***General Research.*** This is the kind of research characters might perform at a library, college, or hall of records. It's easy and has few obstructions. While the knowledge might be antiquated or obscure, it is still considered public knowledge, potentially accessible by anyone willing to put in the time.
- ***Underground Knowledge.*** Characters cannot acquire certain information through general research. In these cases, it might require investigating forgotten chambers or interviewing murderous criminals. Access to the knowledge might require characters to perform furtive, morally questionable, or even illegal acts. It could include occult or forbidden lore, political secrets, blasphemies, or scandals.

To turn the act of acquiring knowledge into an encounter, consider using multiple stages of difficulty that balance the amount of risk the characters must undertake against the reward they can attain from success. Include at least three possible options for the characters to source their information. Like combat, allow the characters several attempts to "defeat the enemy," along with the necessity of taking damage and expending spells, which potentially increases the difficulty of future combat encounters.

Set a range of difficulties such that failure doesn't mean characters don't succeed at the task, but that it makes the overall task more difficult. For example, the following consequences assume the characters accomplish the goal of acquiring some of the information, but they suffer one or more setbacks:

- Enemies overhear details of the characters' findings, allowing them to infer their goals and intentions.
- The characters accidentally lead their enemies to the source of the desired information.
- The characters allow their enemies to obtain part of the information they cannot access themselves.
- The characters need to expend one or more spells to bypass some arcane defense mechanism that hides or protects part of the information.
- The characters need to provide morally questionable individuals with a resource to access the information.
- The characters need to trade some of their information to gain more information.
- The characters unwittingly allow enemies to learn the location of an additional source of information.
- The characters unwittingly give their enemies the means to track them.

Corruption. Few cities are politically, socially, or financially stable enough to avoid corruption. It only takes one corrupt guard to alter an adventure's potential outcome drastically. Corrupt officials might employ guards, militia, and mercenaries to create conflict and trigger encounters. For example, a city might employ a criminal ring under the command of a former bandit to police the streets. A commander might encourage his agents to extort protection money to supplement low pay. Alternatively, the city watch might fall under the influence of a notorious evil, such as a rakshasa, or host patrols comprised of shapeshifters or dhampir.

Similarly, characters might prey upon the moral turpitude of various officials by offering bribes in the form of money, items, or personal favors. Offering bribes to guards might prompt them to look the other way. A bounty or king's ransom might also entice a city official into operating above the law to round up suspects for arrest or questioning.

PHYSICAL

Most civilized cities frown upon armed combat within their walls. Combat is dangerous and costly, damaging property and injuring bystanders. Furthermore, combat encounters escalate quickly. In the moment, city guards might jump into the melee. In the aftermath, death by combat brings vendettas, gang wars, and assassinations. In general, most citizens settle differences with arguments, legal actions, or, in the worst case, either fisticuffs or the kinds of improvised weapons one might expect to find in a bar fight. Before running a city adventure, the GM should consider the city's attitude toward physical altercations, how the citizens expect to be treated, what they consider acceptable behavior during a disagreement, and the legalities established

by city leaders and law enforcement agencies. Furthermore, the influence of dominant cultural or religious leaders might also dictate how citizens typically react when forced to settle a disagreement.

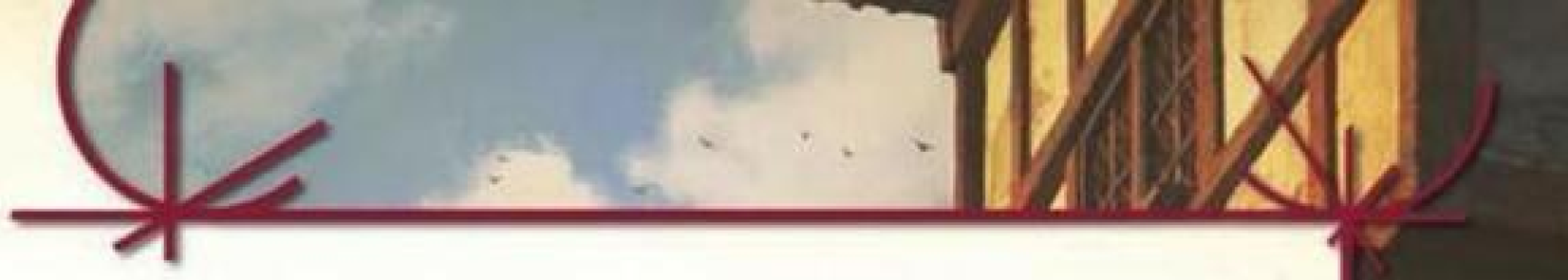
City law typically deems engaging in armed combat as attempted murder. Individuals attacking opponents with swords, battleaxes, crossbows, and other weapons designed for killing humans risk murder charges unless they can somehow justify the use of such force. For obvious reasons, firing ranged weaponry is frowned on, if not illegal. Similarly, laws frequently forbid spellcasters from casting destructive spells like *burning hands*, *sleet storm*, or *stinking cloud* within city limits.

When running adventures that feature grittier or more violent encounters, reduce the consequences of resolving encounters through combat with the following options:

- ***Dueling Laws.*** Dueling is permissible between consenting individuals. If both individuals openly declare the intent to duel, they might do so freely within a designated area such as a town square.
- ***License to Kill.*** In addition to city guards and soldiers, select individuals possess the right to carry and use weapons openly. The city's ruler(s) provides individuals or members of an organization or agency a license to kill. The license might apply to a specific individual named in a bounty or be more general, such as a writ of consent to capture, kill, judge, or fine known thieves, bandits, pirates, or some other nefarious public enemy. Individuals with this right identify themselves by displaying a badge, medallion, or legal paperwork. While only the city's rulers grant these licenses, they are worth a good deal on the black market. Similarly, some individuals use exquisite forgeries.
- ***Limited Influence.*** For whatever reason, some cities suffer from weak or ineffectual law enforcement. Amoral leaders might not enforce some laws, while a city with a collapsing economy might no longer have the funds to maintain an adequate number of city guards. In some cities, the same laws don't apply to all citizens, and as a result, certain districts become hotbeds for crime and violence.
- ***Open Carry.*** The law only considers fighting with martial and ranged weapons as intent to murder. Individuals are allowed to carry and fight with simple weapons openly.
- ***Self-Defense.*** City law might declare that all citizens hold the right to use weapons to defend themselves against acts of aggression. So long as individuals can provide a responsible witness, they can freely engage in combat with anyone they can legally prove was threatening them with violence.

The subsequent encounters include violence. In some cases, antagonists perpetrate violence on the characters, while in others, the characters witness or investigate acts of violence that draw them into the encounter. Keep in mind that city structure keeps most combat encounters short. Characters rarely have time to engage in loud, drawn-out combat sequences because they draw attention. Combat attracts crowds of civilian onlookers and nearby law enforcement agents within a few rounds.

Violent encounters often leave a wake of destruction, not only to the participants but also to the surroundings. Arcing swords smash into tables and walls, while lightning cracks stone towers and razes hedgerows. Most areas of the city consist of property belonging to someone. Moreover, when individuals damage property, the property owner expects the individual responsible for the damage to grant them restitution for all losses incurred. Depending on the destruction suffered, these damages can exceed



hundreds in gold. However, the precise amount of restitution demanded is often the subject of legal dispute. Failure to pay can result in costly fines.

Assassination. This combat encounter occurs when one of the characters' enemies contracts a third party to kill them. Assassination is typically illegal unless the assassin serves the ruling body of the city. The assassination attempt takes place at a specific time and place that allows the assassin the best opportunity to sneak attack their targets without drawing witnesses' or guards' attention, allowing them to flee quickly. For example, the assassin might snipe characters from a distance, attempt to poison their food, or creep into their bedrooms and slit their throats while they sleep. Assassinations take time to plan, and the assassin must study the targets and collect information about their daily habits to determine the best time and place to strike. Gathering sufficient information takes a few days at least. When planning to run an assassination encounter, the GM should consider providing one or two clues that potentially allow the characters to learn about an assassination attempt in advance. Clues might include the characters' local barkeep telling them that a curious individual was asking about them but didn't leave a name, or one of the characters noticing someone appeared to be following them for the last couple of days.

Brawl. A brawl results from a spontaneous fight among a handful of individuals following some altercation. Brawls frequently occur in taverns where drunken tempers flare, but merchants and vendors might fight over sales or street corners. A gang of dock workers might fight over spilled shipping crates or docking privileges. Essentially, anywhere an argument might escalate to violence can lead to a brawl. Thankfully, most brawls consist chiefly of fist-fighting or other unarmed attacks. Individuals caught up in an unarmed brawl don't usually face more than a fine or a night in jail. Conversely, if participants draw weapons, legal penalties increase, and charges might escalate from disturbing the peace or disorderly conduct to attempted murder.

Duel. A duel occurs when two individuals agree to resolve a disagreement through combat. For example, a publicly insulted or humiliated nonplayer character might suddenly challenge a player character to a duel. Local laws determine whether duels are legal and, if so, provide rules for carrying out a legal duel. The law might require an opponent to first issue a letter of challenge, which the second party must formally accept. In addition, they might require both parties to deposit funeral expenses into an escrow account before killing each other. The city might also enforce specific laws about the times or locations duels can take place or have strange bylaws forbidding certain people from dueling.

Mugging. One of the most common city encounters is mugging. Running such an encounter is deceptively complicated. While often included on random city encounter tables, mugging is a deliberate act performed by an individual with an expected outcome. Muggers rarely mug people at random, rather choosing specific locations frequented by the kinds of individuals they target and knowing what kind of loot they can expect to gain from the mugging. Muggers plan ambushes, hitting their marks fast and unexpectedly. They strike, grab, and run. They don't want to fight, and they don't want to kill.

For this reason, muggers rarely target seasoned adventurers. Adventurers don't look like easy targets, especially if they are armed and wearing armor. Thus, a tussle with a group of well-armed, experienced adventurers usually won't be worth the effort. Instead, muggings take place where there are people worth mugging, such as outside inns and taverns and in areas that would draw less attention.

Murder. All cities consider murder, the willful slaying of another individual, as a heinous crime with severe consequences such as exile or even execution. As an encounter, the characters might prevent a murder or find the body of a murder victim. Both options are a combination of complex investigative, social, and combat encounters. Both options require the GM to provide characters with inferences and clues, identifying the individuals and circumstances leading to the murder. When preventing a murder, characters must determine who the killer is before they strike. When finding a body, characters investigate the crime scene and use clues to track down the killer. The GM can also use a murder victim's body to foreshadow the presence of a murderer in the immediate vicinity. Further, the murderer might be a threat, but the incident might also have been an act of defense, crime of passion, tragic accident, or suicide. In such instances, complex social reactions would resolve the encounter, not combat.

Riot. Riots are like brawls, though the aggression and violence are less discriminant and might target structures and property and involve looting or arson. Riots erupt in response to perceived injustice. Typically, a riot's participants initially gather for some purpose, such as to protest a despotic ruler, hear a charismatic preacher, or attend a gladiatorial competition. During the gathering, the crowd becomes agitated, and tension builds until some instigating incident, which triggers a chain reaction of violence and destruction.

When running a riot sequence, the GM assumes the crowd erupts into violence at some point. The mob can reach its boiling point at a predetermined time or when a specific trigger occurs. The GM should track the mob's mood as it approaches the boiling point, possibly allowing the characters to delay the inevitable or calm the crowd before it becomes violent. The GM should also set contingencies for dispersing the riot. Contingencies might include spells that calm the crowd, the death of the demagogue responsible for the gathering, rounding up and detaining the individuals leading the riot, law enforcement agents or military forces called to disperse the mob, raging fire, or other massive acts of destruction.

Once the crowd gathers, the GM describes changes within the mob as it becomes increasingly violent. Characters either join the mob or attempt to stop it. A riot continues until the characters meet the contingencies for its dispersal, and it leaves behind a wake of destruction, property damage, looting, injury, and death. Determine the extent of the damages based on the level of violence, why the people were there from the start, and the duration of the rioting. For example, the wake of destruction following a one-hour riot over a curfew law in a totalitarian city would be far less than a six-day riot resulting from the political assassination of an upcoming leader that promised the people massive social changes and economic freedoms.

Robbery. While the objective of a robbery isn't to commit violence, individuals committing a robbery openly use threats of violence to pressure their victims. Robberies tend to be orchestrated encounters that involve multiple individuals. Their targets are typically businesses, such as banks, merchant vessels, storage facilities, treasuries, or other buildings designed to store valuables. Every city considers robbery a severe crime. If the characters decide they want to carry out a robbery, the GM should clarify all risks, penalties, and consequences for committing robbery before they execute their plan.

More likely, the GM pits the characters against a troupe of well-armed thugs attempting to commit a robbery. For example, a wealthy individual or organization suffering from a recent rash of armed robberies might hire the characters to guard a valuable shipment or bank vault. As a result, they might be in the immediate vicinity when a robbery occurs. Moreover, most armed robbers are already criminals carrying sizable bounties.

SOCIAL

A social encounter occurs when the initial exchange leads to a situation or conflict that requires a GM to adjudicate with dice the results of a series of interpersonal interactions. Just like in combat, the characters can make attacks, evade, block, and even counterspell, except exchanges aren't made with swords and spells but with wit, guile, bribes, intimidation, seduction, and charm. The difference between a casual interaction and an encounter is that the encounter is dramatic, holds some level of risk, and requires a resolution.

Social encounters demand that the characters participate in verbal exchanges. There are different ways to handle verbal exchanges, depending on the players' playstyle. Some GMs and players like to resolve social exchanges with a basic description of the interaction, both sides declaring their intentions, and then the results are determined with dice. For this style of play, the social encounter runs much like a combat encounter. Alternatively, some groups like to roleplay the encounter, acting out the parts of every individual involved and then determining the results based on the roleplaying. In this style of play, the group encourages roleplaying over ability checks and only use checks when the outcome of the roleplay isn't readily apparent. Most groups use a combination of both styles, depending on the situation. When combining roleplaying and ability checks, the GM is encouraged to award characters bonuses to rolls, advantage on certain checks, or inspiration for clever or inspired roleplay. The GM allows characters to roleplay through an interaction before using the dice to determine the results whenever possible.

Use the following to create situational encounters based on the nonplayer characters' behaviors:

- ***Attracted.*** The character risks attracting the nonplayer character, either as a friend or romantic interest. The character has an easy time keeping the nonplayer character's attention and has advantage on any attempt to gain trust, help, or agreement from them. The problem arises when the nonplayer character continually attempts to insert themself into the character's activities and attract their attention. The nonplayer character seeking friendship might attempt to follow the character around and offer to help them with tasks or constantly invite them to participate in social activities, even when the character is involved in some other task or duty. A romantic interest might

repeatedly send tokens of affection, serenade the individual by moonlight, or be overly and uncomfortably forward in conversation.

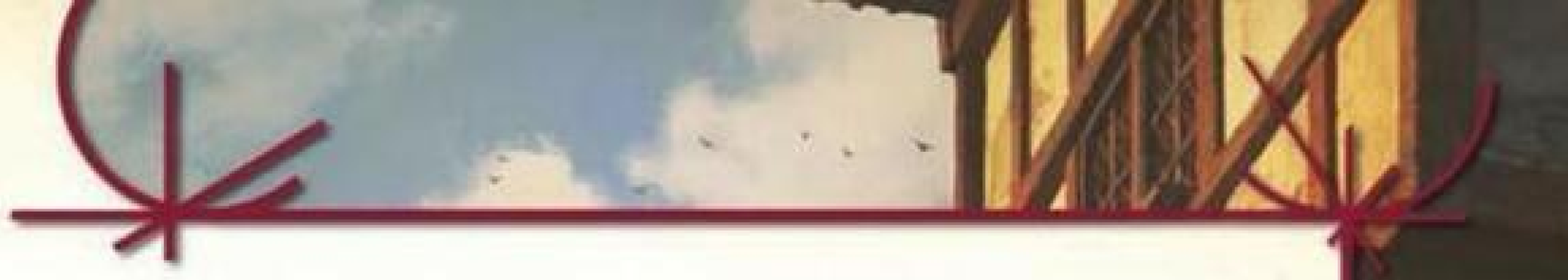
- ***Gullible.*** Sometimes the characters encounter individuals who are incredibly easy to convince or impress. A gullible nonplayer character is someone that believes the forged documents or accepts the characters as foreign royalty. Alternatively, a clever storyteller can reel in gullible individuals to make subsequent parts of their tale more believable. A character has advantage on any attempt to deceive a gullible character.
- ***Skeptical.*** This person always doubts the characters' words. Whenever the characters must present evidence, information, or testimony to someone in authority, this nonplayer character questions the validity of their presentation. Typically, a skeptic serves as an advisor, academician, or expert valued for their insight and intelligence. Sometimes, they are someone who doesn't like the characters based on some prejudice against their cultural background, education, or social upbringing. Regardless, whenever the characters must make an ability check to convince others of an idea, opinion, or plan, the skeptic forces them to make the check with disadvantage. For example, if the characters present an artifact or recovered knowledge, the skeptic demands they provide further evidence to confirm the artifact is authentic or the knowledge is accurate.
- ***Specialist.*** Sometimes, the characters need to seek out those who know specialized information. The specialist might be a sage who owns a vast collection of lost occult lore, a political mastermind, a spy or government informant, or a snitch with deep connections to the city's seedy criminal underworld. Specialists typically expect some form of compensation for their talent. For some, the exchange requires only a simple payment or exchange of information. Others might require something more substantial, such as access to a secret location, a rare item, or completing a complex favor. When determining the results of this social encounter, it's not whether the specialist knows the information but rather how much information the specialist is willing to share. Getting the information might require several interactions over several days.

STAGING ENCOUNTERS

Unlike a random encounter, a GM can set up or "stage" specific encounters. The GM predetermines who is involved, where and when the encounter occurs, what civilians and guards are in the area, and how the antagonists and the characters might interact with the immediate surroundings. Staged encounters might also consist of several related events, each triggering a reaction or additional encounter. The GM might design a short flow chart or use another organizational tool to track various reactions when staging an encounter. Knowing how each variable might trigger future events makes for more cohesive encounters.

Simple Encounters. A single independent event variable triggers a single dependent reaction when executing a simple encounter. The antagonists involved create a simple cause and effect. The characters only need to identify and deal with the effects of one trigger event. Examples of simple encounters include locating a fence disguised as a pie salesperson, interrogating a wererat, or a tavern brawl. Effectively dealing with the reaction resolves the encounter.

Complex Encounters. In a complex encounter, one or more independent variables trigger a chain reaction with multiple dependent outcomes. Whenever the



characters attempt to counter a single reaction, they risk triggering additional reactions. In effect, each reaction has the potential to transform into a new event. Examples of complex encounters include locating a fence disguised as a pie salesperson who, upon confrontation, signals to a watching ally to burn the evidence in his shop or a tavern brawl that serves as a cover-up for a criminal to murder a rival. The characters resolve a complex encounter like a simple encounter, though this can prove far more difficult, since some reactions create events that might not trigger until days, months, years, or even centuries later.

BUILDINGS

Buildings provide one of the foundational locations for staging encounters. For example, the building might be a one-story home, multi-level castle, dungeon, sewer, or sizeable asylum. When staging an encounter inside a building, consider the following elements.

Layout. Consider the overall layout of a building and how things like rooms, doors, windows, stairs, and furniture might affect the encounter. Moreso than in a dungeon, the GM needs to consider what might be happening nearby, such as in the streets outside, or how adjacent structures and might impact the encounter:

- Are there passages or rooms that create dead ends?
- Are there witnesses or bystanders that might see into the building from the street or an adjacent structure?
- Does the building share a basement or passage with an adjacent structure?
- How many staircases or floors are in the building?
- Is the building close enough for an individual to leap or climb to an adjacent structure?
- What areas are easily defended or provide potential ambush sites?

Lighting. Few medieval buildings are well lit. Only buildings with a significant number of light sources (magical or otherwise) provide light equivalent to daylight, and flammable materials provide for most light sources in a medieval fantasy city. When creating the encounter, consider the following lighting questions:

- Can the lighting be extinguished or dispelled?
- Do light sources change throughout the day?
- How well-lit is the building?
- What potential do the light sources have for igniting a fire?
- What's the predominant light source?
- Where are the areas that shed light, such as windows, sconces, and fireplaces?

Locks. Locks are expensive and typically only found on chests and doors that block access to objects or secrets far more valuable than the lock itself. Large, wealthy cities tend to have many more locks in addition to more wealth and complex secrets.

Stability. Consider the role the structure plays in the encounter. Older buildings might be less stable or of a design that limits movement and creates natural hiding spaces or obstructions that limit the effectiveness of certain weapons or spells:

- Does the roof leak?
- Has the stonework or foundation settled at an unusual angle?
- How durable are the floors, staircases, and walls?
- Is it an old building with loose floorboards or rickety stairs?
- What components of the building are flammable?

STREETS

City streets often have unique personalities, an amalgam of its shape and construction, purpose, crossroads and intersections, essential structures, and residents. For example, an entire district might run the length of a street cutting through the center of a large city, or a desolate alley might hold an infamous reputation for knife attacks. As a microcosm for various locations in the city, streets provide the perfect staging ground for encounters. More conveniently, street encounters can take place almost anywhere. When building a street encounter, determine how the personality and shape of the street might influence the encounter, both in terms of social interactions and physical altercations, including combat. Consider the following variables when determining what kind of encounters might work best on any specific street.

Movement. Characters moving in and around the city might travel at different speeds or take alternate routes depending on the times of day and various events. Things that might alter or impede movement around the city include events such as parades and festivals that block streets and alter topography. Incidents or accidents can also affect movement, such as a search and seizure causing a backup of merchant wagons at the city gates. Emergencies, such as assassinations, arson threats, or a city-wide manhunt, can also lead to increased guard activity that slows movement and limits access to certain wards or districts.

Obstacles in the Street

Barrel. Barrels line the street. They might hold rainwater, grain, or sour ale. Knocking over barrels spills their contents, making the cobbles slippery. Anyone attempting to run through the area must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to avoid slipping and falling prone.

Laundry Line. There might be one or several lines of clothing strung between buildings, which can strike individuals as they run through. Anyone attempting to run through the area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to avoid 1d3 slashing damage and falling prone.

Alternatively, an individual might steal clothing from the line to attempt to disguise themselves.

Peddler. An individual selling flowers, seashells, scented oils, incense, material components, or dried herbs from a wicker basket.

Pile of Filth. A pile of dung, offal, or similar waste litters the street. Anyone moving through the filth leaves soiled footprints. For the next 10 minutes, anyone attempting to track or spot the soiled individual makes their checks with advantage.

Pushcart. This small cart holds a collection of easily transportable goods, such as cabbages, fish, laundry, buckets of ash, sacks of flour, apples, or fruit pies. If knocked over, the objects pelt the individual, soiling them. During a combat or chase encounter, a creature bumping into the cart must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or have disadvantage on their next attack roll, saving throw, or ability check before the end of their next turn.

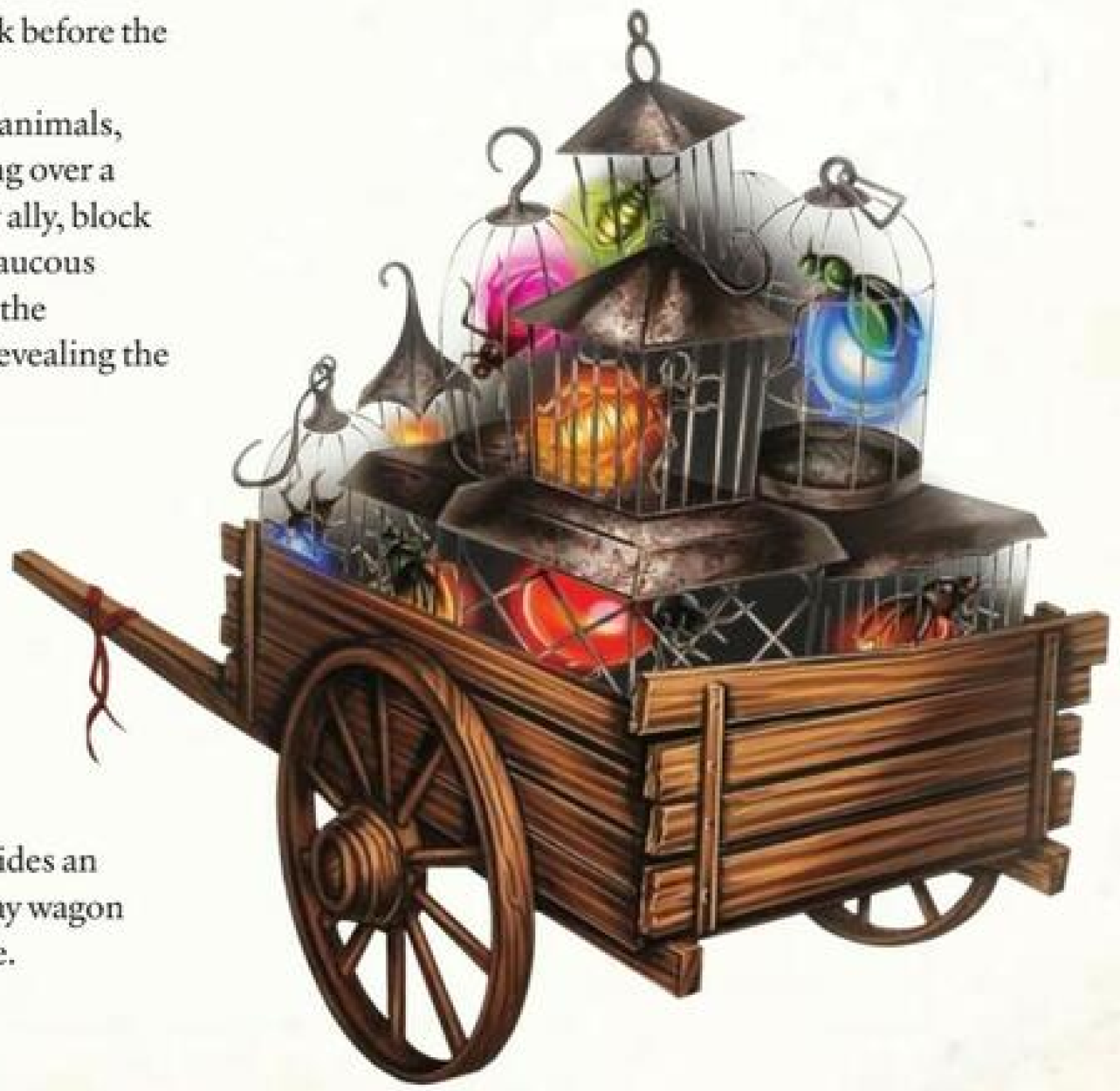
Stray or Feral Animals. One or more feral animals, such as a three-legged dog, two cats scrapping over a fish, or a swarm of rats cowering in a narrow ally, block the path. Startling the animals unleashes a raucous disturbance as they scatter wildly, attracting the attention of all bystanders within 100 feet, revealing the characters' location.

Contingency Routes

Criminals often have contingency routes for traveling quickly and unseen through the city. They rely on them for escaping crime scenes and outwitting city guards and frequently form escape plans based on dedicated routes used to commit similar crimes in the past:

- Stacks of hay rest atop a false floor that hides an ample storage space in the bottom of a hay wagon used for smuggling contraband or people.
- The criminal dashes into a sewer pipe hidden beneath a pushcart, which is operated by a lookout or spotter that works as a street vendor.
- The criminal has one or two friends in high places covering them. These friends might even have their agents in law enforcement capture and imprison the criminal only to release them the following day after having paid a small fine to expunge any charges.
- The criminal is not a citizen but belongs to a political organization beyond the city's authority. Embassies or cargo ships might have their own rules or laws, but city officials expect those living outside the city's jurisdiction to handle their own.
- The criminal keeps stashes of rope ladders, grappling hooks and climbing gear, and ziplines in hidden stashes along a set route.
- The criminal operates near a waterway or stables, providing them with quick access to transportation.
- The criminal uses magical contingencies such as *invisibility*, *misty step*, *dimension door*, and *teleport*, allowing them to vanish into thin air.
- The route runs past a ladder that climbs to a rooftop of a building, which is close enough to the neighboring rooftop for the fleeing thief to leap or swing toward to make their escape.

To randomly determine the setup for an urban encounter, roll a d20 twice and consult the **Staging Idea Generator** table, applying the objective to



either the characters or the antagonists, or choose an appropriate event and objective.

STAGING IDEA GENERATOR

d20	Event	Objective
1	Baptism	Acquire covert information
2	Bazaar	Break up relationship
3	Concert	Build confidence in a potential ally
4	Coronation	Collect a debt
5	Dinner party	Create a distraction
6	Execution	Debunk a theory
7	Feast	Destroy a political union
8	Festival	Establish doubt
9	Funeral	Gain a patron or support from an ally
10	Groundbreaking	Gain access or permission
11	Hanging	Grandstand or heckle
12	Hunting expedition	Lure an opponent
13	Knighting	Make a delivery
14	Play	Perform a heist
15	Poetry reading	Plant an object
16	Trial	Prevent a marriage
17	Wake	Request a favor
18	Wedding	Sow dissension
19	Wicker man	Steal an object
20	Witch burning	Swap a document

ROLE OF CITIZENS

The most complex aspects of planning and running a city encounter revolve around the placement and use of citizens. For purposes of this section, consider a citizen to be any common nonplayer character that lives or works in the city and whose daily activities are disrupted by the encounter. For example, the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker are considered citizens. However, the assassin, captain of the city watch, and the merchant prince are not.

When running an encounter, estimate the relative number of citizens in the area where the encounter occurs. Several factors might influence this number, such as the time of day or the type of neighborhood. Similarly, physical structures such as alleys, wells, or town squares—or is it inside a building—can also affect how citizens might become involved. Use the categories below to help determine how citizens might react during an encounter:

- ***Citizens.*** Only a lone nonplayer character, such as a night watchman, a scullery maid, a goatherd, or a traveler in a neighboring room at an inn, bears witness to the interaction. If the characters do not notice the citizen, the citizen most likely slips off, knowing what they saw and heard, though they might not understand its full implications. Suppose the characters spot the citizen, and they interact. In that case, the single individual is intimidated enough to provide any information or complete any simple task that would allow them to extricate themselves from the encounter with the least amount of risk and the greatest benefit. A single citizen's initial priority is self-preservation.
- ***Couples.*** Couples consist of two people with a shared relationship. The relationship might be friendly or familial, romantic or platonic. Examples include twin sisters running errands, a father and daughter taking a stroll, or young lovers secluded in a hay cart. Like a single citizen, couples attempt to extricate themselves from encounters quickly and with the least risk. However, a couple will prioritize the safety and security of one of its individuals over the other. If the encounter seems threatening or violent, one individual sacrifices themself for the benefit of the other.
- ***Small Groups.*** A small group convenes around a shared activity, such as laundering clothing at a river, working at a mill, or fishing, and might consist of individuals engaging in pastime events, such as carousing at a tavern or playing cards. Citizens become more emboldened in the company of a small group. If the encounter interrupts the group's activities, participants become angry and disagreeable and demand reasonable restitution for time or damages. Restitution can be anything from an apology to payment. Depending on how criminal or violent the encounter appears, they might also threaten to call guards or other authorities to avoid direct involvement.
- ***Gatherings.*** Gatherings differ from small groups in that most of the participants don't know each other. Examples include congregating around a vendor's cart, watching a street performer, visiting a shrine or monument, listening to a preacher, or a small protest or rally. Violent encounters scatter gatherings. Participants flee in a panic, giving

WITNESS'S REACTION

d6	Reaction
1	***Call for Help.*** The bystander panics and screams for help. Any help (such as allies or guards) within range of the scream rushes to investigate.
2	***Gawk.*** The bystander stands in the vicinity and attempts to observe the entire conflict.
3	***Get the Guards.*** The bystander attempts to seek out the assistance of the nearest city guards. Roll percentile dice; they have a 10-percent chance of succeeding. If they fail, during each subsequent round, they can take their full movement and make a new attempt to find guards; add 10 percent to the die roll for each additional attempt. Once the bystander locates guards, they rush to the encounter scene at their full movement rate.
4	***Hide and Observe.*** The bystander attempts to hide and observe events by making a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. On a success, they have advantage on any later checks made to recall events during the encounter.
5	***Intervene.*** The bystander attempts to intervene in the altercation and adds their initiative to the combat round. They use their first action to dodge any attacks and then attempt to use reason to end the altercation.
6	***Run Away.*** The bystander runs from the encounter and trys to extricate themselves from any associated drama.

them little opportunity to bear witness to events or give accurate testimony. Conversely, gatherings frequently reconvene around any social spectacle, provided it appears more exciting or dramatic than the initial event that assembled the gathering.

- ***Crowds.*** A crowd refers to a collection of gatherings assembling in ample public space for a single purpose. Examples include an open-air market, the public execution of an infamous criminal, the death of a popular leader, or a significant protest or rally. Crowds are difficult to disperse and do so in sections in direct response to violent encounters. Depending on the size of the crowd, it might take hours or even days to disperse fully. In addition, crowds present bystanders and witnesses able to provide testimony of the day's events.
- ***Throngs.*** Throngs occur when crowds gather in reaction to an adverse event or circumstance. Examples include the execution of a popular folk hero, the forced marriage of a hated baron, or squatters' uprisings. If a violent altercation erupts within a throng, the encounter triggers a riot (see **Types of Encounters** above for more details).
- ***Masses.*** Masses occur when hundreds to thousands of individuals gather in fear or panic. Congregations of this size and stress level only occur when the entire city boils over in reaction to a city-shaking event, such as an earthquake, revolution, foreign invasion, or kaiju attack. The "fight or flight" instinct overcomes all logical thought. Some individuals run for safety, grabbing children or anything they might think might help them survive. Others attempt to hide, seize buildings, or stockpile weapons. Few individuals behave rationally, and those that gather in mobs block streets or form human stampedes that knock people prone and trample them.

BEARING WITNESS

Whenever citizens witness an encounter, the GM needs to determine just how they react and what exactly the citizen witnessed and their interpretation of any observations.

Roll a d6 on the **Witness's Reaction** and **Witness's Interpretation** tables or choose appropriate responses.

CITY GUARD

Whenever a serious altercation occurs, especially if violence is involved, it's only a matter of time before the city guard shows up. In most cities, the guard primarily exists to discourage conflict, not to create it. Depending on the city's wealth and political temperament, most guards are individuals trained to use a few weapons and who are just intimidating enough to keep order. However, their martial prowess is only slightly better than most of the citizens. In a typical city, most members of the guard do not want to die. Most aren't adventurers, and they perform a job to make money to support their families.

Nevertheless, all guards aren't necessarily under-skilled or poorly trained. Larger cities with stable economies might require better training for those who handle the more serious crimes. Defining who guards the city helps establish how to introduce and use guards during combat.

The GM should use city guards, and nonplayer characters that serve a similar role, to influence encounters, not to serve as encounters. Rather, use the guards—or the threat of the guards—to direct the actions of the characters.

City guards might have one or more of the following abilities:

- ***Impose a Fine.*** The guard can impose fines for lesser violations, such as trespassing, disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, brandishing a weapon in public, and similar crimes. The fee is usually no more than a few gold, though less scrupulous guards might hike the fees and take a small cut.
- ***Interrogate.*** The guard can stop and interrogate random citizens. Refusing interrogation is an admission of guilt and possible cause for arrest. In more totalitarian cities, guards with this privilege might also have the right to search citizens and seize certain items.
- ***Make an Arrest.*** The guard can arrest without prior evidence. Resisting arrest is an admission of guilt and might carry its own fine or punishment, even if the individual is innocent of the accused crime.

WITNESS'S INTERPRETATION

d6	Interpretation
1	***Attention Seeker.*** This bystander claims they witnessed the whole altercation. Unfortunately, they provide an inaccurate account of the event. Anyone can succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check to reveal the witness is lying to get attention.
2	***Caught the Tail End.*** The bystander only observed the last few actions. They assume the altercation's victors unjustly attacked the losers.
3	***Heard the Argument.*** The bystander overheard the altercation and accurately recalls the reason or cause of the encounter. If they succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check, they remember what specific individuals said.
4	***Opening Act.*** The bystander witnessed the start of the encounter and accurately recalls the individual who took the first attack action.
5	***Saw Most of It.*** The bystander watched almost all the altercation. If questioned about specific actions, they must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check to provide accurate answers.
6	***Saw the Whole Thing.*** The bystander watched the entire altercation. If questioned about specific actions, they must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check to provide accurate answers.

Roll a d8 and consult the **Guard Backgrounds** table or choose appropriate backgrounds for relevant guards.

GUARD BACKGROUNDS

d8	Background
1	***Career Guard.*** They've spent their adult life as a city guard. They have proper weapon training and might have become jaded.
2	***Conscript.*** They serve as part of the city's mandatory conscription program that requires all citizens to serve at least one year as a city guard. They have moderate training.
3	***Ex-Criminal.*** Ironically, many criminals have skill sets well suited for the city guard. Alternatively, some cities require guard duty as a sentence for lesser crimes.
4	***Mercenary.*** They only hold their position for a paycheck. Unless the city is extremely wealthy, they won't hire many mercenaries for guard duty. A city typically only hires mercenaries under dire circumstances.
5	***Patriot.*** They might or might not be an official guard, but their strong desire to aid the city against chaos and crime compels them to act like one. They are earnest in their work.
6	***Retired Veteran.*** Used to being in command and bored with retirement, they took a job as a guard and use their military knowledge to run small "task forces."
7	***Soldier.*** The city's military also serves as its law enforcement. As a result, they have far better weapon training than average city guards.
8	***Volunteer.*** They occasionally volunteer to serve as a city guard, typically working no more than four watches per month.

URBAN ADVENTURES

An urban center is a conglomeration of individuals working together—or competing—for survival in the same limited area. Within its limits hang the lures of conflict, fear, hope, mystery, and wealth. Arguably, a large city might hold more mysterious secrets, restless dead, lurking monstrosities, winding mazes, nefarious criminals, and hordes of gold than the deepest and darkest of dungeons. In short, cities make excellent locations for adventure.

A massive city can provide the framework for any adventure, from a quick one-shot, where characters make only a single visit, to a level-spanning campaign.

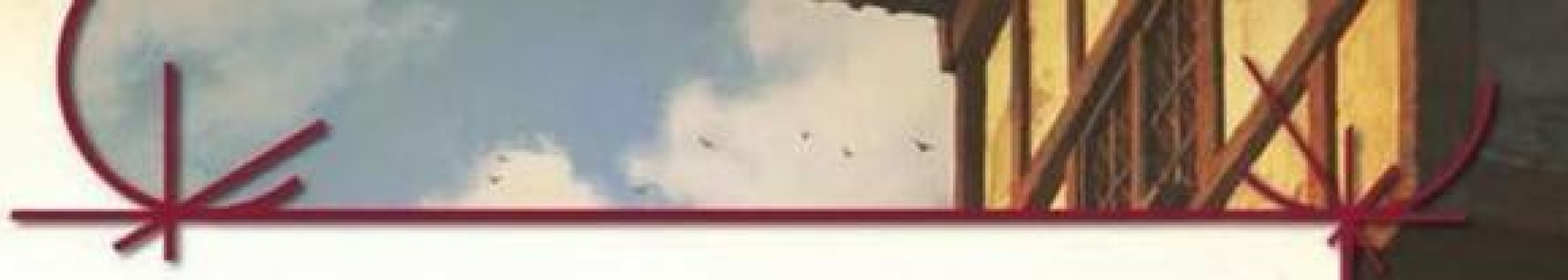
STRUCTURING URBAN CAMPAIGNS

The principal difference between the structure of an urban campaign and any other lies in ensuring the characters' goals and objectives weave into the narrative, into the very fabric of the city. As characters progress and develop, the paths they choose become part of the city's lore, its culture and history. As a result, characters do not complete a city campaign but instead become it.

Short-Term Objectives. Short-term objectives introduce characters to people and places in the city. The GM typically initiates such an objective and provides characters with a plot hook that encourages them to interact with locations, nonplayer characters, and organizations within the city. The more ties a character has to its citizens and locales, the more likely they are to invest in its narrative.

Short-term objectives might be connected to a long-term goal or major event or might lead to a relationship with individuals that provide further short-term objectives. Examples include delivering a secret message to an influential nonplayer character, driving off a street gang or other criminals, exterminating vermin, or running errands for a local alchemist. Each game session should introduce at least one new short-term objective.

Long-Term Goals. Long-term goals tend to be more personal and require the characters to interact with multiple city elements over time. The players assume ownership of narrative arcs associated with their characters' motivation and intentions, while the GM creates story elements that challenge their objectives. The long-term goal provides story immersion and fosters the characters' investment in the city. For example, a character attempting to join a thieves' guild might need to meet and gain the respect of several different guild members by performing a series of near-impossible heists. A character seeking to establish a claim to a forgotten royal bloodline might need to unravel a political conspiracy between rival houses



to clear their family name. Each session should allow some opportunity for at least one character to focus on a long-term goal.

Dilemma. A dilemma is a single problem the characters must overcome to draw an adventure to a close. The actions of ambitious nonplayer characters provide the driving force behind dilemmas, which start when the nonplayer character manipulates an event, shifts the city's political, social, or economic climate, or steals a valuable item. The GM must stress the potential negative impact of the dilemma and allow characters to infer what happens if they fail to intervene. In a city-based campaign, overcoming a dilemma should involve either dealing with a nonplayer character of some significance to the city at large or solving a question about the city's culture, nature, or structure. Examples might include finding an ancient book that contains a fabled lost law of the city hidden in an exiled noble's family crypts, or revealing that doppelgangers have slowly infiltrated the city guard. Each adventure should center around a single dilemma, though it might take the characters several game sessions to resolve the narrative.

Major Events. Major events change the entire structure or culture of the city, adding drama to the narrative, which can be used to redirect the characters' focus. Natural disasters, revolutions, wars, plagues, and invasions are all examples of major events, and they can occur in a compounding series of smaller events or as a single event with extended repercussions. A single event might run the duration of the entire campaign, though it doesn't need to be the focus of the campaign or the adventures. It is also possible to run an entire campaign without a major event, rather in the fallout of one or the dawn of an encroaching one.

Endgame. The endgame is the adventure's final conflict and resolution. Once the characters complete the final conflict, they and the GM determine how the narrative resolves. If the adventure is part of a more extensive campaign, the endgame sets the stage for the subsequent narrative. Therefore, it needs to be relevant to both the isolated adventure and to the campaign as a whole. The endgame clearly describes how events in the adventure affect the characters' relationship with the city and its residents.

These are some examples of situations a GM might address in the resolution:

- Did the characters destroy property or deal collateral damage that triggers a vendetta or feud?
- Did the characters destroy the main villain, or might the villain return in the future?
- Did the characters perform some action to create, strengthen, weaken, or dissolve an alliance?
- Did the characters' actions alter their social standing or their fame?
- Does the villain have proteges that might reappear later in the campaign?
- Was the endgame conflict witnessed by spectators, and did it attract the attention of allies or more powerful enemies?

OVERVIEW OF URBAN ADVENTURES

One of a city's most exciting aspects lies in its constantly changing environment. Dungeons and similarly enclosed spaces might change occasionally but not often: a visitor might wander in or a natural disaster, such as an earthquake or flood, might alter it. For the most part, dungeons remain static locations that characters only run through once. Conversely, cities change constantly. Inhabitants move around, and a myriad of complex alliances shift in response to an array of economic, political, and social variables. Over time, characters and their relationship to the city and its inhabitants flesh out and expand, evolving with subtle intricacies. This dynamic relationship is what makes urban adventures so electric and immersive. Unfortunately, it can also make running a city adventure a logistical nightmare.

When structuring an adventure, the GM should establish a framework to organize the numerous variables in the city, such as influential agents and organizations—whether political, religious, social, or criminal. This helps when reacting to the actions of characters. The GM's responses need to provide clear and accurate context within the setting and, if possible, should provide characters with clear objectives. This can be as simple as a beggar asking for a copper piece, but it must then be clear that the beggar only wants a copper piece, or players might spend excessive time trying to determine a deeper significance in the encounter. Players are by nature both super creative and inquisitive, and city adventures provide a near limitless opportunity to get distracted, so clear objectives help to limit the number of times characters pursue false leads.

Realism vs. Fantasy

Medieval society serves as the foundational inspiration for most fantasy roleplaying games. Historically, citizens of a medieval city could expect to experience abuse, bigotry, and violence. While some or all of these elements could be incorporated, consider the impact of these variables on gameplay. Do not allow "historical

accuracy" to compromise the players' fun—and it's not like dragons and magic are all that historically accurate. For characters to want to spend time in a city, it needs to be the kind of place they would want to explore. Below are a few examples of bending realism for the sake of fun:

- Medieval cities didn't allow visitors to parade about in armor and weapons, but the characters might not let their magical versions out of their sight. So perhaps the city allows trained mercenaries and adventurers to wear arms and armor within the city walls—provided they're registered with the city and have paid for a special permit.
- Medieval cities made rigid distinctions between nobles and common folk and provided no mechanism for social mobility, but perhaps a more egalitarian society would allow members of different classes to associate freely with some way to shift in social standing.
- Most medieval farmers worked land belonging to a noble lord, but perhaps the characters can purchase a farmstead or other property independently.

Sandboxes

In terms of adventuring, cities provide an open structure with few limitations for where characters want to go and what they want to do. Of course, there might be some restricted areas or physical structures that redirect the movement of citizens. Nevertheless, clever characters can always find ways to navigate a city's architectural, economic, political, and social obstacles.

All these elements create a giant "sandbox" for characters to play in. How they choose to navigate and explore that sandbox is up to the players. The GM's responsibility is to ensure the sandbox is actively maintained, well appointed, and doesn't become a "litterbox." So what makes a good sandbox? There are four elements: a solid base, defined borders, clean sand, and toys.

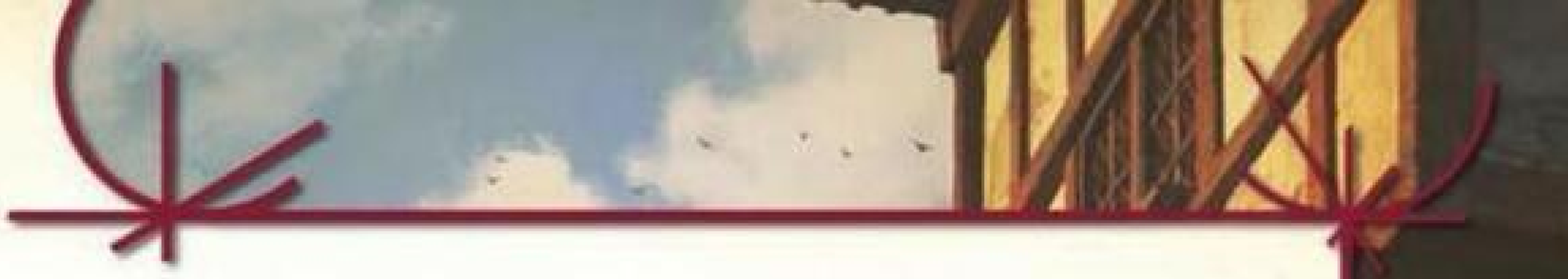
Solid Base. Every sandbox requires a foundation on which to build. While borders can shift, age, and break down, the foundation must remain solid, or a few rainstorms might quickly turn it into mud. This base is the adventure's foundational concept, and it doesn't matter whether it's for a campaign or a one-shot adventure. It needs this to stay grounded. Even in a well-developed city with hundreds of years of history, it must exist around the adventure. A great adventure shapes the city and affects and influences people, structures, and events because the city is effectively a nonplayer character itself. A solid foundation centers the focus on the actions of the characters.

Defined Boundaries. Sand shouldn't be scattered all over the place. Boundaries keep it within the sandbox. In terms of adventure design, what is part of the adventure and what is not must be defined. When characters begin to gravitate toward something beyond the borders of the adventure, the GM must create a way for them to refocus on the foundational concept. Fortunately, a GM has many options for boundaries. Cities are three-dimensional, and when necessary, adventures can expand in any direction beyond the city walls. Cities have structures that climb upward and structures below. Adventures in a city can still occupy towering spires and dank dungeons, fetid sewers, ancient ruins, crime-ridden quarters, and haunted graveyards. Larger cities and city-states often have farmlands, provinces, and holdings beyond their walls, and some have enclaves and embassies in distant locales. In short, any type of adventure might happen within the boundaries of a city.

Clean Sand. This sand represents the elements of the adventure with which characters interact. These are the encounters and challenges characters need to face and overcome to meet a specific objective tied to the foundational concept. Dirty sand makes people want to leave, so avoid soiling the sand by introducing too many random and unrelated encounters or elements that create unfun interactions. For example, suppose a random pickpocket targets a character in the process of investigating a series of burglaries. In that case, the characters might break from the adventure narrative and chase the pickpocket around the city—only to discover the thief has only distracted them from attending to their primary objective. Instead, the pickpocket should attempt to steal something related to the characters' objective.

Key nonplayer characters help direct actions and supply reliable information, providing ways to help the player characters drive the narrative. Likewise, GMs should incorporate key items or locations that connect characters to the narrative. Sand that doesn't connect to the narrative doesn't belong in the sandbox.

Toys. Toys represent all the cool things characters can utilize when playing in the sand. These might include rewards such as gold, magic items, and artifacts, but in an urban campaign, they might also include property, titles, privileges, or access to previously inaccessible areas. The GM uses rewards as incentives to help motivate characters, assess their wants and needs, and predict their actions.



Variables

In terms of structuring an adventure, the variables are those elements of the city most subject to change. In structuring an adventure, variables are organized into three categories: cultural, economic, and structural. The categories aren't necessarily independent, and some variables have elements of all three or qualities that fall outside the categories. Changing one variable frequently causes other variables to change in response, creating conflict, which drives the narrative.

Cultural. As a city's population grows, its cultural dynamic evolves in response. An increasingly diverse population can lead to shifts in entertainment, fashion, food, and language. Similarly, a change in the local political landscape can alter laws and change the culture, impacting business viability, community welfare, foreclosures, military/police presence, religious practices, rents, taxes, and more. Social changes primarily affect nonplayer characters, who then interact with player characters accordingly. Cultural tensions might cause conflicts that result in increased outbursts and physical altercations.

Political changes often follow high-profile events, such as an assassination, coup, election, marriage of an influential socialite, mental breakdown of a governing agent, revolution, or signing of a treaty. Political changes typically affect characters directly, particularly characters with political affiliations within the community. Sometimes social encounters or political debate resolves conflicting political agendas. And any radical shifts might incite physical altercations or even revolt or war.

Economic. Economic changes can cause entire districts to rise and fall, forcing citizens within a city to relocate in pursuit of work or housing. Examples of economic change include acquisition of natural resources, development of new technology, expansion of territory, increase in demand for certain labor forces, or increase in foreign trade. Downward turns can cause a rise in organized crime and the corruption of businesses, law enforcement, and various city agencies. Conversely, upward growth can inspire new organizations or an influx of citizens seeking to grab hold of economic opportunities. Economic change primarily affects nonplayer characters, who then interact with player characters accordingly.

Structural. There are two types of structural change. First comes the slow, deliberate change over long periods as part of the city's natural evolution. This change encompasses variables such as architectural differences wrought by preparations for trade or war, demands of a new city leader, or increased popularity of certain cultural, religious, or social groups. Long-term change is often subtle, allowing the GM to slowly shift variables over several game sessions until characters finally feel the full effect of the change.

Conversely, sudden and radical change often follows natural disasters, such as avalanches, earthquakes, fires, floods, hurricanes, meteor storms, sinkholes, or volcanic eruptions. Such disasters create intense stress and trauma and can substantially transform cities, potentially leveling entire districts, flooding ports and sewers, and collapsing buildings, towers, and walls. They can cause massive death, famine, and plague and can leave a city defenseless against foreign invasion.

MAKE THE FAMILIAR NEW

Don't be afraid to change buildings or districts. To shake things up, have a new owner with a very different personality purchase one of the characters' favorite shops or taverns. Similarly, a new law might restrict certain undesirable behaviors that the characters used to engage in, such as a sizable tax on establishments hosting card and dice games for money or a ban on specific spell components. Tragic personal or financial events might also cause a business to close, switch focus, or become involved with money lenders or criminal activities. Conversely, a discovery, such as creating a durable alloy or a popular piece of clothing, might allow a shop owner to expand a business and buy more property or move up the social ladder. They might hire new faces or take the establishment elsewhere.

Emigration. People also move around. Events occurring in different parts of the world might trigger emigration, bringing a sudden influx of new people and cultures. War, famine, political asylum, religious persecution, or hope for new opportunities inspire people to move to new locations. Perhaps dwarves from a nearby mine become very successful, and many of their smiths and merchants buy a bunch of property in the city to establish a dwarven market district. Maybe a shift in climate forces people from the hinterlands to move to the city for protection as extreme cold freezes the soil and farming and heating become impossible. If these individuals stick together and pool their resources, they might purchase a row of houses and change the face of several city blocks.

Martial Shifts. Those holding political power over the city might call for an increase or decrease in the presence of local law enforcement. A king with a cash-flow problem might cut funds for the city watch in certain neighborhoods and sequester the services of

cheaper outside forces or volunteer law enforcement, or they might encourage self-policing by allowing locals to register their city-approved bounties. Neighborhoods might experience an increase in corrupt city guards, vigilantes, or overly authoritarian officials doling out harsh fines and punishments. More frighteningly, extremists may establish training sessions in local meeting halls to train citizens against a perceived common threat.

A city's ruler might need to expand a garrison in times of war or oppositional threats. Authorities might expropriate buildings to house additional troops or place troops in more strategic locations. Similarly, in times of peace, military structures might be reclaimed by the people, transforming a former armory into a marketplace or food court. Should the city fall under the jurisdiction of an outside power, the rulers could attempt to maintain control by instituting garrisons of soldiers, which might even escalate to martial law.

Economic Shifts. An upswing might see the growth of the city's port and docks, expanding them into the neighboring residential areas. New portside inns and taverns accommodate the increases in foreign trade. Conflict arises between locals and raucous dock workers who drunkenly carouse into the wee hours after spending weeks at sea. Conversely, an economic downswing might cause an increase in unemployment and petty crime. Buildings and streets degrade, spurring increases in squatters and overcrowding and shady individuals selling conspiracies and get-rich-quick schemes. A collapsing economy also allows less scrupulous or unethical individuals to purchase properties forcefully or deregulate unethical business practices to stimulate economic growth.

LEAVING THE CITY

All things must come to an end. Whether characters have helped to usher in a new golden age of prosperity for their hometown or have plunged it into an era of darkness and chaos, eventually they are going to want to try something new. GMs should be prepared for players to do what is least expected of them, and sometimes that means bucking adventure hooks and striking out beyond city walls.

Perhaps the characters have just reached new heights of power, unlocking class features that broaden their skillsets. A new tier of play is a great reason to go somewhere new with more exciting challenges to face and unique creatures to meet.

Perhaps the story has come to a satisfying conclusion with loose plot threads all tied up. With the closure in hand, characters are more willing to move on to see new sights and experience new stories.

Or perhaps no one is having much fun with the urban setting anymore. This is okay. It is perfectly fine to acknowledge that the current campaign setting has lost its luster and excitement and that a new direction of tone and location might be best. This is a game after all, and having fun should be the top priority for all.

SHORT ADVENTURE SEEDS

Regardless of the campaign style, the characters undoubtedly spend time in a city, whether to refresh supplies, sell loot, get rumors and quests, buy weapons and armor, research spells, brew potions, or sometimes explore a city just because it's there. Below are some ideas for short adventures set in the city:

- ***Arsonists.*** Someone with a vendetta burns the buildings of their enemies to the ground. The arsonist might feel justified, but the fires threaten to destroy property and endanger the lives of innocent civilians. The characters need to figure out what all the buildings have in common and predict where the arsonist will strike next to confront and stop them from burning down the entire city.
- ***Assassination.*** Someone puts a hit out on someone in authority. Depending on the characters' ethics, they might work to prevent the assassination, seek out who placed the hit, and then track down all the individuals behind the plot. Conversely, less scrupulous individuals might work up a plan to perform the assassination. The characters must gain their agent's trust to create the opportunity to take the target out.
- ***Deliver a Missive.*** The characters must deliver a message to someone within the city. This might be of grave importance, such as getting a code into the hands of a war criminal imprisoned within the city dungeons or delivering a key phrase to a revolutionary who is sending instructions to various sleeper cells hidden throughout the city. Conversely, the missive could be playful and harmless, like aiding a shy lover connect with the target of their affection.
- ***Desecration.*** An influential member of the clergy or similarly powerful social group contacts the characters to investigate the recent and violent desecration of local graves, shrines, or temples. Initiates attempting to join a rival sect performed the desecrations, hoping to gain followers and spread their influence within the city.

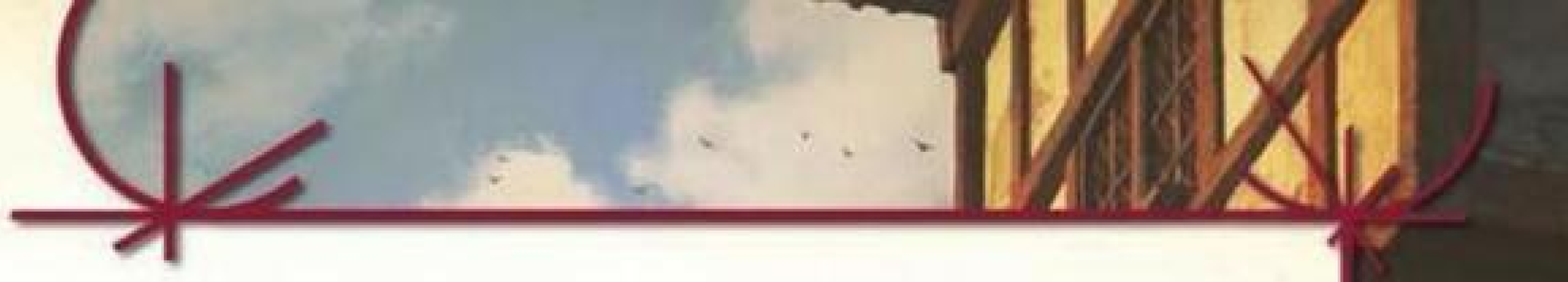
- ***Find a Missing Person.*** In large cities, people frequently go missing. Individuals move, seeking new lives elsewhere. Some might need to flee from an arranged marriage or decide to drop out of society. In other instances, individuals disappear for more insidious reasons. Their bodies turn up weeks later, killed by sickness, substance abuse, or murder. Characters might take the role of bounty hunters and track a missing fugitive. Alternatively, the missing person serves as a key to a more extraordinary investigation or mystery, such as piecing together members of a royal bloodline forced to split after a coup or revolution.
- ***Found a Church.*** Characters with obligations to higher powers might be required to spread their faith or create a house of worship for others who share their beliefs. Adventures might involve retrieving stolen relics and sacred texts, cleansing and consecrating new ground, rooting out evil cults attempting to spread in different parts of the city, or proving high-ranking officials belong to a secret society dedicated to an elder demon.
- ***Gather Information.*** Information is power, and many use it as currency. They leverage the knowledge of both opponents and allies to get the upper hand. Rumors and other secrets can make or break public opinion of influential individuals within political positions, high society, trade guilds, and the clergy. Characters might take assignments to investigate influential individuals prior to their appointments to positions of power or to cast doubt upon the intentions of those creating political or legal policies. The information might be random or solicited public opinion, helping characters determine the true nature of a beloved cleric or influential senator. Conversely, muckraking can help identify key players behind revolutionary movements, cults, or those using fronts to cover up criminal activities.
- ***Ghost Hunt.*** A courier contacts the characters on behalf of the archmage of a local wizard's college to seek out and trap some problematic ghosts. The archmage is secretly a necromancer that seeks to bind several ethereal beings into a dark ritual, allowing him to capture the soul of a politically influential noble to gain access to the family's crypts.
- ***Gremlins.*** Over a week, worker accidents at an industrial complex, such as a foundry or lumber mill, skyrocket with increasingly lethal results. When confronted about the dangerous working conditions, owners blame the accidents on gremlins.

The gremlins might be real creatures or might be something that goes wrong through ineptitude or poor maintenance.

- ***Guard Duty.*** The city guard rarely appears on the list of desired occupations for characters, and mercenary work provides slightly more versatility, allowing individuals to choose from available jobs and better determine their income. In times of need, the city might hire guards or mercenaries to handle specific threats, or they might hire adventurers because, as outsiders, they are expendable. They might also hire them to infiltrate and root out corrupt guards. Alternatively, a city might conscript individuals for guard duty or mercenary work to pay off debts, taxes, or as part of their civic duty. For a twist, the GM can give characters an assignment or job that places them in direct conflict with their interests, such as arresting a dissident that turns out to be an old friend, family member, lover, or mentor.
- ***Haywire Invention.*** A brilliant inventor designs a massive, arcane-powered apparatus for building walls. Days before its public unveiling, the device goes berserk, rolling through the city streets and indiscriminately hurling large stones and splashing mortar everywhere. Nobody can find the inventor to stop the machine, for a jealous colleague has kidnapped him. He must be found and rescued before the machine reaches peak capacity and explodes.
- ***Jail Break.*** There are two types of jailbreak adventures. One involves the characters breaking themselves or someone else out of jail. For example, characters crossing paths with local law enforcement

might find themselves behind bars, even if only held there for a short time. They might seek to free a friend unreasonably jailed for treason or tax evasion or liberate a rebel or criminal. Conversely, a fight erupting in a local prison ward might unwittingly provide means of escape to several dozen prisoners. The escaped prisoners might tear through the streets, or they might attempt to escape the city. In either event, authorities hire the characters to hunt them down, or they post a sizable bounty for their live capture.

- ***Join an Organization.*** Organizations act as melting pots for those who share values or ideals, joining together for moral and financial support. The organization acts as a community and might provide aid to members who might otherwise struggle. A character seeking to join an organization might need to perform a series of trials or provide some sort of tribute or offering. For example, a thieves' guild might require its members to pull off a complex heist or perform a risky burglary. A bardic college might require its members to perform before a hostile crowd or recover a lost verse buried in the cold crypts beneath the king's ward.
- ***Maniacal Doctor or Alchemist.*** A chirurgeon or alchemist tests their latest concoctions or medical techniques on unsuspecting patients—with violent or horrific results. Perhaps a concoction accidentally transforms a fair and just ruler into a cannibal who now hosts covert and gristly epicurean feasts. One of the ingredients in the poultice might be the spores of a strange fungus or parasites whose larvae mature in the victims and burst forth months later, releasing alien swarms upon unsuspecting citizens.
- ***Mysterious Inheritance.*** Characters receive an inheritance from a mysterious benefactor. The inheritance should be something bizarre and of a value that cannot immediately be determined. For example, a merchant the characters once helped might leave them an old pachyderm that used to pull wagons, or a wizard's mentor might ship them a collection of disassembled parts stuffed into a crate labeled Flying Machine.
- ***Night on the Town.*** This adventure starts as a simple night out on the town. In this scenario, the characters aren't out looking for rumors or mercenary work. Instead, they simply want to grab a meal, go out for a few drinks, or try their luck at gambling. At some point, they meet someone who creates drama with the potential to escalate—ending in unforeseen consequences. Perhaps someone gets poisoned at the bar, turning everyone in the room (including the characters) into murder suspects. Perhaps the characters win an unusual relic in a card game that unleashes a horrific curse. They could even get into a fatal altercation with the scion of an important family or organization, prompting a vendetta from relatives or allies.
- ***Performance.*** The characters acquire tickets to see a famous performer as a gift or reward. As it turns out, unscrupulous folks have been bankrolling her career, and she has fallen into debt and a crushing dependency on an illicit substance. During the performance, she drops dead. The death appears to be an overdose, but evidence suggests foul play. Are the performer's financiers sending a message to other performers? Was it a jilted or obsessed fan? Did she somehow fake her death and flee the city to dodge her debts?
- ***Political Power Grab.*** A vacancy opens for the position of personal advisor to the ruler(s) of the city. Several individuals seek to win the influential position, prompting numerous contests to prove the candidate's value. Candidates vary in ideals and ethics, triggering a cutthroat and potentially deadly competition. Characters can either back one of the contestants or attempt to take the position for themselves.
- ***Rebellion.*** Rebellion spawns when the people's ideals conflict with the actions of city authority. If the government is oppressive, the characters might side with the oppressed masses and attempt to spearhead a revolt to oust a despot. Alternatively, officials might ask the characters to put down a rebellion or revolt that erupts in a district filled with monsters or route out former rebels that recently received a pardon.
- ***Research.*** The characters need to acquire lost lore, decipher cryptic runes, check the lineage of different families, or assemble various components of a forgotten or obscured history. Larger cities provide numerous options for collecting information. Examples of sources include crypts, babbling ghosts, libraries, mage colleges, museums, theological schools, or wandering prophets.
- ***Start a Business.*** The characters start some sort of business. They might sell their skills as adventurers to outsiders as assassins, bounty hunters, caravan guides, couriers, mercenaries, or monster slayers. An adventuring business reverses the trope of characters looking for work and instead allows the GM to bring



dangerous jobs directly to the characters. Suppose the characters run a mundane business such as a bakery, exotic taxidermist shop, or moneylender. In that case, adventures might focus on the difficulty of purchasing property, getting supplies, or sabotaging deviant competitors. Perhaps someone doesn't want the characters setting up shop in their neighborhood. Maybe the property they purchased turns out to be cursed, or they might hire someone that turns out to be a werewolf.

- ***Start a Rumor.*** The characters must destroy the reputation of a powerful rival before they can gain a footing in local politics. Missions include placing incriminating evidence, staging crimes, donning disguises, starting a fake argument in a very public setting, and feeding false information to select ears. Should the rival learn who is behind the rumors, they hire thugs or use magical means to retaliate. Thugs escalate the adventure from social attacks to physical altercations.
- ***Trade or Smuggling.*** The exchange of resources drives city economics, but demand requires supply, creating the perfect opportunity for characters when certain materials are dwindling and difficult to acquire. The characters could also be transporters or negotiators, perhaps dealing with contraband or with unsanctioned nations as trading partners.
- ***Vandalized.*** A criminal organization sends groups of thugs to vandalize the properties of shopkeepers in a rundown quarter of the city, attempting to scare them into purchasing protection. The organization tags targets with various secret symbols, signifying which shops pay for protection and marking them as their "territory."
- ***Wrongfully Accused.*** Authorities arrest someone the characters know and trust, charging them with a severe crime, such as murder or treason. The penalty for anyone found guilty is death. The characters must find evidence to vindicate the individual, present it in court, and argue their friend's innocence before a jury. Unfortunately, the real criminal hires thugs to tamper with the evidence and has members of the jury in their pocket.

CAMPAIGN SEEDS

Whether playing with Status or not, characters' actions eventually garner attention and often raise the stakes for all involved. Here are two campaign suggestions for characters who want to make something of themselves in an urban campaign.

Civic Leader's Path

This string of quests is for characters who want to make a name for themselves and be admired for their good deeds and civic engagement. But players beware, the brighter they shine, the more likely someone, or something, seeks to snuff them out.

Levels 1–4. Characters arrive in the residential district of a coastal town to find that the mayor has been missing since the night before. Asked to investigate, they are directed to trace the mayor's last steps to local shops and businesses where he urged people to vote for him again in an upcoming election. Meeting the local townsfolk and getting a better impression of the mayor leads the characters down a path of legally questionable activity in which the mayor might have been involved. In the end, characters face off against the local crime boss and her cronies. Whether the characters take an offer from the criminals or bring them to justice, they are lauded by members of the community on their return and nominated to hold the mayor's vacated position until the election.

Levels 5–8. In this subsequent adventure, the election is nigh, and the characters have a decision to make. After solving the mayor's disappearance, they are on good terms with the locals, and that favor might mean whomever the characters nominate will be a shoo-in as the new mayor. Knowing that, every aspiring politician wants to curry their good will, and the aspirants make extravagant offers to win them over. A few details seem off about the best of the candidates though, and the characters are prompted to investigate yet again before the election takes place. With this, characters are once again thrust into the world of organized crime and learn of an enigmatic Mister E who is calling the shots behind the curtain, planting the best candidates for their own gain and manipulating the election. In the end, the characters are given the option to expose the rigged election or keep a dark secret and earn a tidy profit. Regardless of the choice, Mister E fades into the shadows before they can be revealed, using a combination of skill and magic resources.

Levels 9–12. In the campaign's finale, the election has concluded, the results tallied, and the new mayor has been named. But with this new development comes civil unrest. Crime rates skyrocket, friendly locals and favored businesses are threatened, and the people have taken to publicly protesting the lack of law and order. The new mayor asks the characters to stop the crime at its source: the town's underbelly, a network of old ruins the town was built on after a disaster leveled the region. The descent into the ruins sends the characters

to a secret base for Mister E's crime ring—a network of extortionists, smugglers, and highwaymen that prey upon the region. The final encounter takes place in a churning cistern where the villain rains projectiles down from a precariously high catwalk.

Lows of High Society

This series of events takes players from a mysterious inheritance to a cannibalistic cult hidden in the heart of the city. Themes of body horror, esoterica, and cult worship are prominent in this path.

Levels 1–4. One (or more) of the characters receives notice that a friend of their family has passed away and left their estate in the character's name. The party soon finds itself on the doorstep of an expansive mansion in the wealthiest district of the city. After standard amounts of paperwork with the estate's executor, characters are prompted to explore the mansion and all the secrets the place has to offer. Hidden passages, puzzling clues, and scattered diary entries lead them down both a figurative rabbit hole as well as a literal tunnel passage, sending them to an underground dining room with a bloodstained table. Through the characters' actions, ghosts are awakened and, in their own, unspoken manner, beseech the characters to keep digging for clues. The final reveal brings the characters to find the remains of half-eaten bodies, secret passages to other manors in town, and a wall of handsome paintings of notable citizens who take part in these dark delights.

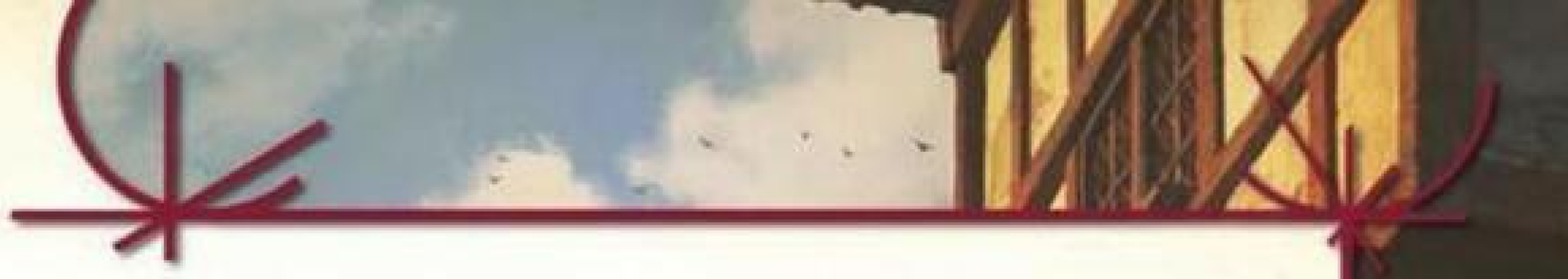
Levels 5–8. In the second part of the campaign, characters find themselves haunted, literally, by the ghosts they awakened in their investigation. Unable to find peace, the characters have little choice but to see through what they have started and must track down the members of the cannibal cult, using resources and clues they found in the previous adventure. This takes characters to the doorsteps of their neighbors, to dinner parties and social get-togethers, as they work out who is who and expose them for the awful cannibals they are. But it won't be easy because the ghosts refuse to stay silent, and they grow more restless with each murderous cannibal exposed. The final encounter takes place in a ballroom with a three-way standoff between the characters, the ghosts, and the villains who ate them.

Levels 9–12. In the campaign's conclusion, the characters have one final task: to lay the ghosts to rest. But now that they're awakened, most of the undead refuse to go quietly, so the characters must track down all the restless undead in the mansion where it all started. The final encounter of this third act takes place in an elemental-powered incinerator deep beneath the mansion where the characters must endure the flames to silence the dead.

HANDLING THE LOGISTICS

Running a city-based adventure presents unique challenges. Seemingly thousands of nonplayer characters, operating in hundreds of locations, set up the player characters with countless potential interactions, quickly leaving the GM and players overwhelmed.

Change the Playstyle. When running a dungeon crawl, characters tend to want to clear the level. Therefore, they must explore and interact with everything. They must check all rooms for traps and secret doors, kill all the monsters, and thoroughly loot the bodies. But when running an adventure set in a city, it is more useful for the GM and players to divorce themselves from the idea that the characters should be seeing and interacting with everything. Instead, to create the illusion of a grand city's sheer size and scope, the characters should feel like they would never have enough time to see everything, so they can establish the things they just don't want or need to see.



Incorporate Backstories. City adventures provide players with more opportunities for roleplaying than any other type of adventure. Those who enjoy social interactions more than combat love city adventures. Characters with elaborate backstories might even attempt to connect them to elements within the city. For instance, an orphan might wish to visit the orphanage where they grew up, while priests and paladins might desire to make a pilgrimage to a renowned shrine or temple. When running a city campaign, the GM should be familiar with the characters' backstories to proactively create encounters and adventures based on locations and people most likely to focus on the characters. Incorporating backstories allows players increased opportunity to contribute to storytelling and plot development. The added story investment also encourages deeper character immersion.

DIRECTING CHARACTERS

For many players, describing a location as off-limits or restricted or that can only be accessed by stealth, forced entry, bribery, or magical charms and persuasion is just too tempting to ignore. And the more difficult it is to access the objective, the harder they might work to overcome the obstacles. Here are some examples of restricted or forbidden scenarios:

- A long-sealed royal crypt or the locked storage chambers of a museum.
- A neighborhood with a violent reputation.
- A towering doorman guarding the back room of a tavern.
- Afterhours in any block or district that enforces a curfew.
- Being excluded from a private charity event.
- Private chambers or a study.

Other Means of Access

GMs should provide multiple ways for characters to access such forbidden zones in case an initial attempt ends disastrously. Here are some potential suggestions:

- ***Bribery.*** Some nonplayer characters are easier to bribe than others. Part of this challenge might be figuring out which guards might be easiest to bribe, persuade, or charm and then learning their shifts.
- ***Disguise.*** Specific individuals or objects are permitted to enter this area. Characters might use social skills to disguise themselves as individuals who have access or use magic or other trickery to appear as an object that someone with access can move into the forbidden zone. Characters might pack themselves into a crate or chest, transform themselves into a stone statue, or hide in a gemstone.
- ***Forgotten Passage.*** Characters researching a location might discover an ancient hidden passage. It might be a sewer or a broken portal that is fixable.
- ***Key.*** A key is any variable that allows characters to access a locked area. The key could be a physical object, a person, the solution to a puzzle, a spell, or a philosophical concept.
- ***Ritual.*** Access to this area requires some ritual. The characters might need to research the ritual's origins and gather unique materials or tomes. The ritual might also be as simple as performing a specific action in a specific place at a specific time, such as during a certain natural phenomenon.

Steering with NPCs

Nonplayer characters are also a great way to steer access. Interesting nonplayer characters pose a far greater risk of intriguing the player characters. If a nonplayer character isn't tied to a plot hook or well-developed area of the city, they should be less appealing somehow—or else some quick adventure design might be required of the GM. If properly utilized, unappealing nonplayer characters will redirect or refocus player characters. For example, someone so overtly annoying that they trigger a street fight will refocus characters who must now either flee or explain themselves to local authorities. Similarly, the altercation could draw the attention of another nonplayer character who is equipped with a suitable plot hook. Here are some unappealing nonplayer characters:

- ***Clingy.*** They insert themselves into the characters' affairs and are difficult to avoid. They might concoct tales of non-existent adventures together to elevate their reputation.
- ***Gossipy.*** They appear at first to be a possible source of information, but it quickly becomes apparent that they are keeping account of the characters' activities and eagerly share it with anyone willing to listen.
- ***Grumpy.*** They have nothing nice to say. If approached, they are standoffish if not openly rude.
- ***Intoxicated.*** They have overindulged in alcohol or some illicit substance to the extent that they stumble about, slur their speech, and vomit or soil themselves. They are loud, filthy, and encourage others to misbehave.
- ***Narcissistic.*** They incessantly boast about their social standing and accomplishments while downplaying everyone else's—including those of the characters.

- ***Needy.*** They want something from the characters, typically money or favors.

Conversely, compelling nonplayer characters are likely to lure characters:

- ***Charming.*** They have an apparently high social value that draws in and commands others.
- ***Creepy.*** They have an unusual habit, like watching executions, or something alien, vile, or morbid.
- ***Inaccessible.*** Although their name comes up a lot, curiously, they never seem to be around.
- ***Nervous.*** Whenever the characters approach them, they develop a tell-tale physical tic, shake, or stutter, or they seem unable to make eye contact.
- ***Shady.*** They keep company with those of shady reputation, such as known fences, petty criminals, drug dealers, gang members, or thugs.
- ***Suspicious.*** Whenever a tragic string of events occurs, they always seem to be on the periphery.

It's also good to know where nonplayer characters are at any given time. This can be assigned ahead of time or rolled on the **Random NPC Locations** table.

KEEPING THE FOCUS

The GM should regularly introduce new adventure seeds to keep characters invested in the city. Examples include invitations to important events, such as the funeral of an important city official or favored shopkeeper. Similarly, any events that bring change to the city should also impact the characters' lives. Below are a few ideas for events that can lure the characters into a new narrative:

- A curious number of dead rats litter the gutters.
- After a surge in crime, authorities find the body of a popular tavernkeeper dumped in a nearby alley.
- Local anglers recovered an abandoned merchant vessel and anchored it in the city harbor.
- Someone painted a curious rune in blood on the doors of several homes in the temple district.
- The city plans a massive celebration for the upcoming harvest festival.
- Unfair taxation laws threaten to shut down the orphanage where a character grew up.

CONTINGENCIES

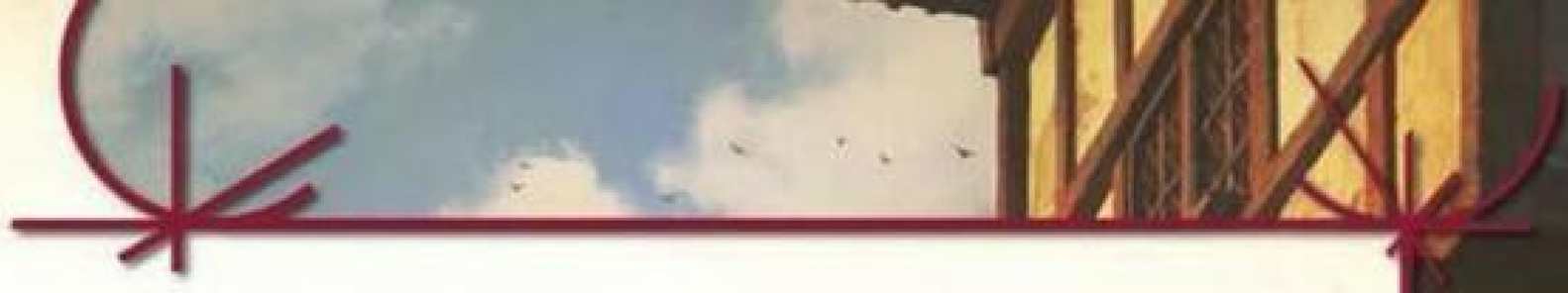
Characters often make decisions that run counter to the GM's plans, driving the narrative in unforeseen ways and forcing the GM to improvise. Increasing the number of variables with which the characters interact also increases the odds that they might make a decision that creates some unforeseen consequence. While the GM cannot predict the characters' actions, they can establish a few contingency options for when such decisions put the characters at odds with forces within the city. Having a set of contingencies for when they go off the rails can turn a disaster into a fantastic new adventure.

Legal Ramifications. Characters should possess a general idea of what happens when laws are broken, like how officials make arrests, determine sentences, and punish criminals. Before characters break the law, the GM should review the questions below to establish contingencies for handling serious consequences like imprisonment, exile, or execution:

- If accused, is there a nonplayer character ally, cohort, or mentor, such as from a guild or temple, that might vouch for a player character or even levy their standing against the authorities to have the charges dropped? How easy is it to bribe officials? Are there specific affiliations or positions an individual can take that allow them to perform specific actions that, for most citizens, would be considered criminal?
- If convicted, can the characters instead work off a sentence or pay a fine? If they are broke, what sort of service are they obligated to perform to pay off the fine or debt? Can another individual purchase a criminal's debt and, in turn, force them to perform a favor for them?

RANDOM NPC LOCATIONS

Location	Morning (d20)	Afternoon (d20)	Evening (d20)	Late Night (d20)
Home	1–2	1–4	1–5	1–11
Work	3–11	5–10	6–9	12–13
Entertainment	12	11–12	10–13	14
Worship	13–14	13–14	14–15	15–16
Errands	15–17	15–17	16–17	17
Visiting Associate	18–19	18–19	18–19	18–19
Out of Town	20	20	20	20



- If exiled, what terms allow the characters to return to the city? Do characters have any reason to return?

Social Ramifications. The characters should clearly understand their local knowledge and social standing within the city. Use their background or backstory to establish the ramifications of who and what they know and what locations they can freely access.

The length of time a character has lived in the city determines how familiar the individual is with the city's culture, history, laws, local authorities and criminals, neighborhoods, resources, and standards of behavior. It also determines the number of allies, friends and family members, mentors, potential enemies, and teachers to whom they have contact or access. Before starting a city campaign, answer the following questions:

- Were any of the characters born in the city?
- Do any of the characters live there now?
- How much time has each character spent there?

Answering these questions helps everyone improvise when resolving social interactions on the fly.

Any individual born and raised in a city likely has family or friends living there, even if the character moves away or spends prolonged time elsewhere. If a character (including transplants) has lived in the city for more than five years, add their proficiency bonus to ability checks related to navigating the city or dealing with city residents.

NPC ROLES

Important nonplayer characters have specific roles that become apparent when the characters interact with them. These roles provide story elements that can help create conflict and drive the narrative. Conversely, they might aid the characters or trigger a significant social encounter. The GM might add any of the following roles to develop an otherwise mundane nonplayer character.

Amnesiac

Unable to recall past events, they wander the streets, seeking clues that might help them remember their unknown history. They approach because the characters seem familiar. The memory loss was deliberate, and someone used magic to erase some specific memory.

Stored Memory. The amnesiac's lost memories hold the key to something meaningful. Treating the amnesiac with *lesser restoration* repairs the memory.

Arsonist

They have serious issues when it comes to restraint. The arsonist doesn't approach characters but instead sets houses, stables, and other buildings on fire.

Firestarter. When an arsonist sets a fire, the flames spread quickly, and ability checks made to put them out are at disadvantage.

Burglar

They make money by breaking into homes, warehouses, shops, and similar establishments to steal small valuables and fence them. The burglar approaches the characters to sell them stolen goods or to hire them for a job.

Master Burglar. The burglar doubles their proficiency bonus when using thieves' tools.

Drunk

Perpetually drunk, they constantly seek more alcohol or the coin to purchase it. The drunk is persistent and can become loud and belligerent if denied.

Obnoxiously Loud. If made belligerent, the drunk sputters a litany of curses that attracts the city guards or anyone else within earshot.

Escaped Criminal

After dodging arrest, they require aid in hiding from the law. Perhaps the criminal broke out of prison, embezzled funds, or is wanted for armed robbery. They might approach the characters about a means of sneaking out of the city, or they might attack them, believing they are city watch, mercenaries, or bounty hunters.

Wanted. There is a bounty for their capture—or half if returned dead.

Gambler

They can't stop gambling and are usually found playing at cards, dice, or other games of chance.

Shark. The gambler is proficient with a gaming set, whether dice or playing cards or something else, and they can throw games to drive up bets. If they throw two consecutive games of chance in a game that they are proficient in, they can cheat on the next round to gain advantage on their third attempt. However, other players or spectators proficient in the same game can make a Wisdom (Insight) check, contested by the gambler's attempt, to spot the gambler's ruse.

Grifter

They use elaborate ploys to trick people out of their gold. They might use cantrips to sell someone a talking dog or offer to sell a fake deed to property that they don't own.

Conniving Grift. The grifter has advantage on Charisma (Perform or Persuasion) checks to convince a mark of their sincerity while running a grift. They can only run one grift on a mark. Once a mark realizes the con, all Charisma checks made by the grifter on the mark are at disadvantage.

Jilted Lover

They had a relationship with one of the characters. Unfortunately, it ended badly, and they have yet to forgive and move on. They want the character to feel the anguish and rejection they experienced when the relationship ended.

Make a Scene. Once per long rest, the jilted lover can launch into a berating and slanderous tirade that poisons the reputation of their former lover. The tirade draws the attention of all creatures within a 300-foot radius that can either hear or see the interaction.

Love Interest

After interacting with the characters, they take a shine to one of them. The GM can determine the object of the love interest's obsession at random.

Watching You. Thereafter, they gather information about the chosen character, write them love letters, follow them around town, and bump into them "coincidentally" whenever the character runs errands.

Missing Person

Someone seeking an individual approaches the characters, either questioning them about this individual's whereabouts or even attempting to hire the characters to track them down. For example, the missing person might be estranged from their family or a soldier fleeing their duties.

Reward. Anyone recovering the missing person receives a monetary reward for their effort.

Pickpocket

The pickpocket steals small items from the pockets, belts, and backpacks of those they pass on the street. But rather than take something, someone hires this pickpocket to plant an item on one of the characters, such as a love note, stolen ring, or arcane tracking device.

Sticky Fingers. The pickpocket has advantage on any Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks to pick a pocket or plant an item on another individual.

Plague Victim

They carry some sort of contagion and might or might not openly display signs of the sickness.

Infect Contact. Whenever the plague victim comes into physical contact with another individual, they expose that person to sewer plague (or a similar disease).

Prophet

The words of supernatural or divine beings echo through the prophet's head. The revelations drive them to wander the streets, proselytizing about the end of times and the encroaching doom and annihilation set to strike the city.

Apocalyptic Fears. Anyone who stops to listen to the prophet must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, or apocalyptic fears plague their thoughts for the next 1d4 days. For the duration, whenever the individual rolls a 20 on any saving throw or ability check, they must immediately reroll the die and use the new results.

Pugilist

They love to prove themselves by besting others in fights. They might run a side hustle, taking wagers on pit fights in a warehouse, or belong to an underground fight club. The pugilist becomes interested in a character whom they think might make a good opponent.

Take a Punch. The pugilist ignores 1 point of bludgeoning damage from any non-magical unarmed strikes.

Rancid Provisioner

At some point, the characters encounter the rancid provisioner when purchasing food. They might be a butcher, grocer, street vendor, or tavern cook, and suspecting something might be wrong with their food, they attempt to get rid of it quickly by selling it at a reduced price.

Food Poisoning. Anyone who eats their food risks getting food poisoning. Characters must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw 1d4 + 2 hours after eating or take 1d6 poison damage and be poisoned. Anyone poisoned can still vaguely taste the food and identify it as the source.

Serial Killer

Casually, they approach a character, or an ally, because they match the profile of the serial killer's victims. Over the next few days, the serial killer keeps tabs on this target, possibly engaging them in friendly, mundane conversation. When the time is right, they attempt to murder their target and take a memento.

Masked Intentions. The serial killer has advantage on any ability checks or saving throws made to avoid having their thoughts, intentions, or emotions read.

INCORPORATING THEMES

Characters have their own unique identity, a culmination of traits and concepts that allow everyone at the game table to identify that character from any other. Similarly, using identifiable themes when constructing an adventure can assist with good character development, and the GM's choices establish the kinds of relationships that develop between the characters and the city. The more the characters resonate with the adventure, the more they will enjoy the setting. The following concepts can be used independently or in various combinations to establish a unique identity for the city.

AGE OF RUIN

The city is falling into ruin. Its rulers are detached from the people, possibly fallen into decadence and madness, a few acknowledging the end of their rulership is near. They have great wealth but only enough power to keep themselves safe from the masses. The city guard protects only them, leaving the commoners to fend for themselves. Outside, the city crumbles, street gangs and loosely knit collectives live in walled-off districts, warring over resources.

Groups form and break alliances, and many flee the city. Due to instability, civil war looms, and trade with outside cities has dropped off. Though largely already looted by thieves, there are older sections of the city still with treasures, magic, and riches.

BARONS' WAR

This industrial city is run by trade barons and wealthy oligarchs, seeking to increase their status and wealth. The barons might be developing weird new machines that require testing, such as airships, potent alchemical fuels, or steam-powered catapults.

Characters take jobs working for one or several of these wealthy employers to gain enough wealth and power that they too can join the competition and begin exercising their control over the city. Adventures might involve disgracing opponents in social contests at fancy parties, sabotaging the developments of rivals, or stealing designs or blueprints for new inventions. Barons might even host gladiatorial battles where characters drive massive steam-powered golems or face off against frenzied hordes of renegade alchemical homunculi.

BEYOND THE MATERIAL

The city lies in a unique location, either between planes or on another plane entirely. The nature of the plane determines city law, leadership, denizens, architecture, and its relations with outsiders.

In a campaign centered on a single city in the planes, there might be an overarching theme of disjunction, some force, entity, or divine clause that threatens the city's existence. Perhaps a paradigm shift threatens to suck the city through a rift and scatter its pieces throughout the multiverse. Alternatively, an ancient contract might threaten to transfer ownership of the entire city to a fiendish overlord.

Characters race to prevent whatever calamity threatens the city's existence. They might need to recover and decipher lost lore, assemble a series of artifacts, or petition favors from otherworldly agents to halt the disjunction.

CITY OF THE STRANGE

The city is ruled, run, and inhabited by a monstrous or inhuman species. Perhaps it exists deep in a forest, with architecture completely fabricated from living plants and occupied by fey, plant creatures, and elementals. Alternatively, the city might appear normal but be entirely masked by illusion and inhabited by shapeshifters, such as doppelgangers or rakshasa, who lure outsiders with offers of profitable trade but whose true interests lie in access to human flesh.

Characters must navigate a very foreign city, deciphering the secrets to its strange existence. Adventures might include uncovering secret passages that allow them to safely navigate the city, finding allies that might support their investigations, and gaining access to information stored or protected by prominent monstrous rulers. The adventure is similar to a typical dungeon crawl, except the encounters favor finesse, subterfuge, and social skills over combat. The dominant species always outnumber that of the characters.

DISASTER STRIKES

After a few sessions into the campaign, the characters receive clues that something cataclysmic is about to occur. Strange omens lead them to predict the encroaching conflict, and after gathering clues, a sage or seer confirms their worst fears—an earthquake threatens to awaken a supernatural horror beneath the city. Next, they work to prevent the cataclysm, and as things progress, minor tremors destroy different parts of the city, opening rifts to the void. Maddening dreams transform people within the city, and some form cults, seeking to propel the transformation.

A vast portion of the city crumbles at the climax, and terrors spill into the streets. Characters must venture into a twisted version of the city to undo the prophesy and save the city.

FOREIGN INVADERS

The city lies on a territorial boundary contested by another kingdom, perhaps at a nexus of ley lines or at the edge of the shadowlands. Within the enemy lands, a new leader emerges, quickly amassing power. Increased border skirmishes hint at a growing threat.

Characters must fortify the city and prepare for war, leading strikes into enemy territory. Adventures take place within the walls of an enemy city where the characters engage in acts of subterfuge, stealth, and assassination as they try to survive and create opportunities for their allies to break through and end the rule of the aggressive enemy leader.

HIGH COURT

This campaign revolves around the manipulations of numerous petty nobles that seek favor and power in the king's court. The king, or other powers, sends the characters on missions throughout the land to clear it of threats, such as bandits, and explore new lands to claim.

The king reveals he seeks an heir, and when not ingratiating themselves to the king, the characters engage with slippery and duplicitous rivals, using subterfuge, political debate, and court duels and brokering alliances with other nobles. A character's actions determine whether they increase their own political and social standing, eventually gaining enough influence to earn a nomination as the heir to the throne. Such a nomination causes outrage and conflict between the rival nobles, which might turn bloody. Resolving the conflict determines who becomes the new king.

PRIESTS

An order of devout priests runs the city, and religious mandates drive the daily life of all citizens. Their tenets are painfully strict but benevolent, and priests demand all citizens (including the characters) prove their faith with trials and tributes. At some point, rival priests attempt to take over the city by infiltrating the priesthood, disguising themselves to appear saintly but secretly performing foul rituals and occult practices to manipulate the people. At first, citizens welcome the newcomers for loosening the strict tenets, but soon, a deviant shift in behavior occurs. Once the characters uncover the truth, they must stop the priests and reconsecrate the city in the name of their benevolent god.

PRISON

A nearby kingdom founded the city as a penal colony. It is exceptionally fortified, including having many walls and some unusual elements of architecture designed to keep prisoners from escaping, and lies in a remote location. It was notoriously under-supported and understaffed. Overcrowding quickly became an issue as it was flooded with debtors and enemies captured during the last war. In the early years, guards lived in barracks, but they've since brought in families and purchased homes or small farmsteads, and the increasing population and subsequent demand for supplies drew merchants and shopkeepers. The prison grew beyond its holding capacity and inevitably broke, resulting in an epic jailbreak with the former prisoners seizing the city.

The GM can run a campaign in this city at any point during its historical timeline. For example, the characters might start as prisoners and must struggle for space rights and limited supplies. Later, the characters could attempt to take over a section of the prison and eventually work to overthrow guards, initiating an all-out revolt. Alternatively, the characters could arrive after the revolt and need to navigate an entire city run by dangerous criminal gangs, all warring for control.

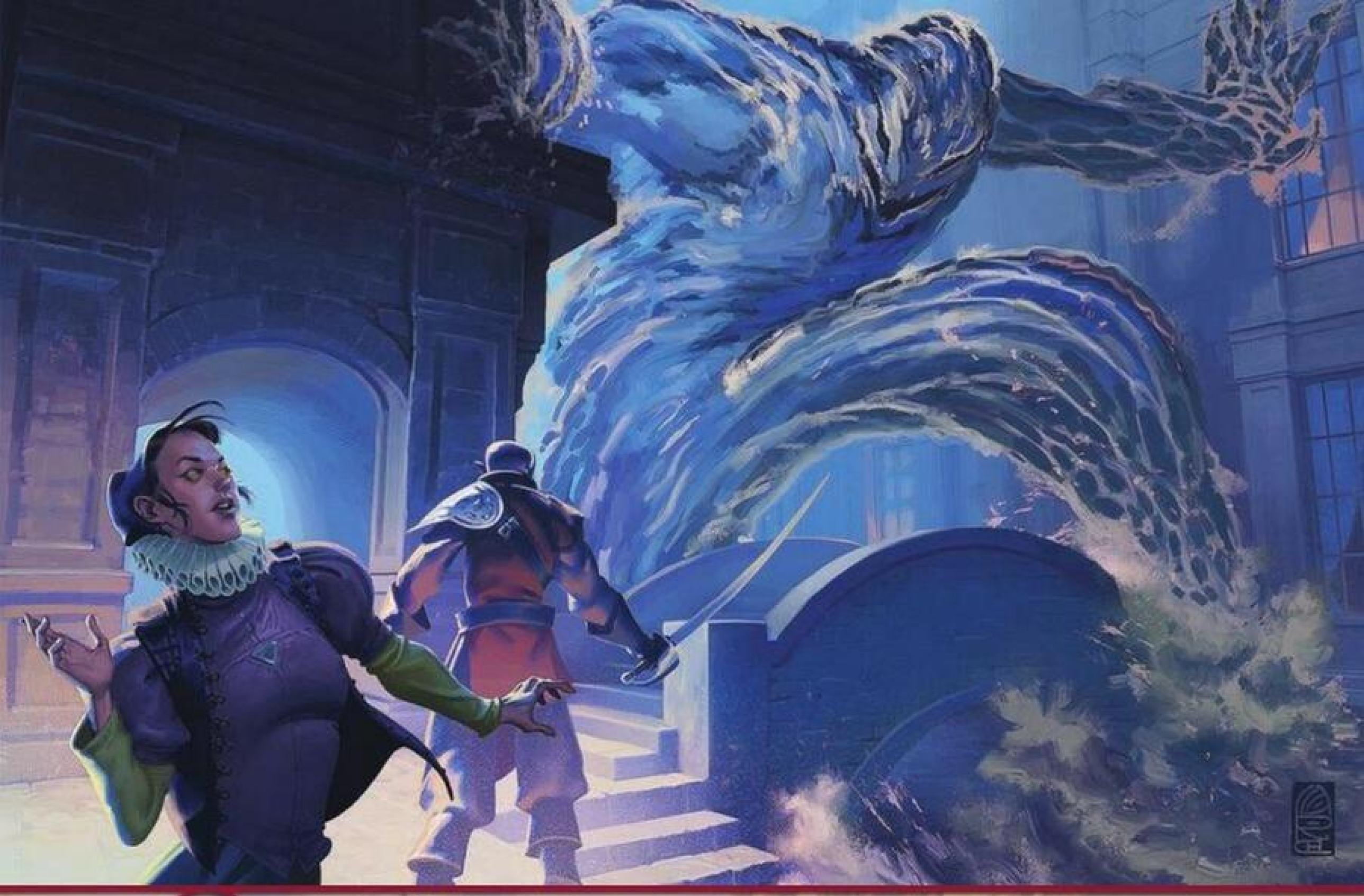
REBELLION

A tyrannical despot rules the city. Citizens tell tales of cruelty to scare their children. Laws are strict, and punishments are extreme. The city guard upholds a curfew, and anyone caught in the street after dark is hunted down and killed. The ruler is a literal monster, or a humanoid devoted to something of pure evil, and has a cadre of powerful, evil enforcers.

Characters grew up in the city, connected to freedom fighters that helped its citizens, smuggling in food and medicines and building a network of heroes that could overthrow the tyrant.

SHADOW GUILD

The city has two ruling bodies: the official government and a powerful criminal organization, such as a thieves' guild, that operates behind the scenes. Either the government isn't aware of the manipulation or the extent of its lost power, or it fails to take the criminals as a serious threat. Several criminal agents might operate within the official government or on the criminal organization's take. As characters progress, the organization attempts to recruit them into their fold, and they can either join and take over the city or reject the organization and work to dismantle it for good.



5 CITY HEROES

An urban adventure wouldn't be complete without heroes. This chapter details how the characters can interact with a city or town, such as by owning property, earning a title for deeds done for the people, or gaining a network of contacts. This chapter also contains new backgrounds, class options, magic items, and spells for characters in urban campaigns.

A rampaging water elemental rounds a corner in the city's canals amid a chorus of screams and turns its attention to the two local heroes who step up to face it.

OWNING PROPERTY

Characters might come into possession of urban property in a variety of ways. If they begin play as locals, then one or more of them might already own property. Alternatively, as play progresses, some players might have their characters purchase an abode, business, or plot of land. They might inherit such property or be paid with or granted title to it for services rendered to the community. Many players like roleplaying out the aspects of acquiring a house or apartment, a church or temple, a business or meeting house for an organization, or even an estate or keep.

A newly claimed house, cottage, or tower can serve as a headquarters or safe haven while a business might act as a source of passive income that supports the characters' lifestyles. If the characters want to take a deeper dive into owning property and want to actively run a large business or manage an estate during downtime, there are a

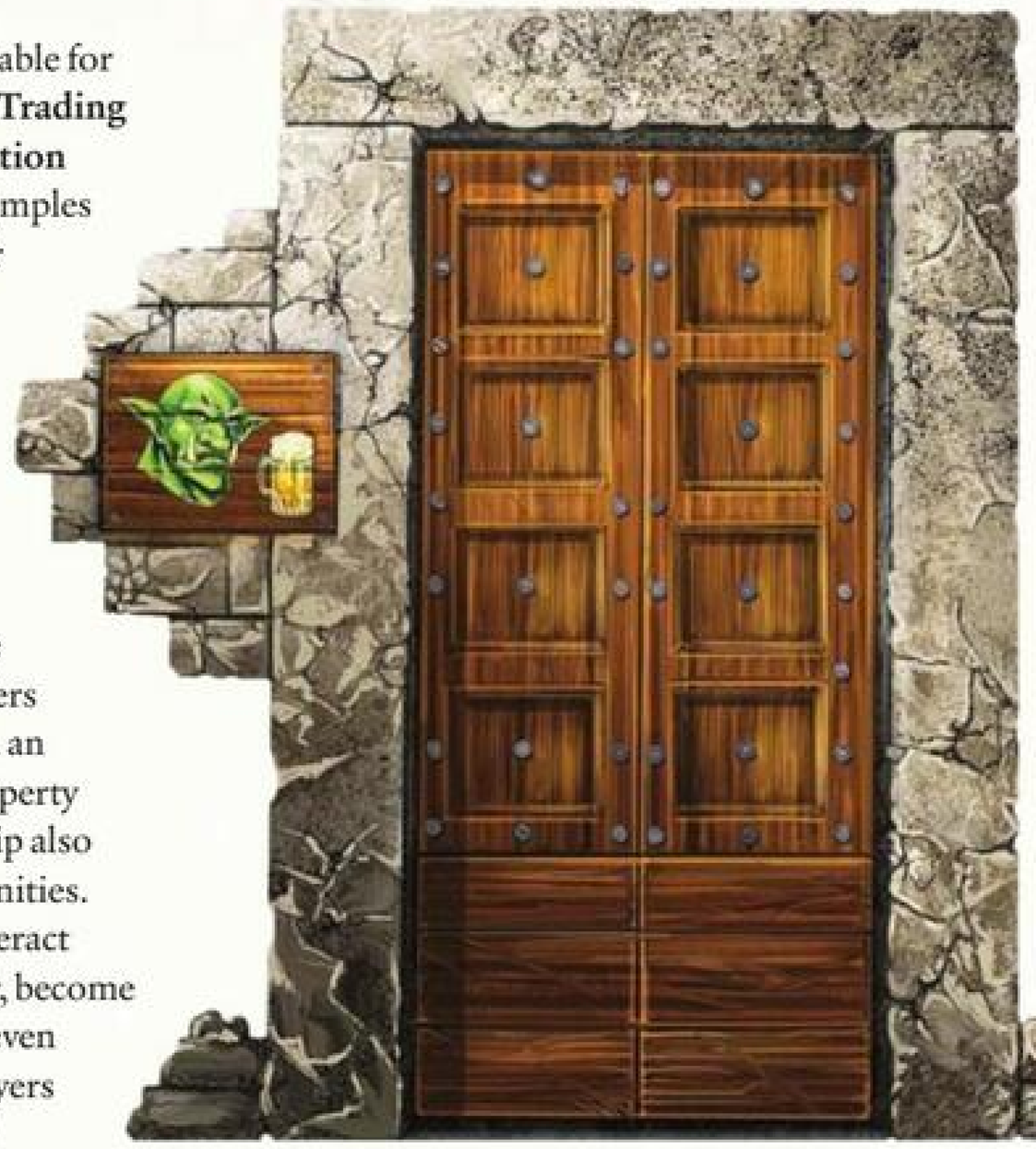
variety of interesting options and systems available for handling the finer details (see the **Managing a Trading Company** and **Manor Ownership and Operation** downtime options in *Tome of Heroes* for two examples of such systems). This section assumes a lighter touch with property ownership for GMs and players more interested in using property as a story element rather than an active game element.

Benefits of Property Ownership. Permitting characters to own property in the setting provides a variety of perks. It encourages the characters to remain within the bounds of (or return often to) the city. Characters having reasons to stick around is paramount in an urban-based campaign, and granting them property in some form does just that. Property ownership also allows for more roleplaying and quest opportunities. Characters with property are more likely to interact with locals in the district around their property, become invested in the challenges those locals face, or even work to better their neighborhood. Finally, players with characters that own property can explore what it means to play a more settled character. Such characters are more likely to have families or other ties to a particular region or nation than characters that constantly travel the world, which provides opportunities for different types of character goals and styles of play.

Roleplaying Opportunities During Acquisition. Keep in mind that acquiring property can come with its own set of interesting possibilities and challenges. Finding the right piece of land or building can be an adventure all its own. Some considerations:

- Do the characters just ask around?
- Do they hire an agent to make inquiries?
- Does doing so attract shady brokers or schemers looking for gullible investors?

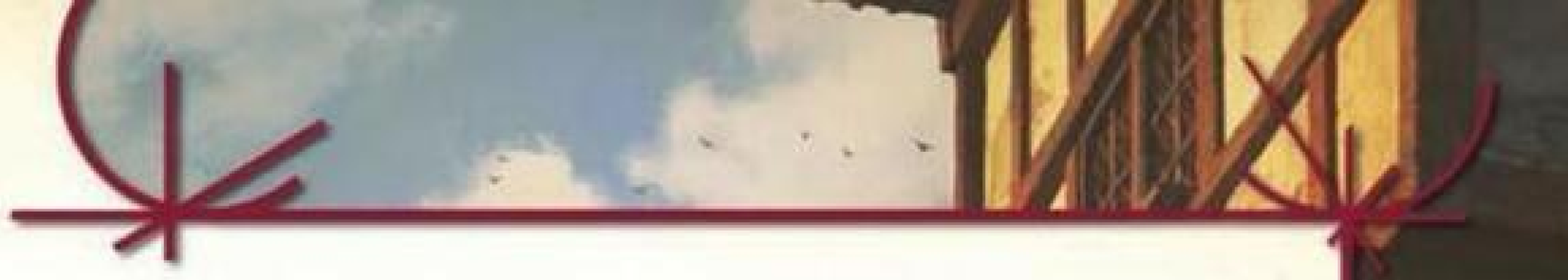
If the players don't initially express interest in property, it can be added to an ongoing story. Did the characters find the deed hidden behind a painting or in a scroll tube found among other treasure? Did one of them inherit the business from someone? Did they even know the property was coming to them? Maybe they are expected to manage it as part of their familial duties. What if they did a great service to a local lord who grants them title to the property? What if they receive the property as part of a bargain or as a reward for clearing the property of some menace?



Unique and Interesting Sites. Once the characters acquire the property, it can become its own source of story hooks or additional connections to the area. Here are some possibilities:

- Perhaps the property has a significant history, such as serving as the home of a city founder or once belonging to a malevolent cult.
- Maybe it's haunted, or there are previously unknown secret accessways to the subterranean sections of the city in its basement.
- Perhaps there are other entities who believe the property actually belongs to them, and what happens if their claim is legitimate?
- Are there rumors of treasure hidden within the property's walls?
- If it's a business, is it competing with a ruthless entrepreneur?
- Is the local tax collector corrupt?
- Is the neighborhood controlled by a local gang or crime syndicate that expects protection money?
- Does owning the business come with the responsibility of sitting on a merchant council or the opportunity to become members of an exclusive club?

Long-Term Campaign Effects. As the players start down the path of their characters owning property within a city or town, the opportunities can become a



fun mini-campaign or extended story arc all its own. Some options include:

- They can go from owning a single business to much larger enterprises.
- Maybe they corner the market on a particular import or export.
- If they are generous, maybe they decide to tear down slums they've acquired and replace the buildings with better housing for the poor. Whatever they decide to do, they almost certainly become responsible—either directly or indirectly—for the citizens who are affected by their property decisions. Pretty soon, they could be major players in the community's social, political, and economic dynamics.

TITLES AND PRIVILEGES

As the characters spend time in a city, they might serve local authorities or influential organizations, or they might earn acclaim for some deed. In these situations, the GM might give the characters opportunities for upward social mobility, culminating in a position of political significance, a noble title, or a special social privilege, such as private seats at the local theater house. A title typically grants special rights, privileges, and abilities within a set of parameters, but it also often comes with additional responsibilities. A privilege is often much smaller and more specific in scope, offering less power than a title but without the added expectations. Consider the following when determining if a title or special privilege is an appropriate award for a character:

- Does the character deserve the title, or are they being set up as a scapegoat?
- Does the title allow the character to access new locations?
- Does the title allow the character to partake in local government or lawmaking?
- Does the title come with any duties or responsibilities?
- Does the title come with any legal or political rights?
- Does the title offer real power or social mobility, or is it more of a formality?
- Is the character expected to display their formal title through specific attire, a badge of office, a piece of jewelry, or similar?
- Is the character expected to offer advice or counsel to a ruler, court, or other government body?
- Is the character required to attend meetings of government officials or address the public?
- Is there anyone envious of the character's title?
- Which actions violate the expectations of the title or result in the loss of the title?

POWERFUL TITLES

Most titles come with some type of social or economic privilege, but particularly influential titles might come with socially or economically impactful benefits. Because of this, influential titles can be treated similarly to magic items, granting special or temporary benefits in specific situations. Here are some sample powerful titles:

- ***Bishop.*** You serve as your church or temple's public voice, allowing you to offer advice and counsel to the most potent and influential city policymakers. The tenants of your faith drive your counsel, and you can infuse them into public policies and city law. Whenever city policymakers are discussing a law or policy that opposes the tenets of your religion, you can challenge it, forcing the law or policy to be rewritten or dissolving it altogether, the GM's choice. Once you use your title in this way, you can't do so again until seven days have passed.
- ***Earl of the Court.*** You acquired influence within the city's judiciary system. You can lend your logic and reason to sway the outcome of a trial or legal dispute. Once per dispute, you can provide your opinions to one of the arbitrators in the dispute, forcing the arbiter to reroll their most recent ability check to determine the results of an arbitration attempt. You then choose if the arbiter uses their original roll or the new roll. Once you use your title in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.
- ***Magistrate.*** You possess influence within the city's law-enforcement system. You can leverage your reputation with city law-enforcement agents to influence the decisions of city guards, jailers, and similar officials. Whenever you witness an interaction between a law-enforcement agent and a citizen, you have advantage on the first Charisma check you make to influence the interaction. Once you use your title in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.
- ***Magus.*** You serve as the high court's official seer and counselor in matters concerning magic, allowing you to influence court decisions within your sphere of knowledge. The court might call upon you to help

plan strategies for war, architecture, and espionage or to consult on the use of magic in regulating or easing the lives of citizens. The title grants you the right to an audience with any official responsible for making, regulating, or adjudicating city policies related to or concerning magic. Though you have the right to this audience, the chosen official can decide when and where the audience takes place, provided the audience is within 24 hours of your request for it. Once you have used your title to gain an audience with an official, you can't do so again until 15 days have passed.

- ***Sheriff.*** You hold a position in law enforcement, giving you charge over guard units in a ward or district and allowing you to call on guards, serve warrants, arrest lawbreakers, and post bounties within your district. Authorities outside your district acknowledge your position, but guards outside your district prioritize the orders of their district sheriff and leaders. While within your assigned ward or district, you can use an action to call up to a number of **guards** equal to your proficiency bonus, which arrive in 1d4 rounds, act as your allies, and obey your verbal commands. The guards remain for 1 hour or until you dismiss them as a bonus action then return to their assigned posts. Once you have used your title to call a number of guards equal to three times your proficiency bonus, you can't call guards again until 3 days have passed.

CONTACTS

A contact is any nonplayer character with a connection to at least one of the player characters, often through repeated or extended interaction. The contact has a social relationship with one or more of the characters and possesses information or has access to information in a specific area of expertise, typically related to the contact's profession, education, or social circle. The characters can use that relationship to request favors, often by owing a favor in return.

Similar to henchmen and hirelings (detailed in **Chapter 3**), contacts can have varying skill levels and can be talented in a variety of areas. Unlike a henchman or hireling, a contact isn't hired by the characters and interacts with the characters based on relationship rather than remuneration. However, some contacts might request compensation for performing a favor, especially if a favor is particularly risky or would put the contact in danger. When a contact requests to be compensated for a favor, consult the **Henchmen and Hirelings** section to determine the contact's desired compensation based on their expertise in the area of interest requested by the characters. Alternatively, a contact might request only compensation for any materials necessary to perform the favor.

RELATIONSHIPS

Each contact's relationship with the characters falls into one of three categories: acquaintanceship, business association, or friendship. The relationship determines kinds of favors (detailed later in this section) the contact is willing to perform for the characters and the outcome of any dealings between the characters and the contact. At the GM's discretion, the contact's relationship with the characters can change, depending on the characters' interactions with and requests of the contact.

Acquaintanceship. The contact is an acquaintance of the characters, such as the server at a local restaurant, the neighborhood messenger-delivery person, a traveling merchant at the market, or a similar individual with regular but brief interaction with the characters. When the characters request a low-risk favor of an acquaintance, the acquaintance has a 50-percent chance of requesting a favor in exchange. An acquaintance performs a moderate-risk favor only if compensated, and they never perform a high-risk favor for the characters. An acquaintance never performs a favor against their personality, morality, or beliefs. If the requested favor is particularly atrocious to the acquaintance, they might immediately terminate the relationship upon being asked. If the contact is a law-abiding citizen, and the request is both illegal and against the acquaintance's personality, morality, or beliefs, the acquaintance might report the characters to the authorities.

Business Association. The contact is a business associate. They aren't necessarily a business owner, but the business associate views their relationship with the characters as an equitable give-and-take, keeping interactions professional and impersonal. While they might request compensation from the characters for favors performed, a business associate is never considered a henchman or hireling and is typically someone on equitable or higher socioeconomic footing with the characters, such as a merchant guild leader or local politician. When the characters request a favor of a business associate, the associate always requests a favor in exchange for a low-risk favor. A business associate performs moderate- and high-risk favors only if compensated, and they charge double the standard rate for high-risk favors. A business associate can

perform a favor against their personality, morality, or beliefs. However, such a request might have negative consequences if the associate feels that knowledge of the request holds more value to the associate than the relationship with the characters or the compensation they paid.

Friendship. The contact is a close friend of the characters, interacting with them on a very regular basis and holding them in high regard. When the characters request a favor of a friend, the friend rarely if ever requests a favor in return for a low-risk favor and has a 25-percent chance of requesting a favor in return for a moderate-risk favor. The friend has a 50-percent chance of requesting compensation for a high-risk favor. If the characters request a favor that is against the friend's personality, morality, or beliefs, the friend questions and is reluctant to perform the favor but typically still performs it, especially if they believe the characters have great need of the favor. In such situations, the friend might give the characters a firm lecture on the request, express concern for the characters and their decisions, or even warn the characters that they might not agree to such a request again. If the request is particularly atrocious to the friend, the friend might even take actions that strain the friendship, such as gathering other concerned friends to speak with the characters or contacting authorities to help "correct" the characters who have gone down a "bad" path.

FAVORS

While characters might occasionally visit with a contact to be friendly or make small talk, more often, they seek contacts when they need something. A request of a contact is called a favor and comes in three forms: minor tasks, information, and resources.

Minor Tasks. The contact performs a minor task for the characters. A minor task might include delivering a sealed letter, leaving an item on a table in a certain building, standing in a particular way at a specific place and time, or holding onto an object for the characters until they return.

MINOR REPERCUSSIONS

d6	Repercussion
1	The contact's sources dry up, and it takes at least 15 days for the contact to rebuild or get new sources, delaying the completion of the favor.
2	An official agency conscripts the contact for mundane tasks, such as watch duty or transcribing ledgers. The contact can't complete the favor until the mundane task is finished, delaying the completion of the favor.
3	The contact only partially does the favor or leaves behind some evidence connecting the contact to the favor.
4	Months after completing the favor, the braggart contact drunkenly reveals details to an untrustworthy rival.
5	True or not, the contact thinks of the characters as friends and makes no secret of their association while performing the favor.
6	True or not, the contact thinks of the characters as untrustworthy and makes no secret of their opinions while performing the favor.

Information. The contact provides the characters with requested information. Information might include specific individuals' names, a location where something is kept or hidden, lost details of a historical city, or details of affairs that influenced noble lineages.

Resources. The contact procures a resource for the characters. Resources might include books and texts on specific subjects, spell components, a spyglass, poison, a room at an inn, or a warrant.

RISK

Whenever a contact agrees to perform a favor, they assume the risk of any potential problems or dangers accompanying the favor's completion. For many favors, assumed risks are minimal, but for others, the risk is monumental, even life-threatening. There are three risk levels of favors: low, moderate, and high. While an association between risk and legality exists, a high-risk favor isn't necessarily criminal, and a low-risk favor isn't always legal.

Low-Risk. The contact performing a low-risk favor raises little concern and poses no apparent consequences. Such favors might include delivering a sealed message, researching a historical event, purchasing mundane equipment, and gathering local rumors.

Moderate-Risk. The contact performing a moderate-risk favor stirs curiosity or gives observers pause. Such favors might include posting a threatening note on someone's door, asking about a known criminal, researching floorplans for a bank, or purchasing a crate of manacles.

High-Risk. The contact performing a high-risk favor prompts alarm if the contact is witnessed. Such favors might include setting fire to a building, purchasing a quiver of magical human-slaying arrows, and serving a summons to a prominent noble at a dinner gala.

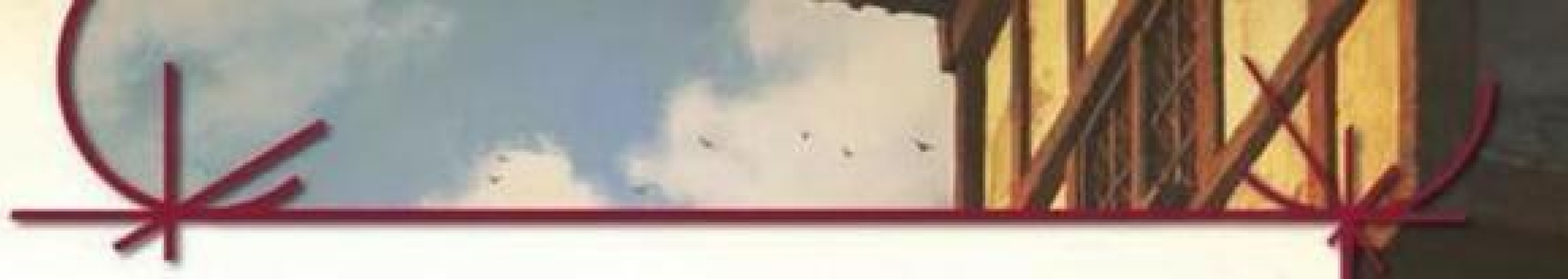
REPERCUSSIONS

When the characters request a favor of a contact, there is a chance that performing the favor has repercussions. A low-risk favor has a 5-percent chance of causing a **Minor Repercussion.** A moderate-risk favor has a 15-percent chance of repercussions. If one results, roll any die; on an even result, the moderate-risk favor causes a **Minor Repercussion,** and on an odd result, it causes a **Mild Repercussion.** A high-risk favor has a 25-percent chance of repercussions. If one results, roll any die; on an even result, the high-risk favor causes a **Mild Repercussion,** and on an odd result, it causes a **Major Repercussion.** If a favor causes a repercussion, roll a d6 and consult the appropriate table to determine the outcome.

DOWNTIME OPTION: CONTACT NETWORKING

Though any character can have a contact or group of contacts to call on for favors, a character can spend downtime growing a wide network of contacts. Networks branch out from the character, leaving the character personally familiar with only a few, key contacts but capable of leaning on the knowledge and resources of the networks. In this way, the character might still have personal contacts to call on for favors while also having access to a network that allows the character greater influence within the city as a whole.

Building a contact network requires gathering information, meeting with potential contacts, and negotiating terms. A character must spend one workweek in a populated city and at least 20 gp paying informants, greasing palms, buying information, and other similar expenses.



MILD REPERCUSSIONS

d6	Repercussion
1	In performing the favor, the contact inadvertently revealed unflattering information about an individual of significant legal or political authority. The contact completes the favor but then must lie low until the situation calms, becoming temporarily unavailable.
2	While performing the favor, the contact breaches a code of conduct that results in a temporary suspension from the contact's favorite tavern, social organization, or even profession.
3	While performing the favor, the contact is arrested for a minor act, such as public drunkenness. As a result, the contact can't complete the favor for 30 days or until someone pays the 25-gp fine.
4	The contact suddenly skips town for unknown reasons, leaving the favor unfinished.
5	The contact completes the favor but demands an additional 10-percent compensation, claiming additional, unexpected expenses.
6	Someone exposes the contact's participation in an amoral activity, which might or might not be related to the favor. As punishment, the church forces the contact to perform penance, uphold a vow of silence, and remain in the local temple for the next 60 days, preventing the contact from completing the favor.

MAJOR REPERCUSSIONS

d6	Repercussion
1	While performing the favor, the contact breaches a code of conduct that results in the permanent termination of the contact's position within an organization, guild, or other social or professional group.
2	While performing the favor, the contact gets into a violent altercation and must face a lengthy sentence. The court offers to reduce the sentence for information that might incriminate the characters, giving the contact three days to decide.
3	Authorities arrest the contact for committing a criminal act in the process of performing the favor. As punishment for the crime, authorities brand or tattoo the contact. After that, anyone observed in conversation with the contact attracts the suspicion of local authorities. Out of anger, desperation, or genuine concern, the contact makes it a priority to find the characters and explain what happened.
4	While the contact is performing the favor, the characters' enemies use the contact to set them up.
5	A powerful rival takes the contact hostage, preventing the contact from performing the favor. The characters receive a threatening ransom note.
6	Authorities find the contact's broken body in a canal, on a hidden rooftop, at the bottom of a well, or in some other out-of-the-way location.

Network Points

After a workweek of interacting with contacts and contacts of contacts, a character makes an ability check using the **Contact Networking** table to determine the number of network points acquired that week. If a character has network points when making this check, add the network point total to the check. The type of ability check a character makes depends on the type of network the character utilizes that week:

- ***Information Gathering.*** This network connects street finches, watchful spies, gossips, snitches, and other individuals with an ear for conversation. A character using this network makes an Intelligence (Investigation) check.
- ***Mercantile.*** This network consists of merchants, craftspeople, journeymen, bookkeepers, bankers, and individuals from various shops. Network members use their insights and guile to influence market values and increase profits. A character using this network makes a Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check (the character's choice).
- ***Political.*** This network consists of politicians, aristocrats, pundits, tax collectors, and other factions involved in city politics. Members of the network share and exchange information able to influence changes in public policy. A character using this network makes a Charisma (Persuasion) check.

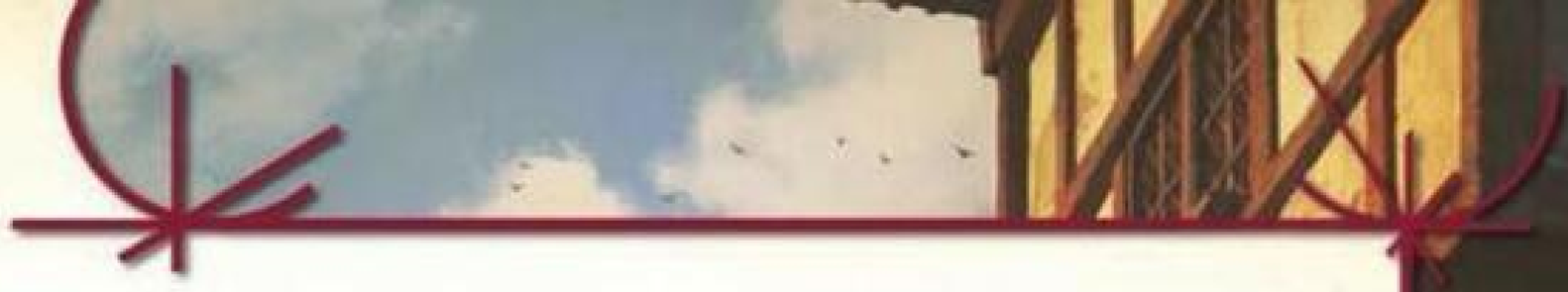
CONTACT NETWORKING

Check	Result
1–5	One of your primary contacts became embroiled in a scandal, forcing that network to temporarily disband. You lose 1 network point. If you have no network points when you roll this result, you have disadvantage on the next check you make to determine network points.
6–10	Your contacts failed to acquire and distribute the appropriate information and resources, preventing the network or its influence from growing. You gain no network points this week.
11–15	Procuring resources took longer than expected; however, the network remained cohesive enough to expand its influence and gain new members. You gain 1 network point.
16–20	The network assured that everything ran like clockwork. You gain 2 network points.
21+	The network yielded exceptional results and even expanded its effectiveness by gaining access to new resources. You gain 3 network points.

- ***Research.*** This network is comprised of scribes, philosophers, sages, historians, reclusive occultists, and antiquities collectors. A character using this network makes an Intelligence (Arcana, History, or Religion) check.
- ***Underground.*** This network connects the illicit or illegal activities of many morally ambiguous individuals, such as fringe anarchists, fences, rogue alchemists, and assassins. Network members typically run or participate in illegal economies and provide services that keep their allies hidden from the law. A character using this network makes an Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Network points represent a character's successful expansion and organization of groups of interconnected people that can provide the character with resources, information, and subtle but far-reaching influence. A character can spend points to use the following features:

- ***Truthseeker (Costs 1 Network Point).*** The character calls on the network for information regarding a topic. The character has advantage on one Intelligence or Charisma check to procure, research, or discover a specific piece of information related to an individual or to a location within a city, such as the whereabouts of a wanted criminal, the lineage of a certain noble, the original owner of a contested tavern, or the true identity of a masked vigilante.
- ***Lobbyist (Costs 1 to 3 Network Points).*** The character calls on the network to influence a legal or political situation. For 1 network point, the network sways 25 percent of a monarch's advisors, a city's consuls, the voting public, a trial's jury, or similar influential group in the city to vote or counsel in the direction desired. For each network point spent beyond the first, the network sways the vote or counsel of an additional 25 percent of the group.
- ***I Know a Guy (Costs 2 Network Points).*** Networks are effective because each member knows another member that can help in a given situation—or that member knows a member who knows a member that can help. The character can lean on the network to discover the exact individual the character needs for a specific task, resource, or piece of information. For example, the character might have found an object from an ancient civilization while traveling and needs to know more about it. The network can point the character to a local elderly bookshop owner who is not-so-secretly obsessed with all things related to that ancient culture and likely has the information the character seeks. In addition, the character has advantage on the first ability check made to interact socially with the individual before the end of the character's next long rest.
- ***Systemic Overhaul (Costs 5 Network Points).*** The character calls on the network to overhaul one system within the city, provided the character hasn't attempted another systemic overhaul in the past year. The character uses the network's influence to alter the balance of power in one of the city's districts. The character doesn't need to roll for complications when spending network points to enact a systemic overhaul. The district falls under the direct influence of the network—but not necessarily under the character's direct control—for at least 90 days. For the duration, the character receives regular reports from contacts concerning any rumors or



CONTACT NETWORKING COMPLICATIONS

d8	Complication
1	Your activities have offended the superiors of members of your network, who use their power to trace the activities to you and to file charges against you. You lose 1 network point and must spend 200 gp on hiring legal counsel to disprove their claims in court.
2	A third party or rival agency threatens the family or welfare of one or more members of your network. The third party or rival agency coerces the members into helping them set up a fake meet or drop point as a basis for an ambush for you or other members of your network.
3	Local authorities mark someone in your network as an associate of a criminal organization. For the next seven days, they put a tail on you and other members of your network to monitor your activities. You can't gain network points until you lose the tail.
4	One member of your network double-crosses you by selling off information to a third party, and you receive false or unusable information from them instead. You lose 1 network point.
5	Members of the network are caught in an embarrassing scandal. You lose 1 network point.
6	One of your primary contacts flakes, unable or unwilling to continue being part of your network. To rebuild your network, you must pay 100 gp for each network point you have.
7	Several members of your network are embroiled in a disagreement. You have disadvantage on the next check you make to determine network points.
8	A new and well-connected contact seeks to join your network. You have advantage on the next check you make to determine network points.

threats in the district, and the character receives resources, items, and minor goods and services from contacts and various other individuals in the district, with a total value of no more than 100 gp every 30 days. The character can use this influence to put specific politicians in positions of power, affect policymaking, sway judges, and enact similar political changes, but only within the district. Lastly, each time the character uses the I Know a Guy feature of this downtime before the end of the 90 days, it costs only 1 network point.

Complications

Characters that spend time building a network of contacts take on the burdens and challenges of managing, organizing, and coordinating a wide variety of people, many of whom the characters don't know directly. A character has a 10-percent chance of triggering a complication for each workweek spent building the contact network. When a complication is triggered, the GM can either create a complication or roll a d8 and consult the **Contact Networking Complications** table.

BACKGROUNDS

Cities are home to a myriad of professionals, valued careers, and storied upbringings. Perhaps your wizard is a vigilante masquerading as someone else by day but protecting their city by night. Or maybe your warlock was a public servant, fulfilling a civic duty before they took on their pact.

APPRAISER

You have developed an appraiser's eye in a specialized industry of high-value items. You may have started as a merchant or an artisan in your specialty field, but as your fascinations grew more specialized, you discovered a knack for impressing collectors with your knowledge and your dogged persistence in finding the next collection piece. You enjoy more freedom now, usually bouncing between collectors and shops and more far-flung places, looking for the perfect piece or the last, elusive capstone to a collection.

Skill Proficiencies: History, Investigation

Tool Proficiencies: One type of artisan's tools

Languages: One of your choice

Equipment: A set of books about your specialty field, a magnifying glass, a merchant's scale, a set of traveler's clothes, and a belt pouch containing 15 gp

FIELD OF INTEREST

Either as a merchant or an artisan, you delved into a particular field and eventually specialized in it. You are a warehouse of knowledge and trivia in your field, and you have acquired an eye for quality and authenticity within it. Choose a field or roll a d10 and consult the table below.

d10	Field
1	Gems and jewelry
2	Paintings
3	Cultural artifacts
4	Reliquaries and religious icons
5	Maps
6	Books, scrolls, or tablets
7	Coins
8	Sculptures or carvings
9	Natural artifacts
10	Curiosities

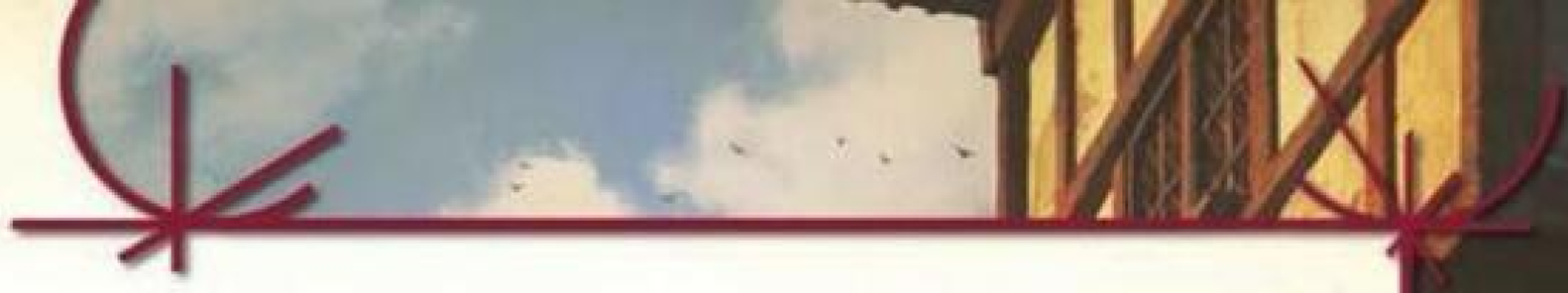
FEATURE: DISCERNING EYE

As a skilled appraiser in your field, you have a loose network of artisans, merchants, and collectors who recognize your expertise and trust your judgment. Among those who deal in your field, you enjoy a certain amount of privilege and authority; when you speak, people in your field listen. When you find an item within your field, you have an idea of the value of it to the right person, and you have a strong idea of where you might find that person. In addition, you have a knack for spotting forgeries and fakes. You can identify a forged or fake item after 1 minute of inspection if you have ever seen or held the item the forgery is attempting to copy.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Appraisers can seem like fussy or pretentious city folk, unprepared for travel or field work, but travel is often necessary in their passionate pursuit of collecting the best, the most famous, or the hardest-to-find examples of their specialization. In these cases, the appraiser steps out of their comfort zone and reveals the power of their determination and single-minded focus.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I speak at length about important items in my field and try to find a way to work my field into most of my conversations.
2	I can focus so hard on what I'm doing that I lose track of anything and anyone around me.
3	I don't mean to sound pretentious, but I can't help it if I'm more educated and interesting than everyone else.
4	I'm very enthusiastic about my field, and I like to get other people excited about it, too.
5	I'm always dreaming up plans to find some incredible, lost artifact related to my field.
6	I love to collect anything related to my field, and I am overstuffed with information and items that I like to keep around me.
7	I have a special talisman representative of my field that means a lot to me and reminds me why I'm devoted to it.
8	I'm kind of a neat freak, and I like to keep all of my things in tidy order.



d6	Ideal
1	**Knowledge.** The objects I collect mean something to people, and they should be in the hands of those who understand these meanings, contexts, and histories. (Neutral)
2	**Perfection.** I don't think anything is worth doing unless you are trying to do your absolute best at it. (Lawful)
3	**Avarice.** I just want the best price for the items I collect, and if I must fudge a few details to make it more "authentic" for the highest bidder, then so be it. (Evil)
4	**Control.** I want complete control over my time, my business, and the items I collect. (Lawful)
5	**Attachment.** I love my collections and being surrounded by my items brings me joy and security. (Any)
6	**Integrity.** I honor my field by prioritizing authenticity. I go to lengths to provide accurate information and treat my clients with fairness and items with respect. (Good)

d6	Bond
1	I am loyal to the merchants, artisans, and collectors who rely on me to find what they need.
2	I will not bear an insult to the dignity and relevance of my field.
3	I have my own collection I dream of completing, and I couldn't bear anything to happen to it.
4	I seek out the knowledge and opinions of other educated people to expand my own wisdom about my field and its significance.
5	I chose my specialization when I fell in love with someone in that field, but I've never been able to tell them.
6	My mentor made me who I am, but then they met an untimely end pursuing their passion. Not only will I not meet the same end, but I will also get revenge on the one who killed them.

d6	Flaw
1	I'm very impatient with people who don't understand my passion for my field.
2	I secretly look down on the same artisans and merchants I sometimes work for—they understand only the barest significance of my field, even as they craft or peddle within it.
3	I am a total control freak and panic when my plans go awry.
4	I've imperiled my reputation by once passing off a forgery as to a collector when I needed the gold.
5	I tend to namedrop people I've worked for, famous artisans I've met, and the titles of works I've read or seen in order to make myself look important.
6	I am overly critical of others' work or discoveries in my field, as I worry that I was never truly good enough to work in this field, only to study it.

MIDWIFE

From an early age, mentors trained you in the skills of midwifery. You witnessed many births and later accompanied others as you became practiced in the art of delivering children and providing comfort and calm words. Through your training, you can readily identify common illnesses and are skilled in the creation and application of herbal remedies

Choose how you came to learn your skills. Were you raised within a community where midwifery was a respected tradition? Do you practice the art as part of your religious duties? Were you appointed to the task by a wealthy merchant or noble and work for individuals above your allotted station in life? Or is the practice of midwifery more of an obligation that you resented and ultimately left behind to seek a new life?

Skill Proficiencies: Medicine, Persuasion

Tool Proficiencies: Healer's Kit, Herbalism Kit

Equipment: A healer's kit or herbalism kit, a small gift (silk ribbon, handmade statuette, simple necklace, or similar) from a family you helped through a difficult delivery, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing 15 gp.

FEATURE: BELOVED

As a midwife, you hold the respect and gratitude of the families you helped. Your skills make you and your companions welcome in nearly every community. If you help an individual deliver a healthy baby, that individual compensates you to the best of their ability, as appropriate to their social standing. The GM decides the nature of the compensation. For example, a poor family might gift you with a basket full of fresh vegetables.

You also have ties to a specific community and might keep a residence there. The community could be one where you worked for a time as a midwife or the community where you first learned to be a midwife and with whose children you feel connected. While in your community, you can call upon the people for food and shelter, to hide you, or to help you escape from danger, provided you remain in good standing and that helping you doesn't pose great risk to the community.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTIC

The art of delivering new life into the world colors the emotions and imagination of the midwife, shaping their personalities. Likewise, the people they serve and their experiences within their communities shape mannerisms and ideals. Their flaws form from superstitions, the pains of failure, or an ideal or bond taken to an extreme.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I perform my work with practicality and detachment to protect myself from the intimate nature of childbirth.
2	I make no distinctions and hold no prejudices toward those in need of my services. A mother is a mother, and a child is a child.
3	Every child I help birth tells me a secret (literal or philosophical), and I use these secrets to guide my actions.
4	I'm sometimes filled with a longing to reconnect with the children I have helped birth, feeling uncertainty about my own legacy and impact on the world.
5	I make a lot of analogies concerning life and the art of midwifery, some of which make my companions blush.
6	I openly voice my disdain for those who overly chastise or punish children.
7	I prefer working for the aristocracy and have become accustomed to the fine accommodations they provide.
8	I sometimes speak to my friends in baby talk.

d6	Ideal
1	**Tradition.** My craft has long-held traditions and secrets, which I must faithfully preserve and teach. (Lawful)
2	**Charity.** I will always offer my assistance to those requiring it, regardless of payment. (Good)
3	**Mercy.** I shall offer whatever comfort I can to those suffering in mourning or grief of a lost child. (Good)
4	**Righteous.** If the opportunity to place a child into the hands of a wealthy benefactor arises, I would do so for the child's benefit. (Chaotic)
5	**Faith.** I place the success of my work in the hands of my god and accept whatever results arise. (Lawful)
6	**Aspiration.** I hope to help my community grow and prosper by passing on my knowledge and training to others. (Any)

MIDWIVES AND GENDER

In the real world, midwives were and still are mostly people who identify as women, as childbirth has historically been seen as a matter for women to handle. However, fantasy worlds can and will be different.

When creating a character with the midwife background, think of the society in which the character was raised. How did that society and culture shape the character's desire to be a midwife? In what ways did it shape how the character approaches midwifery? Your midwife character can identify as female or not; what matters most is providing medical support, a reassuring demeanor, and a desire to help bring new life into the world.

d6	Bond
1	I will forsake any other obligation in the moment of delivering a child.
2	Years ago, I delivered a child I believe might have been possessed.
3	I shall never knowingly take any action that might result in the death or injury of a child.
4	I must teach another individual my craft before I leave the world.
5	I am willing to sacrifice myself for the life of a child.
6	I seek a child born with a unique mark that my community believes shall become the protector of my people.

d6	Flaw
1	I am prejudiced against those born into a different social status and am unable to trust them.
2	I am envious of the lives of wealthy children and expect that as adults, they should repay me for my help.
3	I always believe everything a child tells me in confidence.
4	Death is as sacred as childbirth, and I will not interfere when it comes to anyone.
5	I believe that negative thoughts affect the personalities of the children I deliver, and I therefore refuse to engage in conversations I dislike.
6	The first stillbirth I ever delivered was to an unkind and powerful noble. I have been nervous and fearful around nobility ever since.

PUBLIC SERVANT

You've worked countless hours making your community a better place for others. You know what it takes to run a city and that a city is more than just a collection of buildings and roads. You know that a city, at its core, is people. You also know what a commitment to city planning looks like, the resources it takes to manage projects and people, and the initiative required to make things happen. You also know that cities don't just happen overnight and that they are built over time, one brick at a time, by dedicated people like you.

SERVICE OCCUPATION

There are many kinds of civil servants, sometimes working alone and other times as members of an agency or team. What was the nature of your job before you answered the call to adventure? You can work with your GM to determine your professional experience, choose an occupation, or roll a d8 and consult the table below.

d8	Occupation	d8	Occupation
1	Fire Brigade	5	Courier
2	Barrister	6	Teacher
3	Clerk	7	Engineer
4	Tax Agent	8	Day Laborer

Skill Proficiencies: History, Persuasion

Tool Proficiencies: One type of tools or vehicles (land)

Languages: One of your choice

Equipment: A set of tools (one of your choice), a bottle of black ink, a quill, a uniform with accompanying badge, license, identification papers, or other signifier of your occupation, a set of traveler's clothes, and a belt pouch containing 15 gp

FEATURE: UNRESTRICTED ACCESS

You are comfortable with the authority granted to you by your occupation, and you know how to navigate through bureaucratic red tape. You can use the status of your occupation to gain access to areas and items in public places that are usually restricted to authorized personnel only. Also, when you are caught trespassing, you can cite your knowledge of rules, regulations, decrees, and laws to validate your presence and have advantage on ability checks to diffuse the confrontation.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Civil servants are hardworking, everyday people dedicated to providing vital services to others and putting their communities first. Even when taking up the life of an adventurer, they can't help but look at the challenges before them with the lens of their working experience. They understand the values of teamwork and cooperation, but they are often susceptible to overestimating tasks before them or using their positions of authority for ill.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I prefer to elevate those whose work might be missed rather than my own.
2	I try to remain objective at all times.
3	I always measure twice and cut once.
4	I have two personas: one for interacting with the public and an entirely different one for my friends and family.
5	I prioritize work-related tasks over my personal needs.
6	I like to be playfully difficult in tough situations, but it doesn't mean I work any less.
7	I have a relevant work story for every occasion, and I enjoy telling them whenever I can.
8	I tighten my belt and roll up my sleeves when things look bad.

d6	Ideal
1	**Justice.** Everyone is innocent until proven guilty, and everyone deserves fair and equitable treatment. (Good)
2	**Tradition.** I believe that the old ways are the best ways. (Lawful)
3	**Greed.** I have no problem skimming from the job to give myself a leg up. (Evil)
4	**Community.** I see the strength in togetherness and believe that teamwork is key. (Neutral)
5	**Democracy.** I believe that everyone has a right to their opinion and to contribute to the success of the many. (Lawful)
6	**Authority.** I wield my position like a weapon to get what I know I deserve. (Evil)

d6	Bond
1	I have my occupation because someone else recommended me for the work, though I know not who.
2	My parents did this job, and theirs before them. I've taken up their legacy for better or for worse.
3	I have a family, and everything I do, I do for them.
4	I advocate for those who can't speak for themselves.
5	My work gave me insight into a particular flaw in my city's infrastructure that only I can remedy or exploit.
6	An injury to my home and community is an injury to me.

d6	Flaw
1	When I get nervous, I focus on step-by-step instructions for even simple tasks.
2	When someone makes a point, I have to play devil's advocate.
3	I am chronically late because I'm overly confident in my abilities.
4	Sometimes, I enjoy the authority afforded to me by my occupation too much.
5	No one must ever learn that I embezzled money from my community's funds.
6	Nothing is ever finished to me. I can always make something more perfect.

VIGILANTE

You understand sacrifice and regularly do so with your personal life for the sake of others. You wear one persona during the day, playing the unsuspecting citizen, until the time comes for you to don the trappings of your alter ego and fight corruption and tyranny. You might be a wealthy noble, a hardworking civil servant, or a cherished entertainer. But your true identity, what defines you, is your constant vigilance and preparedness to combat wrongdoing. Whether high on gargoyle-adorned rooftops or sneaking through narrow alleys, you tirelessly ply your craft.

Consider what sort of vigilante you are and what your methods, costume, and name are. Work with your GM to develop associates, informants, or even nemeses, as well as a potential secret lair to use as a base of operations—whether that's the rooftop gargoyle where you stash your spare costume or a well-appointed and staffed basement beneath your manor. The most effective vigilantes have a persona that precedes them and a network of resources to draw upon, though building that persona and network can play out over the course of your game rather than being established from the beginning.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Intimidation

Tool Proficiencies: Disguise kit, thieves' tools

Equipment: A grappling hook, 50 feet of hemp rope, a disguise kit, a costume with a hood and domino mask, and a thick belt with five half-sized pouches containing a total of 5 gp

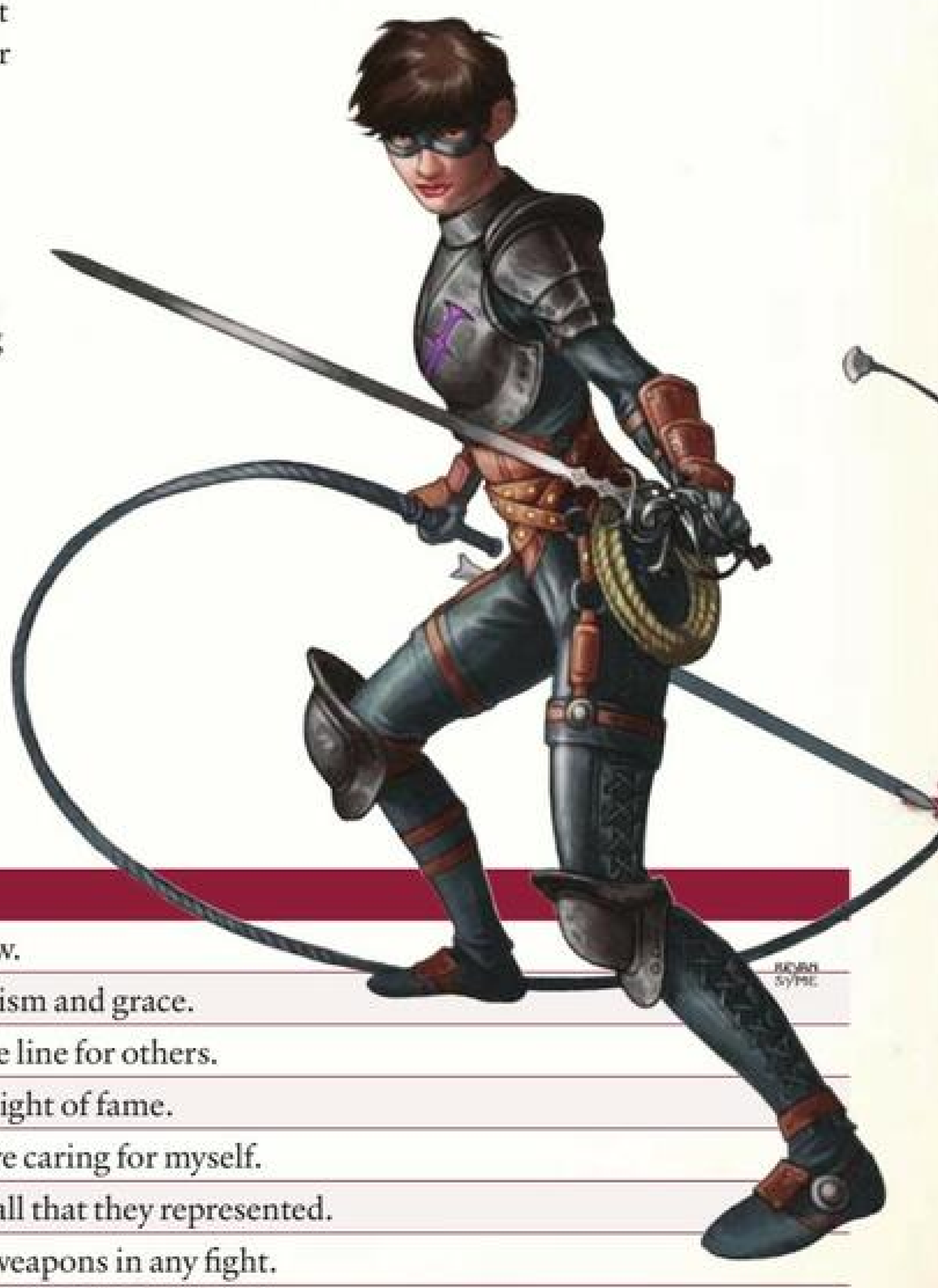
FEATURE: SECRET IDENTITY

You lead a double life, combating crime and corruption by night and playing the role of everyday civilian by day. You've had to learn how to make your everyday persona convincing to avoid suspicion in case your secret vigilantism runs the risk of exposure. You've kept two or more different names, adopted different body postures for each of your identities, and carefully managed your public appearances in each persona.

Choose another Background as your secret identity. You don't gain that Background's proficiencies or equipment, but you gain that Background's Feature and one personality trait from that Background's Suggested Characteristics, for a total of two personality traits: one from the Vigilante Background and one from your secret identity. Your secret identity is what many know you as and is the source of your overarching reputation and status. Your vigilante persona might have its own status and reputation, for better or for worse.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Vigilantes are some of the most stoic and resourceful of heroes. Often, a major event, such as a crime against their family or witnessing an injustice within the city, acts as a catalyst for the vigilante, bonding them to the calling and informing their morals and methods. Vigilantism comes with its share of dangers, and most vigilantes have to guard their loved ones, their secrets, and themselves against foes who seek to manipulate them.



d8	Personality Trait
1	I have my own code of ethics I personally follow.
2	I can endure hardship and even pain with stoicism and grace.
3	I have no problem putting my well-being on the line for others.
4	I prefer a shroud of mystery rather than a spotlight of fame.
5	I care about the people in my community before caring for myself.
6	I idolize a particular hero and seek to emulate all that they represented.
7	Sarcasm, insults, and funny quips are my first weapons in any fight.
8	When I am told I can't do something, I will prove that I can just out of spite.

d6	Ideal
1	Community. I combat crime to serve my community and make it a better place. (Good)
2	Vengeance. I will punish those who do wrong against me and my kin. (Chaotic)
3	Mastery. I am a predator, and the city is my hunting grounds. (Evil)
4	Justice. In a world full of corruption, someone must hold wrongdoers accountable. (Good)
5	Vigilance. I must keep constant watchfulness to keep the peace. (Neutral)
6	Independence. I work outside of the law. No one elected me to fight, but I do it anyway. (Chaotic)

d6	Bond
1	My parents died trying to protect me. I now fight on in their memory.
2	My code of honor is sometimes all I have, and I can't betray that.
3	I have a confidant who knows everything I do and risks a lot to help me in just small ways.
4	I don't know who my parents are, but they left me a remarkable gift that I use to fight evil.
5	Another vigilante took me in at my worst moment, sheltering me from harm and then teaching me their ways.
6	I keep a list of nemeses and foes who have wronged me and the people I care about.

d6	Flaw
1	Sometimes I am so focused on the big picture that I am not aware of the small ripples I cause.
2	I don't have time for useless laws, regulations, and excessive bureaucracy.
3	I enforce what I think is right without regard to the rule of law.
4	Sometimes my secrets get too big and become hard to manage.
5	I value cold facts over emotion, sometimes to the detriment of those close to me.
6	When times get tough, I choose violence.

CLASS OPTIONS

Cities serve as great stopping points for adventurers between adventures, but many adventurers spend their entire lives in cities, protecting the city's communities or connecting with the city in a way others might connect with a forest. These urban heroes find their fair share of adventure and danger within the city's walls.

BARD COLLEGE: COLLEGE OF CHICANERY

The College of Chicanery is an informal, barely associated group of bards with bad reputations among their ilk as hucksters, con artists, and snake oil peddlers. Members of this college tend to share the secrets of their operation through clandestine, often dysfunctional, pairings of a mentor and an apprentice. Once the mentor has shared what they know, they typically move on to a new domain, and their apprentice eventually tutors another promising young scoundrel.

Bards of this college are often confused for rogues, but their misuse of minor magics and wielding of the power of story marks them for what they truly are. Most operate in cities, earning comfortable lives on the naivety of their gullible marks. Not all members of this college are cads, however. Some use their tricks to deliver humility to the high-and-mighty, acting as benevolent tricksters.

While some members of the College of Chicanery do use music to better enchant their marks (with a trend toward jingles and catchy tunes), their true specialty lies in weaving magic-infused words into hypnotizing patterns with complex fast-talking and banter, and it lies in using stories to craft potent falsehoods momentarily into reality.

BAFFLING SPIEL

When you join the College of Chicanery at 3rd level, you learn to weave your fast-talking with patterns and magic to befuddle the mind. As an action, you can expend one use of your Bardic Inspiration to launch into a rapid-fire speech interwoven with—depending on the situation—verbose promises, pleas for your life, non-sequiturs,

made-up statistics, fake anecdotes, and audience flattery. Choose one Humanoid you can see within 60 feet of you and that can hear you. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC or be charmed by you until the speech ends. The speech ends at the end of your next turn, unless you take an action to continue the speech, extending it until the end of the following turn. You can extend the speech in this way for up to a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1 round).

While charmed, the target also has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and can't perform tasks requiring concentration as it continues to listen to you, dumbfounded, impressed, or both. If you or your allies attack or harm the charmed target, the effect on it ends. You can have only one Humanoid charmed at a time. If you charm another, the effect on the first target ends.

QUICKER THAN THE EYE

Also at 3rd level, you've become an expert at quickly manipulating items, making them disappear and reappear in your hands. Your proficiency bonus is doubled for Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks.

In addition, you can expend one use of your Bardic Inspiration when you hit a creature with a melee attack to snatch or knock loose an object it is holding, wearing, or carrying. The target must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw against your spell save DC or drop one object of your choice that you can see. If you have a hand free, you grab the object in that hand as it falls. Otherwise, the object falls into a random space within 5 feet of the target. The object you choose must be small enough to fit in one hand, can be a weapon only if the weapon has the Light property, and can't be wrapped around or firmly attached to the target. For example, you could snatch a belt pouch or dagger but not the target's shirt or the gauntlet of its armor.

CRAFT SNAKE OIL

By 6th level, you've learned the art of imbuing an item with false magic that compels a target to desire it. For 1 minute, you present a mundane, nonmagical object you are holding to a Humanoid you can see within 15 feet of you and discuss its supposed properties or stories of its provenance and history, playing up the item's value or flattering your target's taste.

When you complete your presentation, you imbue the object with a false aura, radiating magic of a school of your choosing, if any. You can also cause the object to manifest minor magical effects, such as glowing, humming with power, or emanating ethereal whispers.

The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC or be compelled to possess the object. The target resorts to bartering, persuasion, deception, or intimidation to acquire the object, but it doesn't act in a way that might harm it or be suicidal. Each minute the target is unable to acquire the object, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. On a failure, it remains compelled to possess the object and escalates its efforts to outright begging, theft, or violence, provided it believes such actions don't put it in immediate danger.

The false aura on the item fades after 24 hours, and the effect on the target ends. Afterwards, the target doesn't know why it was so obsessed with the object.

You cannot use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

MOUNTEBANK'S EXIT

By 14th level, you've mastered the art of deception so thoroughly you can disappear and leave your marks convinced you were never there. As an action, you conjure a distraction, such as a blast of smoke, a dramatic wind billowing your cloak around you, or a sudden shower of lights, that lasts until the start of your next turn. At the same time, you turn invisible, and your speed increases by 10 feet.

Each creature within 60 feet of you that can see or hear the distraction and that isn't a construct or undead must make a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed save, a creature forgets you were there and forgets any interactions it had with you within the past 10 minutes. On a successful save, a creature forgets the action you took the turn before the distraction but otherwise remembers you. Affected creatures rationalize the forgetfulness as you being someone else, as events transpiring differently up to the point your presence vanishes from memory, or similar rationale. This effect doesn't make a creature forget everything they knew about you prior to this effect.

You cannot use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

CLERIC DIVINE DOMAIN: COMMUNITY DOMAIN

Wherever people congregate into villages and towns, expanding their networks of family, friends, and neighbors, deities arise to protect these communities. Invoked for good harvests, healthy children, and defense against danger, these gods are credited with keeping the hearth fires of civilization burning. Community-focused deities have exemplars ranging

from harvest gods like Demeter, Dagan, and Lugh to gods of the hearth and home, like Hestia, Brighid, and Matka Gabia. Clerics of these deities are common, given their significant role in keeping society going, but many are humble community priests blessing pregnancies, ensuring good harvests, and healing the sick. Some, however, take on an active role as protectors of civilization and keepers of the hearth flame, actively defending against and hunting down threats to their communities and those who would despoil the sacred social bonds they protect.

DOMAIN SPELLS

You gain domain spells at the cleric levels listed in the **Community Domain Spells** table. See the Divine Domain class feature for how domain spells work.

COMMUNITY DOMAIN SPELLS

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	*purify food and drink*, *sanctuary*
3rd	*continual flame*, *warding bond*
5th	*create food and water*, *tiny hut*
7th	*private sanctum*, *wall of fire*
9th	*commune with nature*, *flame strike*

BONUS CANTRIP

When you choose this domain at 1st level, you gain the *sacred flame* cantrip if you don't already know it.

HEARTH'S WARMING LIGHT

Also starting at 1st level, any fire or light you create sheds light for half again its normal distance. For example, a *light* cantrip you cast or a torch you light sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet.

In addition, a creature within the bright light of any fire or light you create doesn't suffer exhaustion from extreme temperatures, such as the freezing cold of a wintry tundra or the burning heat of a desert. The creature can still suffer exhaustion from other causes.

CHANNEL DIVINITY: COMMUNITY STRENGTH

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to inspire your community to pull together for a common goal. As an action, you present your holy symbol and choose up to six creatures you can see and that can see you within 30 feet of you, which can include yourself. Each target can use the Help action as a bonus action on its next turn, and the creature being helped gains a bonus on its ability check or attack roll equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of +1).

STOKE THE HEARTH

Starting at 6th level, you can call upon the power of the hearth to protect you and your allies. For 1 minute, you and friendly creatures within 15 feet of you have resistance to cold damage or fire damage (your choice). You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

POTENT SPELLCASTING

Starting at 8th level, you add your Wisdom modifier to the damage you deal with any cleric cantrip.

RETURN TO SANCTUARY

When you reach 17th level, you become intrinsically tied to your community and can return home when you are in peril. At the end of a long rest, you can designate a location you are familiar with as your sanctuary. The sanctuary must be a building or a location within a building, such as the chapel in a barracks, which you call home. You don't need to own the building, but you must be welcome there and must have eaten and slept there at least once.

Until you finish a long rest, you can sense when your sanctuary is in peril as long as you are on the same plane of existence as it, but you don't know the details or scope of the threat. At the GM's discretion, you might know if the peril comes in the form of damage to the building or in the form of a creature within the building suffering a violent death.

As an action, you can teleport yourself and a number of willing creatures up to your proficiency bonus within 30 feet of you to your sanctuary, appearing in the nearest unoccupied spaces to where you last slept or ate within the sanctuary. In addition, when you are reduced to 0 hit points, you can use a reaction to teleport yourself to your sanctuary, appearing in an unoccupied space nearest to where you last slept or ate within the sanctuary.

Once you have teleported at least one creature to your sanctuary, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

DRUID CIRCLE: CIRCLE OF THE SEWER

Druids of the Circle of the Sewer convene in an unlikely spot: underground in the city's sewer and drainage systems. Outside the attention of most of the city's citizens, these waterways are a bizarre reassertion of natural order, and druids of this circle commune with, study, and emulate this unique water. The circle meets in the sluiceways and channels underground and in forgotten streams of rainwater and refuse, where a

whole ecology flourishes beneath civilization, unknown and disregarded.

Much like the sewers where they dwell, these druids are often considered best left forgotten. Their waterlogged appearances and fluid shapeshifting can be disturbing, but what disturbs people most is their muttered knowledge of things lost and unknown, secrets dredged from the city's detritus.

DROWNED FORM

When you join this circle at 2nd level, you learn to adopt a watery, drowned form. You can use a bonus action to expend one use of your Wild Shape feature and suffuse your body with water and muck rather than transforming into a beast form.

While in your drowned form, you retain your game statistics and look drenched, pallid, and covered in muck with webbing between your fingers and toes. You have a swimming speed equal to your walking speed and can breathe air and water. In addition, you are immune to disease, have advantage on saving throws against poison, and have resistance to poison damage.

You can stay in your drowned form for 10 minutes, or until you dismiss it (no action required), are incapacitated, die, or use this feature again.

When you reach 10th level in this class, you can stay in your drowned form for 1 hour or until you dismiss it. In addition, your swimming speed equals double your walking speed, and you are immune to the poisoned condition and poison damage.

FLOW OF THE CITY

At 2nd level, you can use an action to taste water, such as runoff from a storm, flood, or street washing, and glean some insight into recent events. You can question the water about events that happened within the past hour within 60 feet of where you tasted the water, gaining information about creatures that have passed, weather, and other circumstances. This information comes to you in the form of a brief vision of a recent happening, the whispered sound of voices that spoke near the water, or a similar conveyance, rather than the water speaking directly to you.

When you reach 12th level in this class, you can use this feature while touching a body of water and learn the general appearance of the most recent creatures with an Intelligence of 6 or higher that came into contact with that body of water within the past 24 hours. If you use this feature on a particularly large body of water, such as an ocean or river, you learn only of creatures that came into contact with the water within 1 mile of where you touched the water. You can learn the appearance of a number of creatures equal to your proficiency bonus.

You can't use this feature again until you finish a short or long rest.

POLLUTED WATERS

By 6th level, your exposure to the often-polluted or refuse-filled water within a city has infused your drowned form with the power of poison. When you are hit with a melee attack by a creature within 5 feet of you while you are in your drowned form, the attacker takes poison damage equal to your proficiency bonus.

In addition, while in your drowned form, you emit a rotten, mildewy stench. A creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. If this effect ends for a creature, that creature is then immune to your mildewy stench for the next 24 hours.

DISCARDED KNOWLEDGE

At 10th level, you learn how to tap into the knowledge contained within the waste-filled waters that flow through and beneath civilization. You can perform a 10-minute ritual while partially submerged in a body of water that has been substantially used by civilization, such as a sluiceway in a sewer, a city pond, a fountain, a river running through town, or similar. The water must be deep enough to cover at least half your body. Once the ritual is complete, the water reveals to you some bit of knowledge contained within the waste filling it, granting you one of the following benefits:

- **Discarded Papers.** You can read, write, and speak a language you don't know.
- **Discarded Tools.** You are proficient in one skill or artisan's tools of your choice.
- **Discarded Magic.** Choose a cantrip you don't know from any spell list. This cantrip is a druid spell for you.

At least one inhabitant in the city or town where the water is located must have knowledge of the desired language, skill, tool, or cantrip for you to choose that benefit. The benefit lasts until you finish a long rest or until you perform this ritual again. Once you perform this ritual, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

FLUID FLESH

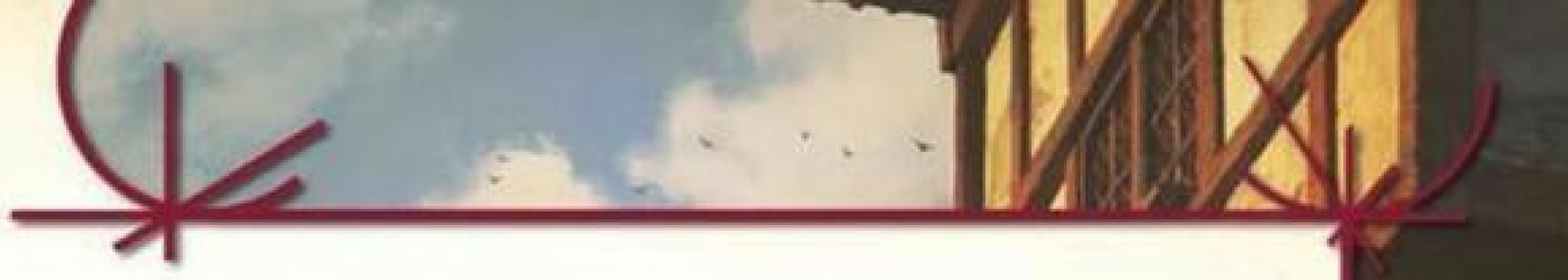
By 14th level, your drowned form becomes more like animated water, transforming you into an avatar for the city's waterways. While in your drowned form, you can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. When you transform into your drowned form, you can choose whether your equipment falls to the ground in your space, merges into your new, watery form, or is worn by it. Worn equipment functions as normal, but the GM decides whether it is practical for the equipment to move with you if you flow through particularly narrow spaces.

In addition, while in your drowned form, you can use an action to spin yourself into a watery tornado and enter the space of a Large or smaller creature within 5 feet of you. The creature must make a Strength saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed save, the creature takes bludgeoning damage equal to 2d8 + your Wisdom modifier, and it is restrained by the force of your spin. While restrained, the creature is unable to breathe unless it can breathe water. On a successful save, the creature takes half the damage and isn't restrained, and you are ejected from its space into an unoccupied space of your choice within 5 feet of the creature.

A creature that starts its turn restrained by you in this way takes poison damage equal to twice your proficiency bonus. The restrained creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. On a success, it frees itself from your grasp and ejects you into an unoccupied space of your choice within 5 feet of it. You must use a bonus action on your subsequent turns to continue spinning and keep the creature restrained. If you don't, the effect ends, and you are ejected from the creature's space as if it succeeded on its saving throw.

FIGHTER MARTIAL ARCHETYPE: RAKE

The rake is a confident fighter and ne'er-do-well, typically of aristocratic birth and privilege, who lives for parties, excitement, and proving their superiority. These are fighters who develop their skills for bragging rights instead of out of duty, money, or survival. Captivating and implacable, the rake duels and carouses through life—dangerous in single combat and charming outside of it.



BONUS PROFICIENCY

Beginning when you choose this archetype at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in one of the following skills of your choice: Intimidation, Persuasion, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth. Alternatively, you learn one language of your choice.

ASTUTE CHARM

Also at 3rd level, you learn to utilize your personality and charm to enhance your prowess in and out of combat. When you roll for initiative, you add your Charisma modifier to the check.

In addition, when you make a Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or when you make a saving throw, you can use a reaction to add your Charisma modifier to the check or saving throw. You can use this reaction a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

CAROUSER

At 7th level, you gain proficiency in Charisma saving throws, and you can add half your proficiency bonus, rounded down, to any Charisma check you make that doesn't already include your proficiency bonus.

TAUNT

By 10th level, you know exactly how to enrage your foes to strike where and when you want. As a bonus action, you can add your Charisma modifier to your Armor Class and issue a challenge to a creature you can see within 30 feet of you that understands at least one language you know. The target has disadvantage on attack rolls against any creature that isn't you until the start of your next turn. For the duration, if the target misses you with an attack while within your reach, you can use your reaction to make one melee weapon attack against the target. If the attack hits, add your Charisma modifier to the damage roll.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

IMPRESSIVE STRIKE

By 15th level, your self-confidence and dazzling presence in combat has reached a state where even your opponents are sometimes too impressed by your technique to continue fighting you. When you hit a creature with a melee weapon attack and that creature understands at least one language you know, you can choose to deal no damage to it. Instead, your target must make a Charisma saving throw (DC equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier) or be charmed by you for 1 hour or until you or one of your companions does anything harmful to it. While charmed in this way, the target treats you like a friendly rival or unlikely mentor, and it is more interested in watching or learning your technique and exploits than in continuing to fight you. The target refuses to harm its allies, but it otherwise fights by your side if you are threatened.

You can't use this feature again until you finish a short or long rest.

INCORRIGIBLE SHOWOFF

At 18th level, if you can see or hear at least one ally within 30 feet of you, you can't be charmed or frightened, and you can add your Charisma modifier to the first melee weapon attack you make each turn. If the attack hits, add your Charisma modifier to the damage roll.

MONASTIC TRADITION: WAY OF LEAPS AND BOUNDS

Monks who study the Way of Leaps and Bounds practice a tradition that pushes them to reach for new heights, overcome any obstacle, and accept ever-escalating challenges. Devised among the rooftops, cupolas, and towers of urban environments, this monastic tradition emphasizes speed and movement, teaching monks to use their ki to enhance their momentum for unimpeded traversal and self-defense, as well as how to use personal achievement as a wellspring for reserving ki.

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

Starting when you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in the Acrobatics or Athletics skill (your choice), and you have advantage on ability checks made to climb, hold onto a ledge, or maintain balance on a narrow surface. Your training takes place on rooftops, mixing combat techniques with leaping, climbing, and balancing on and between buildings.

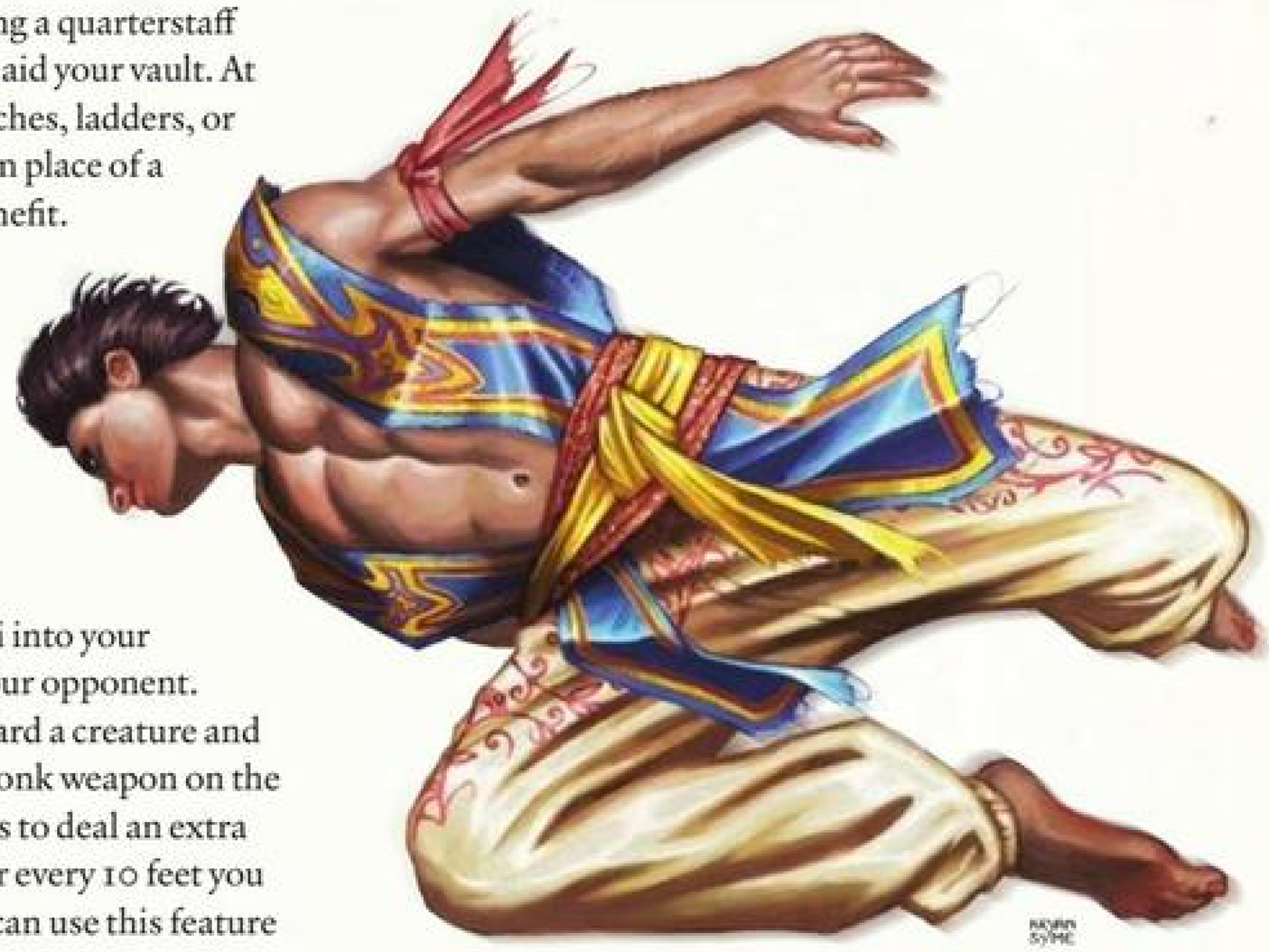
FREE RUNNING

At 3rd level, you learn to use your ki in new ways, gaining more powerful means of traversal through your own font of spiritual strength. You gain the following benefits.

Powerful Vault. As a bonus action after moving at least 15 feet in a straight line, you can spend 2 ki points to propel yourself through the air. You gain a flying speed equal to your remaining movement until the end of your turn. If you end your turn in the air, you fall, as normal. Your flying speed is double your remaining

movement instead if you are wielding a quarterstaff or a spear, as you use the weapon to aid your vault. At the GM's discretion, long tree branches, ladders, or other pole-like objects can be used in place of a quarterstaff or spear to gain this benefit.

Unfettered Bound. As a bonus action, you can spend 1 ki point to easily traverse even the most cluttered alley. Your movement is unaffected by difficult terrain until the end of your turn.



BOUNDING KNEE

At 6th level, you can channel your ki into your momentum as you barrel toward your opponent. When you move at least 10 feet toward a creature and hit it with an unarmed strike or a monk weapon on the same turn, you can spend 2 ki points to deal an extra 1d6 damage of the weapon's type for every 10 feet you moved, to a maximum of 6d6. You can use this feature only once per turn.

CARTWHEEL KICK

Starting at 11th level, you can use an action to perform a cartwheel or similar spinning kick then use the momentum to better avoid your opponents' attacks. Each creature within 5 feet of you must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw (DC equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier) or take bludgeoning damage equal to one roll of your Martial Arts die + your Wisdom modifier. If you are wielding a quarterstaff or spear, each creature within 10 feet of you must make the saving throw, as you use the weapon as the central point of your spin, giving your kick further reach. Afterwards, you gain the benefits of the Disengage or Dodge action (your choice) until the start of your next turn.

You can increase the kick's damage by spending ki points. Each point you spend, to a maximum of 3, increases the damage by one roll of your Martial Arts die.

SWIFT FALL

By 17th level, you learn to channel the kinetic energy from a fall into a devastating dive. When you are falling and use your reaction to trigger your Slow Fall feature, you can direct your fall toward a creature you can see within 10 feet of where you would land. Make an attack with an unarmed strike or a monk weapon against the target. On a hit, the target takes additional bludgeoning damage equal to the amount of falling damage that Slow Fall prevents you from taking, and you land on your feet in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the target.

If you used Powerful Vault before your fall, you create a shockwave when you land. Each Large or smaller creature within 5 feet of where you land must succeed on a Strength saving throw (DC equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier) or fall prone.

PALADIN SACRED OATH: OATH OF REVOLUTION

The Oath of Revolution is a rallying call on street corners and a banner of unity for the downtrodden. Giving of themselves in civil service, paladins who take this oath work to ensure that the freedoms of the communities they protect remain unmarred. Believing that equality, by definition, is a virtue shared by all, they take up the cause to whomever would challenge the rights of others. When paladins swear this oath, they swear to protect others with sword, speech, and soul, doing so in times of peace as well as in times of war. They expect to stay watchful of their communities, to guard against injustices, and to right wrongs rooted in tyranny. Believing that freedom can take many forms and that each must find their own, these paladins typically eschew knightly orders in favor of standing shoulder to shoulder among the folk they swore to protect. To them, the civil service of others in their community is as reverent as an act of piety. A holy symbol carried by such a paladin is as likely to be a flag, banner, or pennant of their community's colors as it is to be a devotional token to a god or pantheon.

TENETS OF REVOLUTION

Paladins who swear the Oath of Revolution devote themselves to their communities, and truly all communities of goodly folk. By taking up arms and banners, they seek to rally people who chafe underneath oppressive powers. These paladins believe that all persons have a say in how they are governed and work tirelessly to defend that right. They keep a constant vigil against the tendrils of vile corruption that inevitably leak into society's upper echelons, undermining the peace of the people the paladins swear to protect.

Challenge Corruption. You vow never to turn a blind eye to the dealings of those who violate the rights of the people, especially the people of the community you swore to protect.

Obstruct Oppression. You pledge your body and will as a bulwark against the attacks, both physical and political, of those who would harm the freedoms of the people.

Topple Tyranny. You swear to bring low the regimes of those who would wield their authority as a cudgel to cow people into submission.

Protect the People. You promise to represent the needs of the many before representing yourself and to promote liberty for all.

OATH SPELLS

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed in the **Oath of Revolution Spells** table. See the Sacred Oath class feature for how oath spells work.

OATH OF REVOLUTION SPELLS

Paladin Level	Spells
3rd	*healing word*, *heroism*
5th	*aid*, *warding bond*
9th	*beacon of hope*, *mass healing word*
13th	*freedom of movement*, *locate creature*
17th	*dispel good and evil*, *hold monster*

CHANNEL DIVINITY

When you take this oath at 3rd level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options.

Protect the People. As an action, you can present your holy symbol or a melee weapon as you make a rallying cry to bolster your allies. Choose a number of friendly creatures you can see and that can hear you within 30 feet of you, up to a number equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of one creature). For 1 minute, you and the chosen creatures each gain 5 temporary hit points and have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage (your choice) from nonmagical attacks.

Turn the Tyrannical. As an action, you can present your holy symbol and shout a litany to rebuke oppressive and tyrannical forces. Each hostile creature you can see within 30 feet of you that dealt damage to a friendly creature below half its hit-point maximum within the last minute must make a Wisdom saving throw. If the hostile creature fails its saving throw, it is turned for 1 minute or until it takes damage.

A turned creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from you as it can, and it can't willingly move to a space within 30 feet of you. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to move, the creature can use the Dodge action.

AURA OF CONSTANCY

Beginning at 7th level, you emanate an aura that helps you and your companions hold the line against oppression. While you are conscious and not restrained, you and each friendly creature within 10 feet of you can't be moved against its will and has advantage on ability checks and saving throws against effects that would knock it prone.

When you reach 18th level in this class, the range of the aura increases to 30 feet, and you and friendly creatures within 10 feet of you can't be knocked prone while you are conscious and not restrained.

SOUL OF FREEDOM

Starting at 15th level, you have advantage on ability checks and saving throws made to escape or avoid being grappled or restrained, and you can spend 5 feet of movement to automatically escape from nonmagical restraints.

PEOPLE'S CHAMPION

At 20th level, you can draw upon the courage of those you serve and become empowered by the shared ideals of justice, liberty, and unity. As a bonus action, you gain the following benefits for 1 minute:

- You regain 10 hit points at the end of each of your turns.
- You can use a bonus action to give a friendly creature you can see within 30 feet of you 10 temporary hit points.
- Whenever a hostile creature you can see within 30 feet of you deals damage to a friendly creature below half its hit-point maximum, the hostile creature takes radiant damage equal to twice your proficiency bonus.

Once you use this bonus action, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest, unless you expend a 5th-level spell slot to use it again.

RANGER OPTIONAL CLASS FEATURES: URBAN RANGER

This section offers optional features that you can gain as a ranger when you reach certain levels in this class. These features shift a ranger's focus from the untamed wilds to the no-less-dangerous city streets and are for those rangers who learn the ways of urban environments with the same depth as others might learn a forest. If you choose to take one of these features, it replaces the listed ranger class feature, and you gain no benefit from the replaced feature. When adding urban flavor to your ranger, you can choose one or two of these features, or you can choose to use all of them. As always, consult with your GM before selecting any of these optional features for your ranger character.

CITY EXPLORER

Replaces the Natural Explorer feature

By 1st level, your time living in cities has made you particularly adept at navigating and surviving within them. You understand the importance of diplomacy and, when that fails, combat that isn't lethal. You gain proficiency in the Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion skill (your choice), and your proficiency bonus is doubled for that skill when interacting socially with Humanoids. In addition, you have advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks made to climb, and, if you are holding a length of rope at least 10 feet long, you can attack with it, using the statistics of a net with a maximum range equal to half the full length of the rope.

When you reach 6th level in this class, you gain a climbing speed equal to your walking speed, and you have advantage on initiative rolls while in an urban environment or when at least one of your opponents is Humanoid.

ADDITIONAL RANGER SPELLS

The list of spells below expands the standard ranger spell list that you have access to starting at 2nd level when you gain the Spellcasting feature. The list organizes spells by spell level, not character level. This list provides additional options for when you are choosing your spells; it doesn't replace the existing ranger spell list. An asterisk indicates a spell found in the City Magic section of this chapter.

1st Level
Charm Person
Comprehend Languages
Disguise Self

2nd Level
*City Sight**
Knock

3rd Level
Clairvoyance
Tongues

4th Level
Compulsion
Faithful Hound

5th Level
Legend Lore
Passwall

PULSE OF THE CITY

Replaces the Primeval Awareness feature

At 3rd level, you can tap into the collective conscious of the city to sense the general mood of its citizens. As an action while in a settlement, you can sense the surface emotions of Beasts and Humanoids within 1,000 feet of you for 1 minute, but you can't pinpoint each source of emotion. You can also sense the direction to gatherings of particularly strong emotions, such as happiness in the direction of the local theater house or panic in the direction of the district where a monster is attacking. If the gathering is moving, you know the direction of its movement. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

When you reach 5th level in this class, you can cast the *locate object* spell without expending a spell slot. Once you cast this spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

When you reach 13th level in this class, you can cast the *locate creature* spell without expending a spell slot. Once you cast this spell in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

CITY STRIDE

Replaces the Land's Stride feature

Starting at 8th level, moving through nonmagical difficult terrain costs you no extra movement. You can also pass through terrain made of nonmagical, crafted objects and openings without being slowed by them, without taking damage from them if they have spikes or a similar hazard, and without squeezing, provided the opening is large enough for a creature one size smaller than you. For example, you can pass through an alley filled with crates and barrels without being slowed, and, if you are a Medium or smaller creature, you can pass through a shop's small window lined with broken glass without taking damage or squeezing.

In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against the effects of magical and nonmagical traps.

ROGUISH ARCHETYPE: SKIRMISH SURGEON

You've dedicated yourself to watching over your comrades in battle and pelting your foes with dangerous concoctions. You keep a steady hand amid the chaos to practice life-saving techniques while mitigating the taxes they leave on the body. And when you're not playing the doctor, you fight with a blade in one hand and bottled disaster in the other.

FIELD SURGEON

When you choose this archetype at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in the Medicine skill if you don't already have it, and you gain proficiency with alchemist's supplies or the herbalism kit (your choice). You also can use the bonus action granted by your Cunning Action to make a Wisdom (Medicine) check on yourself or one creature within 5 feet of you.

BLOODLETTING

Starting at 3rd level, you understand that precise cuts in the body can be just as effective at helping as harming. You can use the Medicine skill in the following additional ways.

Bleed the Vein. You can deal 1d4 piercing damage to yourself or a creature within 5 feet of you and make a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check. On a success, you end one of the following conditions affecting the target: incapacitated, paralyzed, or poisoned.

Field Patch. You tie a tourniquet, wrap a wound, or perform some other quick patch-up to yourself or a creature within 5 feet of you that is below half its hit-point maximum. Make a Wisdom (Medicine) check and consult the table below to determine the effectiveness of the patch-up.

Check	Result
0–5	The target loses 1d4 hit points.
6–15	The target gains 1 + your Wisdom modifier temporary hit points.
16–20	The target gains 1d4 + your Wisdom modifier temporary hit points.
21+	The target regains 1d4 + your Wisdom modifier hit points.

HARMACY

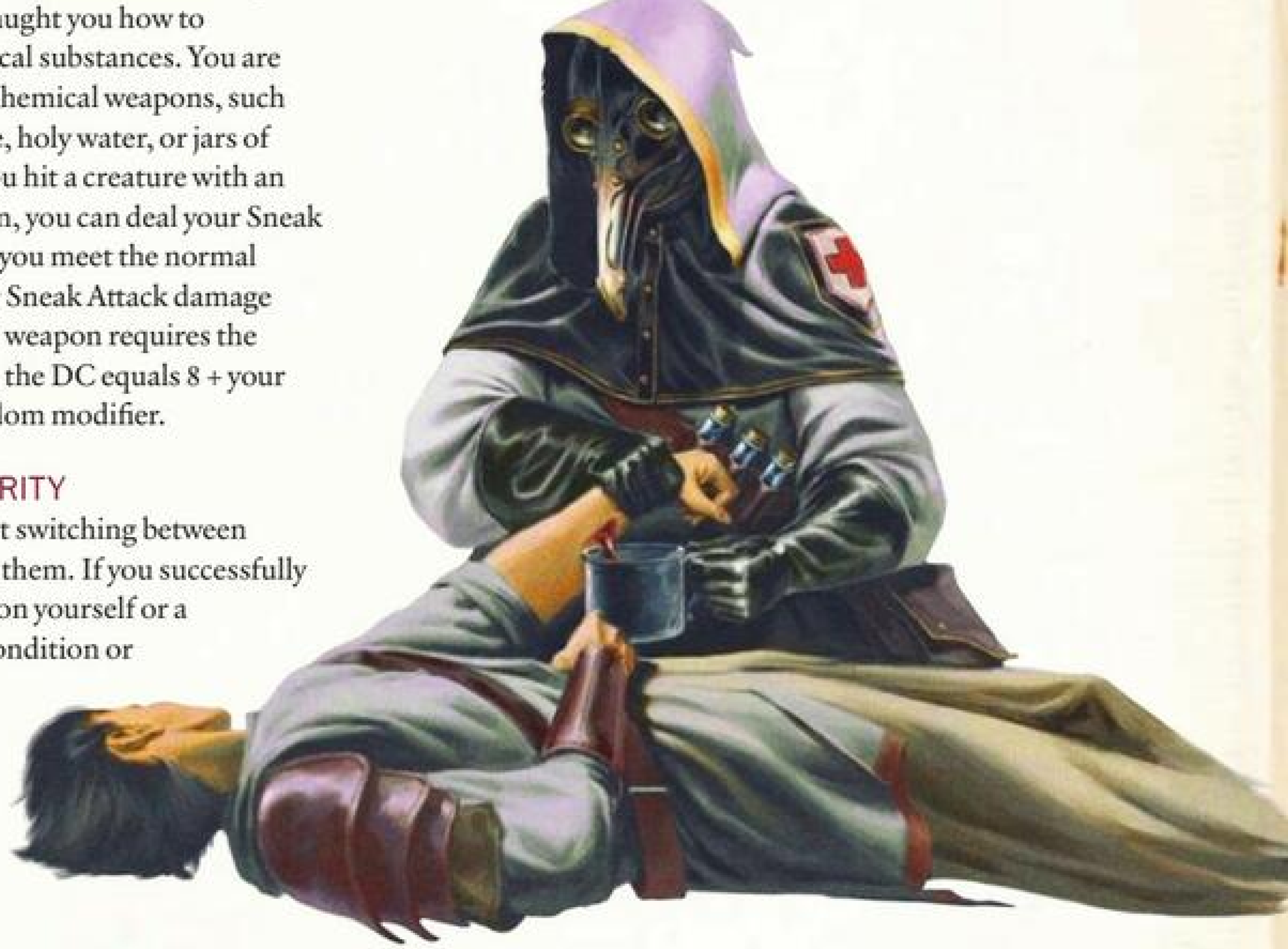
By 3rd level, your time in medical tents and tending wounded on battlefields has taught you how to handle and distribute alchemical substances. You are proficient with improvised alchemical weapons, such as vials of acid, alchemist's fire, holy water, or jars of leeches (see sidebar). When you hit a creature with an improvised alchemical weapon, you can deal your Sneak Attack damage to it, provided you meet the normal requirements for dealing your Sneak Attack damage to the target. If the alchemical weapon requires the target to make a saving throw, the DC equals 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier.

SURGEON'S AMBIDEXTERITY

By at 9th level, you are adept at switching between patching wounds and causing them. If you successfully use your Bloodletting feature on yourself or a friendly creature to end one condition or provide temporary hit points or healing, you have advantage on the next attack roll you make before the end of your next turn.

PREVENTATIVE CARE

At 13th level, you can provide others with therapeutic treatment to help them ward off illness and injury. You can spend at least 10 minutes tending to the medical needs of up to six friendly creatures (which can include yourself), bolstering their bodies' natural defenses. Each creature gains temporary hit points equal to your proficiency bonus and has advantage on Constitution checks and Constitution saving throws for 1 hour. A creature can't benefit from Preventative Care again until it has finished a short or long rest.



JAR OF LEECHES

This small, glass jar is filled with leeches. As an action, you can throw this jar up to 20 feet, shattering it on impact. Make a ranged attack against a creature, treating the jar of leeches as an improvised weapon. If the jar hits a creature that isn't a construct or undead, the target takes 1d4 piercing damage, and at the start of each of its turns, it takes 1 piercing damage as the leeches stick to the target and continue biting it. A spellcaster covered in leeches has disadvantage on Constitution saving throws to maintain concentration on spells. A creature can end this effect by using its action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check to scrape off the leeches.

Alternatively, the leeches can be used to aid in medical procedures. The leeches have ten uses. When you make a Wisdom (Medicine) check, you can expend one use of this jar to give yourself advantage on the check, provided the check involves blood and wounds, stabilizing, or treating a disease or poison. If the jar has five or fewer uses remaining, you can't make an attack with it.

The jar weighs 2 pounds and costs 20 gp.

LETHAL DOSING

When you reach 17th level, you learn to exploit weaknesses revealed by your alchemical substances. If you hit a creature with an improvised alchemical weapon within the last 1 minute, your Sneak Attack damage against that creature increases by 3d6.

WIZARD ARCANE TRADITION: STREET MAGIC

Some wizards enjoy lengthy apprenticeships with knowledgeable mentors or in the erudite surroundings of academies and libraries. Other wizards, whether from intense curiosity or desperation, have to parse arcane secrets out of scavenged and stolen spell books, from drunken ramblings of down-and-out mages, or from occult symbols scrawled on walls in forgotten alleys. These wizards are street magicians, adaptable opportunists bereft of the organization and prestige many wizards enjoy. Instead, they make their way with a cobbling of magical misdirection and intuition, staying alive, afloat, and ready for the next opportunity.

Street magicians are mixed specialists of divination and illusion and often survive life on city streets by using their talents to mystify and entertain crowds. Many street magicians hide their arcane power for fear of reprisal from local authorities, to avoid the eyes of arcane colleges, or simply to better deceive their audiences. Some are elaborate con artists and tricksters, masquerading as street entertainers or mysterious fortunetellers, while others may, more or less legitimately, sell their abilities as investigators, spies, or matchmakers.

ADAPTABLE MAGIC

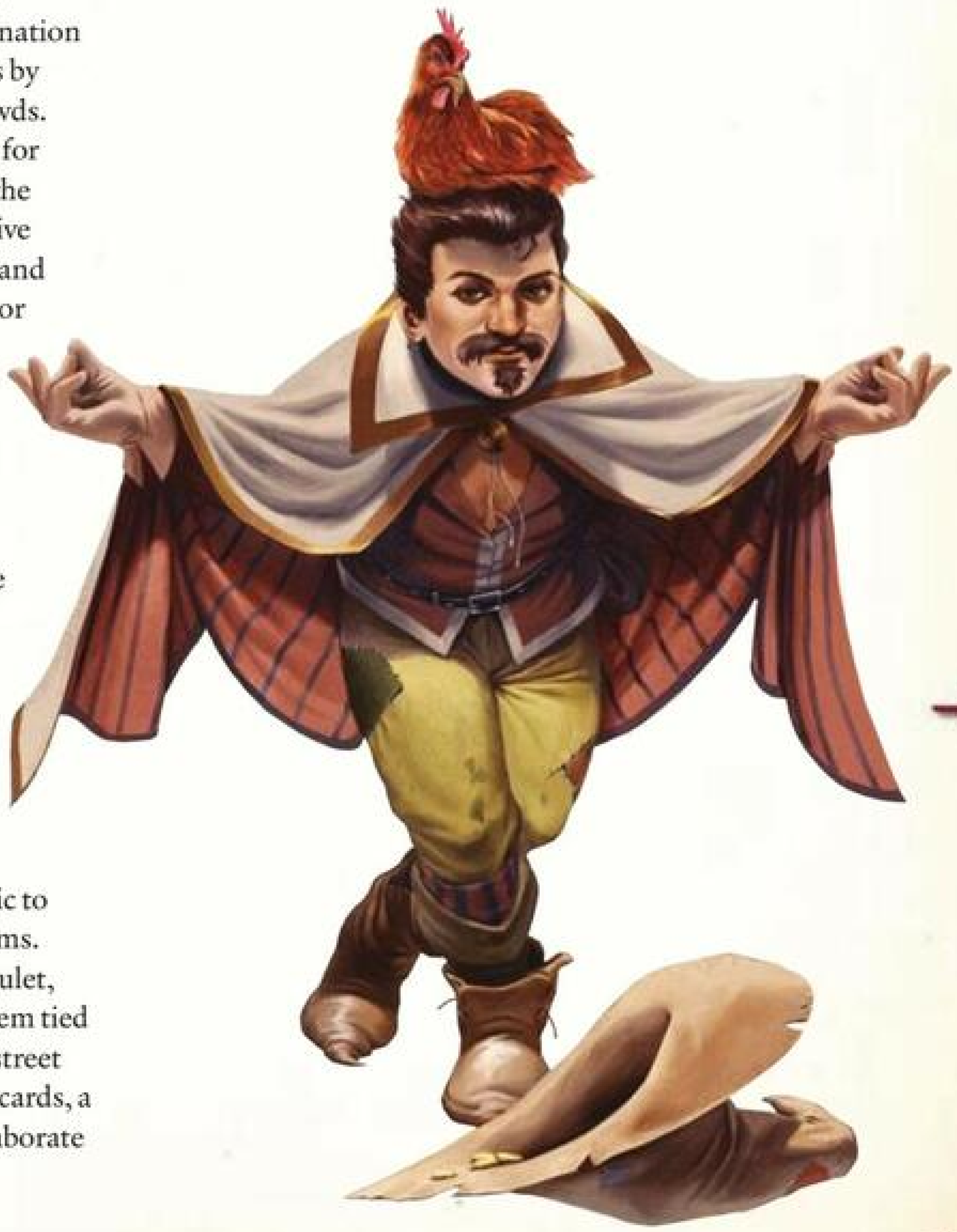
Beginning when you select this tradition at 2nd level, your scrabbled-together, piecemeal arcane knowledge has made you a more adaptable spellcaster, giving you flexibility that specialized wizards often lack. At the end of each long rest, you can change which wizard cantrips you know. This doesn't increase the total number of wizard cantrips you can know.

In addition, your adaptability leads your magic to become tied to more mundane and personal items. Instead of an arcane focus, such as an orb or amulet, your spellcasting focus is a small, nonmagical item tied to your personal identity expression or to your street persona, such as a set of dice, a deck of divining cards, a piece of costume jewelry, a polished skull, an elaborate hat, or similar.

PARLOR TRICK

At 2nd level, you have mastered minor tricks of illusion and divination that leave your audience in awe. Choose a creature you can see within 30 feet of you that can see and hear you. The target must know at least one language you know. As an action, you can create one of the following minor magical effects related to the target:

- Draw a card from a deck you are holding that matches the card the target is imagining.
- Conjure the target's favorite flower. The flower lasts for 1 minute.
- Fill a space you can see no larger than 1 cubic foot with the target's favorite scent for 1 minute.
- Correctly guess the target's known name, age, or occupation. This effect reveals to you the target's most widely known or public information. For example, it could reveal that the target is a local blacksmith, but it wouldn't reveal if that blacksmith was secretly occupied as an assassin for the local thieves' guild.



- Change a die roll or divination card result to what the target wants or expects to see.
- Pull a coin from the target's homeland from behind its ear. The coin is fake and lasts for 1 minute.
- Know a phrase the target most wants to hear from a now-deceased relative.

At the GM's discretion, this feature can reveal or conjure up other crowd-pleasing, minor bits of information or illusions relevant to the target. The effect never reveals in-depth information about the target and never provides context or additional details on the revealed information.

Afterwards, the target must make a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC. On a success, the target is aware you used magic to influence the situation or create the effect it witnessed.

Once you use this feature on a creature, you can't use it on that creature again for 24 hours.

COPY SPELL

By 6th level, you learn how to mimic spellcasting that you see. When you see a creature casting a spell within 60 feet of you, you can use your reaction to make an Intelligence check to memorize the spellcaster's movements, words, and other spellcasting nuances. The DC equals 10 + the spell's level. On a success, you temporarily learn how to cast the spell by mimicking the words and movements of the spellcaster you observed, provided the spell is of a level you can cast.

Until you finish a long rest, that spell becomes a prepared spell for you, and it doesn't count against the number of spells you can prepare that day. If the spell doesn't normally appear on the wizard spell list, the spell is nonetheless a wizard spell for you. As with any other spell on your prepared list, you can expend spell slots to cast the spell.

Once you use this feature to copy a spell, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

MAGIC HAT

At 10th level, you can turn any mundane container into a magical container, giving you access to any of your stored equipment and tools of entertainment from anywhere. At the end of a long rest, choose a nonmagical container large enough to fit your hand but no larger than a sack, such as a small chest, a hat, a tankard, or similar. Alternatively, you can choose a nonmagical object with several pockets, like a cloak, robe, coat, or similar. You connect the chosen container to a small, extradimensional space bound to you. This space can contain up to 12 cubic feet of nonliving material (3 feet by 2 feet by 2 feet), and you can access it only through the chosen magical container. Retrieving an item from the extradimensional space requires an action.

Only you have access to your extradimensional space. Any other creature that reaches into your container sees and feels only the material of the empty container. When you die, all contents held within your extradimensional space spill onto the ground within 5 feet of you from your chosen container.

SPELL MIMICRY

At 14th level, your ability to copy spells that you see grows. You can now use Copy Spell a number of times equal to half your proficiency bonus. You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

CITY MAGIC

This section contains new magic items and spells that can be found or used in urban environments, from manacles that restrain spellcasters to spells that help you navigate in a city.

MAGIC ITEMS

These magic items can serve as random treasure for adventurers in cities or as tools for the characters' foes to utilize against them.

ARCANIST'S PIGMENT

Wondrous Item, Rarity Varies

This refined, chalky stick of pigment comes from minerals that have been exposed to powerful sources of magic and that still retain a great deal of arcane potential. Several different colors of *arcanist's pigment* exist, each with its own unique properties. A pigment is consumed when its magic takes effect.

Carbon Black (Rare). You can use an action to crush this pigment and throw it in the air. The pigment clumps together and forms into 2d4 skeletons in unoccupied spaces within 10 feet you. The skeletons are friendly to you and your companions, and they act on your turn. You can use a bonus action to command how they move and what action each takes on its next turn, or to give them general orders, such as to attack your enemies. In the absence of such orders, the skeletons defend themselves but otherwise take no actions. The skeletons crumble to dust after 1 minute, when reduced to 0 hit points, or if drenched with at least 10 gallons of water.

Cobalt Blue (Uncommon). This pigment can coat the armor of one Medium or smaller creature. Applying the pigment takes 10 minutes. For 8 hours, the armor is immune to heat, rust, and corrosion, and its wearer has resistance to fire damage and poison damage.

Imperial Purple (Rare). You can use an action to crush this pigment and sprinkle it on one Medium or smaller object within 5 feet of you. For 8 hours or until the object is drenched in at least 1 gallon of water, the object appears more mundane than it actually is: filigree appears tarnished, gemstones look like glass fakes, a sharp edge looks jagged and damaged, and similar effects. In addition, the object can't be targeted by any divination magic or perceived through magical scrying sensors. If the object is magical, spells and effects that would detect it as such perceive it as nonmagical.

Sanguine Scarlet (Very Rare). If you crush this pigment as part of casting a conjuration spell that creates or summons one or more creatures, you strengthen the magical bond between you and the creature or creatures. You have advantage on Constitution saving throws to maintain concentration on the spell, and if the spell makes you lose control of the creature or creatures when your concentration breaks, the creature or creatures are dismissed instead. In addition, any damage you take is halved, and the creature or creatures take the other half (split evenly between the creatures, if you control more than one).

Verdigris (Uncommon). You can use an action to break this stick of pigment and toss it at a point you can see within 10 feet of you. The pigment bursts into green fog in a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on that point for 1 minute. Each creature that starts its turn in the fog must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be coated in green dust. A creature coated in green dust has a –2 penalty to its Armor Class as the pigment temporarily weakens its armor. A creature that isn't wearing armor is unaffected by the dust. The effect lasts until the coated creature spends 1 minute cleaning the armor or until the armor is drenched in at least 10 gallons of water.

CONJURELOCK MANACLES

Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

These open-fingered manacles etched in arcane runes cover most of the hands, hampering complex finger and wrist movement. Each set of *conjurelock manacles* comes with one key, and you can use an action to bind the hands of one Small or Medium Humanoid that is incapacitated, restrained, or unconscious. While a creature is bound in these manacles, the creature can't perform the somatic components of a spell, and the manacles enclose the creature in a sphere of antimagic. The sphere is weightless and just large enough to contain the creature. Spells can't be cast within the sphere, magic items, except for the manacles, become mundane within it, and the bound creature is unaffected by spells and magical effects from outside the sphere, except for the magic of the manacles.

You can use an action to unlock the manacles with their key. The bound creature can take its action to free itself by succeeding on a DC 21 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to wiggle free or a DC 21 Strength (Athletics) check to break the manacles. Alternatively, a creature can take its action to pick the lock by succeeding on a DC 21 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. If the bound creature is freed from the manacles by any means other than the key, you receive a mental ping to let you know the manacles were breached, and you are aware of the manacles' location when they were breached, if you and the manacles are on the same plane of existence.

SPELLS

This section contains new spells. Each spell in this section denotes its associated class lists next to the spell's school. As with any optional rule, consult with your GM before selecting one of these spells, even if the spell normally appears on your class's spell list.

CITY SIGHT

2nd-Level Divination | Bard, Cleric, Wizard

CASTING TIME: 1 minute
RANGE: Self
COMPONENTS: V, S, M (a cobblestone, splinter of wood from a building, or similar object from the settlement)
DURATION: Concentration, up to 1 hour

While in a settlement, you can focus on a piece of that settlement and find the shortest, most direct physical route to a specific, fixed location within that settlement. You don't need to be familiar with the location, but you must know its name, such "the Stormy Hippopotamus tavern," or description, such as "City Watch district headquarters." If you name a destination outside the settlement, a destination that moves (such as a flower seller's cart), or a destination that isn't specific (such as "a guard's home"), the spell fails.

For the duration, as long as you are within the settlement, you know how far the destination is and

in what direction it lies. While you are traveling there, whenever you are presented with a choice of paths along the way, you automatically determine which path is the shortest and most direct route (but not necessarily the safest route) to the destination.

COBBLESTONE QUAKE

2nd-Level Evocation | Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard

CASTING TIME: 1 action

RANGE: Self (15-foot cone)

COMPONENTS: V, S, M (a ring made from lodestone)

DURATION: Instantaneous

You grip the ground before you and shake it like a carpet. Each creature in a 15-foot cone must make a Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 4d4 bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half the damage and isn't knocked prone. Any containers inside the cone are toppled over, potentially spilling their contents out and away from you.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the size of the cone increases by 5 feet, and the damage increases by 1d4 for each slot level above 2nd.

DISTRACTION

1st-Level Enchantment | Bard, Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

CASTING TIME: 1 action

RANGE: 120 feet

COMPONENTS: V, S, M (a reflective bauble, bead, coin, or trinket)

DURATION: 1 hour

You attempt to drive a creature you can see within range to distraction, making it less likely to catch pickpockets,

discern it is being deceived, or notice your sneaking companions. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or have disadvantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Wisdom (Perception) checks for the duration. The spell ends early if you or your companions do anything harmful to it.

MAKE THE WELKIN RING

6th-Level Conjuration | Bard, Cleric

CASTING TIME: 1 action

RANGE: 120 feet

COMPONENTS: V, S, M (a small handbell made of glass which is consumed by the spell)

DURATION: Concentration, up to 10 minutes

A large, spectral bell appears at a point you can see 60 feet directly above you and immediately begins ringing. The spell fails if you can't see a point in the air where the bell could appear (for example, if you are in a room with a ceiling lower than 60 feet).

When you cast the spell, choose a point you can see within range. A blast of sound ripples from the bell to that point. Each creature within 5 feet of that point must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 8d6 thunder damage and is deafened for 1 minute. On a successful save, a creature takes half the damage and isn't deafened. At the end of each of its turns, the deafened creature can make another Constitution saving throw. On a success, the effect ends on the target. A creature made of inorganic material, such as stone, crystal, or metal, has disadvantage on this saving throw. A nonmagical object that isn't being worn or carried also takes the damage if it's in the spell's area.

On each of your turns until the spell ends, you can use your action to call down thunderous ringing in this way again, targeting the same point or a different one.

The spell emits sound audible out to 500 feet.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level of higher, the damage increases by 1d8 for each slot level above 6th.

VOICE OF THE MASSES

2nd-Level Enchantment | Bard, Sorcerer, Wizard

CASTING TIME: 1 action

RANGE: 120 feet

COMPONENTS: V, S, M (a drop of water from the public well of a large city)

DURATION: Concentration, up to 1 minute

While in a settlement, you flood the mind of a Humanoid you can see within range with a cacophony of the inner voices of everyone in the surrounding community. A barrage of hopes, fears, concerns, doubts, and longing pour over the target, making it lose all sense of direction. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the target takes 3d6 psychic damage and becomes disoriented for the duration. Whenever the disoriented target moves, it does so in a random direction. To determine the direction, roll a d8 and assign a direction to each die face. On a successful save, the target takes half the damage, isn't disoriented, and the spell ends.

At the end of each of its turns, the disoriented target can make another Wisdom saving throw. On a success, the spell ends on the target.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, you can target one additional Humanoid for each slot level above 2nd. The Humanoids must be within 30 feet of each other when you target them.

APPENDIX

NAMING TABLES

Consistently coming up with unique and interesting names and descriptions for nonplayer characters, inns, or shops—not to mention ships, religious orders, and the like—can be a challenge for even the most experienced GM. This can be especially challenging when a name is needed on the spot, such as when the characters suddenly take an unplanned detour into a new area. The "naming" tables presented here can be used to create hundreds of names for any location, organization, or nonplayer character while the **Motivations** and **Unique Characteristics** tables can be used to give them further detail and life in the world.

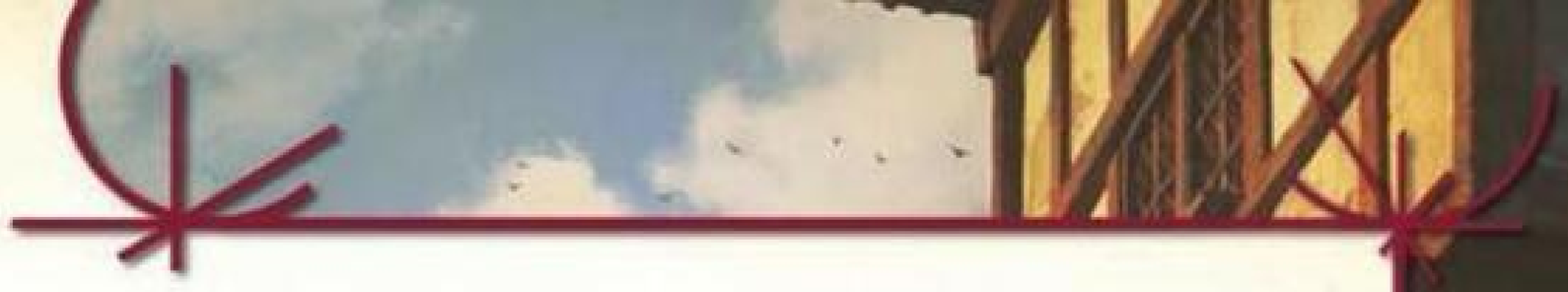
Using the Location Naming Table. The **Location Naming** table can be combined in different ways to create unique names for locations, organizations, or even ships. Roll at least once on two of the **Location Naming** table columns, and then add *the* or *and* or even *Order*, *Brotherhood*, or similar terms to create something fun and evocative. For example, an establishment might be rolled up as the Angry Griffon or an organization might be called the Silent Dagger Company. For added complexity, roll three times on the table, such as for a theater house named the Toothless Harpy's Lute, or roll a die and use the number rolled as part of the name, such as for a bookshop named the Seven Scholars or a tavern named Three Drunken Kobolds. The possibilities abound!

LOCATION NAMING

d100	Creature	Descriptor	Object	Person	Undefined
1	Ankheg	Amorous	Amulet	Abbot	Bane
2	Badger	Angry	Arrow	Abjurer	Banquet
3	Banshee	Arrogant	Axe	Adept	Bite
4	Basilisk	Bashful	Barrel	Alchemist	Bliss
5	Beetle	Bawdy	Beard	Aristocrat	Blood
6	Behir	Black	Bell	Assassin	Breath
7	Boar	Blue	Blade	Barbarian	Brew
8	Bugbear	Brass	Blood	Bard	Brood
9	Bunyip	Brave	Bolt	Baron	Call
10	Cat	Broken	Bone	Barrister	Caress
11	Centaur	Bronze	Book	Beggar	Choice
12	Chimera	Brown	Bottle	Bishop	Courage
13	Cobra	Burning	Bridge	Blacksmith	Curse
14	Cockatrice	Chanting	Bucket	Burglar	Dance
15	Cockroach	Chaste	Candle	Butcher	Death
16	Cricket	Choking	Carriage	Carpenter	Deep
17	Crow	Clever	Castle	Cavalier	Delve
18	Cyclops	Comely	Cauldron	Chamberlain	Depths
19	Derro	Copper	Chain	Chancellor	Desire

20	Devil	Courageous	Chalice	Cleric	Desolation
21	Dog	Cowardly	Claw	Conjurer	Despair
22	Dolphin	Creeping	Club	Constable	Discovery
23	Dragon	Crooked	Crossbow	Cook	Disdain
24	Drake	Dancing	Crown	Courtesan	Disgrace
25	Dryad	Dreaming	Crust	Disciple	Dream
26	Duck	Drunken	Cup	Diviner	Embrace
27	Eagle	Dull	Dagger	Druid	End
28	Ettercap	Empty	Drum	Duchess/duke	Fate
29	Ettin	Flaming	Elixir	Emperor/empress	Flourish
30	Falcon	Flying	Fang	Enchanter	Fog
31	Familiar	Frozen	Feather	Evoker	Folly
32	Fish	Gasping	Fiddle	Executioner	Gambit
33	Gargoyle	Gold/golden	Flagon	Farmer	Gamble
34	Genie	Graceful	Flame	Fiddler	Gasp
35	Ghost	Grasping	Flask	Fighter	Gaze
36	Giant	Green	Gauntlet	Fisherman	Gift
37	Gnoll	Grey	Gem	Fishmonger	Glare
38	Goblin	Grinning	Goblet	Footpad	Glory
39	Golem	Hairy	Grape	Friar	Grace
40	Gremlin	Happy	Guillotine	Hangman	Grasp
41	Griffon	Haunted	Hammer	Hermit	Grip
42	Grindylow	Homely	Hand	Highwayman	Haunt
43	Hag	Honest	Harp	Horseman	Holiday
44	Harpy	Honorable	Head	Hunter	Honor
45	Hippogriff	Hopping	Helm	Illusionist	Hope
46	Hobgoblin	Hungry	Home	Innkeeper	Howl
47	Homunculus	Insufferable	Hoof	Inquisitor	Hunt
48	Horse	Jealous	Hook	Jailer	Ire
49	Hydra	Jumping	Horn	Jester	Jest
50	Imp	Last	Hourglass	Knight	Kiss
51	Jabberwock	Laughing	Idol	Lady/lord	Knot
52	Kobold	Lazy	Inkwell	Lass/maiden	Laugh
53	Kraken	Leaky	Jug	Mage	Leap
54	Leprechaun	Leaning	Kettle	Maid	Liberty
55	Lich	Leaping	Key	Mariner	Luck
56	Linnorm	Leering	Lantern	Merchant	Masquerade
57	Lion	Lonely	Lute	Miller	Menagerie
58	Lizard	Lucky	Lyre	Minstrel	Mercy
59	Manticore	Lusty/lustful	Mask	Monarch	Miracle
60	Medusa	Mad	Moon	Moneylender	Misery
61	Mermaid	Modest	Mug	Monk	Nightmare

62	Minotaur	Mystic	Noose	Mystic	Oath
63	Naga	Oily	Oak	Necromancer	Path
64	Nymph	Passionate	Parchment	Noble	Plague
65	Ogre	Patient	Pick	Oracle	Prayer
66	Orc	Platinum	Plow	Paladin	Pride
67	Otyugh	Pompous	Quill	Peasant	Promise
68	Owl	Prancing	Quiver	Peddler	Quest
69	Owlbear	Proud	Rock	Pickpocket	Rage
70	Peacock	Purple	Rose	Pilgrim	Rampage
71	Phoenix	Raging	Scabbard	Piper	Rest
72	Pixie	Randy	Scarecrow	Plowman	Revenge
73	Pony	Red	Scimitar	Porter	Rhyme
74	Rakshasa	Rusty	Scroll	Priest/priestess	Roost
75	Rat	Salty	Shackles	Prince/princess	Scream
76	Raven	Saucy	Shield	Ranger	Shadow
77	Roper	Scarlet	Shovel	Rogue	Slumber
78	Sahuagin	Silent	Skull	Sage	Smile
79	Salamander	Silver	Spear	Sailor	Song
80	Satyr	Singing	Staff	Scholar	Sorrow
81	Scorpion	Sinking	Star	Scribe	Soul
82	Serpent	Sleeping	Still	Servant	Spirit
83	Siren	Slippery	Stone	Shaman	Sting
84	Snake	Smiling	Sun	Shepherd	Storm
85	Specter	Squinting	Tabard	Sheriff	Strike
86	Sphinx	Stone	Tail	Soldier	Terror
87	Spider	Thirsty	Talisman	Sorcerer	Triumph
88	Stingray	Thundering	Tankard	Squire	Tyranny
89	Stirge	Toothless	Throne	Steward	Valor
90	Succubus	Treacherous	Tome	Summoner	Vengeance
91	Sylph	Tricky	Tooth	Tax collector	Venture
92	Termite	Valorous	Torch	Thug	Wail
93	Titan	Vengeful	Tower	Tourist	Walk
94	Toad	Vulgar	Trident	Transmuter	Wave
95	Treant	Wandering	Trowel	Traveler	Way
96	Troll	Wanton	Wand	Warrior	Whisper
97	Turtle	Weeping	Wave	Wheelwright	Wind
98	Unicorn	White	Wheel	Witch	Wish
99	Worg	Wounded	Whip	Wizard	Word
100	Wyvern	Yellow	Whistle	Woodsman	Wrath



NPC SURNAMES BY REGION

d100	European (Central)	European (Eastern)	European (Western)	Mediterranean	North African	Scandinavian	Turkic
1–2	Aebersold	Adamec	Ackland	Agostini	Abergel	Aalberg	Abdulin
3–4	Agterberg	Agarici	Arnault	Ahmeti	Aboulker	Aavik	Abdullayev
5–6	Arneth	Asboth	Aznar	Alexiou	Aslam	Aistrup	Akhatov
7–8	Bannwart	Balogh	Azucena	Anestis	Ayad	Alver	Akhun
9–10	Baumer	Bielak	Bailes	Asllani	Badawi	Bergvall	Alizadeh
11–12	Beutler	Blatny	Balland	Axiotis	Bahjat	Bjelland	Alptekin
13–14	Beyrie	Bodiu	Berwick	Balboa	Barakat	Bjornson	Arslan
15–16	Bosman	Brabec	Brannagan	Barlos	Belkacem	Brakstad	Batyrshin
17–18	Clauberg	Burian	Brun	Behrakis	Chaibi	Brydolf	Bayzhanov
19–20	Coster	Cernak	Carpena	Berisha	Chakroun	Castberg	Bortnik
21–22	Daschner	Chvala	Chalkley	Calligaris	Daivari	Crona	Burkhanov
23–24	Dirksen	Csonka	Chardin	Capello	Darwish	Daugaard	Cherkashin
25–26	Dopfer	Dimitrescu	Chuquet	Caruso	Dehlavi	Devold	Dilmurat
27–28	Drenth	Disztl	Daucourt	Costas	Erakat	Eckblad	Dragunov
29–30	Eberhardt	Doroftei	Delgado	Dedaj	Fayed	Ellefsen	Engelgardt
31–32	Elzinga	Dudek	Devlin	Di Paola	Fitoussi	Espersen	Fattakhov
33–34	Fichtner	Enache	Faherty	Dimas	Gamil	Farnerud	Fedoseyev
35–36	Freytag	Erdei	Feasey	Doxiadis	Gazzah	Fjelde	Garayev
37–38	Gaertner	Faludy	Flandrin	Dushku	Halimi	Garborg	Goremykin
39–40	Goehring	Fiala	Fuentes	Endrizzi	Hannachi	Gylling	Hasanov
41–42	Haan	Florescu	Gaillot	Errani	Hariri	Haslund	Ibragimov
43–44	Hanisch	Garai	Glasby	Fazio	Hindawi	Haukvik	Ignatyev
45–46	Hordijk	Halas	Gremaud	Florakis	Ishak	Heurlin	Jalolov
47–48	Horlacher	Havran	Guzman	Fotakis	Jarrar	Hovland	Juraev
49–50	Jaeckel	Havrilla	Irwin	Giorgi	Kassar	Ivars	Karimova
51–52	Jansen	Hazai	Kiely	Hatzi	Kateb	Iversen	Kashgari
53–54	Kantner	Hevesi	Labre	Hoxha	Khatibi	Jakobsson	Kashuba
55–56	Kauer	Hyka	Loughlin	Iakovou	Kirdar	Karlen	Kosarev
57–58	Kimmich	Ignat	Luengo	Inzaghi	Lagha	Kleppa	Kulov
59–60	Kneissl	Jakubec	Lynham	Jilani	Lazaar	Lagerfeld	Loktev
61–62	Koehl	Jastrab	Morris	Karvelas	Marwazi	Lassen	Lukin
63–64	Kracht	Kadlec	Nealey	Laska	Mebarek	Lumbye	Mammad
65–66	Ladner	Kalivoda	Noirot	Lionetti	Mokrani	Mathiesen	Mardanshin
67–68	Lembke	Karman	Peguero	Lorenzo	Mzali	Maurud	Mirzayev
69–70	Lievens	Kotula	Penfold	Mantalos	Nadwi	Norin	Muhadow
71–72	Manstein	Lapedatu	Phelan	Morelli	Nawfal	Nystedt	Mustafin
73–74	Marolf	Lipka	Portillo	Nushi	Okasha	Poulsen	Nikishin
75–76	Mostert	Matulka	Quigley	Panagi	Rezgui	Pryser	Niyazova
77–78	Nitzsch	Moraru	Raynault	Rosato	Rizvi	Rasch	Ogarkov

79–80	Odermatt	Moravec	Renshaw	Sadiku	Roukoz	Renlund	Rejepow
81–82	Otten	Nechita	Sawyer	Savalas	Sabri	Rohtez	Rogozin
83–84	Pasche	Pavlics	Seoige	Scaletta	Sadek	Rokne	Sabirov
85–86	Reinhardt	Petrescu	Simarro	Thanas	Sahnoun	Stensen	Sayadov
87–88	Riedijk	Provaznik	Tejedor	Tombras	Shaath	Stokkan	Tagaev
89–90	Salzgeber	Sluka	Trumble	Vecchio	Tirmizi	Thybo	Taskin
91–92	Schut	Triska	Tully	Vrioni	Wardak	Tungesvik	Togan
93–94	Starink	Tudoran	Valdivieso	Xydakis	Wazir	Werfel	Usenov
95–96	Vischer	Voinea	Vannier	Zaharia	Yafai	Wickholm	Yakhin
97–98	Weltner	Zelinka	Verdugo	Zanetti	Zahawi	Zakrisson	Yelchin
99–100	Zumthor	Zvara	Zapata	Zervos	Zainab	Zetlitz	Yusupov

NPC FORENAMES BY REGION (TABLE 1)

	EUROPEAN (CENTRAL)		EUROPEAN (EASTERN)		EUROPEAN (WESTERN)	
d20	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine
1	Adelheid	Arnulf	Adelina	Alojz	Adelaide	Allain
2	Adriana	Bernhard	Branka	Antek	Agnes	Arnaldo
3	Anneliese	Clemens	Csilla	Barbu	Anabel	Aston
4	Bettina	Dagobert	Dana	Branimir	Chantal	Bastien
5	Carolien	Gerwin	Denisa	Branislav	Davina	Cyril
6	Edeltraud	Giovanni	Elisabeta	Ciprian	Fernande	Ealdred
7	Eliana	Herschel	Fruzsina	Dalibor	Glynis	Edmund
8	Frida	Johann	Gordana	Grigore	Isabel	Florian
9	Gisela	Konrad	Hajnal	Hynek	Jacin	Gaspar
10	Grete	Liebwin	Jarmila	Jaromir	Kyra	Gaston
11	Hanneke	Ludwig	Jasna	Ludomir	Leisha	Hendley
12	Heidi	Lukas	Larissa	Mihai	Lupita	Kieran
13	Inge	Niklaus	Lejla	Mircea	Maeva	Mateo
14	Jolande	Nivaldo	Marioara	Neklan	Mirta	Mayhew
15	Lowiena	Norman	Orsolya	Ondrej	Ramona	Mulgrew
16	Margriet	Pepijn	Slavena	Ratimir	Sabine	Odhran
17	Marjan	Pieter	Sorina	Tivadar	Tamsin	Oslac
18	Saskia	Quirijn	Vesna	Tomek	Urraca	Philippe
19	Wilhelmina	Tielman	Viorica	Vladislav	Violette	Rowan
20	Willeke	Wolter	Zora	Zdenko	Vivian	Sorrel

NPC FORENAMES BY REGION (TABLE 2)

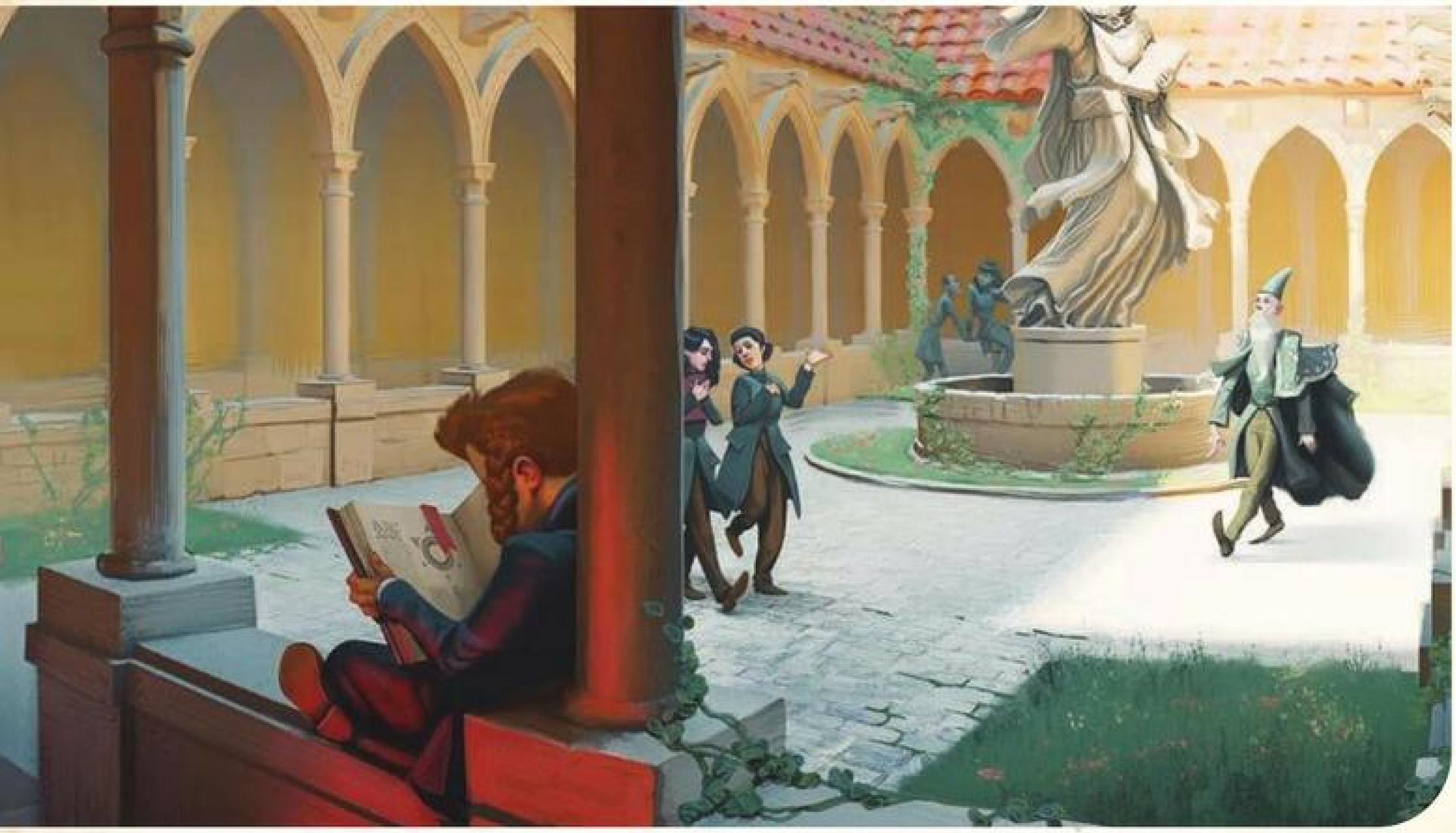
	MEDITERRANEAN		NORTH AFRICAN		SCANDINAVIAN		TURKIC	
d20	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine
1	Adriana	Acamas	Abiha	Ahmed	Annika	Arvid	Aigul	Abidin
2	Agariste	Alessio	Amira	Ahmose	Astrid	Bjorn	Aygerim	Beyazid
3	Alina	Besnik	Bishara	Djamal	Birgit	Claes	Azra	Cemil
4	Carissa	Dimitris	Bushra	Djoser	Britta	Diderik	Dinara	Demir
5	Deianira	Erion	Chaima	Farid	Elsebeth	Eirik	Fatima	Dilshod
6	Esma	Fabrizio	Faiza	Haitham	Helga	Erland	Feride	Faraj
7	Evelina	Feride	Henuttawy	Harwa	Henrika	Eyvind	Gizem	Fikret
8	Fiorella	Lambros	Hetepheres	Iyad	Hilda	Hjalmar	Hayati	Fuad
9	Giona	Lodovico	Isesu	Muhsin	Ingrid	Jesper	Hiam	Halit
10	Ilaria	Nazario	Iset	Murtaza	Iselin	Karsten	Irmak	Ilhami
11	Irina	Niko	Meresankh	Nebit	Kajsa	Lothar	Ismet	Khorshid
12	Luiza	Phaedon	Nafisa	Osorkon	Karlina	Ottar	Jumana	Mesut
13	Nikoleta	Renzo	Nahla	Ramzan	Lina	Ragnar	Lulwa	Murod
14	Panorea	Stelios	Nava	Simut	Lovisa	Rasmus	Nasrin	Omar
15	Polina	Tanush	Neferu	Taslim	Malin	Sigurd	Oksana	Orhan
16	Rosaria	Tazio	Nermin	Tawfiq	Margit	Terje	Pinar	Rizvan
17	Tatiana	Thaddeus	Rashida	Wadjmose	Rikissa	Torben	Sabina	Suat
18	Xenia	Valmir	Sakina	Waleed	Ronja	Torvald	Yasmin	Tevfik
19	Yilka	Vassilios	Tiye	Zafar	Yngve	Ulrik	Zakiya	Vidadi
20	Zita	Zanobi	Zahra	Zouheir	Yvonne	Vilhelm	Zeynep	Yazar

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS (NPC)

d20	Characteristic
1	Almost always smiling softly, regardless of the circumstances.
2	Always carries their pet animal on their shoulder or in a pouch at their hip.
3	Always clinking coins, stones, or similar objects in their pocket.
4	Carries a carved figurine of an animal and talks to it when they believe no one is watching.
5	Checks their hair every time they pass a reflective surface.
6	Chews on tongue, inside of cheek, or nails when deep in thought.
7	Cocks head to the side when interested in the current conversation.
8	Constantly adjusts glasses, tie, sleeves, or some other article of clothing.
9	Distinct, loud, boisterous laugh that sees frequent use.
10	Has eyes of differing colors.
11	Never meets the eyes of the person listening to them in a conversation.
12	Nods constantly when listening to another person in a conversation.
13	Overexaggerates facial expressions when conversing.
14	Plays with or twirls hair when talking.
15	Rubs a small piece of jewelry, stone, braided rope, or similar object when stressed.
16	Slowly hops from foot to foot when waiting.
17	Smokes a pipe.
18	Tugs at their ear when nervous or energetic.
19	Wears a different hat each time the characters see them.
20	Wears the scale of some unknown creature on a string around their neck.

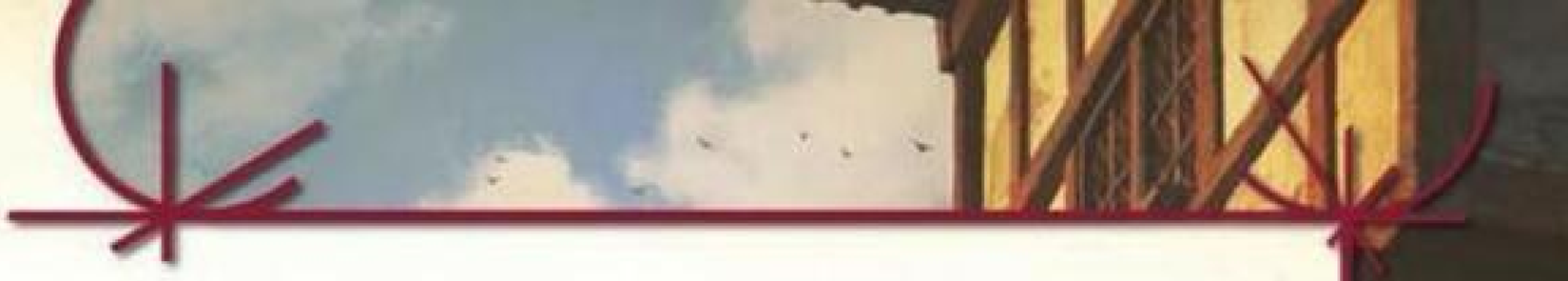
UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS (LOCATION)

d20	Characteristic
1	Always brightly lit inside.
2	Blue light briefly shines from an upper window at the same time every day.
3	Carvings of sea monsters on every piece of furniture.
4	Fireplace has a crooked chimney.
5	Front door is painted a bright color.
6	Full of friendly cats.
7	Has a small shrine to a local deity.
8	Has an odd rune carved on the southwestern wall.
9	No matter where a person steps, the floor creaks.
10	One wall has fire damage in an odd shape.
11	Overly ornate door knocker.
12	Oversized doorknob.
13	Piece of furniture built into the wall is decades older than the building.
14	Smells like fish.
15	Smells like fresh flowers.
16	Staircase missing fourth step.
17	Still smells like the bakery that occupied this location decades ago.
18	Unusually cold/warm interior.
19	Vine with black flowers grows on the fence.
20	Windows shaped like animal silhouettes.



MOTIVATIONS

d20	Motivation
1	A fortune teller once told me I would fulfill a prophecy, and I am hoping (or afraid) it will come true.
2	A guard slighted me years ago, and ever since, I've refused to bow to authority or listen to anyone with a badge of office.
3	A local shopkeeper saved my life when I was young, and I work to pass along their kindness in everything I do.
4	An adventurer entrusted me with a great secret years ago, and I fear those seeking the secret might arrive one day to take it by force.
5	I am a devout member of my faith and honor my deity in everything I do.
6	I am accustomed to mediating disputes and always work to find equitable compromises in every situation.
7	I bear a terrible scar from a magical accident in my youth, and I strive to hinder any magic users I encounter to prevent another from experiencing my pain.
8	I believe in the common good and strive to always put my community first.
9	I come from a long line of members of my craft, and I must maintain and continue that legacy.
10	I grew up poor and will stop at nothing to earn my spot among the city's elite.
11	I lost someone that meant the world to me, and now I'm simply going through the motions of my life.
12	I must keep my business or livelihood financially stable, no matter what.
13	I put my all into everything I make, and I take great pride in the quality of my work.
14	I support a recently deposed leader in my city or temple and actively work to return them to the position.
15	I want nothing more than to have fun and enjoy my vices.
16	I want to see the current government fall and subtly act against it.
17	I will do anything to support and protect my family, even if it means breaking the law.
18	My family has a generations-long quarrel with another family in town that I strive to mend.
19	My life is a gilded cage, and I seek to escape it.
20	The monarch's word is law, and I consider myself their most loyal subject.



100 INTERESTING NPC ENCOUNTERS

The following table contains one hundred unique individuals whom characters might bump into while traveling along a city's streets and alleys. These encounters can serve as no more than a bit of flavor or as the beginning of countless adventure seeds.

d100	NPC Description
1	Alcoholic high-elf scholar who claims drinking is all part of the "research"
2	Armorer of regional fame known for specialty helms
3	Astrologer using a sheet of parchment with a pinhole in it to study the sun's rays and what he claims is an impending eclipse
4	Barbarian clad in a manticore pelt with the primary interests of feats of strength, ale, and singing
5	Beggar with a penchant for gambling, but luck is seldom on their side, which is how they lost both legs
6	Blonde and pudgy cook, with a penchant for proper seasonings, is exceedingly suspicious of strangers—paranoid that they are after "secret ingredients"
7	Captain of the watch wearing a blindfold and feeling her way along the street
8	Certified genius who hates yes-or-no questions and always answers with, "Yes and No may come may go, but Maybe lasts forever"
9	Chandler melting wax into the crevices of the cobblestones to form unusual runes
10	Cobbler who has a plague and is terribly infected with contagious boils
11	Confectioner with a tray of sweets desperately asking everyone to return the free samples from yesterday
12	Cook famous for cultivating the rarest herbs and strangest cheeses
13	Demon architect, responsible for building a city of hell, in disguise and walking among mortal men
14	Deranged, emaciated halfling who insists the PCs possess an item that belongs to them, to the point of violence
15	Disciplined game hunter who will not name the creature they are seeking
16	Disheveled-looking knight, formerly in the service to the lords of the desert, whose psyche is broken in two as the result of a bloodmage's curse, with one personality harboring more sinister motives
17	Dragonborn dressed in robes, grabbing people by the arms, and screaming, "They're coming!"
18	Dragonborn soldier carrying a bag that has just ripped open, spilling wyrmling scales everywhere
19	Dragonborn wearing a dress of peacock feathers
20	Drunk woman carrying a rune-carved oar
21	Dwarf carrying a large drum and running through the streets as if late
22	Dwarf weaving through heavy foot traffic with a tall stack of hat boxes about to fall over
23	Dwarf who doesn't appear to be wearing anything at all except his hobnail boots
24	Dwarf with a special harness offering transportation on his shoulders throughout the city
25	Dwarf woman wearing a crow mask throws platinum coins at passersby
26	Elf holding an hourglass and telling everyone to shush while she watches the sand intently
27	Escaped prisoner, still in broken shackles, begging everyone to find "Marie"
28	Extremely awkward and shy young teen with an insatiable bloodlust and great prowess in physical combat
29	Extremely tall human whose turban is bound with gold thread and whose copious silk gown hides a trio of silver-hilted scimitars
30	Famous musician, middle-aged, balding, and fat, with an extra finger
31	Feverishly sick individual, vomiting and gagging repeatedly, who will die before the night is through without care

32	Former squire with desire to be extremely helpful but ends up being useless
33	Friendly dragonborn looking for expert miners and dungeoneers to help excavate dwarven artifacts from the nearby ruins of a silver mine, mostly as trap fodder as they delve deeper
34	Gnome wearing a cloak made of rags
35	Gnome wearing a pair of fake wings and singing at the top of his lungs
36	Gnome wearing a sheet across his chest and with shaving cream on his face who seems lost in thought
37	Gruff and cross-eyed dwarf who recently had his beard shorn by an elf rival and burns with thoughts of vengeance
38	Gruff dwarf skilled in crafting fine hammers of destruction and has an unusual disdain for ale and a passion for tea
39	Grumpy blacksmith eating a meat pie and spitting out adamantine bone shards from it
40	Half-elf maiden in gossamer silks apologizes as her bag of 1,000 bearing balls spills all over the street
41	Half-elf ranger obsessed with the drow, their culture, and their goddess
42	Half-elf wears a black veil and a black gown held aloft by a dozen maids all also dressed in black
43	Halfling struggling to push a wheelbarrow filled with potted plants
44	Halfling tattooed head-to-toe with strange, archaic runes; those with arcane knowledge or powers see the bearer carries a second soul trapped within their body
45	Halfling wearing a top hat almost two feet high, leaning on a walnut cane with a raven's head, and grinning through pointed teeth
46	Half-orc dressed entirely in white
47	Half-orc handing out fliers for an upcoming play
48	Half-orc wearing his curiously round moon hat at a very jaunty angle
49	Head of a flourishing estate who thrives on blood sport
50	Horrendously pompous lordling who claims to be heir to a particular castle, though he is the third son in the family
51	Husky fellow with no neck looking for investors; owes a lot of money to the wrong sort of people
52	Illusionist who never tires of scaring the daylights out of unsuspecting folk
53	Judge with muddy robes speaking gibberish and looking horrified
54	Juggler tossing steel rings with a partner for coin
55	Kobold drawing optical-illusion street art with chalks
56	Local farmer and hunter, well-respected in the community for generous donations of fruits and vegetables; their apples are cause for celebration
57	Lovely woman who has lost her way; her hidden accomplice pickpockets good Samaritans as they give her directions
58	Man in threadbare clothing stopping to rest while carrying a door in its frame
59	Man rolling a barrel leaking yellow powder down the street
60	Man wearing a black jester's outfit
61	Man wearing a sandwich board advertising memories bought or sold
62	Merchant with one arm who's dripping wet and furious
63	Middle-aged herbalist who is bitterly estranged from their spouse and two sons
64	Noblewoman furtively selling real jewelry she believes is costume jewelry
65	Obese half-demon mage with a pompous and unfounded air of nobility and an extreme case of sloth
66	Part of an envoy to discuss important matters of state, except they seem to have arrived in the completely wrong place for that kind of business

67	Petty lord who has risen from the dead and doesn't recall why or how
68	Pious goat herder, blind and zealous, who asks too many questions
69	Piper playing sorrowful tunes while trying to get patrons to enter a trinket shop
70	Pompous tiefling, carrying a huge number of scrolls and quills, looking for someone to chronicle their whole life as it happens to them
71	Powerful magician and pathological liar with a dire need to impress others
72	Recently escaped prisoner from a secret underground lizardfolk encampment
73	Rogue, wounded and limping, seeks revenge on their entire guild
74	Rumor- and information-collector of a demon lord who skulks about, asking questions and spying on people of power, import, or riches
75	Sage with a tripod from which a petrified dragon egg hangs claims an earthquake is imminent
76	Scoundrel looking for someone to kidnap a family and frame a corrupt lord for the act; percentage of plunder is negotiable
77	Scullery maid obsessed with drinking and dining in the city
78	Sea captain frantically trying to sell a small statue of a troll no one wants
79	Smooth-talking pirate, looking for a ship and companions for a profitable adventure
80	Sneering woman who claims to be a well commissioner investigating the town well but carries no credentials
81	Soldier awkwardly dragging a heavy chest with a muddy tapestry draped over it
82	Soldier obsessed with duty to their kidnapped lord
83	Soothsayer needing someone to buy her a cheap necklace made of purple crystals to "set things right"
84	Street vendor with a pushcart laden with various sized bells, all of which have had their clappers stolen
85	Tavern server leading a pair of strong lads carrying a barrel of plates between them
86	Tired brick-layer who works building dungeons and lives in a trance-like state, possibly connected to a nasty wizard employer
87	Town drunk, privy to excellent information, who needs to get drunk enough to remember the information
88	Traveling antiques dealer who is a large construct and travels only by foot with wares strapped to an elaborate wood and metal backpack that stretches high into the air
89	Vendor selling two-headed kittens with a sign that reads, "I'll pay you 1 gp to take one"
90	Very old half-elf trying to rid herself of a cursed map
91	Warlock having a heated argument with an invisible companion who may or may not be imaginary
92	Wealthy wool merchant whose considerable worth actually comes from no-questions-asked dealings of second-hand arms
93	Wise and friendly alchemist traveling in an old wagon overladen with clinking bottles and dusty books
94	Wizard dressed in bright blue robes asking everyone if they've seen a fire imp run this direction
95	Woman dressed in the back half of a pantomime tarrasque outfit
96	Woman wearing a jester's hat with a formal noble's outfit below
97	Woman who wears a bridal gown which she appears to have worn for some time—years perhaps
98	World-class poet collecting local folklore to include in their forthcoming epic
99	Young boy in fine servant's clothing carrying a gilded cage with several songbirds
100	Young girl carrying a large ceramic two-handed sword as tall as she is

URBAN ENCOUNTERS

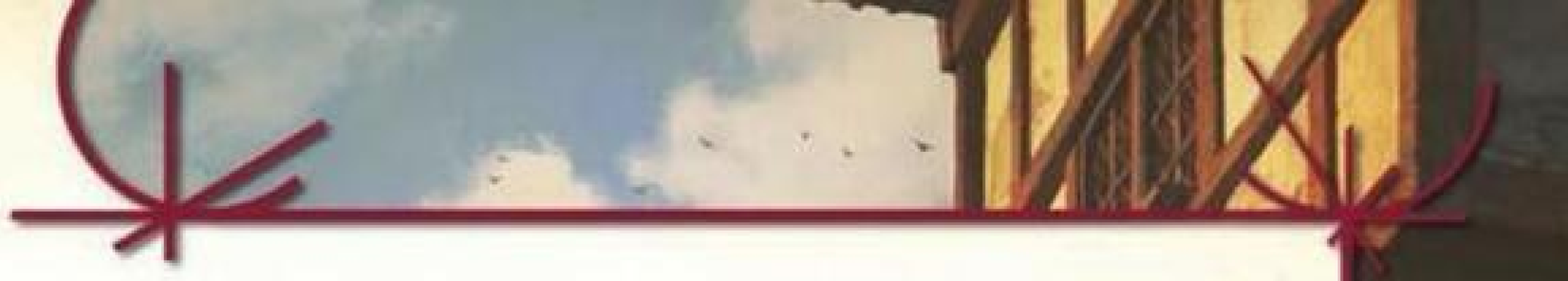
The tables presented here can be used to create encounters in urban and farmland environments. They are divided by CR groupings and include flexible numbers of creatures to better tailor the encounters to the characters. Many encounters reference creatures from *Tome of Beasts* (TOB), *Tome of Beasts 2* (TOB2), *Tome of Beasts 3* (TOB3), and *Creature Codex* (CC), but each encounter that features such a creature also gives an alternative creature from the core rules. Either creature can fit that encounter or can be replaced with another creature more appropriate for the game world. An asterisk (*) denotes a creature found in the **City Inhabitants** section of **Chapter 3**.

Urban Events. The **Urban Events** table contains encounters that operate as extra flavoring to fill city streets with unique happenings. Because of this, the table has no listed CR and can be used to create unique events for characters of any level.

Cataclysmic Encounters. The **Urban Encounters (CR 15+)** table provides situations that test the mightiest of characters. Each scenario is intended for characters of at least 15th level, is open-ended, and includes at least one powerful creature, a disaster of some kind, and minions for the powerful creature. These encounters are designed to spark the imagination for major encounters or challenges for the characters. The encounters don't list specific quantities of creatures or the exact effects of the disasters to give extra flexibility for fitting such large, complex encounters into the adventure.

URBAN EVENTS

d20	Event
1	A bell strikes from somewhere in another district, and every nearby local that can hear it immediately stops what they are doing to kneel in the direction of the sun.
2	A folded letter glides on a breeze before landing in a character's lap. Unfolding the letter reveals an invitation to a dinner party clearly addressed to someone else.
3	A cloaked figure runs up to a random character and says, "Here, hold on to this for me, and I'll come find you later." The figure then shoves a copper rod etched with verdigris-coated runes into the character's hands before running off. Mere moments later, a figure in midnight blue robes decorated with stars arrives and asks if anyone has seen a cloaked figure with a copper rod.
4	An explosion rocks the street as the inventory of a tinkerer's shop rockets outward through shattered windows and scatters on the street and among pedestrians. Half a dozen apprentices scramble out of the shop to hastily clean up the mess.
5	A man covered in boils approaches the characters and begs for alms. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check determines he is unknowingly suffering from a disease that will turn him into a **zombie** at the end of the day if the disease isn't cured.
6	The characters happen upon a pop-up market and are asked to judge a fruit pie, giant vegetable, or floral arrangement competition.
7	A slowly proceeding line of people leads up the hill to a bathhouse, discussing what they are going to ask the bathhouse's fortune-telling **bannik** (TOB3, or **sewer jinni***).
8	An old acquaintance needs investors for an exciting new business opportunity. The risks are commensurate to the reward, and it might require a little extra work from the characters beyond financial backing.
9	Frantic shouting pierces the serenity of the cityscape, and the smell of smoke and burning wood soon follows as flames begin to lick up a nearby building.
10	A trio of young **pet mimics*** cry out, lost and separated from their owner who went into a nearby shop. One of the characters happens to resemble their owner in some way (hair style, scarf color, brand of boots, or similar resemblance), and the mimics immediately rush to the character for comfort, subjecting them to their Cuteness trait.
11	A sullen-looking urchin in an overcoat sits atop a shadowy stoop and makes a noise as the characters walk by, attempting to get their attention. The urchin angles the hem of the coat out just a bit to indicate contraband substances for sale.



12	A signboard stands beneath the hot midday sun covered in job postings, from tasks like painting a building to requests for help in ridding a local farmstead of some menace. A character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher notices a peculiar symbol carved into the wood near the bottom of the board as well as an arrow pointing to a nearby alley or blank wall.
13	A trio of knights calls for any person capable of wielding a weapon to join them in a crusade against a local coven of hags who are threatening those on the outskirts of the city. If no one answers their call, they begin the unpleasant but thorough process of forced conscription.
14	Two bakery stalls compete for customers as their owners, rival **bakery drakes** (TOB3, or **crafters***), furiously ply their craft while goblin employees unintentionally undermine their employers' successes by passing around too many free samples in an attempt to draw more customers.
15	A dozen nobles on riding horses parade through town, giving pedestrians little choice but to quickly scamper out of the way or get trampled.
16	A curious individual doggedly follows the characters for a number of stops, entirely without finesse, stealth, or even courage to approach the group. If confronted, the individual reveals they are the characters' biggest fan.
17	An earthquake rattles the foundations of the district, causing pockets of difficult terrain and jeopardizing the stability of nearby structures, potentially putting the characters or their allies in danger of being caught in collapsed buildings.
18	Light glints off the tip of a monument or piece of architecture or through a window. Following the light ray to where it ends reveals a pattern that mirrors a nearby intersection.
19	Someone bumps into one of the characters and disappears into the nearby crowd. Another character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) of at least 13 notices a single, silver coin marked with an odd symbol affixed to the first character's back, collar, or shoulder.
20	An ox-drawn cart ahead hits a rut and bucks, sending heavy barrels rolling in the characters' direction. Each character in the path of the barrels must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone. A character that fails the saving throw by 5 or more sprains their ankle and has their movement speed reduced by 10 until they finish a long rest.

FARMLAND ENCOUNTERS (CR 1 TO 4)

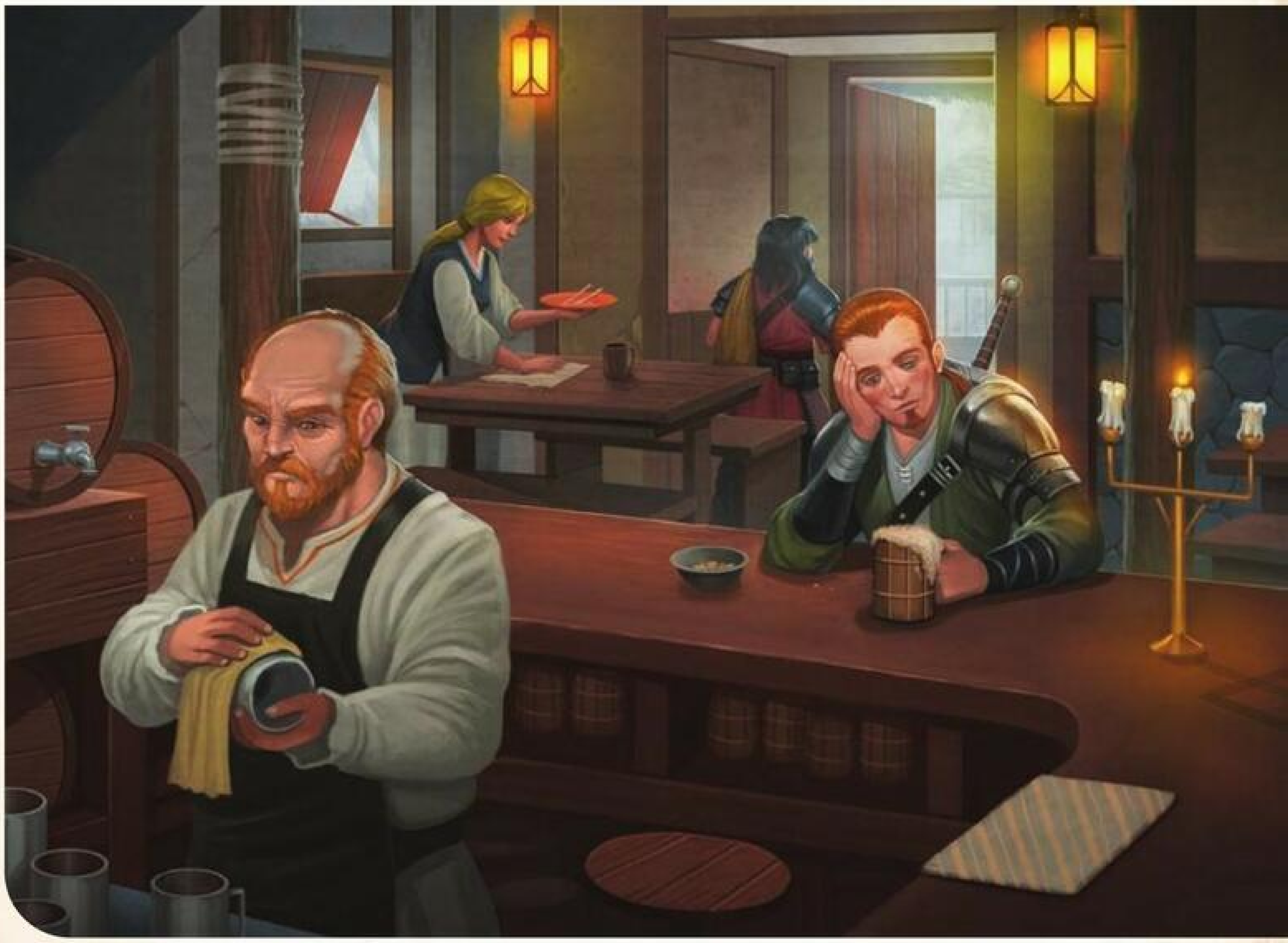
d8	Encounter
1	A **shovel dragonette** (TOB3, or a **crafter***) and a **tuberkith** (TOB3, or an **artist***) fight a tough battle against four **swarms of centipedes** as the insects attempt to destroy a garden full of exceptionally healthy-looking vegetables.
2	A **rum gremlin story keeper** (TOB3, or a drunken **hobgoblin**) recites dirty limericks and bawdy shanties from the prow of a little boat being rowed around a small pond by 1d4 **rum gremlins** (TOB, or 2d4 **goblins**).
3	A 10-foot patch of farmland turns to quicksand as a **quickserpent** (TOB2, or two **giant constrictor snakes**) suddenly emerges.
4	A team of two **sellswords***and one **spellhawk*** run training drills in a field, callously trampling crops and upsetting local farmers.
5	An adolescent **ogre** plays with local children, giving them shoulder rides and tossing them in the air as they squeal with delight. Parents were tolerant of the play until one child broke a leg from a fall after the ogre, who is afraid of small animals, was startled by a cat. They want the play to end and seek help resolving the issue with the gentle-but-skittish giant.
6	A woman tends to her garden while a **giant lizard** visibly explores her homestead. Entirely oblivious to the intruder, the woman is so intent on her gardening that she is mere moments away from being attacked.
7	A newly hatched **green dragon wyrmling** frolics through flowerbeds, breathing poison upon the blooms and enjoying how they wilt.
8	A farmer yells for help from atop their house as their dog barks loudly below, steadily losing ground as it works to keep a trio of cockatrices from entering the barn. A petrified cow stands in the field nearby.

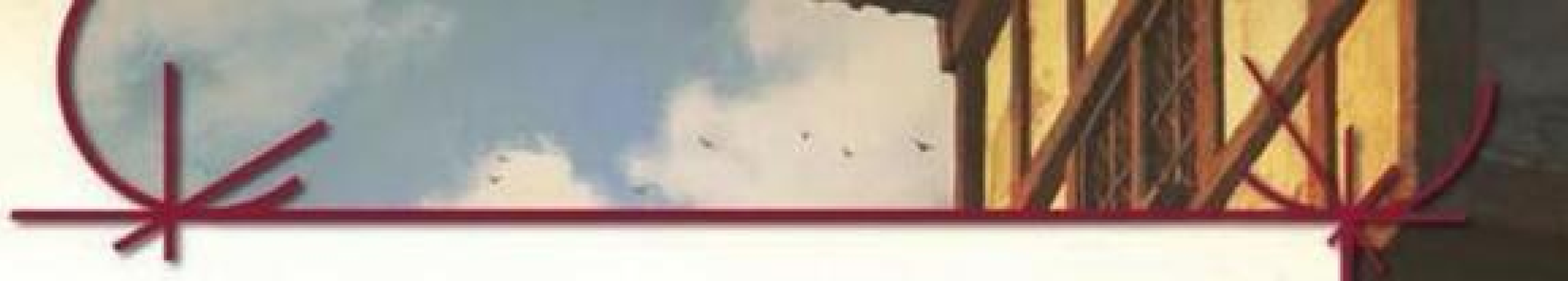
URBAN ENCOUNTERS (CR 1 TO 4)

d12	Encounter
1	A building the characters regularly enter has a lock on its main door when they try to enter it today. The lock is actually a **lock mimic*** that noticed traffic in the area and attached itself to the door.
2	A pair of cats prowl the street near an old townhouse, yowling and hissing and behaving with hostility toward anyone who approaches them. In truth, the two cats are **yowlers** (TOB2, or 1d6 **giant rats**) who are intent on entering the townhouse to settle a score with the spellcaster inside—a former master.
3	An **ettin** and a **kobold ettin** (TOB3, or an **ogre**) are in an argument over who is the most attractive giant.
4	A **gnoll slaver** (CC, or a **merchant***) snaps a whip at a quartet of manacled **commoners** that are marching too slowly for the gnoll's satisfaction.
5	A **swarm of bees** (TOB2, or **swarm of insects**) has left a patio of lunch patrons reeling in agony.
6	A **clockwork pugilist** (TOB3, or a **berserker**) runs up to the strongest-looking character and demands a duel, giving the character only a moment to respond before taking a swing. When one of the combatants is reduced to half their hit-point maximum, the pugilist bows, thanks the character for the lesson, and runs off.
7	A **junk shaman kobold** (CC, or a trio of **kobolds**) meanders about, collecting junk and adding to a towering bundle of trash in a basket over its shoulder. The kobold approaches the characters and asks if they have anything they aren't using.
8	Several **commoners**, a **guard**, a flock of chickens, and a border collie (use **mastiff** statistics) all seem to wait hand and foot on a brightly feathered bird perched on a luxurious pillow carried by one of the commoners. The bird is actually an **august rooster** (TOB2, or a pair of **harpies**) using its magic to get the attention it believes it deserves.
9	A cart driven by twin **alchemists*** tips over in a collision and crushes a series of boxes they were hauling, spilling potion bottles and various vials. The twins panic aloud and in unison, "They're loose! Somebody help!" as a **legion pigeon*** emerges from the wreckage and begins to split itself while a **doppelixir** (TOB3, or a **mimic**) attempts to hide amid the loose bottles until someone picks it up.
10	A **bathhouse drake** (CC, or a **merchant***) chases after four mischievous **alley sprites***. The sprites are laden with stolen bath towels, robes, and bubbling soaps in a basket held between them. The weight of the basket slows their flight by 10 feet, but they cackle wildly as they toss some of their stolen goods at their pursuer.
11	A **snake with a hundred mage hands** (TOB2, or a **performer*** with a **footpad*** ally in the crowd) operates a veiled cart, putting on a puppet show while surreptitiously picking the pockets of the crowd.
12	An **ogre alleybasher** (TOB3, or a pair of **ogres**) attempts to clothesline the character in the lead before robbing the person and making a run for it. The character must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone. The character has disadvantage on the saving throw unless the character has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher.

URBAN ENCOUNTERS (CR 5 TO 9)

d20	Encounter
1	Two **performers*** busk on opposing sides of the street, each with an **animated quartet** (TOB3, or a pair of musically inclined **priests** of an art-related deity) performing for them. The two groups quickly become hostile toward each other as the performers argue over perceived slights and stolen audience and earnings. They attack each other without regard for anyone caught between them.
2	Steady, days-long rain causes overflow in the sewers, which slowly seeps into the streets and fouls the area. A **sewer blob*** rises through a nearby sewer grate or up from a canal and reaches out for an unsuspecting citizen.
3	A malfunctioning **locksmith** (TOB2) goes from door to door to install or strengthen existing locking mechanisms while menacing any who interferes with its work (or 2d6 malfunctioning **animated armors** guard random doors, refusing to allow anyone entry or exit).
4	A **psychophant cultist** (TOB3, or a transformed **oni**) charismatically speaks to a crowd, working to convince them to join a new church. The cultist's ally, a **cult fanatic**, moves through the crowd, anointing the foreheads of people who agree with the cult's message. Unless convinced to not attend the new church, the anointed people become **cultists** after 1d4 days of indoctrination.
5	A wizard's apprentice is thrown to the ground as one of the books in their grasp suddenly erupts, depositing a **bookworm***. The apprentice screams as the bookworm coils around them and begins devouring the magic from a dropped spellbook.

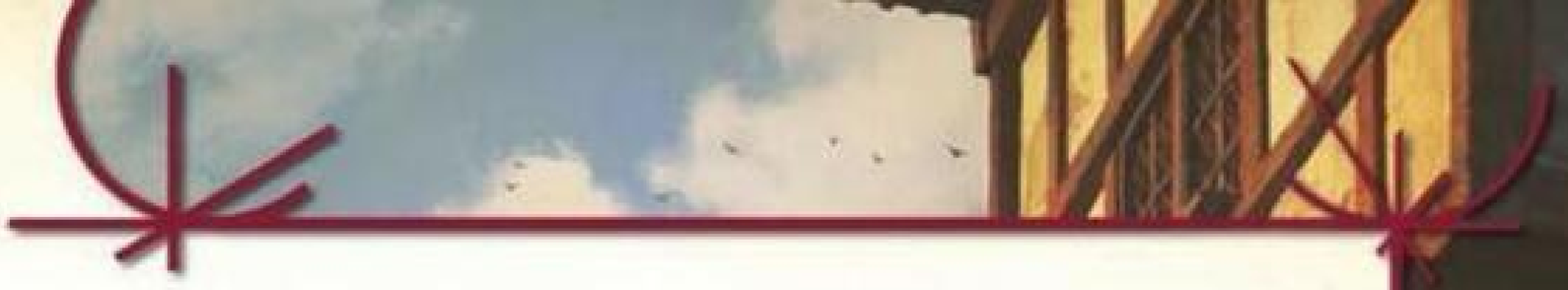




6	A **cleric of the brew** (CC, or a drunken **priest**) and their dutiful **keg golem** (CC, or a trio of faithful **veterans**) make their way through the district, blessing everything and everyone in sight with sacramental beer. A patrol of four **guards** attempts to stop the priest for disturbing the peace with public drunkenness, and the two groups are on the verge of an aggressive altercation.
7	A building collapses in a heap as a **one-headed clockwork dragon** (CC, or a **clay golem**) breaks free from the shop where it was being constructed, massacring anyone in the area. The engineers responsible for the creature are nowhere in immediate sight.
8	A **dwarf firecracker** (TOB3, or a **knight**) leads 2d4 **dwarf pike guards** (TOB3, or 2d6 **guards**) in springing an ambush from an alley. The leader attempts to intimidate, claiming they have a "dead or alive" bounty on the characters, and offers the "easy way" if the characters don't put up a fight.
9	A **footpad*** leading a gang of four **thugs** attempts to corral and corner the character with the lowest passive Intimidation, seeking to relieve their mark of valuables.
10	A self-proclaimed fan in a blue, hooded cloak approaches the character with the lowest reputation or highest Charisma—or who is a halfling—and extends a fully sleeved arm out for a handshake. The fan is actually a **luck leech** (TOB2, or an **undead factotum***) who is eager to feast.
11	In response to a recent outbreak of crime, the local government has commissioned 1d6 **bronze golems** (CC, or **veterans**) to patrol the streets, snatching up wicked criminals and some unfortunate bystanders.
12	A young **monarch*** (without the Call Symbol action) visits the city from another nation, accompanied by 2d4 **guards**. The monarch sees the characters, strides forward, and to the dismay of the guards, throws a glove at the character with the highest Charisma or highest Strength. The monarch challenges the character to a duel, asking to be shown the skills of the people of this nation.
13	A **merchant captain** (TOB3, or a **mage**) leads a caravan through the city with 2d4 **merchants*** and one **veteran** protecting the goods. As the caravan nears an alleyway, a **thief lord** (CC, or an **assassin**) leaps onto the lead wagon from a rooftop and commands a gang of 2d4 **footpads*** to ambush the caravan from the alleyway.
14	Three **alchemists*** cause a dangerous crossfire when they publicly confront two colleagues, a **blood mage** (CC, or a **mage**) and a **necromancer** (CC, or a **mage**) with well-founded accusations that their colleagues are dabbling in dark—and potentially illegal—magic.
15	After hearing of the characters and their deeds for the city, a coven of three **green hags**, disguised as elderly women, approaches them for assistance. The hags attempt to lead the characters to a private location, such as an abandoned building or alleyway, and then they try to take down the characters, hoping to steal the characters' identities to better facilitate their plots within the city.
16	A **pine doom** (TOB2, or a **treant**) has had it with the expansion of the town's border and slams against palisades and building walls, destroying everything in its path in its rampage.
17	A pair of grubby-faced street kids taunts and goads a local official or member of law enforcement into a nearby alley. In truth, the kids are two **red urchins***, and they are toying with the official before consuming them away from prying eyes.
18	Construction of new buildings unearths a nest of 2d6 **kackerlacks***, which retaliate against the workers before skittering farther into the city in search of more prey.
19	A **labspawn golem*** wreaks havoc on storefronts as a haggard **alchemist*** follows, trying in vain to gain control of it.
20	A shop's grand opening, a beloved guard's birthday, a respected official's retirement, or similar small celebration fills one street with food, games, dancing, and laughter. The celebration takes a turn for the worse when a disgruntled **rat catcher***, who was recently fired from the post, leads 1d4 giant rats (transformed **wererats**) and 2d4 **swarms of rats** into the celebration to devour food and attack the partygoers.

URBAN ENCOUNTERS (CR 10 TO 15)

d12	Encounter
1	One of the characters is struck by a vision of a full moon in three days' time, and its appearance shifts from the image of a grinning jack-o'-lantern with ten teeth to the image of a basket full of fruit and vegetables to the image of a handshake between a dirt-crusted hand and a hand made of sticks. A **pumpkin king** (TOB2, or a **cloud giant** whose rain and cloud control prompted good harvests) is about to come calling, seeking its share of the harvests it made flourish over the past decade.
2	The glint of light on steel from a high vantage point is the only warning characters get as a **shadow fey poisoner** (CC, or an **assassin** with a **footpad*** apprentice) attempts to carry out an assassination contract. A note with a character's name and a cryptic symbol is the only clue the creature carries with it.
3	A team of chimney sweeps working on a street's worth of residences anger 2d6 **ash drakes** (TOB, or 2d4 soot-covered, hibernating **air elementals**), which take to the skies to voice their displeasure and launch attacks at the chimney sweeps.
4	Drawn to the recently polluted docks district, a **venom maw hydra** (CC, or 2d6 **fulgovores***) rampages through the streets, wreaking havoc as it heads toward filthy waters.
5	A **ghost** bursts through a nearby wall and attempts to possess one of the characters. Failing that, it urgently begs to be allowed to possess one of them. Moments later, a **ghost hunter kobold** (TOB3, or a disguised **deva** intent on bringing eternal rest to the wayward spirit) rounds a corner ahead and, without preamble, questions the characters about the ghost, going so far as to attack a possessed character if necessary to extract the ghost.
6	An exhausted Humanoid lies in the characters' path, covered in needle marks and missing much of its blood. The **cambium** (TOB, or **vampire**) responsible lurks nearby, using the creature as bait for passersby.
7	A trio of **chimeras** escapes from a nearby coliseum, sadistic mage's dungeon, or royal menagerie. They destroy anything and anyone within range while their goat heads bleat in a curious cadence. If at least one chimera is still alive after 3 rounds, a **royal chimera** (TOB3, or a **nalfeshnee**) descends from the sky to add to the chaos.
8	As the characters turn a corner, they come across a sobbing, kneeling noble and a **shadow fey executioner** (TOB3, or an **assassin**) moments away from dealing a mortal blow. A shadow fey ambassador (TOB2, or an **archmage**) leans against a nearby wall wearing an expression of disapproval.
9	As a citizen defaces an old, important monument, two **righteous sentinels** (TOB2, or **clay golems**) step out from frescoed alcoves to respond with violence.
10	A **herald of fire** (CC, or a pair of **fire giants**) enters the town from the entrance closest to the mountains, claiming that the rulers of ash and cinder demand a tax from every subject of the town. The herald attacks those whom don't comply, but it shows some leniency toward fire-affiliated creatures, such as red and gold dragonborn, sorcerers with an affinity for fire magic, and similar, offering such creatures an additional day to comply or requesting their help in the collection process.
11	A sinkhole opens up in the street, revealing a number of buried tombstones. A **bone swarm** (TOB, or a dormant **vampire**) and 3d6 **skeletons** crawl up to the street to feast on the startled bystanders.
12	The local ruler's eldest child (use the statistics of an arcane **monarch***) walks the streets with a **shield guardian** bodyguard. Angry with a recent ruling by their parent, the young monarch bullies random citizens, kicks over baskets filled with market goods, and otherwise makes a general nuisance of themself. The activity upsets the locals, but none are willing to risk the ruler's ire by speaking out against the heir.



URBAN ENCOUNTERS (CR 15+)

d8	Encounter
1	The **vampire patrician** (CC, or a **vampire**), Damien de Monokos, has succeeded in collecting the Four Chambers of Thoráby and has awoken the city's guardians, the **gargoyles**, from every rooftop. With the skies blackened by the elemental hordes and every source of running water turned to blood, the city's inhabitants have only hours before they are all slain, diseased, or turned into mindless undead.
2	An **ankou soul herald** (CC, or a **solar** that collects and guides the souls of the dead on behalf of a death deity) has discovered the means to subvert its grim duty, halting the natural process after death. Souls of the dead are becoming trapped in a state between life and death, and their material bodies are rising as aimless, uncontrollable undead. To correct this cosmic imbalance, an **angel of judgment** (TOB2, or a **planetar**) has taken command of the herald's **ankou soul seekers** (CC, or the solar's **devas**), sending them to indiscriminately round up any who are in danger of dying to prevent anymore creatures from entering this in-between state while the angel resolves the issue. In the meantime, the angel seeks powerful and capable individuals who can track down the herald and convince it to return to its duties—or slay it so that another may take its place.
3	A **herald of slaughter** (TOB2, or a **glabrezu**), hidden among the city counselors for years, has whipped the townsfolk into a violent fervor, causing fights to break out in the streets. The herald is holed up in the town hall, performing an hours-long ritual. If allowed to complete the ritual, those of the town's tribunal will each transform into a **spawn of chernobog** (CC, or a **vrock**), and the town's people will transform into **dretches**.
4	A virulent plague sweeps through the city, exhausting municipal and religious resources to save the citizens. But time is running out. With an **equitox** (TOB3, or a **nalfeshnee**) poisoning the nearby water sources, the people are starving from lack of food and water. The city's plight attracts **plague spirits** (TOB2, or **hezrous**), which roam the abandoned streets to taunt and torment citizens, and **pestilence swarms** (TOB2, or diseased **giant rats**), which annihilate crops and spread further disease.
5	The **jotun giant** (TOB, or an **ancient green dragon**) Módgudr has lost all patience with the world and rails against the gods and the cities that glorify them, ruining buildings and slaying townsfolk in droves. Crying out at the sky and the lands, Módgudr demands that the gods face him or send someone who will. The stomping and shouting have attracted **thursir giants** (TOB, or **hill giants**), **thursir armorer giants** (TOB3, or **young green dragons**), and **thursir hearth priestess giants** (TOB3, or **bulettes**), who pick through the rubble for useful resources or for survivors to eat.
6	A volcanic eruption has rocked the world, sending blinding ash into the air and cascading streams of lava toward the city nearby. To make the disaster worse, the strength of the eruption opened a gateway to the Elemental Plane of Fire, and a **cherufe** (TOB2, or a pair of **fire giants**), **fire elementals**, and **vorthropods** (TOB3, or **salamanders**) have appeared from the fiery gateway. They pour down from the volcano, burning farmland on their way to the city.
7	A perpetual winter storm has laid waste to the region, encasing structures in heavy snow and ice and paving the way for the **graknork** (TOB2, or a **remorhaz**) to hunt unchallenged. Citizens are mercilessly picked off as they attempt to acquire food and wood. Something seems to be sustaining the blizzard, which continues to strain the city's resources. Worse still, new dangers appear as **sapphire jellies** (TOB2, or **young white dragons**) are drawn out from hiding, and many fallen citizens arise as **glacial corrupters** (TOB2, or **specters**) to torment their neighbors.
8	Hurricane-force winds and tsunamis reduce the docks to sodden smithereens as an **isonade** (TOB, or a **dragon turtle**) and **timingila** (TOB2, or a **dragon turtle**) clash, threatening to sink the entire city and leaving it vulnerable to attacks from **sahuagin**, agitated **water elementals**, **sea hags**, and other terrors of the deep. The churning waters give sailing vessels no quarter, preventing water-bound aid from getting to the city.

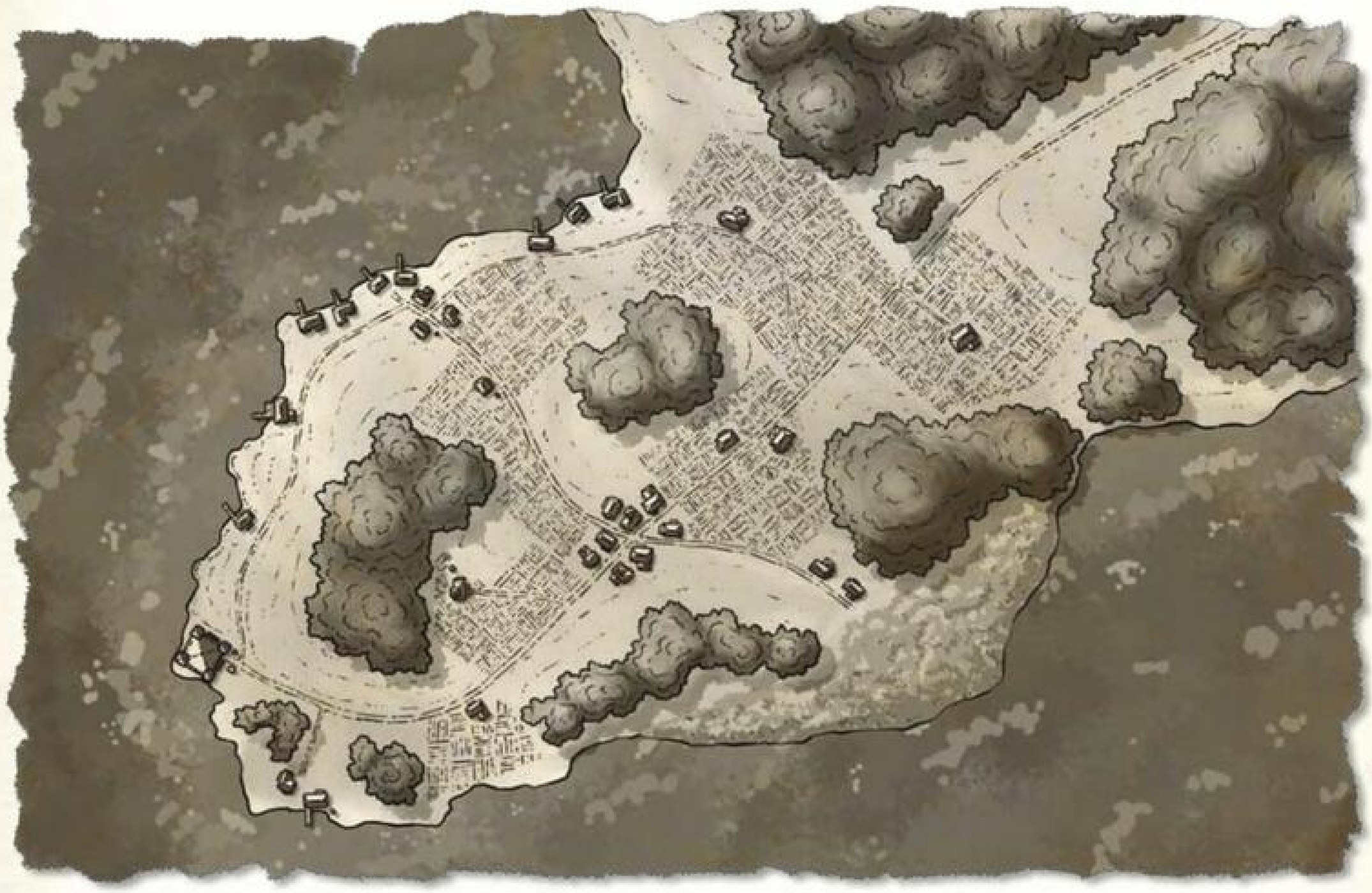
CITY POINTS OF INTEREST

d20	Location	Description
1	Art Gallery	Home to a few exquisite, immensely detailed black-and-white drawings of books, women, and sea creatures. The owner has several clients who tend to be evil in disposition.
2	Distillery	Run by a poor husband and wife. The husband is a gregarious and generous fellow who cares only for the quality of his liquors and sharing them with others. His more practical wife is concerned with their bookkeeping, house, five children, and brand new still, bought on credit.
3	Library	The inside and outside proportions of the library do not match. Inside, the very large library is a small room filled with mundane agricultural almanacs. The learned air of the librarian suggests the more impressive collection remains hidden from the general public.
4	Old Fountain	Sculpted to depict a sea god who has long been out of favor in these parts. Water continues to pour from the old fountain. Rumors say it flows with blood at times.
5	Theater	Left with little support since the long-time and well-respected curator died, ownership is now disputed between a young and frazzled but well-meaning thespian and a pompous businessman of questionable means and motives.
6	Annual Festival	A jaunty two-day party, celebrating a hundred-year-old battle that was either won or lost here, depending on who is telling the story. Celebrants engage in drinking, dancing, and feats of strength. Historical reenactments are greatly frowned upon.
7	Auction House	Owned and operated by a publicly disliked foreigner. The townsfolk openly denounce the business as disreputable, but most of the naysayers still purchase wares frequently.
8	Gamblers' Lodge	Touting a notorious reputation for bloodthirsty betting and dubious morality, this rundown den features beetle fights.
9	Great Tombstone	Fnal resting place of the ashes from all 113 previous captains of the guard. It is customary for the current captain to visit the grave and offer flowers daily—a reminder to perform his job admirably. Strange things tend to happen near the tombstone just before dawn.
10	Old Bell Tower	An overzealous young composer uses the bell tower without permission as his personal sounding board. His compositions have yet to win favor with the townspeople, but the local musicians all speak highly of him.
11	Hillcrest	A hill near the edge of town has a nearly perfect crown of mushrooms growing on it.
12	Fey Arch	A 5-inch arched opening in a tree near the center of town is said to have once contained a passageway to a realm of pure beauty and magic. Opening the door has been forbidden by the local warden, who fears its power and is afraid of fey in general.
13	School of Natural Lore and Skills	A liberal arts university (beast mastery, herbalism, tracking) of modest size led by scholarly types, the leading experts on spores, molds, and fungi. Admittance to the university is deemed an honor by all folk, except for the dwarves, who view it as hitting rock bottom.
14	The Stocks	Room for three, one is occupied by a grisly debtor with a 2-ft. beard. He invested all his money in arms and armor for an impending war, but the conflict was resolved peaceably and he lost everything.
15	Undead Garden	This once-beautiful and luscious garden turned rotten and black one day. Strangely, the dead flowers and plants continue to grow.
16	Ruins of the First Mansion	The first stone and mortar structure built in the town. Long abandoned by the original builders, it now stands as a historical landmark. The last owners fled after a catastrophic disaster left the east wing of the mansion in rubble.
17	Regional Sword & Shield Tournament	A twenty-person melee where all contestants must be a knight or of noble birth. The prize for winning the tourney is a mysterious chalice, a dance with a prince or princess, and a tour of the castle's upper vaults.

18	Archive	Collection of the town's scrolls and volumes, which may be worn and moth-eaten or well preserved, depending on the town's attitude toward knowledge.
19	Stables	Where the lord's prize-winning stallions are kept. Known to also house more exotic and dangerous creatures, which may be for sale.
20	Hot Springs	The famed pools bubble up from the depths of the land, drawing travelers to lessen their burdens for a while and enjoy a good soak. May be restorative.

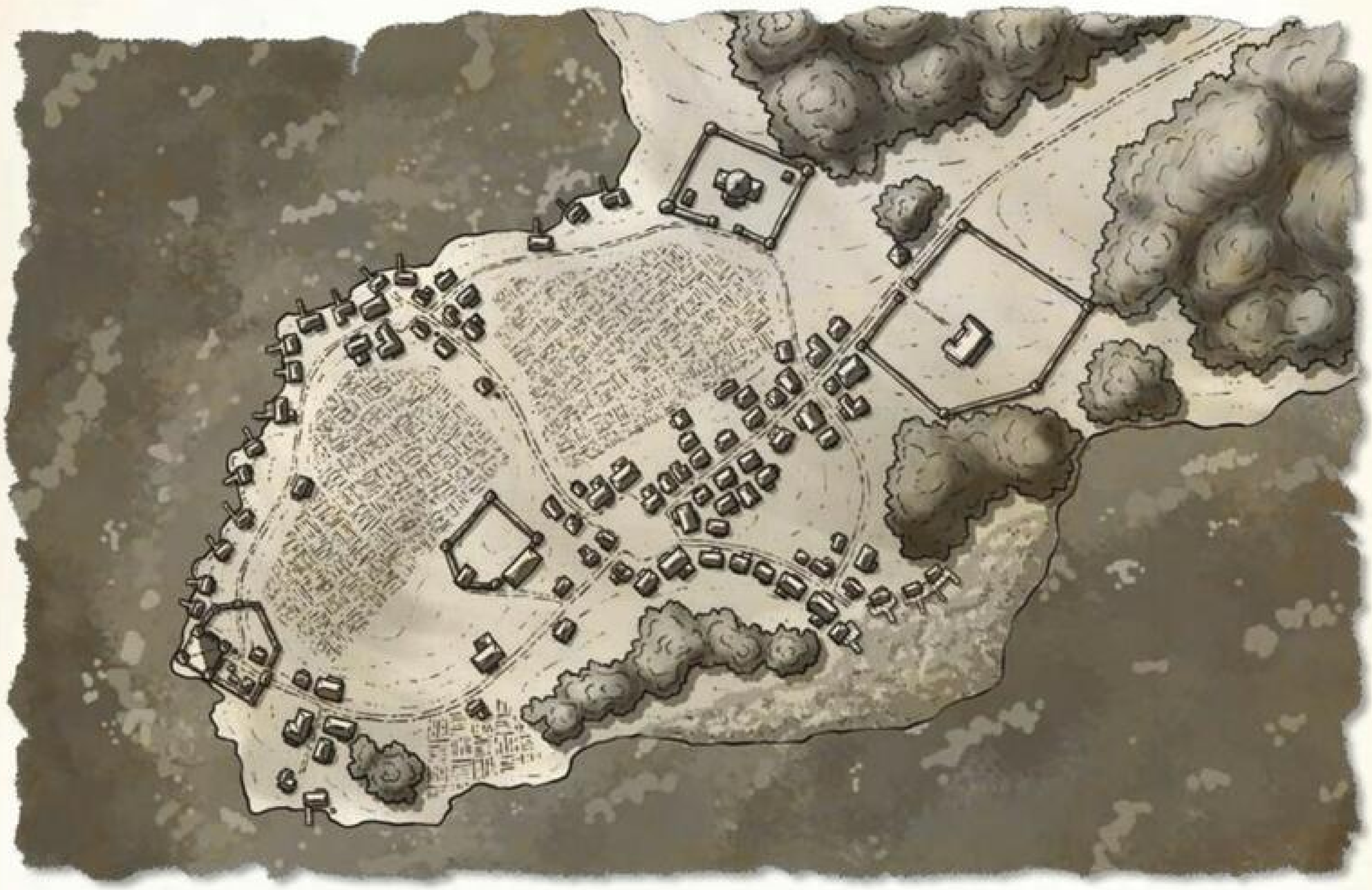
EXAMPLE TOWN GROWTH

The following three maps depict the geographic progression of a small community that expands over time. As the population swells and more and more buildings replace the surrounding farmland, the environment becomes more urban. Note how the earliest established roads and structures inform where the later growth occurs. Original roads remain, while side roads gradually branch off to reach more homestead sites. Trees and farmland disappear, except for a few parks and estates, replaced with homes and businesses. The growth changes many elements of the initial thorpe, but the original layout of the place is still visible.



MAP 1: THORPE

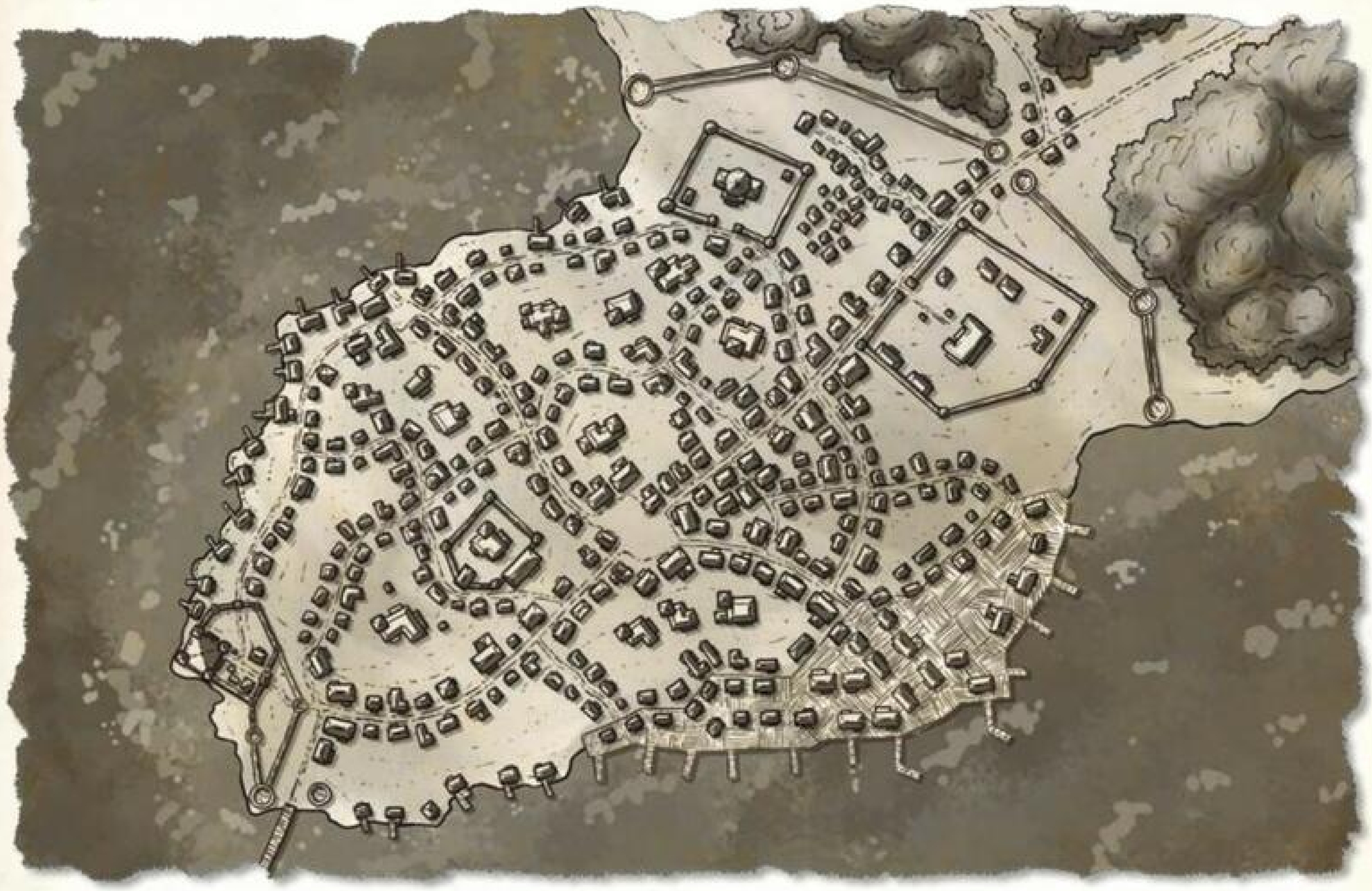
In the first map, a rural hamlet has popped up on a peninsula jutting out into a calm bay. Fishing huts dot much of the shoreline, with piers extending out into the water. Farms cover most of the land, interspersed with copses of trees. A handful of small businesses—a general supply store, a tavern, a common hall, a temple, and a blacksmith—sit at a crossroads in the middle of the settlement. Not long ago, a pair of adventurers chose the place to settle down and constructed a small square keep at the very tip of the peninsula, where they could keep an eye on and protect both the hamlet and the bay. The southeastern shore of the spit of land is marshy ground, not suitable for occupation.



MAP 2: VILLAGE

Over perhaps a generation, the thorpe has become a small village. Some farmland in the vicinity of the crossroads has been transformed–the central population has increased as newcomers build more houses and small businesses to cater to one another. More of the forested land has been cleared, both for additional construction materials and to expand the available farmland. The owner of one of the farms has converted the property into a stable and yard to breed horses. A handful of the wealthier landowners have transformed their farmsteads into estates, enlarging their dwellings and constructing walls for privacy. The keep has expanded to include outer walls and some additional buildings to house a handful of men-at-arms for additional protection and law-enforcement.

Some of the earliest businesses at the crossroads have relocated and the original buildings demolished to create a proper village green in the middle of the crossroads. Citizens have arrived to establish a wider variety of shops and cottage industries, such as a leatherworker, tailor, carpenter, and so forth. A second crossroads has grown up along the northwest side of the peninsula, with businesses focused primarily on the fishing trade, producing rope and netting, barrels for salting and shipping fish, boats, sails, and oars, producing pitch for water-sealing, and so forth.



MAP 3: TOWN

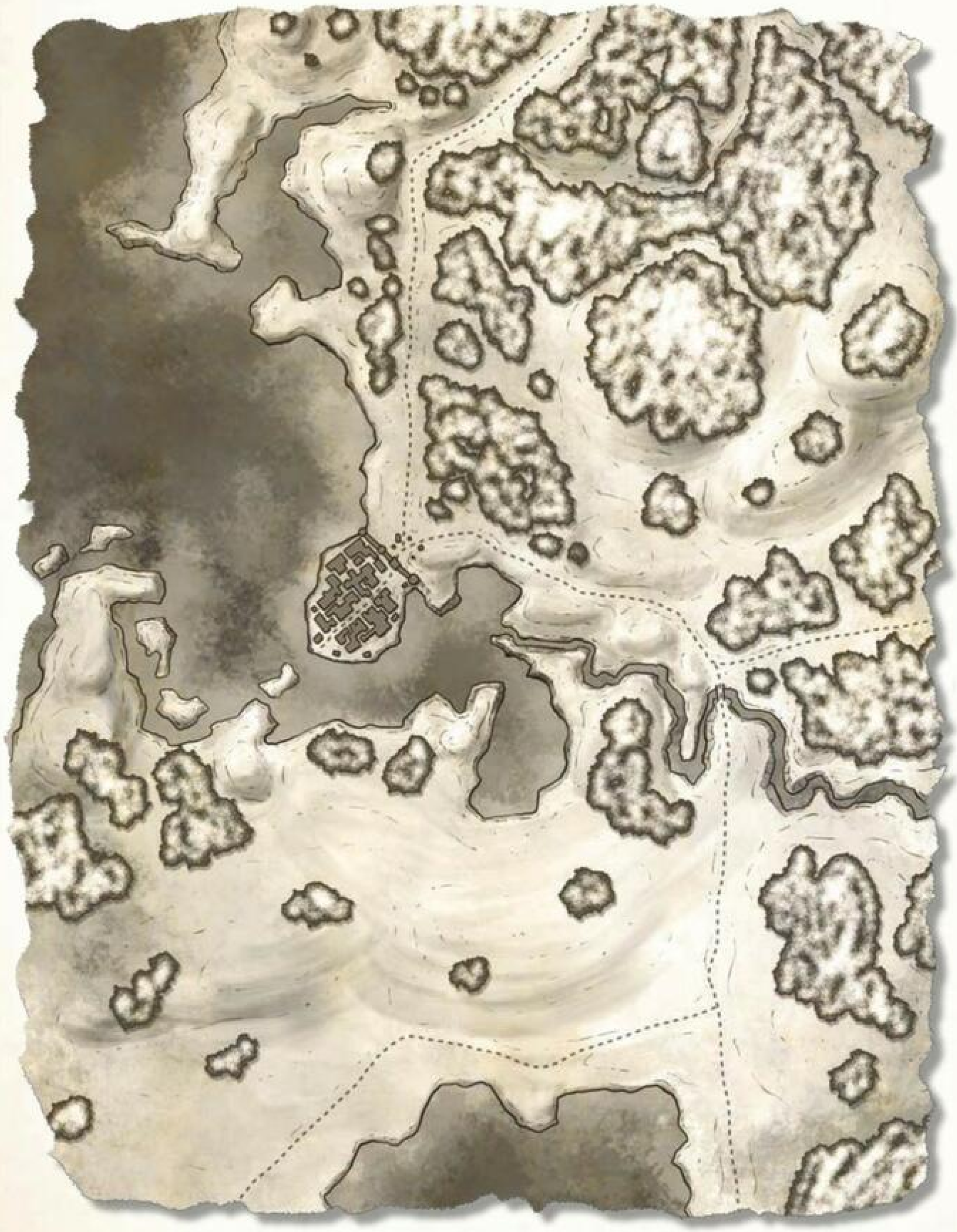
A few decades later, the village has grown into a proper town. The populace has constructed a defensive wall across the neck of the peninsula and a causeway off the southwestern tip of the land (where it crosses a narrow point on the bay to the shore beyond), and the keep has been expanded again to act as a gatehouse for the causeway. All farming has shifted inland, and the population has grown more urban. The trade industry has transformed the marshland along the southeast shore into a wharf upon piers constructed on pilings above the soggy ground and with berths for cargo ships and numerous warehouses for handling goods. Wealthy citizens have constructed townhomes, and more temples have cropped up to serve the people. Beyond the walls, more dwellings line the road.

EXAMPLE METROPOLIS GROWTH

As with the example town growth maps presented on the previous pages, this series of maps depicts the geographic progression of a metropolis.

MAP 1

The town upon the peninsula from those earlier maps can be seen in this new set, protruding into the bay where a sizable river flows into the ocean. Several roads follow the coastline or veer inland to other destinations.

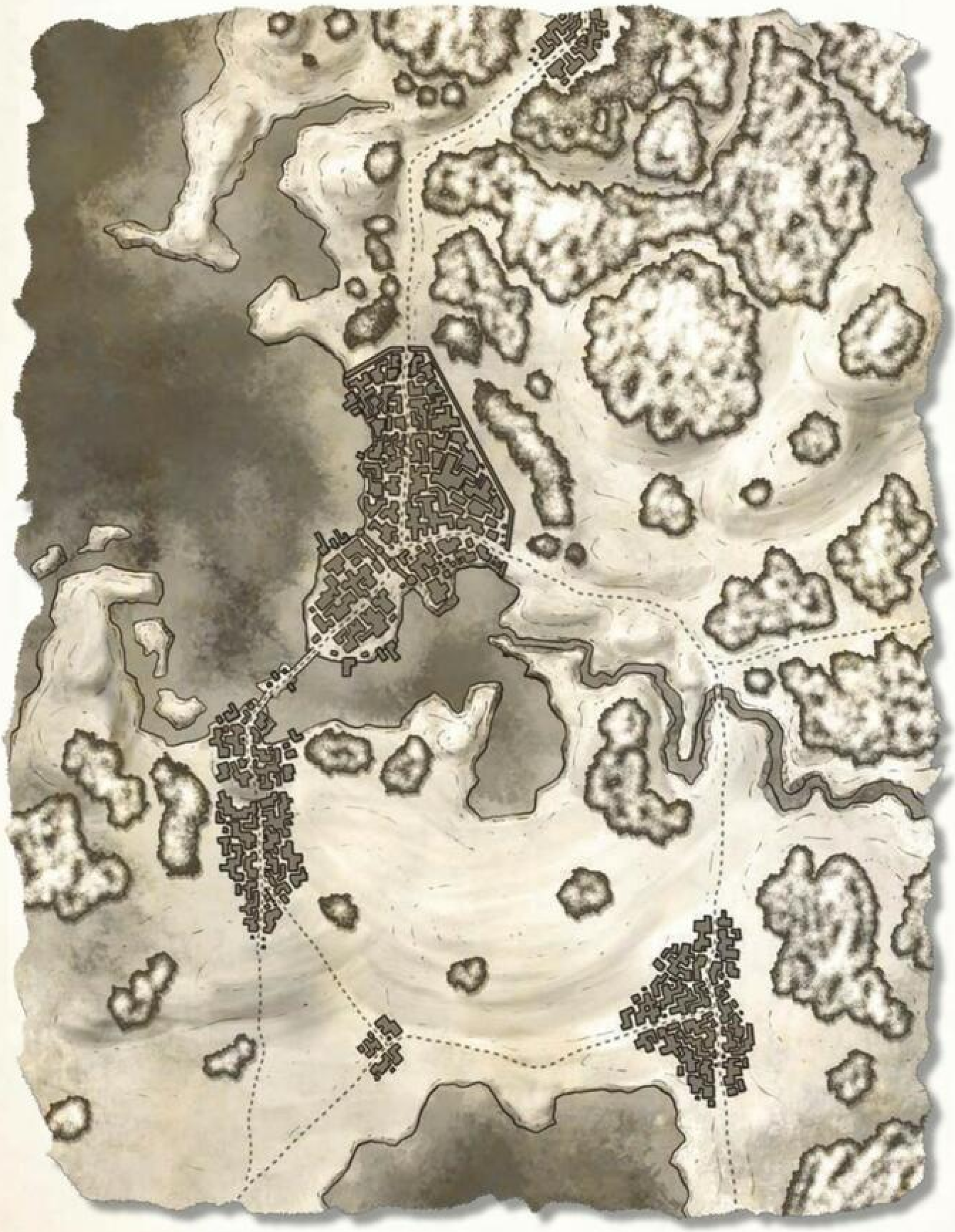


MAP 2

The village on the peninsula has expanded beyond its original city walls, with more homes and businesses lining the roads leading north and southeast, as well as past the causeway extending from the peninsula's southwestern tip. At other crossroads, residents have gathered into other small, rural communities, perhaps with one or two businesses catering to travelers who have no desire to actually enter the burgeoning city.

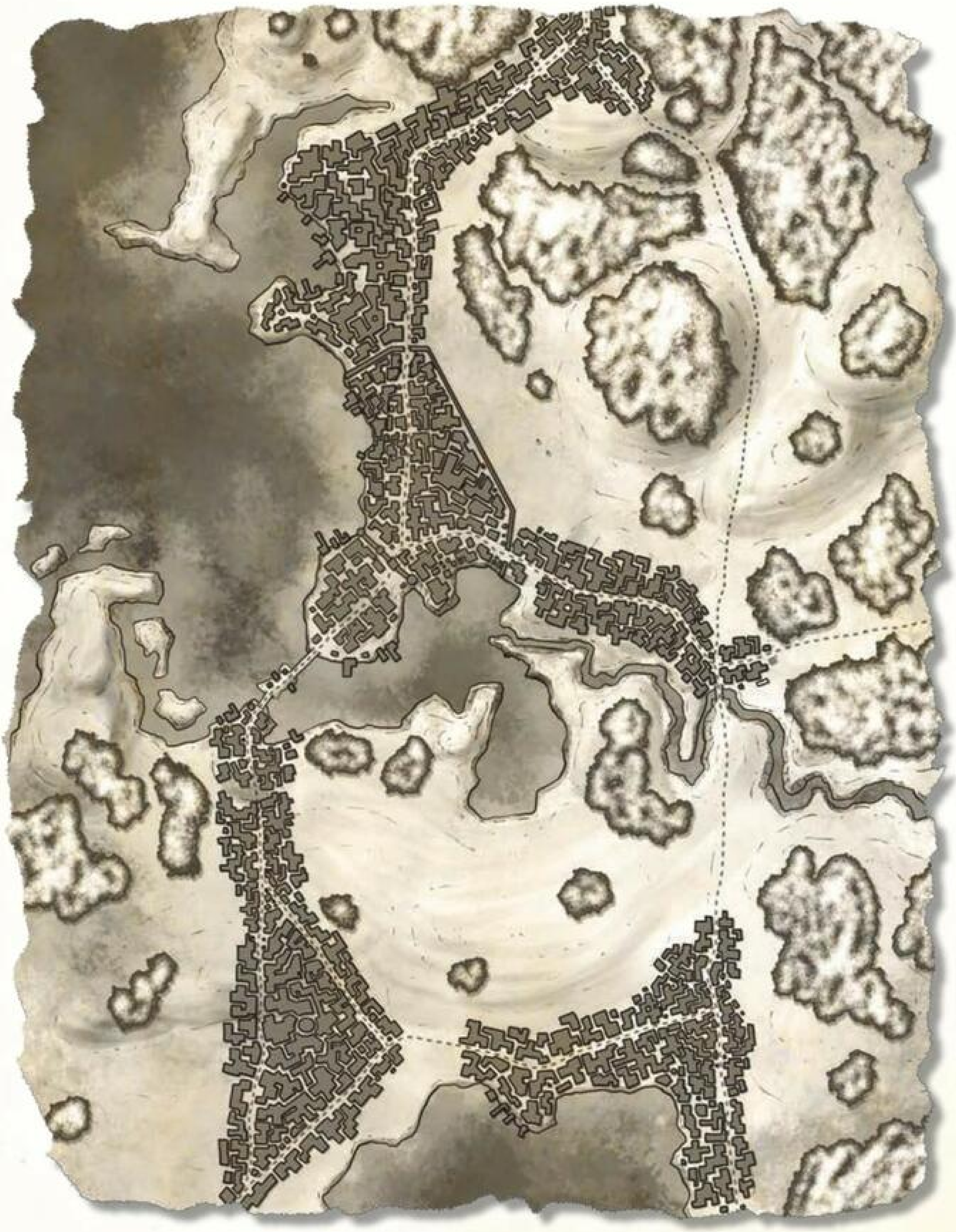
MAP 3

The central city has continued to expand and a second wall protects its landward side, with gates at both the north and southeast roads. Elsewhere, the other crossroads thorpes and hamlets continue to expand slightly as overland traffic to and from the city increases.



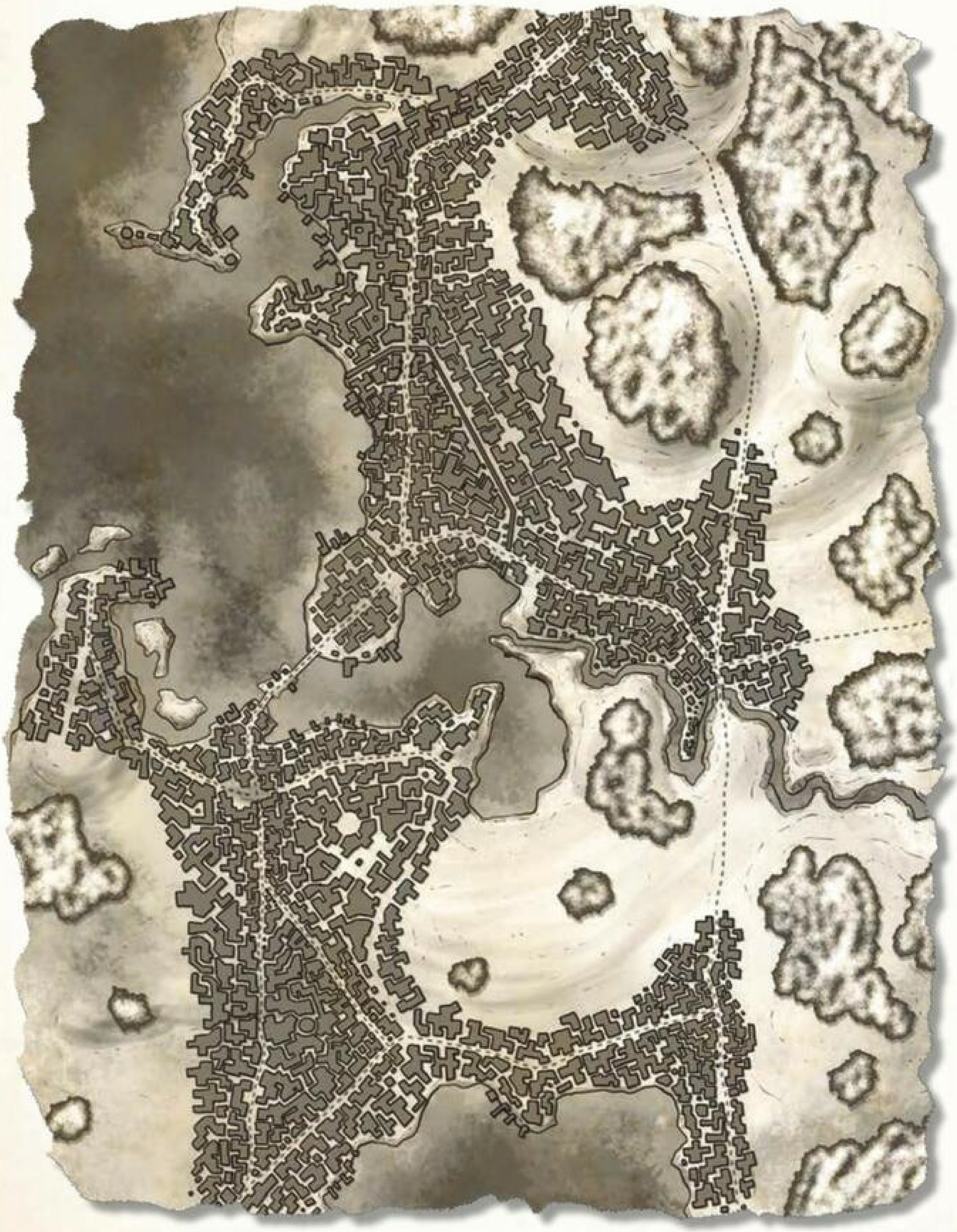
MAP 4

The population continues to expand, with new homes and businesses cropping up all along the roads leading toward the city. Wealthier citizens begin to claim the northern shoreline for themselves, building lavish estates with beautiful views of the sea.



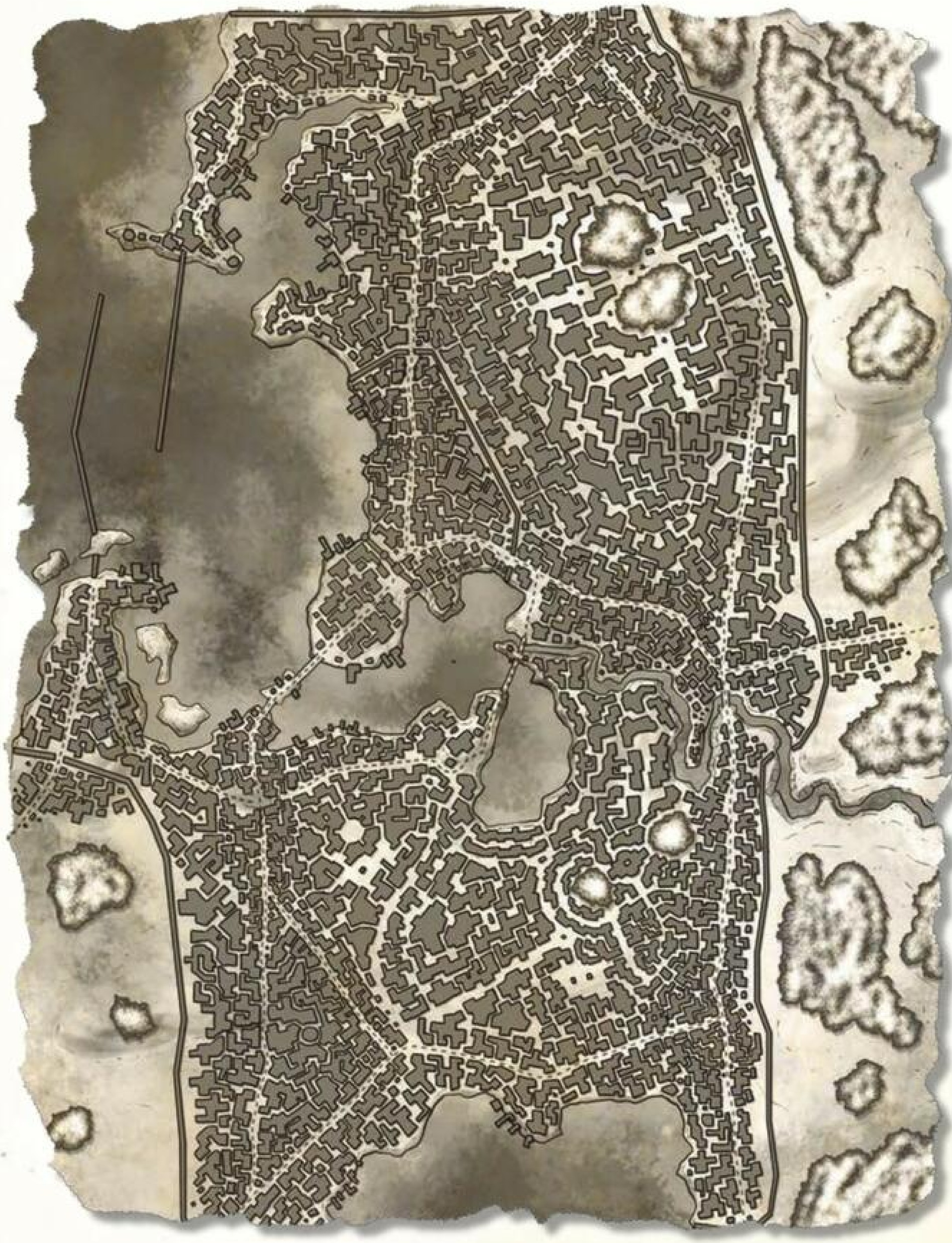
MAP 5

Growth continues along every roadway in the vicinity. A second peninsula on the southwestern side of the bay sprouts a military pier to serve the city's naval fleet. The small peripheral communities have begun merging, their original village centers transforming into district squares of the larger metropolis. More and more coastal land along the north side of the bay is developed by the wealthy.



MAP 6

The entire region around the bay and the various roads has been urbanized. A breakwater has been constructed across the mouth of the bay, and a third set of city walls now surrounds most of the population center. Some sections of the metropolis that were once still forested have been transformed into parkland or private estates for the wealthy. The population continues to extend along the roads from the city gates.



BATTLE MAPS

The following maps are useful for running a wide variety of encounters during adventuring in cities and towns. (They are also available in physical form in the *Campaign Builder: Cities & Towns Map Folio*.)

CITY PLAZA

Perfect for running encounters where large crowds gather, the city plaza map features a central fountain, a set of vendor stalls, plus several official buildings and storefronts. Pushcarts, crates and barrels, and alleys with sewer grates and wooden staircases up to second-floor apartments round out the scene.

MONUMENT BOULEVARD

This street map features a wide boulevard divided by a central plinth and reflecting pools. The plinth stands within a grassy circle surrounded by flowering hedges for those who want to step away from the bustle of the street. The reflecting pools are flanked by carefully cultivated trees, and two fountains mark the side streets, giving the entire place a solemn, respectful atmosphere. Shops line either side of the boulevard, including one featuring a small patio café.

ARENA

This large, bowl-shaped wooden structure can serve as the site of many different games and competitions. From jousting lists to races, from wrestling matches to acrobatics, the arena can host it all. Wooden stairs on the outside lead up to the entrances at the top row, while a separate set of box seats allow the local nobility to watch the goings-on in comfort and privacy. On the opposite side from the box, passageways lead beneath the stadium seats to chambers where contestants can prepare. Bright pennants and a set of statues holding aloft a burning beacon make the arena easy to spot from anywhere within the city. Outside, vendors and pushcarts serve the attendees.

City Plaza

CITY RUINS

This collection of winding city streets and alleyways wander through the destroyed homes and businesses of vanished citizens. Crumbled pavement, broken fountains, collapsed roofs, and overgrown vegetation all denote the effects of the forces of time and entropy on civilization. Sewer grates lead into the subterranean passageways below the city streets.

TEMPLE AND SHRINE

The walled grounds of this holy place reside on the shore of a lake or sea, providing a tranquil locale for religious proceedings. The grounds feature meandering paths through gardens filled with flowering bushes and trees. The temple near the entrance includes a broad, columned chamber with a raised dais and idol opposite the front doors, while numerous statues decorate the corners both inside and out. Small shrines for private contemplation flank the main path to the seaside rotunda, where a unique altar sits within a circle of columns. In one corner of the property, the groundskeeper's cottage sits out of the way.

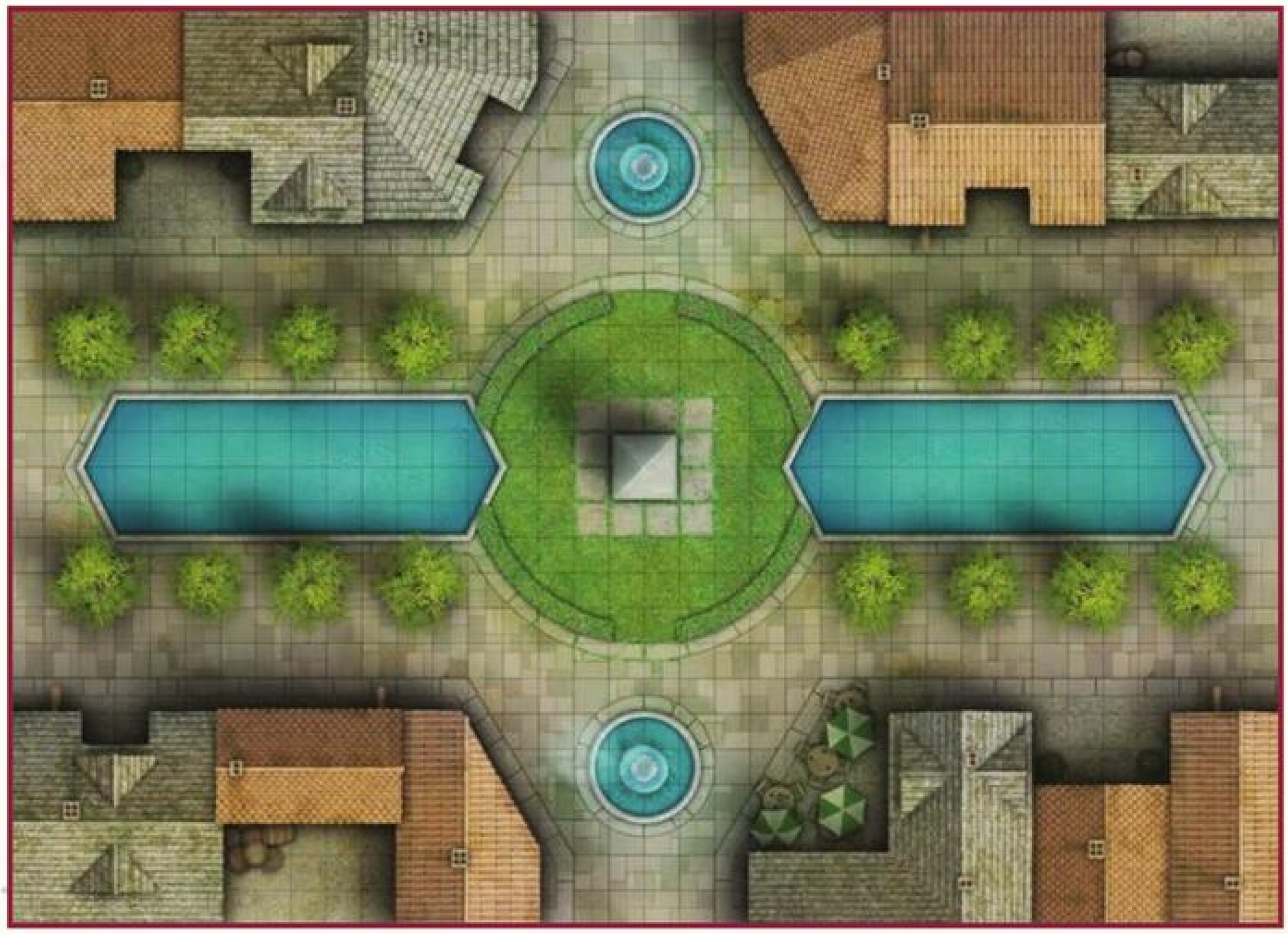
CANALS

Shops and homes line the waterways of this unique city section, where boat traffic is as prolific as foot traffic. Arched bridges spanning the watercourses allow small boats to maneuver, and most homes and businesses include places to tie up watercraft directly at their front doors. The ever-present vendors find prominent places to hawk their wares, while stacks of crates and barrels full of goods await their turn to be hauled elsewhere. Away from the canals, higher sections of the city rise via staircases.

CISTERN SEWER AND HIDEOUT

Here, tunnels below the surface streets drain off rainwater to prevent flooding. This map features a great cistern within a huge, columned chamber, along

Monument Boulevard



Arena

with walkways allowing passage along the various tunnels and outlets. In one corner rests the bottom of a circular well, while the basement of a surface building includes a hideout with secret doors to allow for traveling unnoticed to other parts of the waterways and the city beyond.

CITY STREETS AND ALLEYS

This map presents a typical urban city block, with numerous houses and businesses nestled tightly together, their roofs at all angles and heights. Major streets give way to narrow side roads, which in turn empty into narrow, twisting alleys. Stacks of goods and refuse fill every available corner. Some buildings feature private, walled gardens and wooden staircases leading to second stories. A splashing fountain marks an intersection of two roads, and several sewer grates lead below the surface levels into the dark depths below.

MARKET AND ZIGGURAT

This map provides a Mesopotamian vibe and features a grand city gate that opens onto a marketplace filled with statues, date palms, and many vendor tents and wagons. All sit within the shadows of a great ziggurat that has steps leading up from three sides to a landing (that perhaps leads to an even larger portion of the edifice). Carefully cultivated planters sporting flowering shrubs round out the scene.

ELVEN FOREST VILLAGE

This wooded area is the perfect setting for an enchanting collection of elven or fey structures. Sitting upon terraced ground above the tumbling runnels of a waterfalling river, the buildings are all open-air in design. They include a great dining hall with a monument or altar at one end, a pair of rounded chambers that can serve as dwellings or places of meditation, and a flying mount aerie with nests. The boles of huge trees support a massive canopy overhead, and tucked into one corner is a secluded archery range for practicing aim. Pathways and bridges meander through the idyllic place.

City Ruins

CEMETERY

This quiet, somber location marks where the dead rest. Pathways crisscross among arrays of gravesites, with the occasional statue or monument interspersed. A pair of crypts feature sarcophaguses and wall vaults where important personages have been laid to rest (or soon will be). The entirety of the place is fenced to clearly demark the boundaries between the living and the deceased, while ancient, gnarled trees watch over everything.

DOCK AND WAREHOUSES

This map depicts the wooden wharf and pier of a dock district. Cargo vessels sit at berth, awaiting loading or unloading from a crane, while smaller rowed boats are tied to ladders. The warehouses include stacks of goods in various shapes and sizes of containers, a wagon for transport, a caged area for more valuable cargo that should be locked up for safekeeping, and an office where recordkeeping and funds are dealt with.

Temple and Shrine

Canals

Cistern Sewer and Hideout

City Streets and Alleys

Market and Ziggurat

Elven Forest Village

Cemetery

Dock and Warehouses

CAMPAIGN BUILDER

CITIES & TOWNS

SYMBOL

NAME

GOVERNMENT TYPE

RULER(S)

DEFENSES

TRADE GOODS & RESOURCES

CLIMATE

CURRENT DISASTER(S)

MAP

DETAILS

NEARBY SETTLEMENTS

LAWS & PUNISHMENT

DEITIES & TEMPLES

MAJOR GUILDS & ORGANIZATIONS

DISTRICT

NAME:

NOTABLE BUILDING(S)

MAJOR LANDMARK(S)

LODGING

STORY HOOKS & NOTES

DISTRICT

NAME:

NOTABLE BUILDING(S)

MAJOR LANDMARK(S)

LODGING

STORY HOOKS & NOTES

DISTRICT

NAME:

NOTABLE BUILDING(S)

MAJOR LANDMARK(S)

LODGING

STORY HOOKS & NOTES

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DISTRICT

NAME:

NOTABLE BUILDING(S)

MAJOR LANDMARK(S)

LODGING

STORY HOOKS & NOTES

DISTRICT

NAME:

NOTABLE BUILDING(S)

MAJOR LANDMARK(S)

LODGING

STORY HOOKS & NOTES

DISTRICT

NAME:

NOTABLE BUILDING(S)

MAJOR LANDMARK(S)

LODGING

STORY HOOKS & NOTES

ADVENTURING NOTES

ECONOMY

Max GP of goods & vendors _____

Taxes _____ Cost to enter city _____

Cost of living _____

Crime _____

_____

Imports _____

_____

Exports _____

_____

POPULACE

Population _____

Mood (Current Affairs) _____

Mood (Outsiders) _____

Mood (Government) _____

Festivals & Celebrations _____

_____

Notable NPCs _____

_____

_____

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MIDGARD

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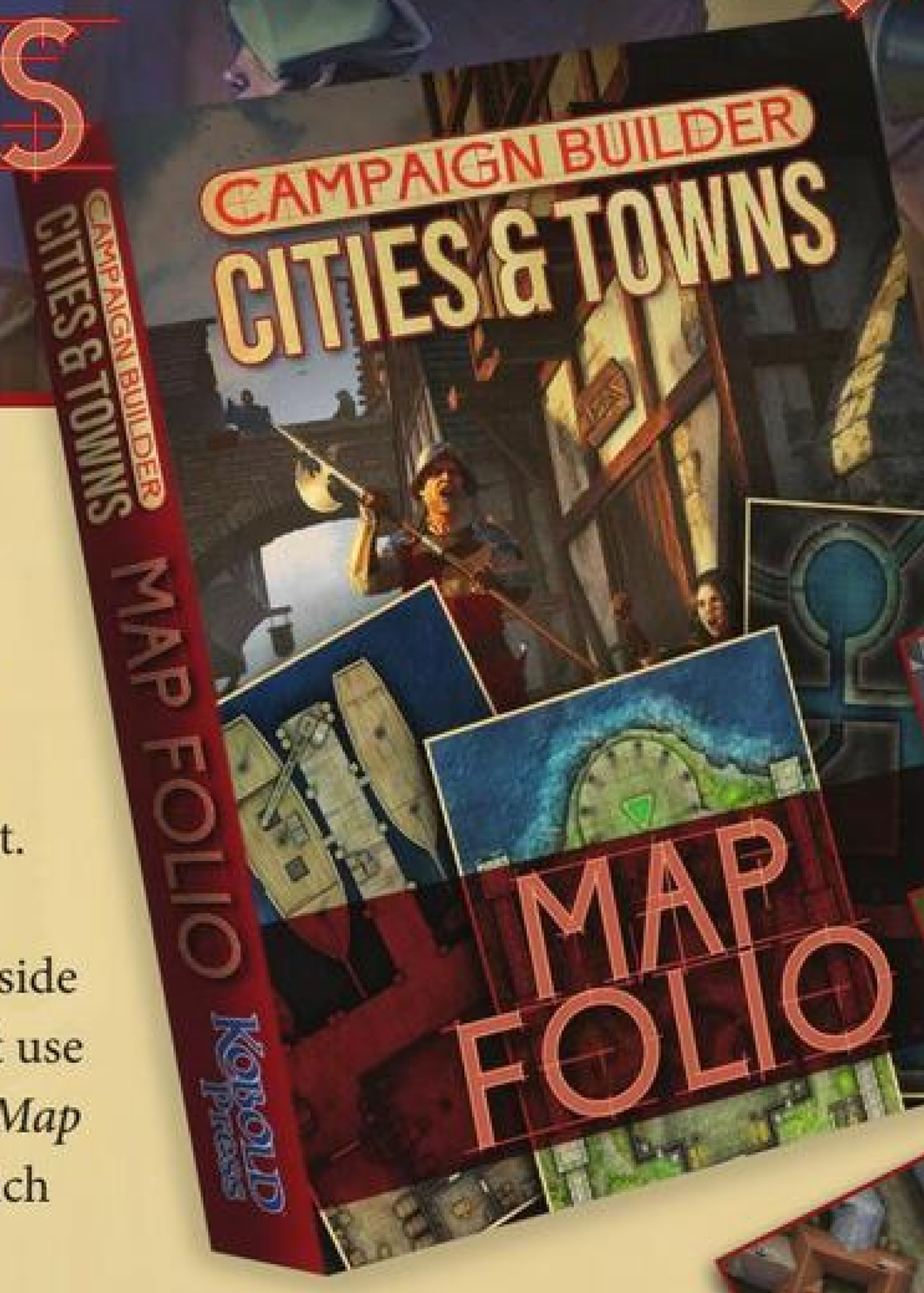

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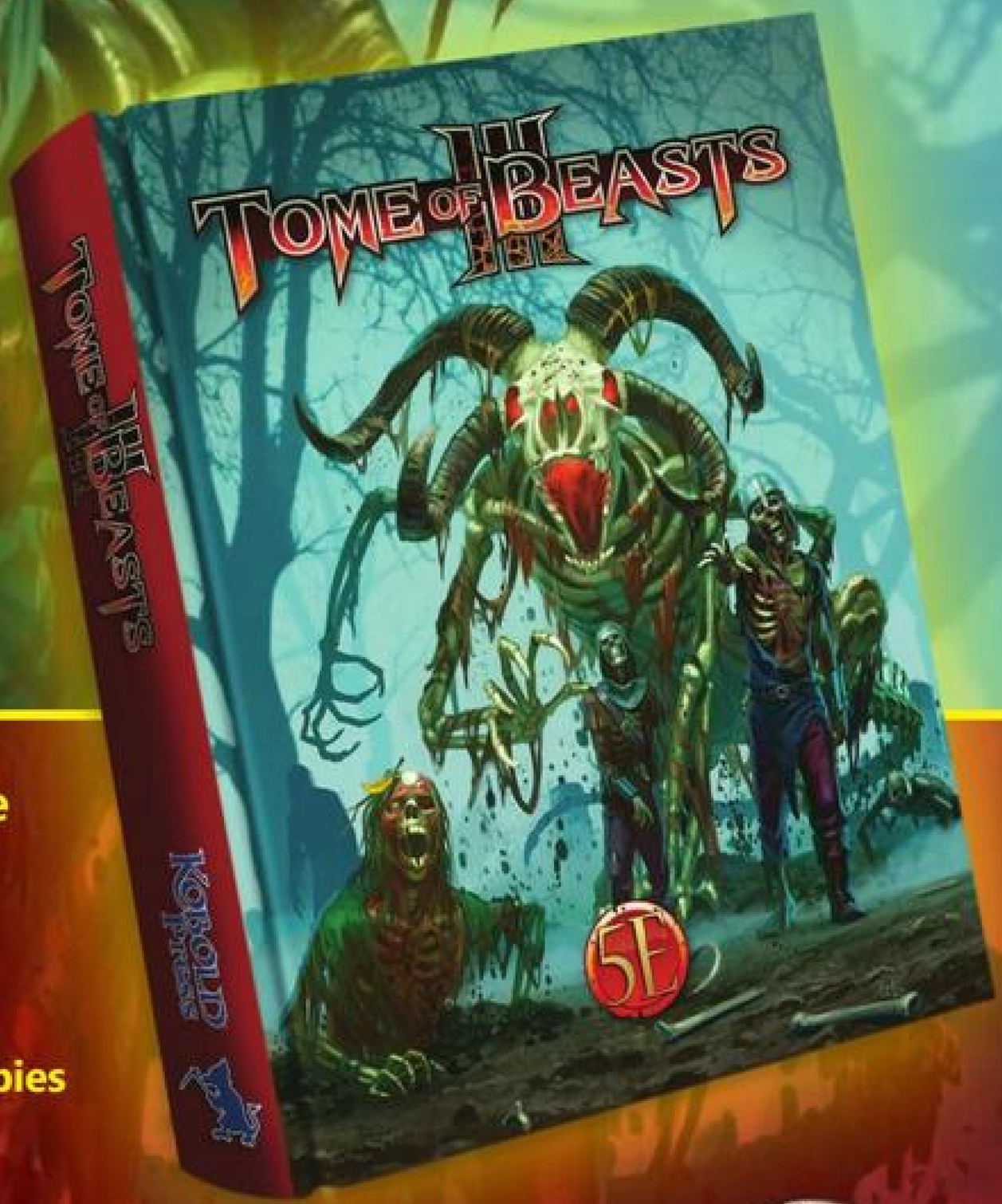

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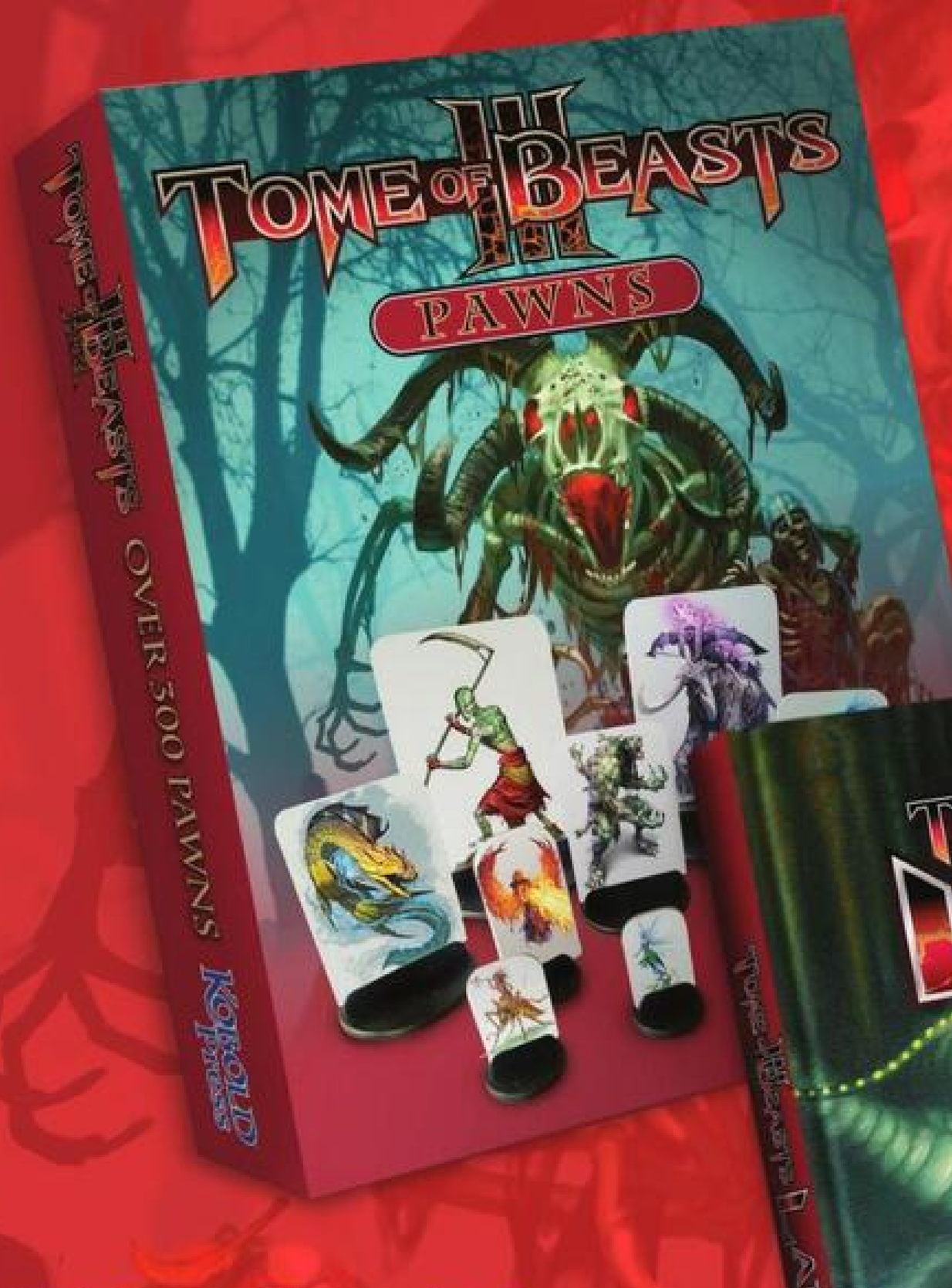

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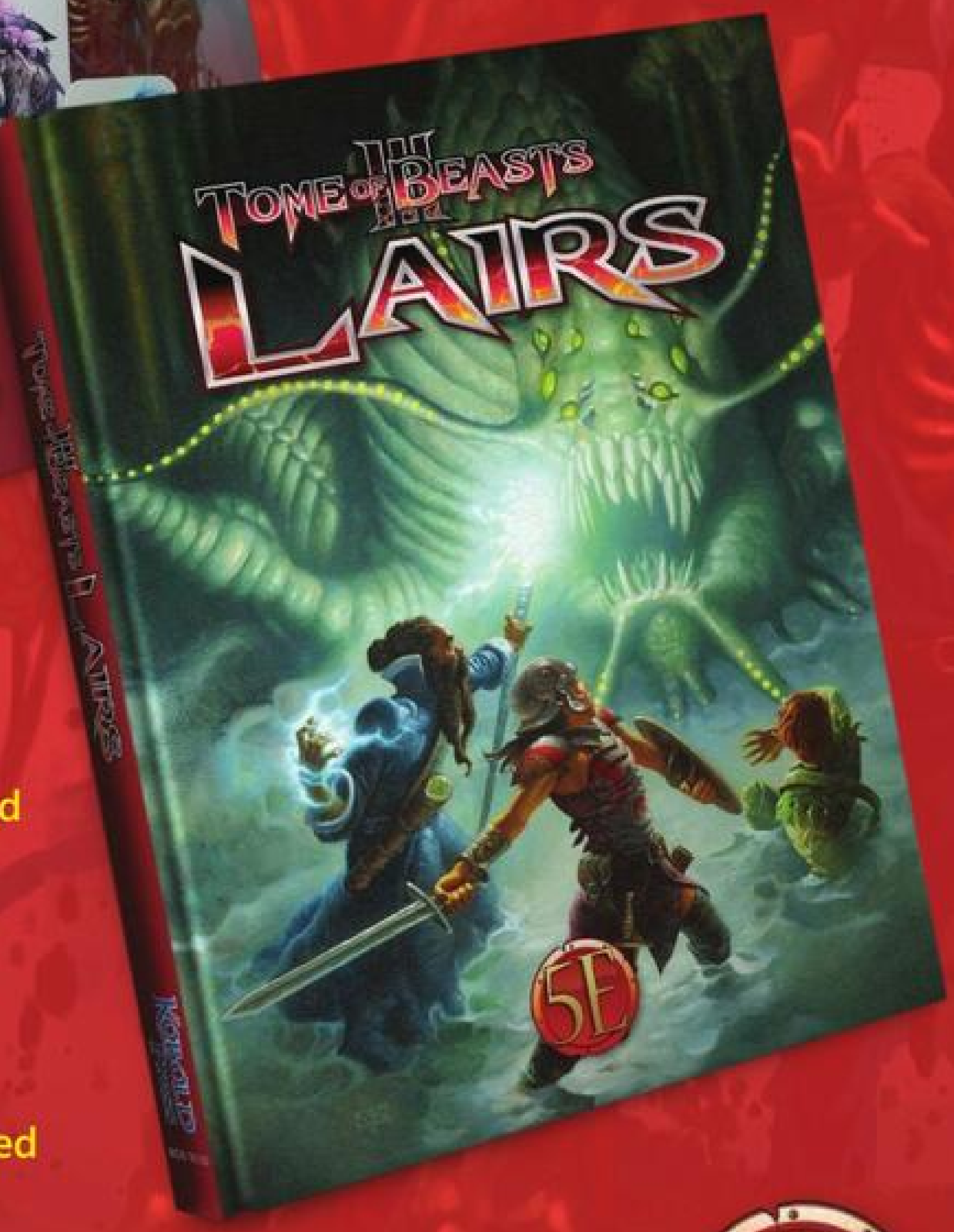

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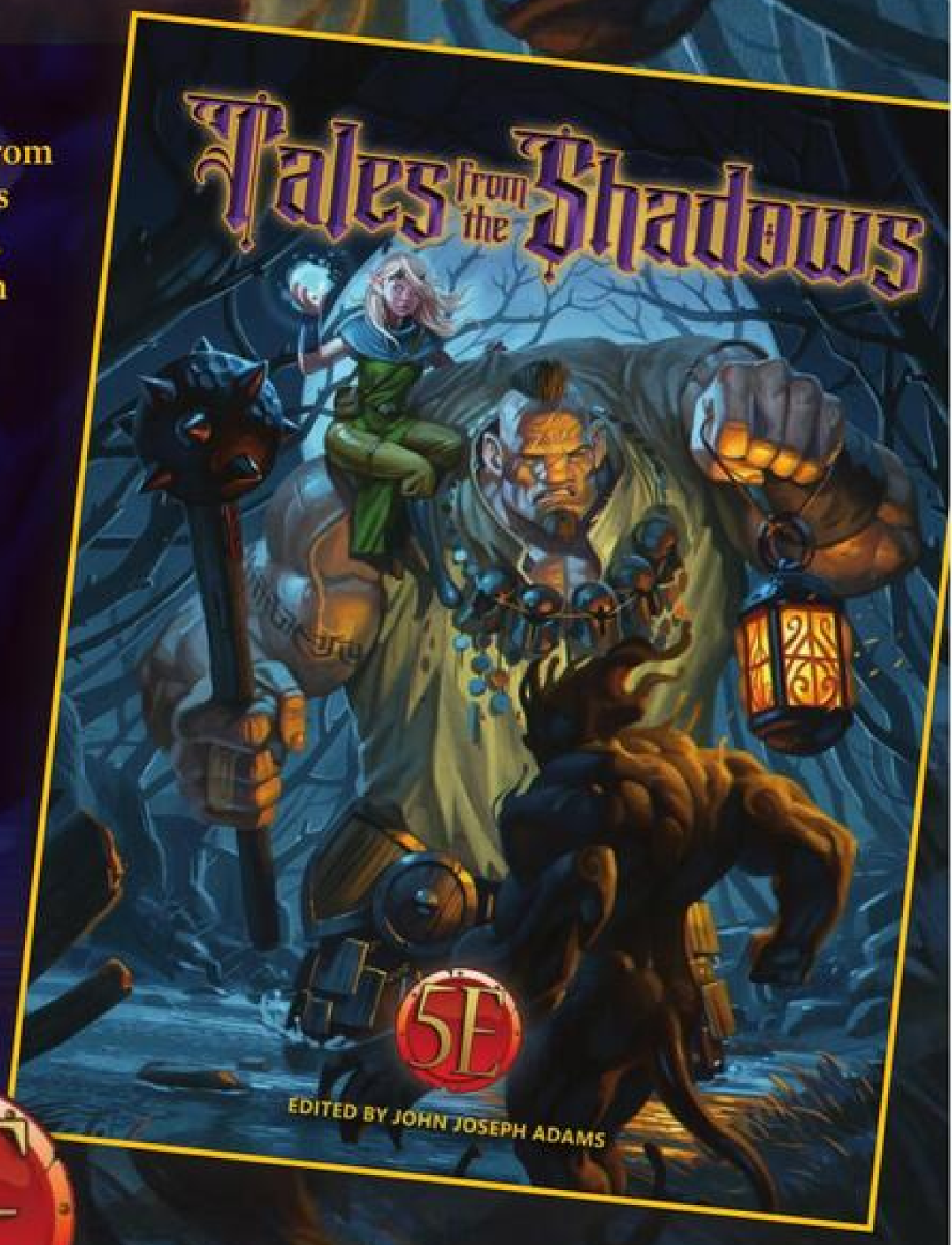

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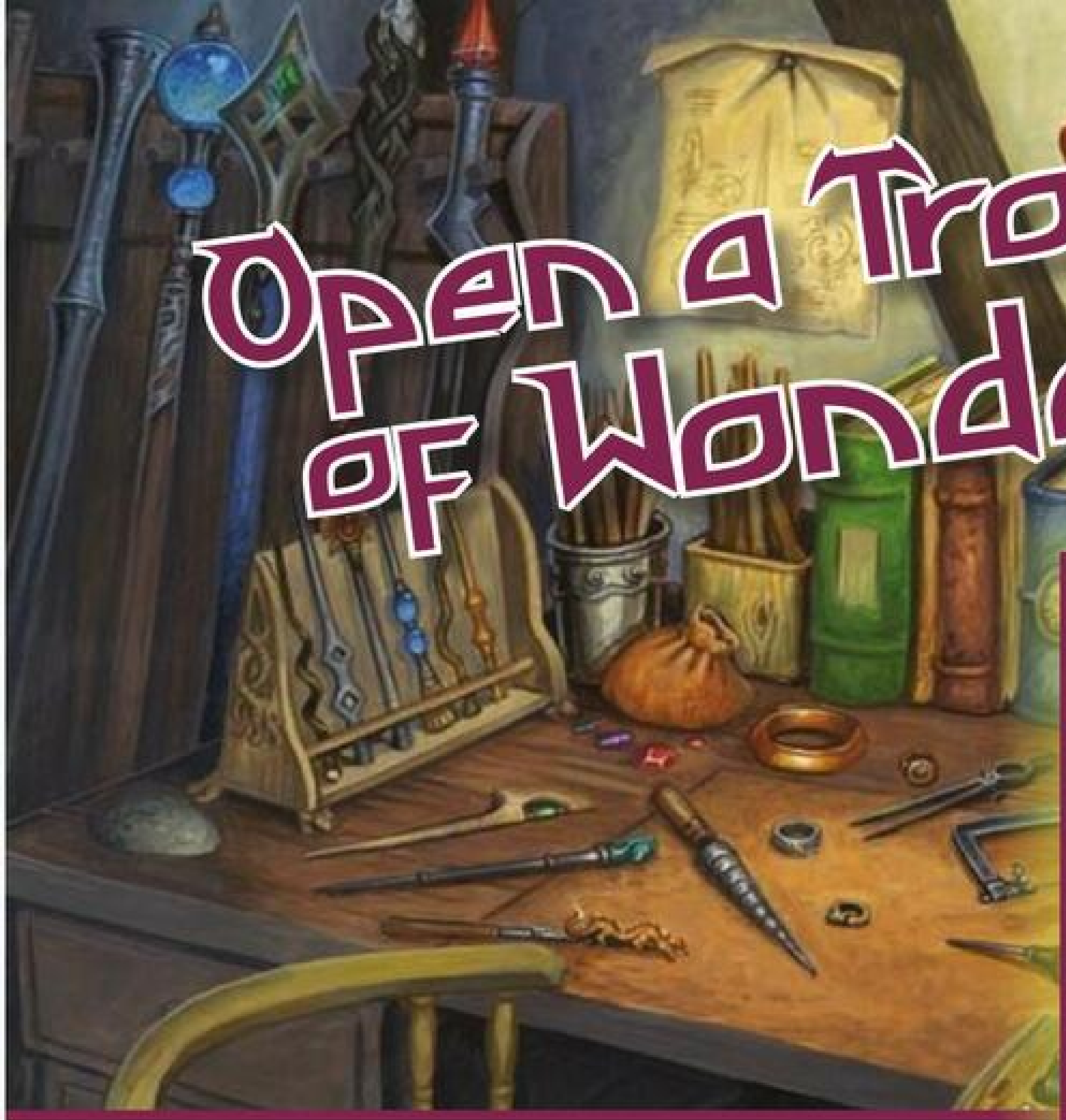

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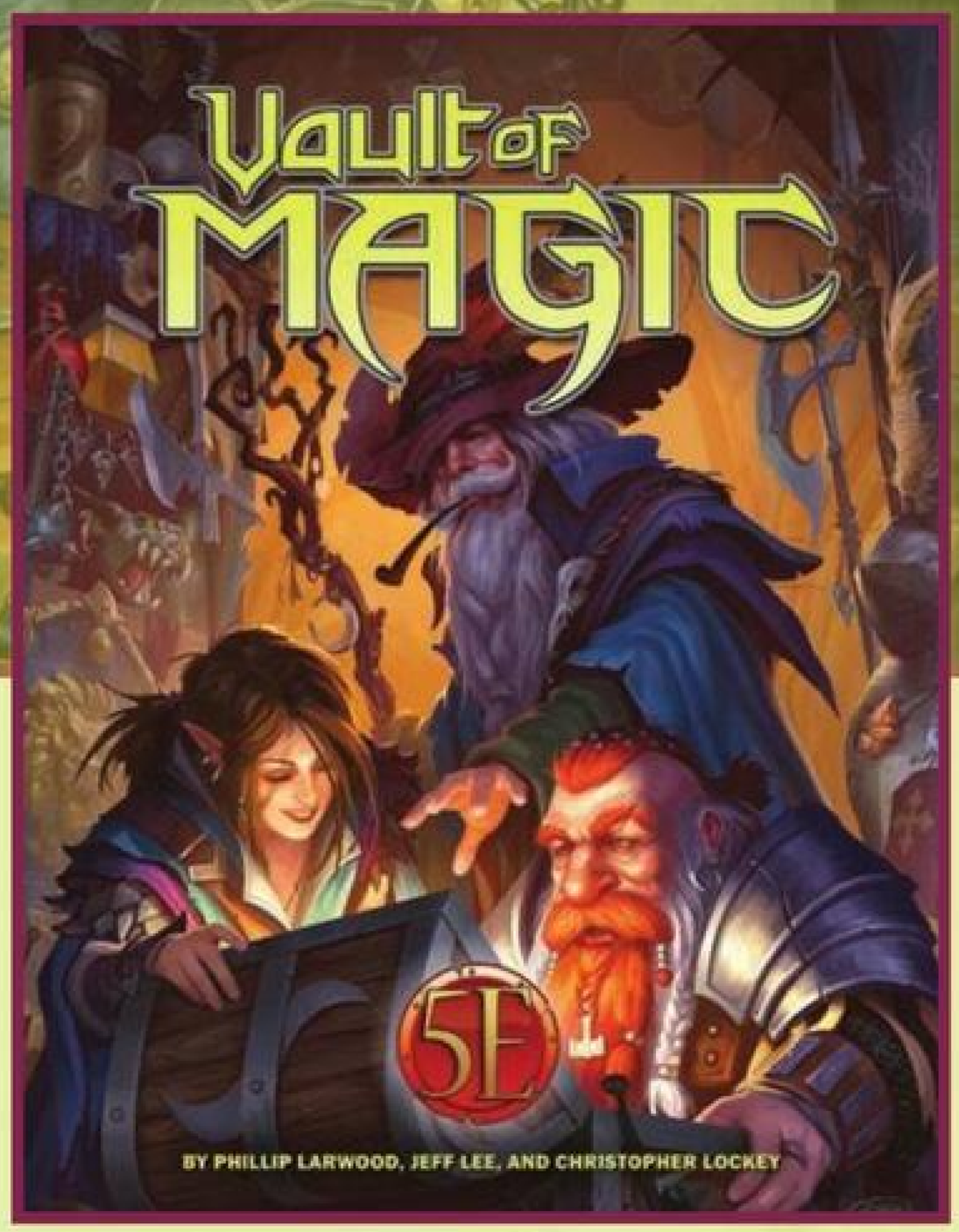

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